

Sunday

TELEGRAPH
MAGAZINE

ROCK & ROWLAND

WHY EVERYBODY WANTS
TO BE IN THE KELLY GANG

+ Matthew White | Pete Murray | Sophie Lee | Jonathan

Byron Bay hinterland

SET IN A LUSH TROPICAL VALLEY ON THE FAR NORTH COAST OF NSW, THIS EN-CREDENTIALLED LUXURY ESTATE OFFERS SECLUSION, PAMPERING AND ACCESS TO PRISTINE BEACHES

ing a weekend break with BFF, who has three andily enough, two of them are staying home he third, at only five months, is entirely portable. ve at Coolangatta, where the sun is shining e temperature is a good six degrees warmer e rain-soaked city we've just escaped, and it e a holiday already.

e met by the concierge from Emerald Valley r carbon-neutral, five-star private estate a few kilometres from the (very) small town ral, in northern NSW. (We could have used pad, but didn't someone say eutral?)

erald Valley Villa was completed 005 and has been receiving r about 18 months. As we're around the vast living area, e, courtyard and spa, a creeping f impostor syndrome takes hold; e seriously swanky set of digs. master bedroom - with emperor- and walk-in closet - and huge ensuite have ound French windows that afford spectacular ut over the valley, making me feel as if I might nly person on the planet. A squawk from the e-style courtyard behind me reminds me I'm not. efed and changed, we sprawl on the daybed by ine springwater pool to read magazines and late the view. Come nightfall, we cook fresh d garlic bread, then sit out on the subtly lit catch up on the last few weeks' worth of girlie

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gossip over a bottle of champagne from the well-stocked bar fridge.

One glorious night's sleep later (for me at any rate), we decide to tackle the 25-minute drive into Byron Bay to check out the markets. It's a Queensland public holiday weekend and the town is awash with tanned teens and tie-dyed locals spruiking their various wares.

After an hour of browsing, followed by a late brunch and a few errands, we're feeling a bit frazzled, so we head back to our slice of serenity just in time for our Infinite Goddess massage sessions.

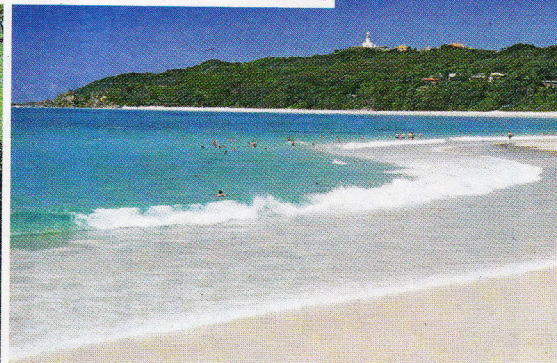
Seriously pummelled and soothed, we fill the outdoor spa with bubble bath and introduce baby Jack to his first jacuzzi with bikini-clad ladies, while the sun sets gloriously over the valley.

Once the little man has drifted off to the land of nod, we prepare a last supper and bemoan our lot at having to leave such luxurious digs so soon.

Sure, we have another whole day ahead of us but, with 32 hectares of tropical gardens - complete with koalas and wallabies - to explore by 4x4 Polaris Ranger, the meandering river to spot platypuses in (from the confines of a net draped pavilion) and the private waterfall and lake to cool off in, heaven knows how we're going to fit it all in.



(clockwise from far left) The rolling hills of the hinterland; daybeds on the deck by the spring pool at Emerald Valley; the private estate is five minutes from the beach; rated; it's only a 25-minute drive to Byron Bay's beaches



Fact file...

HOW TO GET THERE Virgin Blue and Jetstar fly daily to Gold Coast Airport ex Melbourne and Sydney, then it's a 45-minute drive to Emerald Valley Villa. **WHERE TO STAY** Rooms at the Villa start at \$1000 per night (there are four bedrooms, each with its own bathroom). Visit www.emeraldvalleyvilla.com. **FEELGOOD FACTOR** The Villa was built using recycled woods and runs on 100 per cent green power. **WHEN TO GO** Head up for the sun in summer and the fireside in winter. **WHAT TO BRING** The bare essentials. A concierge is on call for anything you need. **WHAT TO DO** Besides the obvious - nothing - a massage is a must. Call Infinite Goddess (aka Tracy) on 0401 572 162.

