

EMIRATES ONE&ONLY WOLGAN VALLEY

Business with purpose

Integrating Best-practice Environmental Initiatives with an Ultra-luxury Tourism Offering.

Nestled in a private valley between two national parks in the iconic World Heritage-listed Greater Blue Mountains region, west of Sydney, Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley is an ultra-luxury conservation resort. The resort occupies just one percent of a 7,000-acre wilderness reserve, and is a world-leading example of carbon-neutral conservation and sustainable tourism operation.

In 2019, Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley celebrated its tenth consecutive year of carbon neutral certification. It was the first resort in the world to achieve internationally accredited carbon neutral status when it opened in 2009 and remains the only resort in Australia with this standard of accreditation. It is also the only Australian resort in recent history granted permission to build in close proximity to a World Heritage Area and was built according to a philosophy of complete integration with its environment.

In 2018 and again in 2019, Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley was recognised as a Bronze Partner of the NSW Government's Sustainability Advantage Program in acknowledgement of the resort's environmental achievements and commitment to business sustainability. In 2020, the resort's status was upgraded to Silver. The resort was also awarded Bronze Member status with EarthCheck in 2019, the world's leading scientific benchmarking, certification and advisory group for travel and tourism. The resort was also awarded Virtuoso's Sustainable Tourism Leadership Award in 2019.

This recognition has been achieved through a combination of long-term initiatives, including energy management; large-scale environmental rehabilitation; protection of existing vegetation; and operational practices which have created a surplus of carbon credits annually.



Sustainable Design

Occupying just 1% of its own 7,000-acre conservancy, the elegant lines of the Australian Federation-style resort belie the state-of-the-art technology that went into its design. Green building principles guided the resort's design, including using locally-sourced, natural and recycled materials (incorporating recycled building materials already on the site); maximising renewable energy and heat recovery and minimising energy usage. Efficient room orientation and traditionally wide verandahs increase airflow and reduce heating and cooling requirements.

Water Conservation

One hundred percent of the water used at Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley is captured on-site from a combination of rainwater collection and extracted the pristine Carne Creek, which runs through the valley. The resort was constructed using the best engineering practices to minimise water consumption; each villa has its own rainwater tank and all water used at the resort is recycled and used to irrigate gardens and horse paddocks.

Restoring the Land

As former grazing property, the landscape was subject to significant clearing of native vegetation and erosion of the waterways which run through the property. One of the main objectives of Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley's conservation work is to protect native wildlife by restoring their natural habitat with a focus on the revegetation of wildlife corridors and stream bank areas. To further support this objective, the resort works constantly to control invasive plants, introduced pests and feral predators, and to improve the aquatic habitat of the ponds, dams and waterways on the property.

Over 200,000 native plants have been established across the property since opening, using seeds collected onsite by both guests and colleagues, which are then propagated at a local nursery. Planting projects to date have focused on the streamside revegetation of Carne Creek and Wolgan River and restoration of important wildlife corridors across the reserve.

Several areas now represent significant fragments of Grassy Box Gum Woodland as well as Chain of Ponds wetland, enabling the establishment of wildlife corridors. This has resulted in an increase in native birds (under 100 in 2007 to over 150 in 2017) and the return of threatened species including Powerful Owl, Diamond Firetail Finch, Brown Treecreeper, Gang-Gang Cockatoo, Glossy Black Cockatoo and Dusky Woodswallow.

The resort's seed bank of over one million native species seeds, collected by guests since opening in 2009, will be vital in the reforestation program following the bush fires in December 2019.

In 2015, the Australian government recognised this with the Banksia Award, the highest accolade presented to environmentally sustainable businesses.



Conservation and Environmental Education

Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley's long-term vision is the protection of regional biodiversity and the restoration of habitat, and the resort's extensive environmental work helps to secure a more stable future for the region's native wildlife. This includes numerous species that are listed as vulnerable or endangered such as the Powerful owl, Greater glider, Yellow bellied glider, Glossy black cockatoo, Regent honeyeater, Platypus, Koala, Brush tailed rock wallaby and Spotted tail quoll.

Guests are encouraged to become involved in the resort's initiatives through the scheduled Conservation Experience, this activity enables guests to make a 'hands on' contribution to the restoration and protection of the reserve by working alongside the resort's Field Guides in diverse projects, including seed collection, habitat reconstruction, landcare, animal surveys, habitat mapping, water testing and tree planting. These themes are reinforced through an innovative children's program, Wolgan Rangers, which aims to inspire a love of nature and lifelong commitment to sustainability in the resort's younger guests.

Sustainable Food

At Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley, guests eat and drink regionally and sustainably. Under the guidance of the resort's Executive Chef, the resort works closely with local artisan producers, sourcing seasonal and, where possible, organic produce, and showcasing regional food heroes from cheese-makers to vintners, orchardists to trout fishermen. Menus are designed to educate guests on the provenance of the food they are consuming, and guests are also invited to discover the resort's on-site market garden.





Other Sustainability Actions (Our Mandatories):

- The Management and Reduction Plan (part of CEMARS and annual carbonZero certification program) incorporates formal controls and monitoring of emissions measurements and emissions-intensity performance indicators (tCO₂e per villa night and tCO₂e per guest night). EOOWV reduced annual carbon emissions by 320.37 tCO₂e between 2010 and 2016 the equivalent of 62 return flights from Sydney to London per year.
- Thirty-five per cent of power is extracted from renewable energy (the maximum amount available). Buildings are equipped with energy-efficient bulbs, compact fluorescent and LED globes with sensors and timers. EOOWV has over 100 solar panels to power hot water systems and illuminate pathways. Since opening, EOOWV has achieved a 48 per cent reduction in electricity consumption.
- Electric buggies are used for guest transportation around the resort area, while environmentally-friendly Tesla S and X Hybrid vehicles are offered for airport transfers. The resort also has two hybrid charging stations and two Tesla charging stations available for guest to recharge hybrid and full electric vehicles whilst staying at the resort.
- EOOWV has installed filtered water refill stations and each guest is given a multi-use bottle upon arrival and encouraged to refill throughout their stay. Reduction in plastic bottle waste has been immediate.
- A long-term goal of Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley is to minimise the waste sent to landfills and maximise recycling, and this aim guides the resort team's actions and initiatives, from waste sorting to reviews of all packaging and implementation of bulk purchasing. The resort is now participating in a bin-trim program which will see food waste converted into water, and the team are committed to continuing to find innovative solutions to further reduce single-use plastics on the resort.
- EOOWV financially supports the development and ongoing execution of WomSAT, a citizen-science driven program recording, tracking and monitoring wombat sightings. Research is done in collaboration with the University of Western Sydney to prevent the impact and spread of Sarcoptic Mange on native wombats, helping researchers to identify opportunities and challenges for wombat preservation.
- EOOWV restored and maintains a historic colonial homestead relic, dating back to 1832. The restoration was undertaken in accordance with UNESCO Burra Charter guidelines and received an Award of Recognition from Heritage Australia. The homestead - now named '1832' - is of historical significance and serves as a reference to Australia's early pastoral industry. Tours of this heritage precinct are facilitated daily, allowing guests to learn about this history.