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Stanthorpe's Calling all Culture Vultures

It's not all food and wine and autumnal colours on the Granite Belt these days, as a peek into the cultural calendar reveals.

The official tourist information website www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au event listing includes a feast for the eyes, ears, mouth and the soul. The backdrop to all this culture in Queensland's capital of cool is the morning autumn mists and golden leaves of the deciduous trees which typify April and May.

Heading the bill, a major art collection opened at the Stanthorpe Art Gallery this week. It is the ninth annual exhibition of Borderline Regional Arts Association. Entitled "*Aspire, Inspire*", it features more than 120 works by nearly 40 local artists. The show is described as "stunning" and runs until 26 May.

Just down the road at the former timber mill in Ballandean is the popular *Art in the Mill*. The event is timed to coincide with the annual Opera in the Vineyard at Ballandean Estate on the May long weekend.

The May long weekend also offers something for the soul when the St Joseph's catholic church hosts the annual "*Three Saints Celebrations*". The story of how three saints - Alfio, Filadelfo and Cirino - were martyred has been handed down for centuries in the small villages of eastern Sicily. Each year it is retold by the Italian community in Stanthorpe.

Autumn offers more: Chef Tony Southgate is dishing up French fare overlooking the lake at Robert Channon Wines; Whiskey Gully will host *Paris Dreaming* - a Gypsy Jazz duo; and at Lucas Estate it's all Rock and Roll to celebrate the end of vintage.

Or for something a little more tame (and intimate) there's Mothers Day High Tea at pretty Bella Rosa's Tea Rooms or at the modern Queensland College of Wine Tourism on Sunday 10 May.

Back at Stanthorpe Art gallery is *Namatjira to Now* - an exhibition which highlights work by indigenous Australian artists from the Hermannsburg School. It will include watercolours from the original and subsequent generations, ceramics and acrylic paintings on canvas. This show runs 29 May to 7 July 2009.

Then at the start of winter - on 13 & 14th June - is the Winter Winelander. This rail and wine lovers trip from Brisbane to the Granite Belt and back is not to be missed.

Event information and accommodation bookings online see www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au

ENDS

NOTES:

1. The Granite Belt is nestled around the town of Stanthorpe and at 1000 metres above sea level the climate which gives it the name as the [coolest place](#) in Queensland.
2. The region is both the [Queensland wine](#) and [apple](#) capital.
3. The appeal of a short break country destination within easy drive of Brisbane, the Gold and Sunshine Coasts is enhanced by the region's four distinct seasons.
4. The multi-cultural community includes many of Italian heritage and is a popular destination for tree-changers.