

# GOLD COAST GETAWAYS

SECRET SPOTS, ROAD TRIPS AND TRAVEL TIPS

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## Set your sites on a luxury upgrade

A rotating wood fire, steaming rain shower, free-standing bath and pillowtop king bed make for winter-proof 'camping' on the Sunshine Coast

HIDDEN in the rainforest-robbed hinterland, Starry Nights Glamping at West Woombie offers the cosiest of canvas experiences.

While its tents maintain camping's connection to the elements – with nearby Petrie Creek supplying a soothing sleep soundtrack – owners Shane and Nicole Nelson said they were guaranteed to keep guests toasty.

"The fireplace can be rotated to face any direction in the tent, whether you want a soak in your hot bath or snuggle in bed," Mr Nelson said. "Luxury bedding is provided, including organic linen sheets and natural woollen blankets and rugs."

"The tents are big, with more than 75sq m of floor space, and feature recycled barn floorboards and an elevated deck, hand-carved

stone basins, a well-stocked kitchenette and plush gowns."

The former veterinarian said opening Starry Nights Glamping in November was a lifestyle-led leap of faith.

"These tents really are a work of love, because Nicole and I, with a little help from our friends and family, have

built them from the ground up," he said.

"It was a big move giving up our secure jobs to risk everything we had worked so hard for. We had been camping for years, loving the outdoors and have always thought more people needed to experience this amazing creation.

"After years of dreaming, many camping trips, discussing our ideas, and generally working up the courage to take the plunge, we started on the journey, which took two years to build, plant and landscape Starry Nights.

"I put the skills I learnt in high school woodwork and

metalwork to use and built the tents myself, from cutting the huge steel beams to building the furniture inside each tent."

There is little left for guests to do but savour the serenity and slide into the slower pace of the eco-retreat about 10 minutes' drive from Montville.

"For many of our guests, it's a well-earned chance to sleep in, enjoy a long, lazy breakfast on the veranda with the paper, perhaps a couple of hours on the beach with a good book before heading back for an afternoon snooze and contemplating a dinner cooked for you from the wood-fired oven sitting under the stars," Mr Nelson said.

"(Guests could also) walk down to Petrie Creek, or along the track through our own little part of the hinterland's rainforest.

"In winter, a roaring fire in the guest lounge is the perfect place to relax after dinner watching the changing light of the bush with a nightcap, perhaps swapping a few travelling tales with other guests or enjoying a game of cards."

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