

so many cheap sweeties



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## handpicked Fergus McGhie



There's nothing like a trip away for finding inspiration. Orange was the destination the weekend after Easter as the town's food week kicked off. The Saturday-night dinner with chef Shaun Arantz was a highlight, but there were many.

As a Canberran who has spent a little time living in the country, I felt instantly at home. Beautiful old federation houses with wide verandas and rose gardens line the streets in the centre of town, while the weather was warm but tempered by a cool breeze. The autumn colours were just beginning to show. While strolling around town early on Sunday morning with a slightly dull head from the previous night's dinner, I began to look at real-estate windows and consider a change to a quieter pace of life.

I had walked into the one of the finest wine shops I've ever seen the day before, so I knew I'd be OK for good wine. An old friend, Nick Butler, presides over an eclectic collection of some of the world's great wines, from Burgundy to Rioja, from Heathcote to Collector – his Union Bank Wine Shop has all the best examples. I was just as impressed with the temperature of the shop, a constant 16 degrees. This is a serious commitment to preserving wine quality, even if it means Butler and his staff spend their days fairly well rugged up.

After a pretty relaxing three-hour drive, Orange's charms worked their magic. The locals are spoiled for choice in wines, restaurants and produce.

- Fergus McGhie was a guest of Cumulus wines.