

SAFFIRE FREYCINET

Business with purpose

Conserving and connecting with Tasmania's unique environment

Saffire Freycinet was designed and built on a framework of sustainability principles that underpin every aspect of the lodge's architecture, daily operations, supply chain and guest experience. From the beginning, the Saffire development sought to "protect healthy sites and heal damaged sites".

Previously a caravan park and backpacker accommodation, the land where Saffire now sits had become degraded and eroded. Today, the lodge occupies just a small portion of the original cleared area and the remainder has undergone intensive rehabilitation and revegetation with more than 30,000 native plants.

"The design aimed to restore the landscape and native ecosystems to their former natural state, as it was before European settlement. "The lodge is now hidden among the trees and the bush has recovered, and with it, the biodiversity of flora and fauna we see," said Patrick Barrie, Saffire's General Manager.

Many local designers, artisans and suppliers were employed in the construction. Designed by award-winning Tasmanian architect Robert Morris Nunn and associates Circa Architecture, the buildings are conceptually organic, reflecting the surrounding environment. Features such as double glazing and natural cycle airflow systems and LED lighting minimised the lodge's environmental impact from the outset.

Priority was given to consideration of how best to implement bushfire management, collection and conservation of rainwater, minimal use of night lighting of landscaped areas, construction management and long-term maintenance of the site.

"The architecture and landscaping form our guests' first impression of Saffire, and immediately connect them to the magnificent surroundings of the Freycinet National Park and Wineglass Bay. That initial connection is a segue into a deeper experience of the raw beauty and character of Tasmania that we hope will inspire guests to share our ethos of 'think globally, act locally'," said Patrick Barrie.



Deep and diverse connection to place

Guests are encouraged to gain a deeper understanding of Saffire's 'eat local' philosophy and supply chain during their stay. Opportunities include donning a full-body apiarist suit to see, up-close, how Saffire's home-grown honey is produced, or stepping into a pair of waders on a local oyster farm to taste prized Pacific oysters while learning about wetland and marine ecology.

Saffire has partnered with First Nations guide, Mick Quilliam who leads coastal walks that reveal the history of the Traditional Owners of Oyster Bay and the complexity and richness of the local flora and fauna. Guests can sample bush tucker, learn about foraging tools and gain their own appreciation of connecting to the land and sea through the eyes of the Palawa people.

The theme of 'connection to place' also manifests in Saffire's menu. Saffire sources produce from local east coast providers and growers such as the Fisher family at Freycinet Marine Farm and Claudio Radenti at Freycinet Vineyard, both of whom have earned national acclaim. Plus, sourcing produce from sustainable farms Tongola Cheese and Long Name Farm where staff from Saffire Freycinet also visit as part of their training and education. These and many more suppliers are key to Saffire's goals of culinary excellence and sourcing more than 85 per cent of its produce from Tasmanian producers.

Helping save the Tasmanian devil

One of Saffire's most significant sustainability initiatives is the establishment of an onsite, one-hectare, free-range enclosure that provides sanctuary – and a 'luxury retirement home' – for endangered Tasmanian devils.

Tasmanian Devils are the world's largest marsupial carnivore and are found only in Tasmania. They are now on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of endangered species due to a rare form of contagious cancer (Devil Facial Tumour Disease) that has decimated the population and resulted in devil sightings dropping by 95 per cent in the north-east of Tasmania, where Saffire is located.

The enclosure accommodates mature devils that have been 'retired' from the Tasmanian Government's captive breeding program. It provides the animals with a safe environment and frees up space for more breeding devils within government facilities.

Saffire, together with guests, has raised more than \$175,000 for Tasmanian devil research. It is a major sponsor of Wildcare's Devil Fund, which provides funding support for the Menzies Institute of Medical Research in Hobart, which has been researching a

solution since devils faced extinction in 2014. The Institute had a major breakthrough in 2022, when it created a vaccine that successfully treats the deadly disease.

The funding has also helped maintain a captive breeding program in Hobart; the reintroduction of more than 100 healthy devils into the wild; field research and sampling; and the publication of immunology research internationally.

The Saffire devil enclosure also provides Saffire guests with the rare opportunity to see Tasmanian devils in a natural setting, with guided tours and daily feeding. Guests are invited to 'adopt a devil', and to receive quarterly updates on the devil's health, as well as news of the advances in research that will ensure their ongoing survival.

"We aim to inspire guests by drawing them into an intimate exchange with the essence of Tasmania; by providing a unique and authentic perspective of raw beauty and character and an immersive connection to the magnificent surrounding environment. We are proudly Tasmanian" said Patrick Barrie.

Other sustainability initiatives (Our mandates):

- Saffire has eliminated almost all single-use plastic and aims to be single-use-plastic-free by 2024.
- Guest amenities, including all bathroom products, are housed in refillable containers. This saves an estimated 586 litres of wasted product per year, and up to seven single-use plastic bottles per room, per stay, equating to up to 51,000 bottles per year.
- Staff collect soap remains for reconstitution by not-for-profit organisation Soap Aid, which sends soap to overseas communities facing major hygiene challenges preventing more than 200 million tonnes being discarded in landfill.
- Plastic bottles have been replaced with reusable bottles for guest excursions and on turn-down in rooms, saving 21,000 single-use plastic bottles per year.
- Recycling and environmentally friendly product programs are in place, including using plant-based and biodegradable cleaning products and coffee cups. Compostable coffee pods are used in suites, saving 5,000 going to landfill each year, while printer cartridges are recycled locally for building roads. Kitchen waste is recycled as compost and used in the onsite vegetable garden.
- The majority of Tasmanian businesses are powered by hydro and Saffire, too, is entirely powered by renewable energy from hydro.
- Saffire Freycinet has committed \$12,500 per year for two years to Wildcare Tasmania's Rehab and Release Fund. Volunteer wildlife carers from around the state can apply to receive a grant from the fund to help them care for and release wildlife safety back into their natural habitat.
- Guests can purchase a 'Saffy' toy with the proceeds going directly towards Wildcare Tasmania's Nature and World Heritage fund. The purchase also supports Tas Textiles, the Tasmanian knitting mill where the Saffy toy is made, providing employment opportunities for people living with intellectual, cognitive and developmental disabilities.