

Byron's

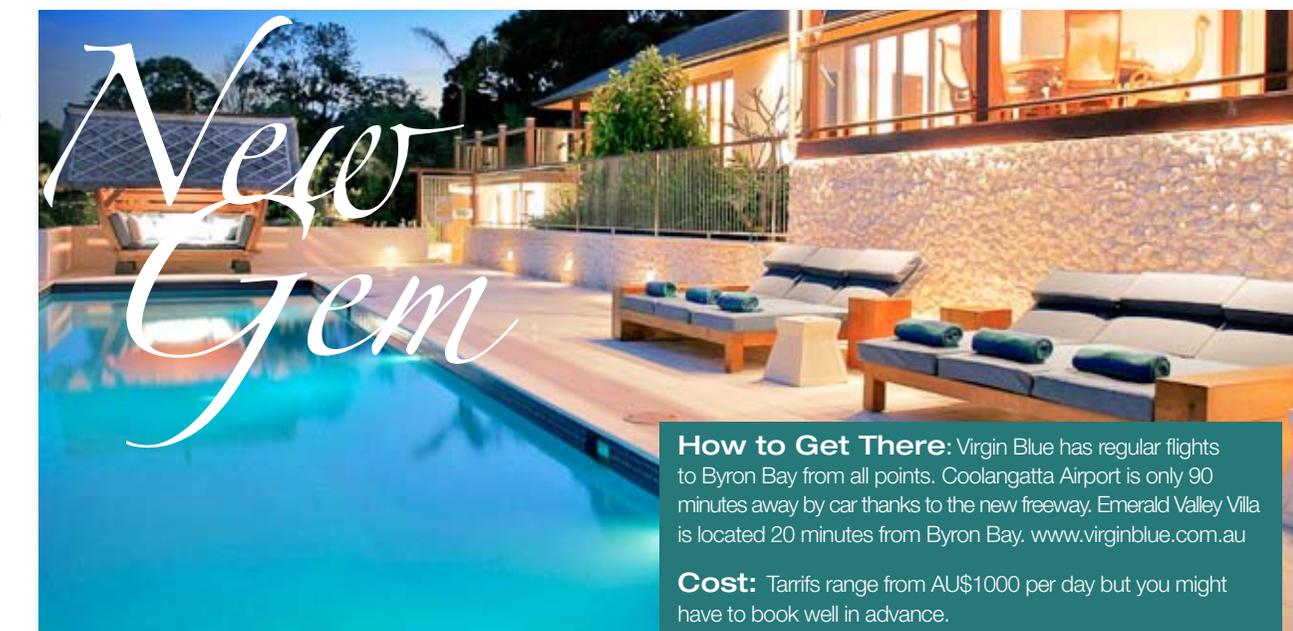
Anyone who has been up to Byron Bay lately will have noticed the distinct turn the tiny, often-sleepy seaside town is making. Yes, the beach is still there, that laid back ambience still present, but it has become the epicenter of a new luxurious craving for retreats wreathed in native bush and solitude. Enter the Emerald Valley Villa.

By Nicholas Bayley

The Emerald Valley Villa is the latest luxury offering to emerge from the hinterlands of Byron Bay. This former hippy community is now steadily being populated with premium housing and resort getaways, perfect for couples and small groups looking to escape the rat race. Set on 80 acres, Emerald Valley is pure pampering for those looking for escapism with all the luxurious and yet eco-friendly trimmings.

"Emerald Valley Villa is an exemplary model of sustainable living without compromising luxury or technology," says Emerald Valley Villa creator Michael Robinson. "All the building structures and grounds have been designed for minimum impact on the surrounding environment; the Villa is climate neutral and runs on 100% green power. Emerald Valley Villa was developed as a landmark demonstration of how design, technology and ecology can combine to create luxurious living without causing harm to the earth."

And you don't have to be in complete seclusion either; Emerald Valley Villa caters to up to eight people in a completely private and secure environment with a distinctive Asian feel. Architectural and



design elements gracing the property pay homage to Bali's unique arts and traditions whilst embracing modern design aesthetics. Recycled hardwoods, imported stone and marble is featured throughout the villa, right down to the hand-cut stone framing the garden flower-beds.

Delve inside and you will find a master suite and three expansive bedrooms, all with adjacent marble bathrooms opening on to private, tropical gardens, perfect for an early morning coffee. Once your day has started, why not have a dip in the pure oxygenated spring water pool, get in some reading on one of the addictive pool-side lounges or for something a little more relaxing, how about a frolic in the property's waterfall and lake and then take a cat nap in one of the unique 200-year-old teak rice barns, one overlooking the pool, the other overlooking the lake. Or why not try out the custom-made lakeside River Pavilion from where you might spy the property's resident platypus? As the sun sets, cocktails by the pool can't be beat and after dinner, how about an open air Jacuzzi under the stars?

How to Get There: Virgin Blue has regular flights to Byron Bay from all points. Coolangatta Airport is only 90 minutes away by car thanks to the new freeway. Emerald Valley Villa is located 20 minutes from Byron Bay. www.virginblue.com.au

Cost: Tariffs range from AU\$1000 per day but you might have to book well in advance.

Contact: Emerald Valley Villa - Ph: (02) 66 849 398
Email: concierge@emeraldvalleyvilla.com www.emeraldvalleyvilla.com

Local Golf: Head to the Byron Bay Golf Course, which hosted the Australian PGA seniors last year. Green Fees from \$30.

Of course, this is a golfing magazine and golfers can rarely sit still long. Fortunately, an onsite concierge service is available to all guests. They can organize spa therapies, including a private marble steam room, gourmet catering in the villas state-of-the-art kitchen, housekeeping services, and of course, tee-off times. In addition, all modern technologies are onsite including broadband internet, satellite television and telephone facilities. Transport options for guests include a current model Range Rover for rental, or perhaps you'd prefer to stay on the grounds using the fun 4 x 4 Polaris-Ranger for easy access to all areas of the property.

Whatever you do, there is nothing quite like the luxurious seclusion that you can share with a loved one or with your friends, that you'll find at the new Emerald Valley Villa.

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