

# ongoldenpond

Nature may provide the serenity but nurture adds sheer luxury to this lakeside haven near Noosa.

Words **Cathy Osmond**

**T**hey picked their way down the short trail, through the trees, grasses, ferns and banksia to our private patch of lakefront. The canoe lay waiting there, and two empty deckchairs stood sentry on an apron of sand. Into the canoe, one wobbly thrust and they were away, on a lake so still it seemed the ripples would roll all the way across to Noosa.

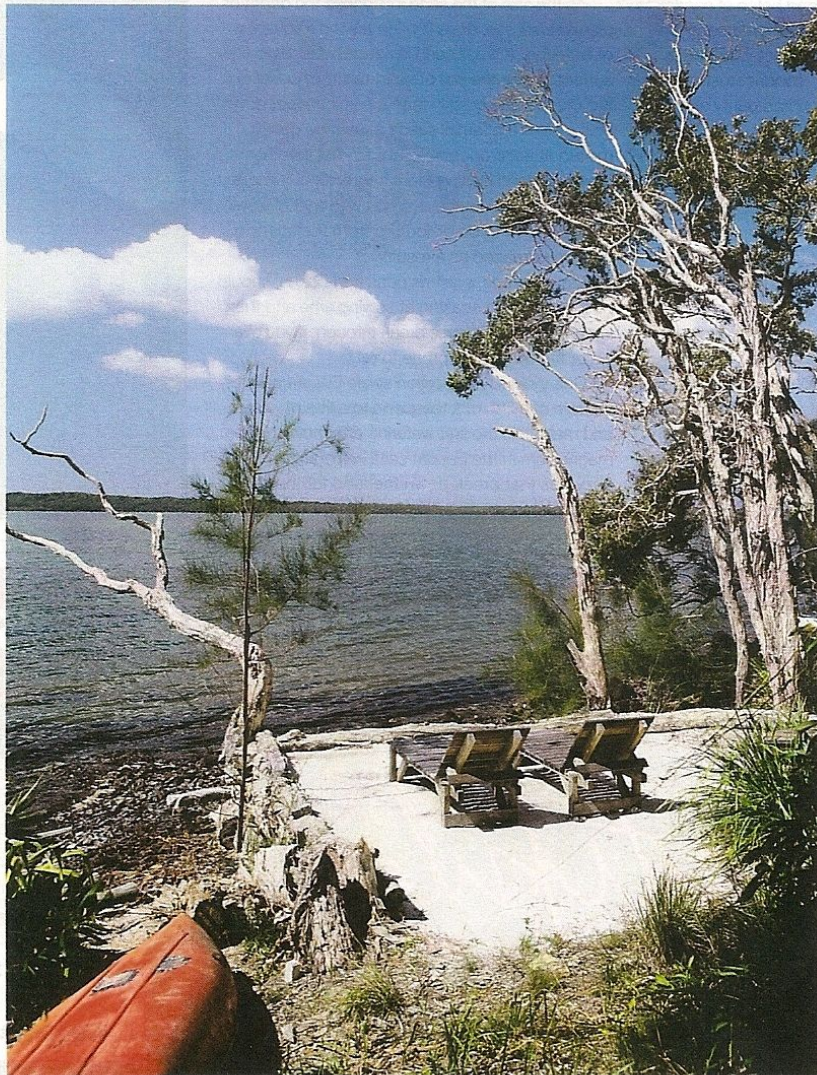
I watched as man and boy slid out of view to the north, up near the place where the saltwater estuary bottlenecked into Noosa River and nesting jabiru could be spotted. The rare waterbird is one of many species to find a haven in this slice of wilderness on Lake Weyba. And this weekend, glass in hand on the wide balcony of Cormorant cottage, I could see why this place was loved by creatures ranging from owls and sugar gliders to all manner of stressed-out suburbanites.

We'd wanted a low-key escape among the trees, but our booking at one of Eumarella Shores' seven "eco-cottages" initially had worried me a little. That kind of hyphenation can conjure thoughts of bucket showers, dirt dunny and bunk beds. All good fun, but we had rug-rats in tow. What would the creepy-crawlies make of the crawler? Would there be other rats on the rug? And would there be a coffee plunger?

As we'd arrived, turning off the Sunshine Motorway near Eumundi and driving towards the western shores of the lake, these thoughts had grown as thick as the wallum bush. But around the last bend of the dirt road to Eumarella Shores was a sign of things to come: a board with the names of the guests and their respective cottages. It was a thoughtful, welcoming touch, characteristic of the balance our hosts strike between eco-experience and five-star service.

Bill Tainsh and his wife Christine have lived on Lake Weyba for more than 30 years; his parents, Doug and Alice, bought the land in 1970, instilling in their heirs a passion for conservation. And such is their desire to tread lightly on their 20 hectares, the couple kept the promotion and development of Eumarella Shores, established in 1992, to a minimum until recent years.

Renovations and some new cottages have bumped up the comfort factor without leaving a heavy footprint on the rainforest. The two-bedroom cottages (with whimsical names like Gentle Jane, Tree Tops, Jabiru and Alice's Garden) run on resource-saving systems including wastewater recycling, but there's no roughing it inside. Ours, while compact (moving the coffee table gave the kids somewhere to play), was light-filled and beautifully appointed. With its wood-burning heater, well-stocked kitchen, comfortable sofas



and beds, luxurious linen and towels, plus gas barbecue and laundry pavilion outside adjoining a private walled courtyard, it was a place I'd happily have stayed a week. There were lots more five-star touches, such as two waffle-weave robes and, in the fridge, a tapas plate and bottle of wine, barbecue seafood hamper and brekkie hamper.

On our second morning, we considered our options. To enjoy the serenity from our deck, or to hit the walking tracks? Go fishing, or take to the canoe in search of the jabiru? We sipped our plunger coffee in silence. There was no hurry: like the protected species all around us, it seemed we had all the time in the world.

**THE PLACE** Eumarella Shores, 251 Eumarella Rd, Lake Weyba Downs, Noosa

**TEL** 5449 1738

**EMAIL** [stay@eumarellashores.com.au](mailto:stay@eumarellashores.com.au)

**WEBLINK** [www.eumarellashores.com.au](http://www.eumarellashores.com.au)

**THE DEAL** Rates for 2 adults. Bed & breakfast packages (include 2 breakfast hampers, wine and tapas on arrival): weekly from \$1250; two-night weekend from \$560; midweek night from \$220. Accommodation only: weekly from \$1100; two-night weekend from \$495; midweek night from \$180. Extra adult \$40 per night; child \$20 per night. See website for more specials. No pets. Save 10 per cent when booking online.

## MUSTDO.

**EXPLORE** the Noosa region's extensive bike trails. All sorts of steeds available from Noosa Bike Hire and Tours (ph 5474 3322; [www.bikeon.com.au](http://www.bikeon.com.au)). **CHECK** out some of the nearby culinary attractions, from Eumundi Markets (Wednesdays 8am-1.30pm & Saturdays 6.30am-2pm) to Noosa's top restaurants.

Eumarella Shores can organise a babysitter. Or stay put for a gourmet hamper by arrangement and order some all-natural takeaway from Tewanin's unique baby & toddler meal delivery service: ask when booking or go to [yumminmytummy.com.au](http://yumminmytummy.com.au).

**LAUNCH** a canoe. Go fishing. Watch the birds. Or just go for a walk, starting at your front door. There are trails around the property and guided tours available.