



THE WRITER WAS A GUEST OF THE OPERATOR



THE WRITER WAS A GUEST OF THE OPERATOR



and yonder an Albert Namatjira. Look, a Ray Crooke, hung almost like an afterthought. There are big old chests, leather-topped tables, hand-made mud bricks, sandstone quarried from the coastal surrounds and salvaged timber beams from a railway bridge.

A total of eight guests can be accommodated in two pavilions, one two-storey suite and another above the lodge; each is named for its view and position. I'm in octagonal Treetops, the only option without a private pool but with the bonus of escarpment views filtered through ancient angophoras, a sexy copper tub in the bathroom and eco fire on the deck. All accommodation comes with rain-showers, huge beds with massage and tilt controls, and a record player and stash of LPs. I choose a Bombay chai from a cabinet of Tea Forte and spin Neil Diamond to compete with the morning chorus of kookaburras.

Classic style:
Pretty Beach House

Designer details? The look is earthed and organic, softened with artfully placed lamb's wool shawls and scented with bespoke candles. Circular light fixtures by Christopher Boots hover like the rings of Saturn, the talcum-soft bed linen is from Bassetti. I want to take home the La Paloma Pottery plates and dishes, and those stylish black espadrilles in my wardrobe. I hatch a plan to kidnap manager Geoffrey Veivers, who looks after guests, minnows and major players alike, as if all are VIPs. Maybe I'd like my breakfast boiled eggs peeled and served in nursery-like china cups shaped like chooks. Yes, I would, actually.

Pretty Beach blurs its bosky boundaries with Bouddi National Park, a connection that's celebrated with a welcome-to-country smoking ceremony. On the boulders opposite

the porte-cochère there are chiselled images, believed to be more than 2000 years old, of fish and a bottlenose dolphin. And I highly recommend a Bouddi walk with an indigenous ranger who'll point out significant cultural sites and heritage trees. You will doubtless encounter bush turkeys which, it has to be said, are hardly as pretty as a picture.

Perfect for: Privacy-seeking couples. Available as a house-party single booking; recent guests have included Bill Gates and family.

Must do: Stroll from Pretty Beach along the foreshore path to Hardys Bay. Visit the Bouddi Gallery, which specialises in contemporary indigenous art. Take a mountain bike or picnic on beachcomber walks. Book the spa beneath Pretty Beach House for therapies using indigenous brand Li'tya.

Dining: Pretty Beach House's five-course degustation dinner includes paired wines and parish produce. At breakfast, honey and jams are from farm-gate stalls and pastries are house-made. The tariff is inclusive of all meals and alcohol, and no one blinks an eye if you help yourself to another slice of the cake of the day. There's the option of dining at the chef's table at the kitchen pass or a morning cooking class. Guests can also elect to have a meal at the nearby sister property, Bells at Killcare.

Getting there: A 90-minute drive from Sydney; seaplane and helicopter arrivals available.

Bottom line: A winter deal offers three nights for the cost of two. From \$4000 a couple for two nights.

prettybeachhouse.com