OEC 2023

# Riverain Chilsinas

G/FT GUIDE



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## Welcome to the 2023 Riverland Christmas Gift Guide

AS it does every year, Christmas is creeping up on us, and with just a touch over a month to go, community volunteers and council staff across the Riverland towns have been working hard to plan events for the whole family to enjoy this festive season.

The 2023 Riverland Christmas Gift Guide showcases the region's many wonderful district celebrations, and the festive season will shine bright, with events in Renmark, Berri, Barmera, Loxton, Waikerie, and Morgan to choose from – or try your hand in attending all of them.

We have included a guide to gifts for the whole family including mum, dad and the kids, all from local businesses. The Riverland has many amazing choices for some Christmas retail therapy, so grab your friends or family members and make a

day of it by shopping lo-ho-ho-cal and giving the gift of the region's finest.

The winner and runners-up of The Murray Pioneer's 2023 Christmas poem competition are announced in this guide, and the winning poem is published. We had a great time reading all of the entries we received. Thank you to everyone who sent in a poem this year.

For a bit of festive fun, this year's guide also includes a mocktail recipe perfect for our Australian summer Christmas (and can easily be made into the adults-only version) and a stunning pavlova recipe fit for any Riverland Christmas table.

We wish all of our amazing readers and local businesses a very merry, and safe, Christmas.

- The Taylor Group Media team



## Renmark Christmas

RENMARK'S holiday celebrations are set to be highlighted by the return of a community-run pageant.

The town's festive season will commence with the return of the Renmark Christmas Pageant. to be held on Friday 1 December,

The event will feature side shows, a food court, face painting, clown entertainment and free photos with Santa by local photographer Grant Schwartzkopff.

The pageant will begin at 6pm, and will be followed by a fireworks display on the river at

Renmark Christmas Celebrations Committee member Neil Martinson said high levels of support for the pageant were shown among local businesses and volunteers.

"I'm really pleased with the great support we're getting from the community," Mr Martinson said.

"Over a period of time with weather problems and Covid, we lost that little bit of Christmas spirit.

"I want to rejuvenate that into the community." Other community-run events include Carols in the Garden, Chaffey Theatre Big Band Bash, Belgravia Pool Day, and a Santa themed Park Run.



#### RENMARK

#### Renmark Christmas Pageant

Friday 1 December, from 6pm **Murray Avenue** 

Renmark's Christmas Pageant makes its return in 2023. Side shows, food court, and more, followed by the fireworks display.

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#### **Big Band Bash**

Thursday 14 December, 11am **Chaffey Theatre** 

Featuring the 18-piece Adelaide Big Band (South Australia's premiere semi-professional jazz orchestra) and special guest vocalists, enjoy luscioussounding big band renditions of your favourite Christmas songs.

#### Renmark Paringa Council-run Christmas events include:

#### **Festive Night Shopping**

Tuesday 5 December, 5pm to 7pm Renmark Visitor **Information Centre** 

Get a head start on your Christmas gift list by creating a unique gift box full of locally made items and delicious regional produce from the Visitor Centre! Enjoy tastings and entertainment throughout the evening.

#### **Twilight Christmas Gift Markets**

Saturday 9 December, 4pm to 9pm Renmark Riverfront

A free market with an emphasis on Christmas gift stalls, food trucks, live entertainment and a visit from Santa

#### Game On and Festive Flix

Friday 15 December, 5pm **Jarrett Memorial Gardens** 

Celebrate the start of the school holidays with a free family fun night featuring mini golf, giant lawn and interactive games plus outdoor festive movie screenings and food trucks. A great night for the whole family.

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#### **Perform in the Precinct**

Saturday 16 December -Saturday 23 December, 7pm to 9pm **Taylor Riverfront Precinct** Local performers will be onsite nightly to entertain at the precinct.

#### **Christmas Party at the** Library

Saturday 16 December, two sessions at 9am and 11am Renmark Paringa Library

Come rock around the Christmas tree at the library and enjoy a morning full of free fun including a performance by the Boomstars, face painting and Santa's workshop.

#### **School Holiday Program**

Monday 17 December -Friday 22 December Renmark Paringa Library, **Chaffey Theatre** 

A variety of free council and community activities and events including Christmas craft at the library, free movie screening at the Chaffey Theatre and Santa's Cave at the library.

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#### RERRI

Renmark Christmas Celebrations Committee members Kathleen and

Jack Tubb, Neil Martinson, Sandy Maddocks, Young Dang,

Lee Dao and Tam Pham. PHOTO: Hugh Schuitemaker

#### **Christmas Market and Root Sale**

Saturday 25 November, 8am to 12 noon

Morning market hosted by the Berri Church of Christ, 1025 Old Sturt Highway, Berri. Free entry, with a sausage sizzle, Devonshire tea, various drinks available, food and craft stalls, dog display, and music.

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#### **Berri Christmas Market**

Saturday 2 December, 9am to 2pm

Get in the festive spirit and enjoy browsing for that special something at the boutique giftstyle Berri Christmas Market, held in the Berri Town Hall. Featuring local crafts, giftware and produce to choose from. The big man in red will make an appearance and be available for photos.



#### Carols by the River

Sunday 10 December, from 6pm

In a picnic event by the Berri riverfront, sing along to your favourite Christmas carols starting at 7pm. Early arrivals can set up their picnic rugs and chairs from 6pm, with a sausage sizzle (by donation), ice cream van and tea and coffee available from 6pm. The annual event is free, however a donation to cover costs and for the Riverland Christmas Appeal is welcomed.

#### **Elves Magical Workshop**

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Saturday 16 December, 11am to 2pm

All elves and Santa's little helpers are invited to join a fun afternoon at the Berri Visitor Information Centre. For \$10 per person, make your own reindeer food, snowman soup, paint a Christmas ornament, and write a letter to Santa. Suitable for all ages with something for everyone.

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#### **BARMERA**

#### Barmera Street Flags and Pole Decorations

Late November, throughout December

Festive greetings will be on show for all who visit Barmera throughout the silly season, with flags and pole décor adding some Christmas cheer to the town.

#### **Barwell Avenue Decorations**

Late November, throughout December

The main street is annually brought to festive life throughout December, with shop windows and Bonney Theatre decorated with Christmas curiosities and sparkly ornaments by hard-working community volunteers.

#### **Barmera December Markets**

Sunday 3 December, 9am to 1pm
Don't miss this perfect opportunity
for Christmas shopping with
fabulous views of Lake Bonney
with all the usual Barmera Market
suspects. The Riverland Toy and
Tucker Run will finish its tour
of the Riverland at the markets
around midday.

#### **Memorial Christmas Tree**

Sunday 3 December, 10am to 11.30am

An annual event consisting of a special morning held at the Barmera Cemetery where anyone is invited to hang a decoration on the 'Christmas tree' in memory of their loved one. A memory book is also available on the morning for written messages to loved ones lost.

### Christmas Pageant and Fireworks Spectacular

Friday 8 December, from 5.30 pm

The most wonderful time of year will be well and truly celebrated in Barwell Avenue. Supported by Berri Barmera Council, the annual pageant is a mainstay in the town. Vintage car displays, food stalls, novelty stalls, amusement rides and much more will get the night started, followed by fireworks once the sun goes down.

#### Santa's Cave Barmera

Friday 8 December to Saturday 23 December, varied hours

Children and the young at heart can delight in the annual Santa's Cave in Bonney Theatre, featuring a wonderland of lights and different displays including Candyland, Elf Village, Reindeer Barn and more. Activities at selected times include Christmas story time, and face painting. Opening for the season on Pageant night from 7pm to 9pm, the Cave will be open Thursdays and Fridays from 2pm to 5pm, and Saturdays and Sundays from 10am to 1pm.



## Berri Christmas

BERRI'S Christmas spirit is alive and well in 2023. The festivities start early with a morning Christmas market and car boot sale held by the Berri Church of Christ on Saturday 25 November, featuring local produce and crafts, a dog display and various eating and drinking options. Locals and visitors are invited to enjoy a day out shopping in the lead-up to Christmas, with the Berri Town Hall set to come to life with a boutique-gift style Christmas market showcasing Riverland crafts, giftware and produce on

2 December Stallholders will have homewares, jewellery, clothing, candles, children's items, home-baked goods and sweet treats, garden and outdoor ornaments, terrariums, succulents, novelty items and delicious local food. Berri's shopping precinct will be open for business and raring to go, all within walking distance of the hall. The Berri and Barmera Christian Churches Carols by the River will return to the riverfront in a picnic event starting from 6pm, with carols starting at 7pm.

## Barmera Christmas

THERE will be plenty to see and do in Barmera this silly season, with the popular Santa's Cave, Christmas Pageant and Fireworks, and town decorations set to put smiles on faces and bring the festive cheer. The month of festivities starts with a market by the lake for your Christmas shopping. The pageant on Friday 8 December offers various entertainment and the float parade, with a visit from Santa before he sets up in

his Bonney Theatre Cave. The Ballistic Fireworks spectacular is set to start from 9.15pm on the town oval. Santa's Cave will be a treat for the young and young-at-heart to get last-minute Christmas wishes in to the big man in red. As always, the elves from the Christmas Window and Street Display Group have been busy getting the shop windows, Bonney Theatre and parts of Barwell Avenue dressed in their Christmas best.





HAVE yourself a holly jolly Christmas in Waikerie this year.

The Waikerie community comes together each year to decorate the town for the festive season and celebrates the occasion with a number of annual events.

Visit the Christmas Tree Trail in Waikerie's Federation Park, behind the Rain Moth Gallery, featuring 3D wooden Christmas trees.

Waikerie Christmas Tree Trail committee spokesperson Donna Matthews said last year they had over 100 trees on the trail.

"It's always interesting for parents and grandparents when they come to view their children's trees from the Waikerie Children's Centre and the different schools, which is always a highlight," she said.

"From an artistic point of view, there are many amazing community groups that put in very detailed trees.

"Some people are artists and hand-paint pictures on the tree, so there are some very high-quality trees, as well as the children's trees that family members love to come and see

"Federation Park does lead up to the Rotary Cliff Top Walk, so people often do the Christmas Tree Trail and continue on to the

A crowd favourite, the Waikerie Community Christmas Pageant returns to light up the streets of Waikerie with festive cheer, with an array of vintage and classic cars on display, and iconic floats from Waikerie businesses and community members.

The Waikerie Institute is set to turn into Santa's Cave from 24 November, and will host the jolly man himself for the whole festive season.

Santa's Cave has been running for more 25 years and features a dinosaur Christmas scene and a gingerbread house.

Volunteers spend numerous hours getting the streets ready for all the festivities, including hand assembling the Christmas trees in the street and every individual bauble attached by hand



#### WAIKERIE

#### **Waikerie Community Christmas Pageant**

24 November, from 6pm

Crush Terrace, White Street, McCoy Street and Civic Centre

The Waikerie Community Christmas Pageant starts 6pm with a parade of vintage and classic cars, then fabulous floats from community businesses and individuals.

#### Waikerie Santa's Cave

24 November to 24 December, 10am to 5pm

Designed by a dedicated team of local volunteers and sponsored by the District Council of Loxton Waikerie, the Waikerie Institute & Soldiers Memorial Hall is transformed each November to host Santa and the children who love to visit him. During the final weeks of the school term (until 15 December) Santa is only in residence from 3pm to 5pm. Gold coin donation entry.

#### **Christmas Tree Trail**

24 November to 14 January

Waikerie's Christmas Tree Trail features more than 100 3D wooden trees lit up by solar lights and decorated by local businesses, community organisations and schools. Dusk is the perfect time to wander amongst this field of Christmas trees at Federation Park, behind the Rain Moth Gallery. The magical trees will delight children and their families and have become a popular tourist attraction.

#### MORGAN

#### Morgan Christmas Pageant and Fete

9 December, from 3pm

Bring your picnic supplies and enjoy the pageant and fete at the riverfront reserve, hosted by the Morgan and District Lions Club. Fete begins from 3pm with live music, activities for children, market stalls, food bags and more. Pageant starts at 6pm, and a surprise is set – weather permitting – for 9.30pm.





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THE home of Christmas in the Riverland, Loxton comes alive with Christmas cheer, festive feelings and magical light shows each and every year. The month-long Loxton Lights Festival features old favourites and new surprises among the light displays, extended trading hours, twilight market and Christmas Wonderland, to name a few. Running from 25 November right through until 31 December, visitors

and locals alike have ample chance to check out the Christmas-loving town. Venture down East Terrace any night throughout the festival to witness the street's trees lit up with a magical light show, or even just take a walk around town to see how Loxton embraces the festive season. Make sure to spend a bit of time in Loxton this Christmas to truly get into the festive spirit.



#### LOXTON

#### **Light Up Day**

Saturday 25 November

Immerse yourself in Christmas spirit on Loxton's biggest day of the year. Loxton's main street is vibrant and bustling with shops open from 9am to 8.30pm, Santa visiting in a morning and evening session, twilight markets and food trucks from 4pm, a festive ferris wheel, the Reindeer Road adventure and kid's zone craft and activities, main-stage entertainment from 8pm and fireworks launched into the night sky at 9pm.





#### **Christmas Tree Festival**

25 November to 17 December, 11am to 4pm

The Christmas Tree Festival has been a staple of the Loxton Lights Festival for more than 25 years, with a display of trees decorated by local community groups and schools. Viewing at CWA Hall, Kokoda Terrace daily from 11am to 4pm. A new theme is presented annually and this year's is All Things Bright and Beautiful, with many unique and creative entries sure to be shared. Gold coin entry. Groups welcomed by appointment, call Marilyn (0439 849 394).







#### Festive Ferris Wheel

25 November to 2 December, various times

Celebrate the Lights Festival's first week with a ferris wheel ride on East Terrace. Take in the River Murray's unique views by daylight, or enjoy the town's Christmas lights by night. Operation subject to weather. Ride the wheel on Light Up Day from 10am to 10pm, 26 November to 1 December from 6pm to 10pm, and 2 December 10am to 10pm.

#### **Lights Tour**

25 November to 31 December, 8.30pm to 11pm

Loxton's main street will be lit up every night throughout the Loxton Lights Festival, with large spotlights illuminating the East Terrace trees to create a spectacular display. Residential homes throughout the town will light the night thanks to the Loxton Christmas Lights Committee and their volunteers who delivered more than 400 Christmas scenes around the streets.

#### **Christmas Wonderland**

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25 November to 31 December, 8.30pm to 11pm

A beloved Loxton icon, the must-see Christmas Wonderland display at the Loxton North Sports Club is filled with lights and images. The circuit, more than 250m long, features not only classic Christmas characters such as Mr and Mrs Claus, but also popular characters dressed in their festive best

#### Santa's Walk

25 November to December 31, 8.30pm to 11pm

Homes and streets of Loxton will experience the magic of Christmas lights, as locals get into the festive spirit and light up their homes. Experience the lights displays in and around Hilbig Street, where it all began more than 30 years ago. The revitalised Hilbig Street playground is ideal to start your viewing adventure.

#### Santa's Workshop

Sunday, December 3, 10 and 17, 10 am to 2pm

Visit Santa at his brand-new workshop at 31 East Terrace this year and enjoy an unforgettable encounter as he personally presents you with a special Christmas gift. Get in early to see the big man on Light Up Day from 10am to 1pm and again from 4pm to 8pm, with professional photography available for those wanting to capture the memories. He will visit Loxton on Sundays in December; however, professional photography will not be available.

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#### **Christmas Shopping**

The vibrant village-style retail precinct is filled with family-owned or independently run businesses ready to welcome you to the town and help with Christmas gift shopping. Shops are open all day on Light Up Day, 9am to 8.30pm. Sunday trading on 3, 10 and 17 December from 10am to 2pm.

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#### **Community Carols**

Sunday 17 December, from 7pm
Gather together at the Loxton
Oval on Bookpurnong Terrace
for Loxton's own Carols by
Candlelight. The town's combined
churches invite one and all to
bring chairs or rugs, or even a
picnic dinner, and sing along
to your favourite Christmas
tunes. Inclement weather
venue: Lutheran Peace Hall, 65
Bookpurnong Terrace.

#### Christmas Nostalgia

Permanently displayed in Loxton Newsagency, 12 East Terrace, during normal trading hours.

The Loxton Newsagency is home to a private collection which relives special Christmas traditions. The permanent fixture is a treasured and historic display of all things Christmas, from novel trees to unique decorations and toys.



## YATES

## Christmas treats for the whole family



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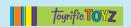
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## **Christmas Mocktail Summer Passion**

This bright, summery mocktail is sweet and tart – perfect for a warm Christmas Day and a great pairing with traditional Aussie Christmas food. Never fear, this mocktail can easily be transformed into an alcoholic version with the addition of your favourite spirit (which you can measure with your heart). While the ingredients call for a fresh passionfruit, tinned passionfruit seeds can also be used in its place. This recipe serves one, however it can be doubled or tripled, depending on the size of your cocktail shaker, for bigger parties.

#### **Ingredients**

1 passionfruit, plus an extra 1/2 to garnish 50ml sparkling or cloudy apple juice 15ml passionfruit syrup 15ml lime juice a few drops vanilla extract

#### Method

- 1. Slice open the passionfruit and scoop out all of the seeds into a cocktail shaker with ice.
- 2. Add the rest of the ingredients and shake well. Strain into a coupe or martini glass and garnish with the passionfruit halve.



## Get festive with the Adelaide Big Band

Bringing festive cheer to the Riverland for another year, the Chaffey Theatre is proud to have the Adelaide Big Band (ABB) returning for a Big Band Christmas Bash.

The ABB will return to the Chaffey stage in the only Riverland show, on Thursday 14 December at 11am, following a successful, fun event in 2022.

Featuring an 18-piece band and special guest vocalists, concert goers will be treated to big band renditions of everyone's festive favourites including Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas, Jingle Bell Rock, The Most Wonderful Time of the Year, Winter Wonderland, and many other Christmas classics.

The ABB proudly boasts its well-earned status as one of Australia's premier community big bands.

Specialising in performing commercial big band jazz and swing repertoire, the ABB appeals to the casual music listener and big music fan alike.

The band draws its music roots from the likes of Count Basie, Woody Herman, Stan Kenton, Buddy Rich, Maynard Ferguson, Quincy Jones and the GRP All-Stars.

The band's membership is made up of an exceptionally talented group of individuals. The make-up includes teachers, psychologists, engineers, builders, salesman, students, IT support

consultants, and both active and retired professional musicians.

While the personalities, ages and backgrounds vary greatly, all involved share a strong common passion for big band music, and have enthusiasm to maintain a connection with the art form.

Given the extent to which big band music finds itself outside of the mainstream narrative in both a social and industry sense, the ABB provides as a unique recreational outlet and experience for all musicians involved.

The band rehearses weekly, performs regularly on the local circuit and is frequently engaged to perform at community events, festivals, private functions, corporate events and conference gala dinners, as well as to back guest performers and touring artists.

Tickets are available to purchase online (www.countryarts.org.au/events/big-band-bash/) and all ticketholders can enjoy a morning tea included in the price.

To coincide with the concert, Hotel Renmark will run a Big Band Bash lunch special, on Thursday 14 December, featuring a choice of fish and chips or quiche, both served with salad, and pavlova for dessert.

Price for main meal and dessert is \$28, with the main by itself costing \$22.



#### RIVERLAND CHRISTMAS POEM WRITING COMPETITION



### Froggy's First Christmas

I wrote this poem for the Murray Pioneer.

In a pond far away, there a little frog lay.

Sad and alone, if all truth be told. The Christmas spirit, he did not hold.

A soft jingle of the night, in the distance a sleigh takes flight.

The frog woke with a start, after hearing the Christmas spark.

The frog started to dance, it was an elegant prance.

He saw the sleigh through the night, he was no longer sleeping tight.

Sadness had gone and joy would come, Santa's job would almost be done.

In the morning the sun arose, I think you know how this story goes.

A package lies at his feet, he opened it, what would he meet?

A baby frog jumped out the gift, and little froggy's mood began to shift.

You'll see the pair in the far away pond, playing in the water and far beyond.

No longer sad and ever so lonely. The joy of Christmas made this pond so homely.



Congratulations RUNNERS-UF







Will and Alora's poems are available to read in this week's edition of The Murray Pioneer (22/11/2023). In addition, all entries will be on display for public viewing at the Chaffey Theatre throughout December.















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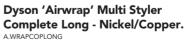
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