



# Southern Flinders Ranges Why?



Fact Sheet

Testimonial from a UK migrant

## **Rob, Donna and Louise Griffin migrated from the United Kingdom to Port Pirie in 2007. Here is their story.**

We chose to come to Port Pirie because my sister and family live here, but having lived as Permanent Residents since September 2007 wouldn't choose to live anywhere else. We are very happy here. The lifestyle is great for us as a family. There's something for all of us and we feel very certain we've made the right decision.

For a start, property prices in Pirie are much lower than in the UK and it's so easy to buy a house. There's no long, drawn out process as in the UK and definitely no gazumping. You find a house; make an offer which, if accepted, signs you up to a contract there and then. There's a 7 day cooling off period in which you can change your mind, otherwise that's it until settlement. We found and bought our house in just 4 weeks and as an added incentive, all first time house buyers in Australia receive a lump sum of \$7,000 from the government whether or not you've owned property in the UK!

Schools were a big consideration and there are quite a few to choose from. We came for a holiday last year and were able to look around and were very impressed with what we saw. Independent schools are also much less expensive than in the UK and class sizes, in our experience, are much smaller. Louise is almost 9 and goes to St Marks where she is very happy. Sport is HUGE in Pirie, not just for the children but adults too. Louise has weekly swimming lessons in the 50m outdoor pool and Irish dance classes at the local dance school. There is also ballet and tap. As it's summer, there's basketball, tennis and of course, cricket. Each sport is played on designated courts and fields. We haven't experienced winter sports yet, but our nephew also plays soccer and 'footy' - Aussie rules football. My nieces play netball and hockey. There's also gymnastics, and drama classes that we know of. All children seem to participate in one sport or another and parents are encouraged to follow their children or help coach. There's a real family atmosphere at these events and we've met loads of parents just by going to watch. Pirie is renowned for its excellent sports facilities. Adult sport is also big in Pirie with much the same sport played as the kids. Rob's become an avid follower of the Pirie Panthers basketball team having never even seen a match before moving here.

A small thing, but there's less traffic here. Roads are wider and many kids cycle to school. The roads seem much safer. We allow Louise to cycle round the block, go down to the local shop and generally do much more here than she did in the UK. Pirie people are also really friendly and welcoming and there's a real emphasis on families. Invitations always include the children.

Everything is 'just 5 minutes away'. Shops, surgeries, the hospital, theatre, vets, schools, sports grounds, gyms, swimming pool. That might mean 5 minutes by car, but there's always somewhere to park and parking is free. And Pirie really does have everything. Loads of clothes shops, supermarkets, cafes and restaurants and you can buy just about anything in the town. We left a lot of our furniture in England before we came over and we've been able to replace all of it in town. TV's, dishwashers, furniture, fridge freezer, Hoover, computer, car, crockery, and with the exception of paint which is *hugely* expensive, everything is cheaper than in the UK. We generally have a much nicer lifestyle here than we did before.

Rob works at SJ Cheesman which is a 5 minute drive from home and he is very happy. We came over on the RSMS visa sponsored by Cheesman's which means we have permanent residency from day 1 and are not constrained by concerns over temporary visas. This has allowed us to put down roots which I believe has helped us to settle quicker and it allows us to make plans for the future. We are also eligible for the same benefits as Australian citizens such as Medicare and family allowance.

I've recently enrolled on 2 courses at TAFE, the local college. Basic keyboard skills and a course for women returning to work. Both part time and within school hours.

Other things that have impressed us with Port Pirie are relatively minor but a refreshing change from what we were used to. Dustbins are emptied every week, even the week after Christmas. Roads are maintained. Ours is being resurfaced this week. There's almost no litter, graffiti or vandalism. People go out and leave their houses unlocked. Cars are left in town with windows open and I've seen keys left in the ignition. The beach is clean and litter free and, a really big improvement on the UK, there's no inheritance tax in Australia!

Of course, there are times when it's not all rosy, and we do miss our families, but the sun is always shining and we have no doubt that we've made the best move. Would we recommend Port Pirie? Definitely. We should have moved years ago.

Donna Griffin

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