



Rejuvenation

Health fanatics and urban weary executives are well catered for on the east



Australian style

coast of Australia with the development of two wellness specific properties.

by Rachael Oakes-Ash



Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat sits in the Gold Coast Hinterland perched high on a hill overlooking the Queensland coastline. Don't be deterred by the large security gate to the property, it's more to keep onlookers out than guests in.

Days start early with a knock on the door to rise and shine from one's seriously comfortable

bed made for deep slumber. Everything serves a health purpose at Gwinganna whether it's the organic shampoo in the ensuite or the sweeping deck with soothing orchard views outside the suite.

Early morning is spent greeting the day with Tai Chi as the sun rises over the ocean horizon followed by a trek through the property's ancient rainforest and bushland. Thigh burners go up up up hill, meanderers take the bush walk with

John, the resident outback character with an astounding data base of flora and fauna trivia.

Breakfast is a leisurely affair, an hour spent grazing on fresh organic fruit, creamy yoghurt, muesli, nuts and grains and hot frittata, omelettes, even pancakes and muffins. It's all good for you with a menu designed to promote detoxification and cleansing of the system. The kitchen is open to the restaurant that overlooks the infinity pool, outdoor fire pit and



amphitheatre, and mammoth wooden deck with furniture just begging for recline.

Mornings are dedicated to activities. Outdoor cricket on the oval with heritage cricket stand; yoga on the deck; spin or step class in the gym. Seminars on nutrition, stress and exercise introduce guests to the benefits of even the most miniscule lifestyle change.

After lunch there's Dream Time, three hours of 'me time' when guests enter the Heritage Day Spa for some serious pampering. Hot stone

massage, acupuncture, Chinese medicine, beauty therapy and even a machine that measures muscle mass, quality of muscle and fat mass and when fed through a software system reveals one's 'physical age' as opposed to birth age.

Cocktail time is six at Gwinganna but don't be expecting any martinis, it's all virgin liquid here. Juices freshly squeezed from the organic vegetable garden on the property followed by a three course gourmet meal and early to bed to

soak in the tub, nap to the sounds of the personal i-pod provided for each guest. In the morning you can start it all over again. Sigh.

Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat

www.gwinganna.com.au

Five night Optimum Wellbeing package, four spa treatments, daily activities, all meals AU\$2625 in an Orchard Suite



Byron Bay has long been home to those seeking an alternative to the stress of city living. A beachside community that attracts the creative, the surfer, the yoga guru and the city folk who have made their money and want to enjoy a real life. Gaia Retreat and Spa is found in the Byron Bay hinterland, amongst a hundred acres of fertile rolling hills.

Owned by Olivia Newton John and her

business partner, Gregg Cave, Gaia is an organic retreat where schedules are non-existent. Yoga is held daily at the civilized hour of 7.30am but there's no obligation to attend, if you miss it you can always join in at 4pm for tai chi or pilates.

Gaia means 'mother earth' and there's a definite nurturing quality to the property. The earth is rich and fertile and home to the

property's organic vegetable garden that provides fresh produce for the restaurant. Australia has the largest organic farming area in the world with over ten million hectares under organic management and Gaia have adopted a raised bed and companion planting farming policy using natural insecticides such as fresh chili to keep unwanted pests at bay.

The heart of Gaia is the Amala Day Spa



where thirty two therapists practice their pampering magic daily. Between visits to the spa guests can play a spot of tennis, relax in a hammock, recline on the hilltop day beds with a book, dip in the hot tub or sauna, take a swim, grab a bike and ride into Bangalow for the markets.

The emphasis here is on choice, your choice

and there's even wine with dinner should you so desire. Food here is seriously good and enhanced with middle eastern, asian and European herbs and flavours. All meals are included and if you have a quiet word in the restaurant manager's ear you may find yourself indulging in some organic dark chocolate. It's good for you, honest.

Gaia Retreat and Spa

www.gaiaretreat.com.au

Five night Refresh Package with all meals, yoga, massage and facial
AU\$2000 in a Sura Terrace