

Beachside resort, Bangalay Villas benefits from South Coast tourism boom

Business is booming for Bangalay Villas on the South Coast. Owners of the luxury resort have plans for their success to benefit locals too.

By

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The idyllic NSW South Coast is a tourist hotspot, with more than 3.8 million Australians visiting the region over the past year. But there are calls for more investment in luxury accommodation to boost consumer spending, with the federal government finding a 3% decline in visitor expenditure compared with the previous year (National Visitor Survey).

The spillover is already being seen at Bangalay Villas, a resort in Shoalhaven Heads. The luxury beachside accommodation attracts a high-spending, environmentally conscious target market.

Bangalay Villas has teamed up with other local vendors to boost business for the broader region. Owner, Michelle Bishop is a born and bred local, and says it's important to grow the pie for everybody.

"We have a huge tourism offering here, with a great beach, national park to the north, river to the south and beautiful farmland with vineyards and dairy farms to the west," says Michelle.

"If we can be a great addition to local business and allow Shoalhaven Heads to be seen as a destination, hopefully, that will help us grow our business and make a more sustainable business for the community as well as ourselves."



The eco-friendly resort uses solar power and has electric car charging stations for visitors.

Bangalay finally opened its doors in October this year, proving popular with both tourists and locals. But it's been a long time in the making.

"About 7 years it's taken us to get the design complete and the final approvals," explains Michelle, who has run a construction company with her husband Tom for 20 years.

"Designing and building a commercial kitchen and bar was outside our regular skill set and we've had to learn a lot."

The 16-villa resort also features a fine-dining restaurant with a strong focus on sustainability, sourcing whole-body animals from local farmers.

"Our head chef has designed a menu that has a huge focus on native ingredients, celebrating the local produce that we have here in the south coast."



The restaurant's award-winning head chef, Brent Strong has designed the menu around local produce and native ingredients.

"We cycle through our wagyu offering on the menu as we work through the cow," explains Michelle.

"It begins as a scotch fillet, then it becomes a tenderloin and then it's a brisket and silverside.

"As Bangalay Dining becomes better known, I think a lot of the accommodation bookings will be food led.

"You see that with other great establishments, people actually want to go and stay there because the food is amazing.

"If we could be thought of amongst those amazing offerings I will be thrilled with that."

Bangalay is now a major employer in Shoalhaven Heads, hiring 35 people from the local area. Michelle hopes to continue supporting the community as the business grows.

Watch the full episode at <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/small-business-secrets/article/2018/11/19/beachside-resort-bangalay-villas-benefits-south-coast-tourism-boom>