

WEEKEND AWAY  
ARTHURS SEAT

# The seat of relaxation

**Mary O'Brien** enjoys a rare unhurried, child-free weekend getaway close to home.

**'A** SPECIAL occasion?" Marg Schofield, one of the managers of George's B&B, delicately inquires. "No," I blurt out. But, on second thoughts, this is a special weekend away, our annual one night without the kids.

Though, as I quickly learn from Marg and husband Stan, they are used to couples arriving for a significant occasion. Recently they had three brides and three grooms staying in the three upstairs suites.

The night after our stay nine women are taking over George's for a hen party. They plan to cook their own meals in the fabulous chef's kitchen downstairs.

The views are stunning from the rooms; after all, George's is only a few houses away from Arthurs Seat lookout. Staying here, you can

enjoy the views of Port Phillip Bay and the city, shimmering in the distance, around the clock from your bed with a bit of neck-stretching, or more comfortably from the leather sofa, dining table and chairs or the generous balcony.

George's is an attractive architect-designed, purpose-built guesthouse that opened about a year ago. It still smells new. Regular cooking schools are held but we are just here for a relaxing night away.

The upstairs rooms focus on the view, with huge windows, soaring ceilings, generous space and high-class furnishings. And the bathroom is to die for. Big and beautiful, and lit from a skylight during the day, the slate tiles, designer sinks and double shower beckon enticingly. And the towels give new meaning to "fluffy".

Marg and Stan make staying at George's a

friendly experience. Stan shows us through the whole building and then thoroughly guides us through our room, with simplified directions for the digital slimline TV, DVD and air-conditioner – nothing worse than spending precious child-free time reading technical instructions.

There are only four rooms; three upstairs with views and one cheaper one downstairs with no lounge and kitchen. There's a great supply of DVDs including some classic movies for those who enjoy a dose of nostalgia.

After we settle in, we wander downstairs to the lounge, George's Cafe, where Marg offers us coffee and homemade cake. We sip our cafe lattes on the terrace, enjoying the fresh breeze whipping up from the bay.

We decide to go out for dinner. It's possible to pre-order an antipasto platter for two or a cheese-and-fruit platter if you feel like having a romantic night in. However, there are plenty of good places to eat within a 20-minute drive. Just make sure to book ahead if it's a holiday weekend. We head for Max's Restaurant at Redhill Estate, where we are impressed. The Pig & Whistle is a closer option or Ten Minutes by Tractor restaurant/winery also gets rave reviews.

We order breakfast for 9.30am and exactly on the dot Stan arrives carrying one of two rather large trays laden with food. There's a platter with a mix of fresh fruit, juices, an indulgent, thick spongy pancake for me while my partner opts for the healthier poached eggs and grilled veggies.

Checkout is at 11am and we spend the last hour relaxing on the balcony, drinking in the sparkling day, the mesmerising view and the crisp fresh air.



## VISITORS' BOOK

### George's Boutique B&B & Culinary Retreat

**Address:** 776 Arthurs Seat Road, Arthurs Seat.

**Bookings:** 5981 8700; georgesonarthurs.com.au; email info@georgesonarthurs.com.au.

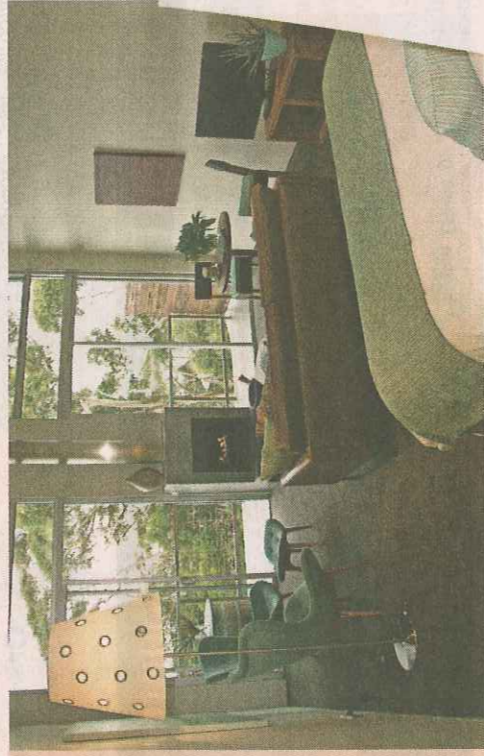
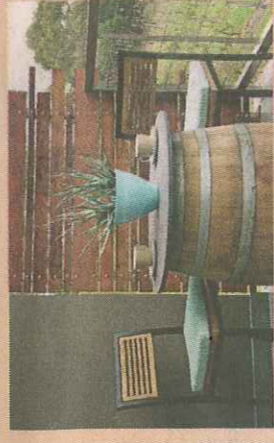
**How much:** Room plus breakfast \$375 a night (off peak \$275 midweek, \$335 Friday, Sunday).

**To sum up:** Tastefully luxurious, a fantastic view, all with a personal touch – perfect for a romantic getaway.

#### The Verdict: 17

The score: 19-20 excellent; 17-18 great; 15-16 good; 13-14 comfortable, well-run.

All weekends away are conducted anonymously and paid for.



Special occasion ... high-class furnishings at George's B&B.