



Bruny Island Long Weekend

BY ALICE HANSEN

As we make our way down the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, we have a sense of heading toward the edge of the world. Wild, raw, and ruggedly beautiful. Our voyage is aboard a high-speed catamaran with latte in hand.

Our Bruny Island Long Weekend has begun. Just 45-minutes from the bustle of early morning Hobart commuters, we set foot on Bruny Island. Rob, owner and creator of Tasmania's latest luxury guided walk, has a wrinkle in his eye that tells us his island has magic in store.

Today we are venturing up to Queen Elizabeth Cape, a 12 kilometre trek that promises beach walking, coastal heath and Eucalypt forest. Cheery chatter echoes down the line of walkers falling into comfortable stride (no more than eight and an intimate group of five for us), as we climb Mars Bluff and Alex points out endemic green rosellas and Yellow-throated Honeyeaters. We catch first glimpse of Miles Beach down below. It's glorious, untouched and entirely void of human life. The pace quickens as we head down the dunes knowing today it will be ours.

Barely a breath of wind, we begin our final leg through Eucalypt forest, across delicate Mutton bird rookeries, and up to Queen Elizabeth Cape.

The return trip is equally special. Touching down on Miles Beach once more, Rob insists we hand over heavy boots and as they dangle from his pack, we enjoy kicking

through ankle-deep shallows for the length of the beach.

A leisurely five hours later we arrive back at the van, intrigued by the talk of our next destination. We are fitted with stylish wetsuit booties and are promptly reversed down a dusty driveway, curious as to where we are rolling...backwards.

As the trees clear, an oyster farm reveals itself in glistening low-tide waters. The sight is as refreshing as the elderflower and sparkling water, topped with ice that is placed in our weary hands down by the water. The perfect pick-me-up as the gentle hum of an oyster farmer's boat fills the air.

Sam, of Bruny Island Marine Farm, left behind his stockbroker's suit for waders and his blissfully relaxed nature mirrors his new office space. As warm water swirls about our ankles, we each enjoy a freshly shucked beauty straight from the farmer's hand.

Making the most of the island's bounty, we then make a pit-stop at the Bruny Island Cheese Company for a tasting and select two fine cheeses to accompany us back to our camp. Towering Blackwoods, Dogwoods, tall Stringy Barks and ferns hug the edges of our luxury camp. Stylish tents line the right side.

It's by night our guides really turn on the gourmet heat. On arrival into the 'dining house' we're met with vibrant orange honey-suckle flowers on a long rustic table that promises much laughter and story-sharing of



the day's adventures.

The menu better resembles a fine-dining restaurant than a camp-kitchen effort. Bruny Island wallaby Carpaccio with radishini and Grandveve pecorino is followed by Spring Bay mussels in delicious Saffron cream while perfectly cooked Murrayfield lamb from northern Bruny is served with lemon, garlic and thyme.

Day two and three offer just as much exhilaration, beauty and gourmet treats. And when thinking about how to describe this weekend, well its impact can be told in the little tear that appeared as I saw the last tip of Bruny disappear out the plane's window. It can stand proudly in its logo that promises four key elements- gourmet food, guided walking, luxury camping and plentiful wildlife. It certainly over-delivered in all. ■