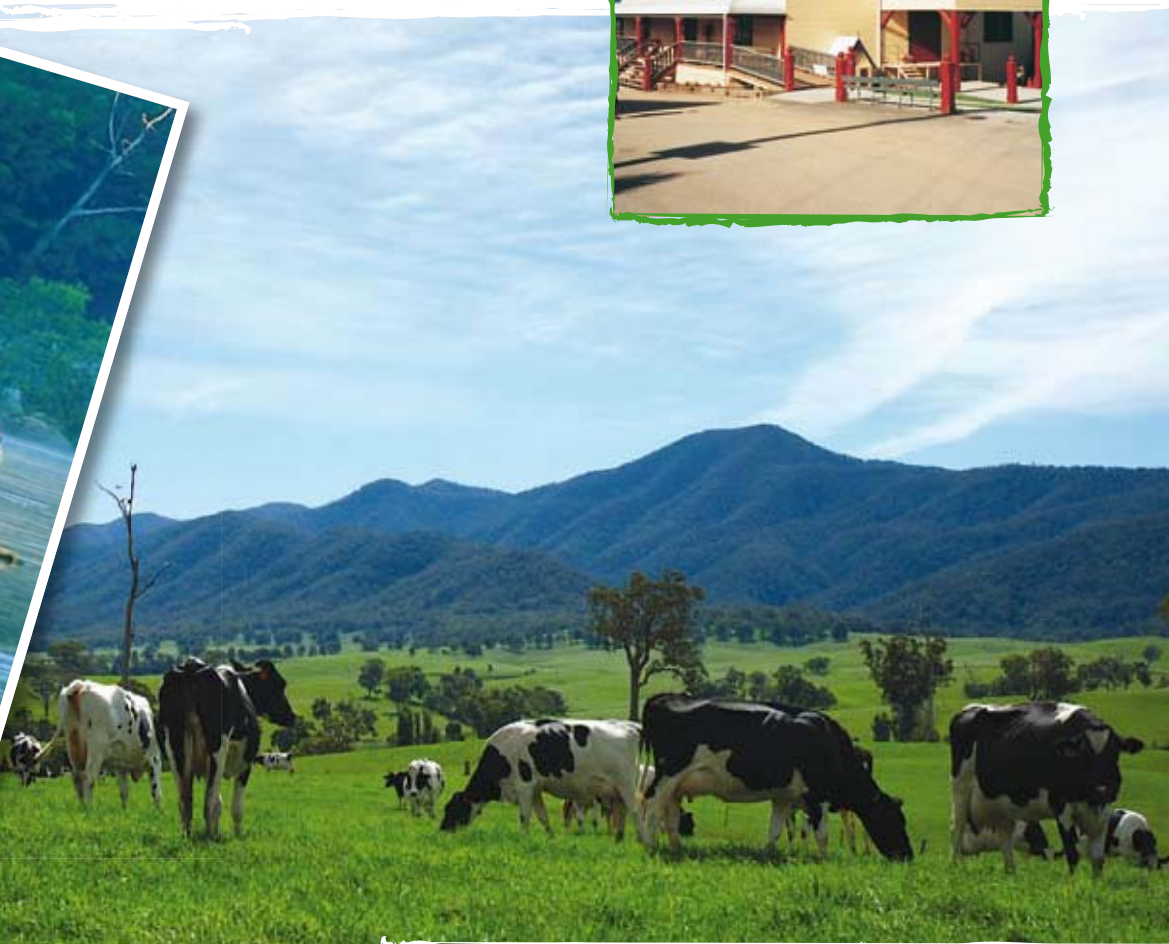


# Bega



Bega Valley



## Bega and Bemboka are the country hearts of the Sapphire Coast, twin townships – large and small – nestled between the mountains and the sea, and linked by the Snowy Mountains Highway.

The most smug-looking cows in Australia live here, grazing on the lush emerald-greenness that helps produce the world famous Bega Cheese – and you can learn about the history of cheese-making at the Bega Cheese Heritage Centre.

There's plenty more history on show around this country heart of the coast. First settled in the mid-1830s as 'Biggah', the current township had its origins 20 years later.

Check out the Pioneers' Museum to learn more, or simply take a drive out to Wyndham or neighbouring Candelo where you can literally walk back through time in a little village designated as an urban conservation area.

St Peter's Church was designed by the Blakett brothers who also designed the Great Hall at Sydney University – but Candelo isn't just about history. It's a hive of activity on the first Sunday of every month – market day! A market not to be missed!

On the road between Bega and Cooma is Bemboka (originally Benbooka, the Aboriginal word for 'high peak'), the northwest gateway between the coast and Cooma and Canberra.

If you've driven this far – and the excellent local pies make it worth the effort – wind your way a little further through the towering eucalypts of the South East Forests National Park to the top of Brown Mountain. If it's a clear day, you will feel like you can

see forever from Piper's Lookout, across the rainforest to the Bega Valley and beyond.

The Brown Mountain track was first used as a weekly mail route between Bega and Cooma in 1867 and the first 'road' was completed in 1889 – the journey took 12 hours by horse and coach in those days; now it's a little over an hour.

Between Bega and Cobargo is Brogo Dam: pristine deep stillness backed up in the towering gorges of the Wadbilliga National Park. Relax or hire a canoe and paddle through the tranquillity. Watch water dragons, sea eagles and goannas at play with nothing but lapping water, bird song and the sound of the wind rustling the treetops to break the silence.