

# PERFECT WEEKEND peter gago

Peter Gago is the chief winemaker at Penfolds, where he is also responsible for crafting its iconic fine wine, Penfolds Grange. He lives in Adelaide with his wife Gail, a government minister in the South Australian parliament.

**A**t this particular time of year, I really try to pack in as much indulgent R&R as I can into my remaining free weekends. Mainly because, any day now, our southern hemisphere vintage is about to swing into action and for the next few months I'll be flat out with the new harvest.

The alarm on Saturday morning is never set. Gail and I prefer a slow start to the day followed by a leisurely breakfast – fruit, muesli, coffee and lots of toast – perched on our balcony with the papers. Luckily, our place overlooks Adelaide's Parklands, with the city centre very close by.

If the weather's good, we'll head over to one of the nearby beaches before it gets too hot. I particularly like the Grange because it's nice and quiet. Or we'll go to Henley Beach, which has some good restaurants for lunch such as the Thai Orchid, where we know the owners.

If it's cooler, we'll trek up to Mount Lofty in the Adelaide Hills and reward ourselves with a light bite at Margie Gregg's Summit Restaurant. It has a fantastic panoramic view of the city and gulf, so it's great to sit in the shade sipping a latte.

In the afternoon, I do enjoy a bit of retail therapy – shopping for cheese, olives and pâté at Adelaide's much-loved Central Market. Temptingly close by is one of my favourite clothes shops, Joseph Uzumcu. The owner is always good for a chat, but he also makes a great espresso. The other thing I can't resist is a visit to a good independent wine merchant such as The Edinburgh Cellars or East End Cellars. I've been an inveterate wine collector for longer than I've been a winemaker, with a particular passion for great vintage champagne.

Then, if there's time, Gail and I will go and see a film just up the road at the Wallis Piccadilly Theatre in O'Connell Street. We love the big screen and great sound system – and, naturally, an ice cream is mandatory.

Catching up with friends is important to both of us, which invariably means going out for dinner and bringing along some wine. The Lion Hotel is a perennial favourite, and not just because it's 50 paces from our front door. The owners, Tim and Andrew, are extremely talented hoteliers and there's always lots of buzz and bustle



in their chic dining room. I also like the contemporary and constantly changing menus. On a special Saturday night they might let me sneak in with something exotic like a bottle of Salon or Krug or a special German Riesling. I tend not to take any Aussie wines with me because I can usually buy them from their excellent list.

Sunday-morning sleep-ins are a thing of the past for us. After a light breakfast, we both go for a 40-50 minute run (separately) around the ovals in the Parklands. In our jobs, with so much travel, it's important to attempt to stay reasonably fit.

Then we like to jump in the car and go for a leisurely Sunday drive. Either we'll head into the Adelaide Hills or drive south through McLaren Vale to the coast, maybe as far as Victor Harbour and

Goolwa. En route we'll take pot luck for lunch at an outdoor café, or take our own hamper of spoils and find a cool, shady spot for a good old-fashioned picnic.

Usually we'll be back home by about 6pm, in time for a very casual dinner at one of my favourite BYO Chinese restaurants, such as Ying Chow or Ky Chow in Gouger Street. They're both noisy, gossipy, "no frills" places with laminate tables and duck as good as anything I've found in Hong Kong. A couple of bottles of a solid Australian or Kiwi Pinot, chosen by Gail, are the perfect accompaniment.

Ideally, we wouldn't be home too late after dinner. We might sit in front of the TV or catch up with some reading. With a good night's sleep under my belt, I'll be ready for all those ripening grapes. JOHN STIMPFIG

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