

Away from the real world



□ THE spacious breezeway at Kings Lodge.

James Perkins felt like the last man on Earth on a visit to Amazing Wollumbin Palms

If you ever feel like you need to escape the world, there is a place less than an hour's drive from Tweed Heads that can make you feel like you are the only person on the planet.

Sitting in a huge block of land at the foot of Mount Warning, Amazing Wollumbin Palms has just three lodges, each separated by at least 300m of forest to ensure complete privacy.

The Sir Joseph Banks, Kings and Altwood lodges are unique and I was keen to find out from owners, Phil and Casey Russell, which I would be staying in.

I met Casey and she took me down to Kings, a lodge built around a pair of 300 year old hand-carved Joglo's, or Prayer Rooms, from a Javanese Kings Palace.

It really is an amazing little house, with a distinct eastern theme.



□ THE exterior view of the magnificent Kings Lodge at the Amazing Wollumbin Palms Retreat.

The two main rooms, which are built around the temples, are linked by a very wide breezeway, featuring a spa and opium day-bed beside the Koi pond with lazy gold fish swimming around its depths.

There is also a barbecue and table and chairs. The first room is the living area, with television, couch and kitchen, while the second room across the breezeway is home to the massive bed and bathroom.

The bed is suspended from the ceiling by chains and hangs more than a metre from the ground.

The tight chains that connect it to

the floor keep it from rocking. Casey told me Wollumbin Palms is a favourite with couples, whether they are newly engaged, or married for 40-years.

There is no way you cannot relax in this romantic setting.

The chirping of the crickets emanates from the surrounding rainforest and is pierced occasionally by the call of a whippbird.

There's air-conditioning for those hot nights or a fireplace if it is too cold.

The rain started pouring down at dusk and I sat in the breezeway admiring the view of landscaped gardens leading down to a lily-covered lake.

I watched the water spill from the roof and onto the mass of palm leaves surrounding the verandah, reaching towards the sky.

The carvings, handmade furniture and beautiful details of Kings Lodge will keep your eyes wandering for hours, but if you do feel like something stimulating, there is an assortment of DVDs, CDs, AUSTAR and a collection of interesting books.

When it comes to dinner time, you can either have Casey and Phil cook you a feast, or bring your own ingredients and use the kitchen to make it yourself.

If you come prepared, you won't

■ The winner of last week's Tweed Residential Tourist prize of a night's accommodation for two at Hillcrest Mountain View Retreat is Enid Todd of Terranora. Please contact Hillcrest Mountain View Retreat on 02 6679 1023 to organize your accommodation.

■ This week's winner of the Amazing Wollumbin Palms Resort accommodation package will be announced when our Tweed Residential Tourist feature returns on January 17, 2009.

have to leave the lodge all weekend.

After a feed of Nachos I took advantage of the spa and slid around in the almost-full tub of scented water as the jets massaged my back and then I hit the sack.

As you lay in the suspended bed, you can turn on the floodlights mounted under the lodge, which illuminate the surrounding forest and you could see some wildlife scratching around if you're lucky.

You can drift off to sleep knowing it doesn't matter what time you wake up in the morning, as your bacon, eggs and tomato will be waiting for you in the fridge, and cereal in the drawer, no matter what time you rise.

But if you like your bread warm, and fresh, slide out of the king size bed around 8.30am and find your



□ LOOKING over the Koi Pond and spa at Kings Lodge.

Interested?

Name: Amazing Wollumbin Palms Retreat
Address: 112 Mount Warning Road, Mount Warning
Contact details: Phone: (02) 6679 5063. Web: www.wollumbinpalms.com.au
Star Rating: 4.5
Price Range: Monday to Thursday 345 per night. Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 385 per night. Minimum two night stay on weekends, and three nights on long weekends. One night, midweek bookings, attract a cleaning fee.
Suitable for: Couples

fresh baked loaf sitting outside your front door. Then make yourself some fresh coffee from the espresso machine and you have the perfect breakfast.

There are too many details in the place to share everything now; you will have to check it out yourself.

Eventually I had to return to the real world, but I left knowing I would have to come back and try one of the other lodges at some point, which are totally different from Kings.



□ THE king-sized bed at Kings Lodge is suspended by chains.

Win a night at Amazing Wollumbin Palms Retreat



The Tweed Daily News and Amazing Wollumbin Palms Retreat are giving one lucky reader the chance to win one nights accommodation for two (value \$385).

To enter simply answer the question on the coupon and send to "Amazing Wollumbin Palms Retreat", Tweed

Daily News, PO Box 6336, Tweed Heads South 2486. Winner will be notified.

*Terms: Valid for Sunday night only until end of June 2009. Subject to availability and conditions.



Q: Who is this holiday suitable for?

A:

Name

Address

Ph

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