



Picture: Dylan Coker

A budding beauty in the Adelaide Hills

LITTLE Layla Mayne, 2, isn't the only one grinning at this cherry orchard at Forest Range, in the Adelaide Hills.

The blossoms are two weeks early this year to the delight of her grandparents, orchard owners Alan and Merawyn – although the juicy red fruit won't appear until the end of spring and into summer.

Mrs Mayne said the unusually warm winter had transformed the orchard into a stunning wonderland.

"It's a wee bit early," she said. "The warmer winter certainly brings on the blossom more."

Several varieties of vibrant cherry blossoms were in full bloom this week at the Maynes' Stella Creek Cherry Orchard.

Mrs Mayne said the buds were "looking superb".

"Once the middle season varieties come through it will be spectacular," she said.

Stella Creek – a small boutique orchard of about 4ha – has 20 cherry varieties.

Mrs Mayne said since she and husband Alan moved to Forest Range from their Norwood town-house seven years ago, it had been a "wonderful change of lifestyle".

Stella Creek is one of 26 cherry orchards in the Adelaide Hills, the Fleurieu Peninsula and the South East, which will welcome cherry lovers to pick their own cherries from mid-to-late November.

OLIVIA WATSON