

CAMP STORIES

A holiday destination with a clear eco conscience, Paperbark Camp in Jarvis Bay, NSW, inspires clean living and healthy eating at home

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Welcome to Paperbark Camp, a holiday escape with an ecological difference. **Top left:** Set in a dense forest of paperbark trees, Paperbark Camp provides 'luxury tent' accommodation, meaning it's open to the elements while having all the comforts of home. Better still, it's environmentally friendly, complete with solar electricity and all the latest mod cons. The final touch? Much of the produce at Paperbark Camp is grown on-site. Here **(middle right)**, Jamie Durie leads the Patio team as they plant the campsite's own kitchen garden; it includes herbs and vegies as varied as sage **(left)** to silver beet **(right)** and rhubarb. Read on to discover how to create your own kitchen garden. >



Jervis Bay, a pristine holiday destination and marine park just two-and-a-half hours drive south of Sydney, has long been popular with nature lovers for its stunning coastal scenery. One of its more enduring attractions is Paperbark Camp, a bush escape which combines the adventure of camping with elegant accommodation, delicious food and old-fashioned hospitality. Nestled amongst the towering spotted gums and paperbark tree forest, the family-run eco retreat is made up of luxury, safari-style tents – it's 'glamping' (glamorous camping) – at its very best!

The property is a great example of how to live with minimal impact on the environment. When Paperbark Camp invited me to visit and talk about planting a kitchen garden, I brought the Patio team along. The newly planted garden (see overleaf) contributes to the gourmet delights of the on-site restaurant, The Gunyah. Planted with a huge range of fresh fruit and vegetables, the garden is set to not only inspire your own kitchen garden, but culinary expression! We've included some easy recipes on page 170 to get you started.

SLEEPING AT PAPERBARK CAMP

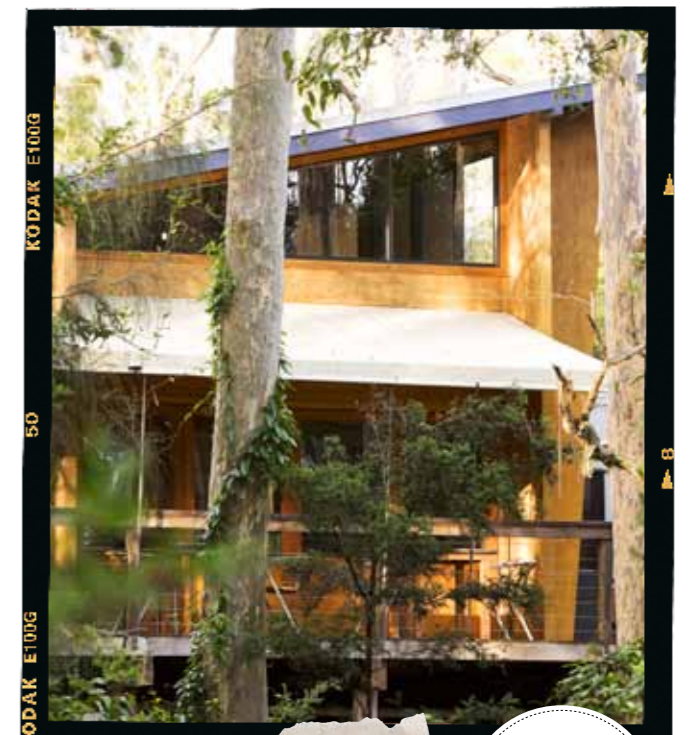
Guests wake up to the sounds of the bush coming to life. Each tent sits on an elevated platform, allowing for privacy, natural ventilation and a view, and comes with a large and comfy bed, verandah and ensuite. For the ultimate treat, the four deluxe tents have freestanding bathtubs and extra-large outdoor entertaining areas.

WHAT TO DO

Canoeing, kayaking and cycling – there are plenty of activities on offer. Wildlife, including parrots and kangaroos, can be spotted in the bush. Go bushwalking through the spectacular Booderee National Park or treat yourself to a massage in your tent. Explore the white sandy beaches with a swim, or cruise on Jervis Bay on a catamaran; you'll feel blanketed by nature.

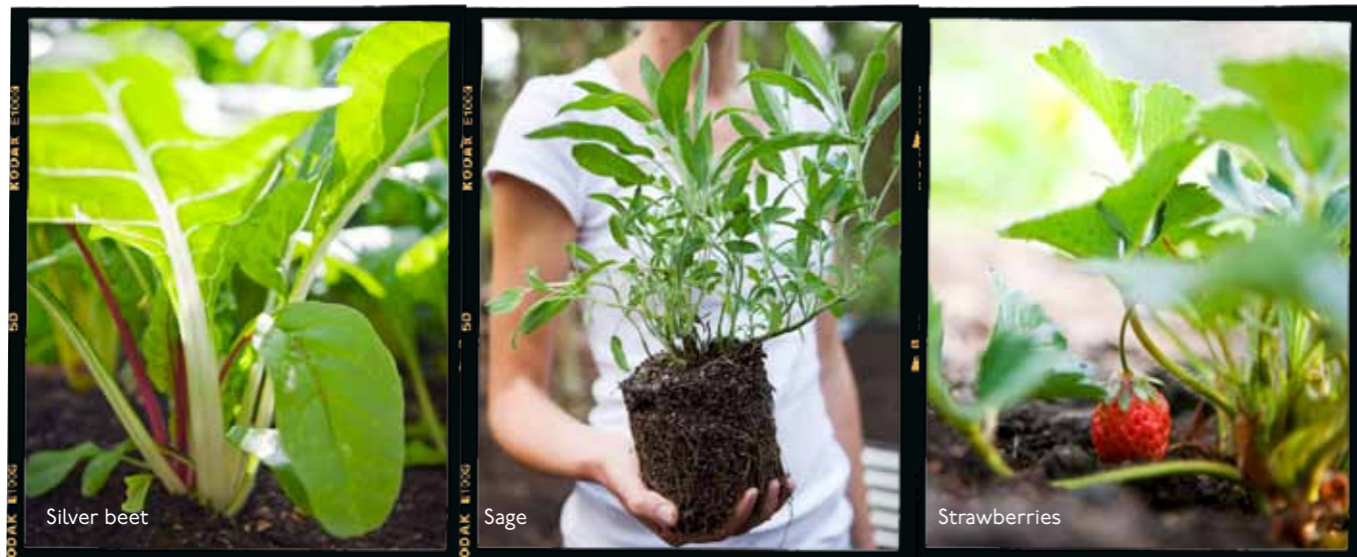
GOURMET GOODNESS

Follow the smell of fresh coffee brewing to The Gunyah, Paperbark's restaurant, where you'll be lavished with gourmet meals. The treehouse-like building opens to breezes and a leafy vista. Breakfast in the sunshine or, once the sun disappears, enjoy candlelit dinners under the gumtrees, home to possums that peer from the branches. Be sure to take a peek at the property's abundant kitchen garden, too. > The activities at Paperbark Camp are diverse. Enjoy {top, from left} a canoe at nearby Currumbene Creek; a quiet stroll down walking trails; a leisurely shower with a view to the dense paperbark forest; a gourmet bite to eat at The Gunyah; or simply sip a cup of tea amidst the peace of the paperbarks {opposite}.



TREADING LIGHTLY

Paperbark Camp's eco credentials are many: designed to sit in sympathy with the landscape, each tent has solar-powered lighting as well as all the goes-without-saying planet-friendly touches: low-flow showerheads, dual-flush toilets and hot water on demand only. There are no fences, allowing local wildlife to roam on the property, and wastewater is pumped 900 metres away from the site to protect the fragile wetland ecosystem. Natural ventilation keeps the tents cool, and rainwater is used as much as possible. In today's world, you should expect nothing less – and Paperbark sets a new standard. Visit paperbarkcamp.com.au to find out more, or to make a booking.



AN EDIBLE GARDEN

The kitchen garden, designed and planted by our team, provides ample produce for Paperbark Camp

At Paperbark Camp, the chefs are able to walk straight into the garden to harvest fresh ingredients for the restaurant. The garden is planted for the menu and the menu is planned around the seasonality of the garden; it's good for the environment and tastes great. Raised corrugated iron beds overflow with lush, leafy herbs and vegies, ready to be harvested for use in the restaurant, The Gunyah. Oversized mosquito nets (opposite) drape down over the beds, protecting them from peckish native animals. Surrounded by native bush food garden beds full of plants such as warragul greens, flax lily and native sarsaparilla, the garden is a sensory, sculptural, edible and educative destination. In it, you'll find herbs, beans, beetroot, lettuce, eggplant, radish, tomato, capsicum, strawberries and more – all fodder for a memorable feast.

"Most VEGETABLES AND HERBS
NEED MORE THAN FIVE HOURS
OF SUNLIGHT PER DAY" ~ JAMIE DURIE

PLANNING YOUR PLANTS

Research which vegetables you want to grow, the best time to plant them, and whether they're best started as seeds or seedlings. Some easy-to-grow plants for beginners include spinach, parsley, beans, leafy greens, thyme, oregano and carrot.

Prepare the soil by adding a thick layer of organic matter, digging it through the soil and giving it a good water. Leave the bed to rest for a week or so before planting. Rake the soil surface to a fine tilth (it should be soft and easy to work) and use a string line to create straight rows. Align them north/south to allow for maximum sunlight and minimal shading and maintain around 50cm between each row, so you can easily access it later.

Once the vegetables are planted, the real fun begins! Depending on your climate and soil type, water around twice a week during the warmer months and slightly less in winter. Fertilise on a regular basis using an organic fertiliser such as a fish emulsion, blood and bone, garden compost or animal manure.

FRUITS OF YOUR LABOUR

Growing your own fruit and vegetables isn't as difficult as you might think. Here's how to get started...

1. Think about the types of herbs and vegetables you use most regularly in your style of cooking.
2. Consider how much time you want to spend maintaining your garden, as vegetable gardens require a lot weeding, watering, mulching, fertilising and harvesting.
3. Keep your vegetable garden as close to the kitchen as possible.
4. Start small and get bigger as you attain more of an understanding of the maintenance involved.
5. Ensure there is enough sunlight. Most vegetables and herbs need more than five hours of sunlight per day. If you have a shady garden, there are still some vegetables you can grow, including some types of lettuce and leafy greens.
6. Drain the soil in your vegetable garden well and make sure it has lots of organic matter. Regularly adding household compost or broken down animal manure is a great way to keep your soil happy and healthy.
7. Protect your garden. A protective structure will keep hungry animals away from your much-loved vegetable crops.
8. Enjoy! Get cooking! Find two easy recipes for fresh produce by The Gunyah's head chef, John Evans, overleaf.

WHAT IS COMPANION PLANTING?

Companion planting is the planting of different crops in close proximity to each other, based on the idea that they help each other in nutrient uptake, pest control and pollination. It's a great way of keeping pests and diseases at bay. There are generally two types of companion plants: those that repel or confuse insects with their strong scent (such as sage, oregano, lavender, basil, santolina, tansy and wormwood) and those (including elder, dill and fennel) with flowers or foliage that attract beneficial insects that prey on other pests in the garden.

Once you've decided which herbs and vegetables you'd like to grow, do your research on which plants work best with each other; often, foods which complement each other in meals, such as basil and tomato, make very good companion plants.



Jamie and the Patio team planted this kitchen garden with radish, strawberries and more, netting it to protect the plants from native wildlife. A net must be constructed carefully, as creatures such as flying foxes can become caught. Consult your local council for guidelines. >



THE TASTE TEST

Chef John Evans of The Gunyah, Paperbark Camp, shares some easy ways with home-grown herbs and vegies

Crispy skin snapper & prawns with garden leaves, radish & Vietnamese mint

soy mirin dressing:

- 250ml rice wine vinegar
- 125ml mirin
- 60ml soy sauce
- 20ml lemon juice
- 50ml water
- 1 birds eye chilli, thinly sliced
- 1cm piece of ginger, finely grated
- 1 clove of garlic, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp sesame oil

- 4 x 180gram fillets of snapper, scaled
- Olive oil
- 6 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 200g mixed garden salad leaves
- 200g green beans, blanched
- 2 tbsp of podded and blanched soy beans
- 1 radish, thinly sliced
- 8 Vietnamese mint leaves
- 8 medium-sized cooked prawns, peeled
- ½ cup soy and mirin dressing

1. To make dressing, bring all ingredients to the boil in a saucepan. Remove from heat and cool. Do not strain. It can be stored in a jar in the fridge for up to two weeks.
2. Preheat the oven to 200°C. Heat a non-stick, oven-proof frying pan over medium heat. Season snapper, add a touch of oil and cook the fillets, skin side down, for 3 minutes or until skin starts to crisp. Add cherry tomatoes to the pan, cut side up, and place the pan in the oven for 4-5 minutes or until just cooked. Remove from the oven, turn fillets over and set aside.
3. To assemble salad, place salad leaves, green and soy beans, radish and Vietnamese mint in a bowl. Drizzle with pre-prepared dressing. Arrange on plates and top with snapper, prawns and tomatoes.

Rocket & basil pesto

- 130g rocket
- 20g fresh basil leaves
- 1 tbsp pine kernels, toasted
- 45g parmesan, freshly grated
- 155ml olive oil
- salt and pepper, to taste

Place rocket, basil, pine nuts and parmesan in a food processor or mortar and pestle and process until finely chopped. Add oil in a steady stream to form a paste, being careful not to over-process as it will lose colour. Store refrigerated in a jar, covered with a layer of olive oil. 