vinetur

Vinarchy to close Banrock Station and Rolf Binder cellar doors in major South Australian wine region shift

Tourism and conservation concerns rise as company consolidates operations, invests in production, and pledges ongoing wetland management

Thursday, June 5, 2025



Global wine company Vinarchy has announced it will close the cellar door and restaurant at Banrock Station in South Australia’s Riverland, as well as the Rolf Binder cellar door near Tanunda in the Barossa Valley. The closures are expected to take place by the end of June, marking a significant shift in the company’s operations in one of Australia’s most prominent wine regions.

Banrock Station, located near Kingston on Murray, is known not only for its wines but also for its internationally recognized Ramsar-listed wetlands. The site has long attracted visitors interested in both wine and nature, offering a unique blend of environmental tourism and viticulture. The decision to close public operations at Banrock Station comes just months after Accolade Wines and Pernod Ricard Wines merged to form Vinarchy, a move that was initially promoted as a step toward innovation in global winemaking.

Vinarchy’s chief supply officer, Joe Russo, acknowledged that the closures would create uncertainty for staff at both sites. He stated that the company is committed to supporting affected employees through redeployment opportunities at other locations or, where necessary, redundancy and outplacement support. Russo emphasized that vineyard and viticulture operations at Banrock Station and Rolf Binder will continue without interruption.

The company is investing $70 million into its Berri Estates facility in the Riverland, which is already the largest winery in the southern hemisphere. This investment will transform Berri Estates into Vinarchy’s main hub for commercial winemaking, packaging, and warehousing. Additionally, winemaking operations currently based at St Hallett in the Barossa and Hardy’s Tintara in McLaren Vale will be moved to Vinarchy’s Rowland Flat site by the 2026-27 vintages, with an additional $30 million allocated for this transition.

Vinarchy produces more than 32 million cases of wine annually and reports over $1.5 billion in net sales revenue each year. The company says these changes are part of a broader strategy to strengthen its winemaking presence in South Australia.

The closure of Banrock Station’s public-facing operations has raised concerns about its impact on local tourism and environmental initiatives. Tony Sharley, who helped establish Banrock Station and its wetlands before leaving in 2009, expressed disappointment at the news. He highlighted how Banrock Station successfully brought together wine lovers and nature enthusiasts, calling it a “fantastic marriage” that inspired similar ventures elsewhere.

Sharley praised Hardy Wines’ original decision to integrate a cellar door with wetland conservation as both unique and courageous. The wetlands at Banrock Station were designated a Ramsar site of international importance in 2002 due to their value for wildlife and biodiversity. Under the Ramsar Convention, Vinarchy is required to maintain the ecological character of the wetlands according to Australian management principles.

A spokesperson for Vinarchy confirmed that the company remains committed to conserving the wetlands through ongoing environmental management practices such as watering and drying cycles. The company also plans to consult with stakeholders about future conservation efforts and explore potential partnerships with environmental tourism organizations.

Local leaders have voiced concerns about what the closure means for the region’s economy and reputation. Riverland MP Tim Whetstone described Vinarchy’s decision as a “day of reckoning” for the area. He noted that Banrock Station has been widely regarded as a center of excellence for wine, environmental stewardship, and tourism. Whetstone warned that losing such a destination could prompt visitors to look elsewhere.

As Vinarchy consolidates its operations and invests heavily in production facilities, questions remain about how these changes will affect South Australia’s wine tourism landscape and ongoing conservation efforts at one of its most celebrated natural sites.