

Weekender

An exercise in pleasure and pain

David Sygall sets his sights high on the South Coast and comes away feeling most satisfied.

On Pigeon House Mountain no one can hear you scream. Or moan as your calf muscles seize up from the two-hour slog to the top. No, there's no one around to share your pain. The only sounds you hear at the summit of Pigeon House Mountain – so named by Captain Cook because of its resemblance to “a square dovehouse with a dome on top” – are fresh high-altitude winds and the flutter of squillions of birds filtering up from the forest below.

Not that this eerie picture should discourage either the avid climber or weekend walker. The 20-minute drive from our digs at Bushview Cottage, near Milton on the South Coast, is itself a treat – winding through dairy country before hitting a dirt track that takes you to the start of the climb.

The trek is challenging. But after negotiating a series of steel ladders and stairways that comprise the final stage, there's a genuine sense of achievement when you look from the mountains to the west across to Nowra, Jervis Bay and the beautiful coastline in the distance.

We couldn't have done the Pigeon House walk if our Bushview Cottage hosts, Roy and Judy, hadn't lent us their four-wheel-drive. Beyond the call of good bed and breakfast hosts, they were happy to lend us their spare wheels.

Roy and Judy opened Bushview Cottage just four months ago after moving from Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, where they had owned another B&B.

Bushview is renovated tastefully, with understated style that blends with the surrounding land. From the outside, the cottage looks ordinary. Inside, it's a big, warm space, with adjustable halogen lighting, local wattle and banksia flowers commanding a vase and historic photographs of nearby Milton hanging from the walls.

There's air-conditioning and heating, a lovely outdoor undercover setting surrounded by a sweetly landscaped garden and a mesmerising outdoor fireplace. It was a pleasure to cook the provided breakfast in the fully equipped kitchen one morning and on the barbecue the next, while birds enjoyed their own morning meals in



Top feeling ... (clockwise from top) mountain views; the cottage is a big, warm space; local birdlife; Bushview Cottage blends in.

the gardens around us. Each afternoon, after a glass of wine and relaxing outdoor spa (particularly handy after our Pigeon House effort), we watched the supplied DVDs and played board games before falling asleep in the cushiest of beds.

The cottage is spotlessly clean and you feel as though you're the first person to stay there. Bushview

Cottage is said to be rated at four stars but Roy wants to make up the few points to reach 4½. You sense he'll get his way.

He's a host with a wicked sense of humour and told us the cottage is the perfect place to come when one feels the onset of a nervous breakdown. Certainly, hiding away here for a night or five can be restorative.

But it's worth getting out because the area is vibrant. Milton township, established in 1860, is now listed with the National Trust and features quaint old buildings restored to century-old glory. We stopped in at the celebrated Rainbow Pie Shop and the lolly shop next door, of which Willy Wonka would be proud.

The previous night we'd gone to

TRIP NOTES

ADDRESS 16 Tallow Wood Road, Milton, NSW, 2538.

BOOKINGS Phone 02 4455 7060, see bushview.com.au.

RATES From \$130 a night for two, with breakfast provisions on the first morning, for a minimum two-night stay in July and August. Otherwise from \$165 a night Sunday to Friday and from \$190 a night Saturdays and public holidays.

VERDICT

Cute getaway with plenty of nearby attractions.

WHY YOU'D GO To sit in the outdoor spa, watching shooting stars and listening to the wild sounds of birds and frogs.

WHY YOU WOULDN'T

You want sweeping sea views from your pad.

FIND TIME TO

- Do the one-hour round-trip walk to Burrill Lake.
- Try some serious fishing.
- Visit the Milton Street market (first Saturday of every month).
- Visit nearby wineries.

nearby Ulladulla and enjoyed a top-class meal at the oldest building in town, Millard's Cottage, built in 1868.

Milton is tiny but the shops are magical, with an array of locally made handicrafts, oils, ointments, candles, jewellery, clothes, antiques and artwork. For the golf tragics, I'm told nearby Mollmook has one of the best courses in Australia.

There's no doubt Mollmook beach is also right up there, though I opted to enjoy the waves from a window seat at the Mollmook Golf Club, beer in hand. After conquering Pigeon House Mountain earlier that day, there wasn't much else I was up for.

The writer was a guest of Bushview Cottage and Tourism NSW.

Egypt

PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- Return economy airfares ex Sydney
- Domestic flights within Egypt (Cairo/Luxor/Aswan/Cairo)
- 4 nights Nile cruise full board basis (B/L/D) and all sightseeing in Upper Egypt (e.g. Valley of the Kings and much more)
- 6 nights accommodation in Cairo with buffet breakfast daily (visits to the pyramids/museums/Suez Canal/Cairo bazaar and much more)
- 2 nights Alexandria (sightseeing to the new Library and excursion to El Alamein)

united
LIC No. 2TA5707
holidays pty ltd

TOURS DEPART FEBRUARY 8 & MARCH 8 2010

460A PRINCES HWY ROCKDALE
PHONE Now 9556 2665
Country callers TOLL FREE 1800 610 710

THIS OFFER SUPERCEDES ALL PREVIOUS OFFERS

SPECIAL OFFER
FEB & MARCH 2010 ONLY!
BOOKING DEADLINE EXTENDED TIL AUG 8

12 NIGHTS/14 DAYS
FULLY ESCORTED TOURS!

3 STAR PACKAGE- WAS \$3750
\$3200
PP

5 STAR PACKAGE- WAS \$4550
\$3950
PP

YES - PRICES DO INCLUDE AIRFARES!

PRICES PLUS FUEL/DEPARTURE TAX \$495 PP
YES - WE HAVE ADD-ONS TO THE HOLY LAND, JORDAN/PETRA OR DUBAI.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.unitedholidays.com.au Prices quoted twin share per person.



UWT0616A