

Soothe the soul and drift away

A Port Fairy hideaway hotel has charms to beguile and revitalise, as MEAGAN ROOTH discovers



Drift House's award-winning designer suites feature Swiss sound systems, bespoke fittings, Jordan furniture, luxurious island baths and super-comfy kingsize beds.



IN a charming historical seaside village a short drive away there is an architectural masterpiece moonlighting as luxurious boutique accommodation.

Imagine a sumptuous private suite where the natural light floods through the sky-high windows to illuminate the bespoke furniture and fittings.

Picture a contemporary space where a stand-alone bath equipped with a scented candle, salts and Grown Alchemy products sits in the centre of the studio floor plan.

Behind a recycled timber partition is a generous kingsize bed fitted with designer Cultiver linen, and sensual classical music is playing from a Swiss sound system on the bedside table on arrival.

Visualise sinking into a Jordan lounge and turning the pages of a book from the shelf or the coffee table collection.

Think about the freedom of setting aside your car keys knowing the beach, wharf, river and quaint shopping strip are in easy walking distance.

This place exists in Port Fairy, a gentle two-and-a-half-hour drive west of Geelong.

Drift House, which opened late in 2013, is an award-winning designer's dream, built with modern and reappropriated materials for a faultless result.

Like the boutique accommodation, Port Fairy is also a blend of old and new.

The charm of the fishing port and heritage streetscape meets a trendy foodie and music

scene, all nestled behind the dunes of the expansive East Beach.

It is the perfect distance from Geelong for a quick getaway or weekend refresher. It is far enough away to feel like you've ventured well beyond your homely boundaries but close enough to drive comfortably in one hit. Embracing the weekend warrior spirit, however, my partner and I stretched our legs in Camperdown and Warrnambool before arriving at Drift House.

We could have easily spent our time in the suite admiring the clever details, feasting on the signature gourmet maxi-bar, toasting marshmallows on the fire in the private courtyard or swimming in the solar-heated pool.

But, with straight-forward directions from co-owner Colleen Guiney, who is responsible for the abstract artwork in the suites, we put on our walking shoes and warm jackets and wander past the botanical gardens to the beach. We amble along the windswept shoreline, feeling revitalised by the crisp salty air, and turn back along the river.

For dinner we head to Coffin Sally, a highly recommended hidden pizza place you have to walk through several doors to find. Colleen likens it to a slice of Brunswick at the end of the Shipwreck Coast. We indulge in wine and pizza and enjoy the atmosphere of the cosy gem before following the Norfolk Pines back to our temporary retreat.

A relaxing soak in the bath by candlelight