FOOD·WINE·TRAVEL
A WORLD OF TASTE

BY CHRISTINE SALINS MAY 3, 2019

WITCHES FALLS COTTAGES, TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN

Witches Falls' cottage #5: the perfect spot for a relaxing getaway.
Although the name sounds like something out of a fairytale, the beautifully secluded Witches Falls Cottages at Tamborine Mountain are actually named after the nearby Witches Falls National Park. Still, the name couldn't be more appropriate because the seven little stone cottages almost hidden from view by lush vegetation are really rather magical.

They are the perfect spot for a few days of relaxation, pampering and sightseeing in one of south-east Queensland's most picturesque locations. Hosts David and Daniela go way beyond being just B & B hosts. They have so much knowledge of things to see and do in the area and are happy to point you in the right direction. Before we had even arrived, David had already told us about the many lovely restaurants in the area and made us hungry for the salt and pepper prawns at The Three Little Pigs – but more about that later.

The cottages are an easy drive for anyone living in south-east Queensland or northern New South Wales, being just 45 minutes' drive from the Gold Coast and an hour from Brisbane's CBD. We arrived in the late afternoon, just in time to take in the sunset at Rotary Lookout, a short walk from the cottages on Main Western Road. There are a couple of park benches at the lookout, so we settled in with a platter that David and Daniela had prepared for us.

The view from Rotary Lookout on a not-so-sunny day.
It was loaded up with at least half a dozen different cheeses, grapes, olives, dates, figs, pickled cucumbers and nuts, along with crackers and a bottle of Granite Belt Syrah from the nearby Witches Falls cellar door. It's a beautiful red that put us into a happy space despite the cloud cover that made for an underwhelming sunset. We snacked on goodies from the platter for the whole of our 2-night stay.

The cottages have private entrances that afford a great level of privacy, and if you have ordered a breakfast hamper, it is discreetly left on a table outside your front door at 8am. The hamper has all the ingredients for a cooked breakfast that you can prepare at your leisure on a barbecue in your own private courtyard. We loved relaxing in this lovely sunny spot, surrounded by flowering bushes and birdsong.

Our cottage had a kitchenette with sink and small fridge, toaster, crockery and cooking utensils. You can select from hampers with ingredients for either a continental breakfast or a cooked breakfast, and BBQ hampers are also available if you want to cook your own evening meal. The freshly baked bread that came with our breakfast hamper was still warm when it was delivered to our door, and again was enough to last us for the two days of our stay. David and Daniela have chooks that provide a regular supply of eggs, and they also grow herbs that guests are welcome to pick.

Our cosy cottage had a combustion stove in the lounge but it was warm when we stayed so we didn't need to fire it up. Nights can be crisp in the mountains, however, even in the warmer months. At the foot of our bed was a TV that could play DVDs, and at reception there was a truckload of DVDs that could be borrowed for free. We chose a couple of movies and settled in for the long haul.

The elevated queen-size bed in our cottage.
Our hosts had provided a small bottle of local port and some chocolates, another thoughtful touch. The queen-sized bed was on a raised platform, up a few steps from the lounge and bathroom. (If you need to get up in the middle of the night, take note …) It was so peaceful and quiet that we slept like babies. Waking up in the morning to nothing but the sound of nature was a treat.

The light-filled bathroom was my favourite feature of our cute little cottage. It was cleverly designed with a wall of glass overlooking a private garden with flourishing greenery and subtle lighting, so it has the feeling of an outdoor bathroom even though it isn't. You could kick back in the luxury spa bath, big enough for two, or savour the walk-in shower surrounded by garden.

A staycation here is so relaxing that you don't even need to venture out for a spot of pampering. Ripples Massage can arrange for a massage therapist to come to you. We each enjoyed a relaxing massage with a foot soak at the beginning and a face mask and head massage at the end. It was truly sublime and we felt so lazy afterwards that we took the car to dinner instead of walking the footpath to North Tamborine village as we had done the previous night.

Tamborine Mountain is home to many wonderful eateries catering for all price ranges and tastes. David had recommended the salt and pepper prawns at the Three Little Pigs and he was right – they were sensational. This classy yet relaxed bistro has a contemporary menu with a focus on locally sourced ingredients, and we can highly recommend it for a great night out. We also enjoyed a finger-licking meal (literally) at Hickory.

The stone cottages are like something out of a fairytale.

The country lanes that meander through the mountains take you to wineries, historic pubs, eclectic gift shops and art galleries, rainforest walking tracks, waterfalls and scenic viewing spots. David and Daniela have created a series of free maps that are invaluable for anyone staying in their cottages. Each map has a different theme, such as wildlife, suggestions for day trips, a harvest trail for roadside stalls, a country drive to Byron Bay, and local workshops in ceramics, cheese-making, cooking, life drawing and so on.

The Gallery Walk shops are within easy reach of the cottages.
Attractions like the Rainforest Skywalk, Tamborine Mountain Distillery, Botanical Gardens, and Gallery Walk with its eclectic shops, cafés, brewery and cheese factory, are a short drive away. Hang-gliding, horse-riding, and fossicking for 200-million-year old thunder eggs are other activities on offer. We had visited the spectacular elevated Skywalk previously so we opted instead to do a tour of the Glow Worm Caves at Cedar Creek Estate Vineyard. It's a man-made attraction and not as thrilling as the glow worms we saw at Lamington National Park, but it was informative and fun.

For some attractions, you don't even need to use your car. It's a pleasant walk from the cottages to Witches Falls' lovely cellar door where you can enjoy a relaxed lunch with a glass of wine. And directly across the road from the cottages is Tamborine National Park, the Witches Falls section of which is the third oldest national park in the world. On the first morning of our stay, we did a three kilometre walk in the park with a steep descent and uphill climb. It was a really good work-out and took all the energy we could muster in our blissfully relaxed state.

If you go:

Witches Falls Cottages
Cnr Main Western Road & Hartley Road (access from Hartley Rd)
Tamborine Mountain Qld 4272
Australia
Tel: +61 7 5545 4411
www.witchesfallscottages.com.au
www.ripplemassage.com.au
www.VisitTamborineMountain.com.au

Christine and Maurie were guests of Witches Falls Cottages. We stayed in cottage #5.

Tags

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