

GOURMET GETAWAY

Gourmet Getaway Victoria's at Ewingsdale, Byron Bay

While Byron Bay has long been on the radar as a destination for sun, surf and sand, it's fast becoming one of Australia's hottest foodie destinations. With local growers yielding world-class produce including pork, macadamia nuts and coffee, Byron Bay is serving up some of the finest fare in the nation. New restaurants and cafés are popping up all the time, meaning there is certainly no shortage of good food in the area – the only difficulty you will have is deciding where to eat in the limited time you have in Byron Bay.

We recently took advantage of the warm days and crisp nights to escape to Victoria's at Ewingsdale, located in the lush hinterland six kilometres outside of Byron Bay. Situated on four acres of vibrant green, perfectly manicured gardens, this magnificent country estate would not look out of place amongst the finest establishments in Provence or Tuscany. Making our way up the tree lined drive, we were immediately taken by the natural beauty of Victoria's at Ewingsdale. The view is truly spectacular and the property is immaculately maintained. We were greeted by owner and proprietor, Victoria McEwen, who was most welcoming, and in our opinion, the most delightful host we have ever come across. Victoria set the tone for what was to be an absolutely heavenly stay, showing us around the property and inviting us to make the most of the fabulous facilities including the communal living area equipped with a grand wood-burning fireplace.

We were fortunate enough to be staying in the best room in the house – the Executive Ocean View

Spa Suite – which was fit for a king. The extremely spacious suite boasts its own fireplace, sofa bed, TV & DVD player, spa bath, refrigerator, tea & coffee making facilities and a gorgeous balcony with superb views of Julian Rocks and Byron Bay lighthouse. The only downfall to this was that we didn't want to leave the room at all! We did, however, manage to drag ourselves down to Byron Beach Café for some lunch.

Set right on the sands of Clarkes Beach, the revamped kiosk is now a modern café offering casual, contemporary Australian cuisine with some of the best views in Byron Bay. We began our meal with a mojito each, which we agreed was one of the best we'd ever had, before ordering a range of dishes from the sharing menu. The first to arrive was the Chunky Avocado Guacamole with Grilled Tortillas. As described, the guacamole was full of creamy, buttery chunks of avocado and served with lightly spiced grilled tortillas – a welcome departure from the tired old corn chip. Next up was a Tuna Carpaccio drizzled with Parsley, Green Chilli & Lemon Emulsion. The tuna was of great quality and practically melted in our mouths and was dressed ever so lightly in the emulsion, so as to allow the fresh taste of the tuna to shine through. Over the next hour, we grazed our way through Salt & Szechuan Pepper Calamari on Vietnamese Pickled Carrot Salad, Truss Tomato, Torn Basil & Bocconcini Salad and Grilled Haloumi with Ruby Red Grapefruit Salsa before indulging in a dessert of Chocolate & Hazelnut Pudding with Coffee Anglaise & Mascarpone.

With bellies so full we could barely walk back to the car, we knew we would not be wanting a proper meal for dinner that night, so we headed down to Green Garage, a funky fresh food market on the outskirts of town. With a special focus on local and organic produce, Green Garage offers a plethora of fresh fruit and vegetables, deli items, readymade meals, snacks, cakes and more. We stocked up on range of goodies to make an anti-pasto platter, and that night as we watched the sun go down from our balcony at Victoria's, enjoyed the area's finest delicacies along with a glass of bubbly.

After a blissful night of reading some good books by the roaring fire, we awoke to a spectacular sunrise and enjoyed a cup of tea on the balcony before making our way down to the breakfast nook. The spread that Victoria had laid out was nothing short of brilliant, with everything from fresh fruit and muesli to pastries, cheeses and juices waiting for us. As if this wasn't enough, Victoria also whipped up some delicate cheese & herb soufflés for us, which we washed down with a glass of champagne beautifully adorned with a fragrant rosella flower. We really just can't sing Victoria's praises enough and think that there a lot of other establishments out there that could learn a thing or two from Victoria!

To experience Victoria's at Ewingsdale for yourself (and we strongly recommend you do!), visit www.victorias.net.au or phone (02) 6684 7047.

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BEST OF BYRON BAY

BEST BREAKFAST

Victoria's at Ewingsdale
(available to in-house guests only)
Top of McGettigans Lane,
Byron Bay, NSW, 2481.
(02) 6684 7047

BEST LUNCH

Byron Beach Café
Clarks Beach, Lawson Street,
Byron Bay, NSW, 2481.
(02) 6685 8400

→ Ask for a
table outside
on the balcony

BEST DINNER

Rae's on Watego's
Wategos Beach, Byron Bay
NSW, 2481.
(02) 6685 5366

BEST WATERING HOLE

Beach Hotel
Bay Street, Byron Bay, NSW, 2481.
(02) 6685 6402

BEST SWEET TREAT

Byron Bay Organic Donuts → YUMMY!
Pier Arcade, Lawson Street,
Byron Bay, NSW, 2481.
(02) 6680 5200

