

Living Gems* Thrive

DECEMBER 2023



Celebrate the season!

The most wonderful time of the year

Let's get jolly

Homeowners' favourite
festive fare

Home sweet home

They'll be home for
Christmas

Holiday adventures

Tempting travel destinations
and pro tips 2024

livinggems.com.au

Message from the CEO

Welcome to the December issue of *Thrive*, the first month of summer and the festive season! In this month's magazine, we celebrate the most magical time of the year with some great holiday-inspired content ranging from some of our homeowners' treasured, time-honoured traditional recipes to stories about what some of our most recent residents are looking forward to enjoying during their first Christmas in their new homes.

With so many of our residents turning their minds to travel during the holiday season, we also share some great overseas travel tips courtesy of former travel agent and Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront homeowner, Norm Pressey, plus some fantastic group tour opportunities in 2024.

At the end of last month, Amber by Living Gems held a very successful Open Day for the resort's last homes in the Final Stage. More than 150 people attended the event to view our beautiful display homes, learn about the fantastic facilities to open next year, and get a feel for this welcoming community.

Construction of the Country Club is coming along quickly with the scaffolding now down, external and internal painting nearing completion, and tiling well underway. Work on the outdoor facilities which includes the lawn bowls area, pickleball and bocce courts, and the firepit are also progressing well.

Residential construction is also moving ahead at pace, with a record number of settlements taking place last month – a tremendous achievement - and more to come throughout December (see page 3).

The Final Stage at our established Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront resort is almost sold out, with just a few stunning, move-in-ready homes now available. Contact Sales Manager Glenys Lowry to make a time to see the last available homes (turn to page 30).

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my warmest wishes to you and your loved ones. From myself and the Living Gems family, we wish you a happy, safe and relaxing holiday season and the very best of times in 2024.



Adrian Puljich
CEO



Record settlements at Amber Stage Two

The residential construction team has been powering ahead on the building program at Amber by Living Gems with a record number of settlements taking place in November and more to come this month.

Living Gems CEO Adrian Puljich said home construction in Stage Two at Amber by Living Gems – the resort’s final stage - is now nearly 65 percent complete.

“With nearly 39 home builds underway at Amber, we remain on track to finish construction around June next year,” he said.

“More than 70 percent of Stage Two is now sold out with the resort as a whole 85 percent sold, and we cannot wait for the community to be fully settled in 2024.”

Stage Two has six home design options, each with between 194.4sqm to 210.07sqm of living

space, two bathrooms, stunning modern kitchens with walk-in pantries and lovely alfresco areas. There are also a limited number of special RV-friendly homes available for buyers looking for plenty of space for a caravan, motorhome or boat.

For those interested in the popular Snowy and Pine home designs, only one standard version of each of these three-bedroom homes remains.

There are also five newly released two-storey home designs available, boasting three bedrooms and between 230sqm and 233sqm of living space. These homes are located within a short walk from the Country Club and are priced from \$830,000.

Construction of the resort’s \$10.5 million Country Club is progressing at pace and is forecast for completion within the first quarter of 2024. Facilities will include a main hall with dance floor and stage, a formal lounge, cafe/dining area, fully

equipped gym, hair salon, pool and barbecue pavilion, games room, library, private cinema, arts and crafts studio, ten-pin bowling, virtual golf and much more.

Located on ten hectares in a leafy, picturesque part of Logan Village, Amber by Living Gems offers idyllic semi-rural ambience with all the convenience of local shops, restaurants and other amenities within walking distance or a short drive away.

Amber by Living Gems will comprise 231 homes when finished.

Contact the Living Gems sales team

To learn more about Stage Two or book a resort tour to view the display homes and facilities, contact Tameeka Manson or Lynda Ruddell on 1800 317 381.

Home sweet home

Cheers to first Christmas at Amber

Rod and Janene Griffith are looking forward to their first Christmas as homeowners at Amber by Living Gems over-50s lifestyle resort where they have already signed up to attend the resort's Christmas party.

"Being in the resort for Christmas is going to be wonderful," said the couple who only moved in a few months ago after downsizing from their Esk property which they called home for about seven years.

One of their reasons for moving to Amber was to be closer to their three children and seven grandchildren who are all now within half an hour's drive of them at Willowvale, Loganholme and Greenbank.

"This will be the first time in a few years that we will all be able to come together as a family on Christmas Day and not only that but we also have a couple of kids' birthdays and graduations to go to in December. Being so close means we can do it easily, without a long drive from Esk," said Rod.

Christmas has always been about family to Janene and Rod who married at the young ages of 18 and 20 almost 50 years ago.

"We've just carried on the tradition from our parents. As youngsters it was all about family and food, and it's been the same all the way through our married life," said Janene, who never fails to deliver fabulous festive cuisine including Christmas pudding, cake, salads and her popular rum balls which are made from a recipe handed down by her mother.

Her pièce de résistance is her decadent and delicious layered ice cream cake which is a newer addition to her culinary repertoire.

"I've found the children often prefer my ice cream cake to the traditional plum pudding. It has proved really popular, and we can't have Christmas without it now," said Janene.

Meanwhile, there are also treats hanging on the Christmas tree including her very popular candy canes and ginger breads which the children love.

"We created a tradition of making ginger breads featuring the names of all eight adults and seven children. Using icing, Janene paints board shorts on the men and bikinis on the girls for an Australiana theme and then puts them in cellophane and hangs them on the tree. It's the first thing everyone looks for when they arrive for Christmas," said Rod.

Rod can be relied upon to deliver fresh crabs for the Christmas table. He catches his own and is often joined by his grandkids who he is teaching to follow in his footsteps.

The couple is also looking forward to the festive atmosphere at Amber by Living Gems where they say the Christmas spirit is alive and well.

"It will be nice to walk out our front door and be able to wish all our new neighbours a happy Christmas. Residents held a street party for the new Stage Two homeowners recently which was great and gave us an opportunity to get to know each other. We are also looking forward to joining more than 60 residents at the resort's Christmas party," said the fun-loving pair.









Rightsizing delight

Couple find their perfect home at Living Gems

Moving day is always exciting – especially when it is into a lovely brand-new home at Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront.

For Kerry and Ruth Dean, who moved into the active over-50s lifestyle resort in late October, the first week was spent putting together the homely touches that makes their place just right.

“We got the keys last Wednesday,” said Ruth. “We timed it because Kerry is a FIFO worker and arranged to be home this week for the move. He’ll be flying out next Wednesday, so today we’ve spent a lot of time at Bunnings shopping for things like pots for the back garden.”

A new three-bedroom home is not the only major milestone the Deans will enjoy this year.

“We’ll be celebrating our 40th wedding anniversary in December,” said Ruth. “Kerry and I met in high school – he was two years ahead of me, but we moved in the same social circles and were friends for many years.”

After growing up in the Northern Territory, the whole family now call Queensland home.

“We have a son and daughter, one lives in Kallangur and the other at Dakabin,” said Ruth. “And my son has a son, and my daughter has a daughter!”

“It’s handy living close because I babysit my grandson every fortnight.”

Ruth said it was also lovely to have her parents only 45 minutes away at Buderim.

“I come from a family of seven children, and we all got together for our father’s 80th birthday,” she said.

“I love the fact that we can have the family to

our new home to celebrate Christmas. In our family, we take hosting Christmas in turns. This year will be at my sister’s place but there will be plenty of opportunities in years to come.”

One of the important considerations for the Deans was to have somewhere that would accommodate their brand-new caravan.

“Over the years we’ve travelled a lot overseas and we’ve been to every state in Australia, but now we’re looking forward to heading out on the road and visiting some of the lesser-known destinations and enjoy some camping,” said Ruth.

Moving into Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront not only means a secure place for the caravan, but also a lot more leisure time when Kerry comes home.

“Because Kerry is a FIFO worker, he used to spend a lot of the time at our old place mowing the lawns and doing household maintenance – then he’d have to go back to work,” said Ruth. “Now he can come home and relax more.”

The couple are looking forward to getting to know their neighbours and taking part in more activities as they settle in.

“We were talking about moving to a community like this for a little while and one day we happened to be driving by, so we pulled in to take a look and I’m so glad we did,” said Ruth.

“Kerry is interested in taking up lawn bowls,” said Ruth. “Right now, he’s getting practise at the ten-pin bowling lanes. He’s keen to play because he used to be in a league.”

Festive fare

Christmas cuisine that tantalises the tastebuds

Christmas comes but once a year and for our many Living Gems home chefs it is a time to create a tantalising spread of delicious festive cuisine to be enjoyed by one and all.

We invited Living Gems residents to share some of their favourite and traditional recipes which, depending on the origin of those celebrating, have come from all over the world. All are lovingly prepared once a year and savoured by friends and loved ones of all ages as they get together to celebrate, reconnect and relax at Christmas time.





Competition hots up

The battle of the Christmas puddings

With seven children and 17 grandchildren between them, Irene and Larry Clifford are used to big family occasions at Christmas, especially when they all turn up.

It is no wonder that the Amber by Living Gems homeowners make two Christmas puddings each year, a task that is equally divided between Irene and Larry.

"It has become quite a competition between us," said the near 40-year-married couple, who previously worked in real estate together. Each home cook uses the same recipe, but the methods differ slightly.

"Larry likes to do his the old-fashion way by wrapping it in a cloth and boiling it while I steam mine which I find so much easier. It's quite a competition. We have to buy two lots of ingredients. I've already cooked mine for this year, but Larry still has to do his ... and may the best pudding win!" said Irene.

The puddings have become a necessity and are always looked forward to as part of the family's Christmas fare, a tradition which goes back to when Irene and Larry were growing up.

"We still put in all the fruit and alcohol but no longer have the threepences and sixpences that we had prior to the introduction of dollars and cents in 1966. Both our puddings are very moist and

servicing it with brandy custard is a must."

On Christmas Day, Larry is also called upon to glaze the ham.

"Larry is actually a really good cook," said 71-year-old Irene, admitting that while there are standard treats they cook up each year, the catering is not all up to them.

"Everyone brings something to put on the table and then we have a big feast. It's delicious and a lot of fun."

Getting all the family together for Christmas is so important to the couple that they never go away at that time of year.

"We always stay put! Our kids and grandkids - of which we've been blessed with quite a few - make Christmas so special and that's why we love it so much. It's also why we try and get a family photo of everyone together each year. It's so rare for all of us to be in one place at the same time."

Irene admits that her favourite Christmases were when the children were young.

"Just to see their faces when they opened the presents. They were so excited and made the Christmas spirit come alive. We are now getting the same feeling from our grandchildren and it's wonderful."

The couple, who lived on Macleay Island for many years, said that for about 40 years they had a huge Christmas tree, but sold it when they moved to Amber by Living Gems about 18 months ago.

"We miss our huge tree but still love to decorate our home for a truly festive feel. It wouldn't be Christmas otherwise!"



Christmas Pudding

Ingredients

250g butter
1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
1 tbsp grated orange rind
1 tbsp grated lemon rind
4 eggs
250g dates
250g raisins
250g sultanas
1 small apple
1 small carrot
125g mixed peel
2 cups fresh breadcrumbs
1½ cups plain flour
Pinch salt
½ tsp nutmeg
1 tsp mixed spice
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
3 tbsp brandy

Method

1. Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add orange and lemon rinds. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Chop dates, raisins and peel; peel and grate apple and carrot.
2. Stir fruit, carrot, peel and breadcrumbs into creamed mixture. Sift dry ingredients, fold in; add brandy.

To steam: Put into well-greased 2.5 litre pudding basin, steam for 4 hours. Re-steam for 2 hours on day of serving.

To boil: Place pudding mixture in the middle of a piece of calico and gather up the ends. Tie tightly with string, making a loop at the end for hanging. Immerse pudding in a large saucepan of boiling water and boil rapidly for 4 hours, replenish with boiling water every 20 minutes; water must not go off the boil. Re-boil for 2 hours on day of serving. Allow to drain for 5 minutes before unwrapping and then serve with brandy custard.

NB: Use an 80cm-square piece of calico. Rinse it under hot water to remove the starch. Wearing rubber gloves, dip it into boiling water, then wring out. Place ½ cup (125g) plain flour in the centre of the cloth. Rub in a circular motion to spread in a thin layer about 50cm diameter.



Cookies for Christmas

A tasty reminder of home

Cookie recipes from a book written in German are a popular Christmas treat for Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront homeowners, Ingrid and Bill Weber, their family and friends.

As a young married couple, Ingrid and Bill moved from Germany to Australia in 1971 where they had two sons and a daughter. Despite the couple's German heritage, they were quick to adapt to the festive traditions of their adopted country with one exception.

"We still celebrate on Christmas Eve, like we did back home," said Ingrid.

"We put the tree up on the morning of Christmas Eve, then we would have Christmas lunch and afterwards, Santa would put the presents under the tree. At night we would have open sandwiches and a meat platter."

The tradition for biscuits began around 1986 after the family returned to Germany for a visit.

"It was around Christmas, and we visited a sugar factory. The children were given German recipe books which contained lots of old and popular traditional recipes ranging from rum balls and cakes to stollen Christmas pastries and many delicious baked biscuits," said Ingrid.



Ever since, Ingrid has included up to six different biscuits from the book in her Christmas fare including the ever-popular spekulatius which is a spiced shortcrust biscuit baked with speculaas spices, coconut macarons, and vanillekipferl that are small, crescent-shaped biscuits made with walnuts, almonds or hazelnuts and dusted with vanilla sugar.

"All the recipes are so easy to do," said Ingrid.

Her baked delights have become so popular that she now cooks up to 120 at Christmas time which is usually celebrated with her children, four grandsons and one great grandson.

Married 55 years, the couple said this year will be a little different as their family aren't able to make it for Christmas Eve but will join them soon after for belated festive celebrations.

"I'll still be cooking my festive biscuits because Bill and I are planning to have Christmas in the resort's beautiful Country Club, and we are encouraged to bring a plate or two. My biscuits look quite different to most and I'm looking forward to sharing them with everyone," said Ingrid.

The couple love living at Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront, which they have called home for 18 months and say the resort's community loves to get together at special times like Christmas.

"There is a great Christmas atmosphere here and we have a Christmas concert with various interest groups performing. We even joined in with singing carols last year. It's such a great time to get together and catch up with friends to reflect on the past 12 months."



Spekulatius Cookies

Ingredients

(Makes about 50-60 biscuits)

- 500g plain flour
- 2 level tsp baking powder
- 250g brown sugar
- 1 tbsp vanilla essence
- ½ tsp ground cloves
- 1¾ tsp ground cardamom
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 eggs
- 200g butter
- 100g ground hazelnuts

Method

1. Sift flour and baking powder in a large mixing bowl. Make a well, add sugar, spices, eggs, then add the butter cut in small pieces, as well as the hazelnut meal.
2. Knead all ingredients together until you have a smooth dough. Keep dough in fridge for an hour.
3. Meanwhile preheat oven on 160 degrees Celsius fan forced.
4. Then work with small amounts only while the rest of dough is staying cold. Roll dough on floured surface, cut into shapes using cookie cutters and place on baking sheet.
5. Bake for 10-15 minutes. Cool and store in well-sealed tin or jar.



Coconut Macaroons

Ingredients

(Makes about 30 macaroons)

4 egg whites
250g caster sugar
½ tsp vanilla essence
Pinch of salt
300g desiccated coconut

Method

1. Preheat oven to 140 degrees Celsius.
2. In a small bowl, beat egg whites very stiff, add sugar in small amounts, then add vanilla, salt and coconut. Mix until well combined.
3. Line a baking sheet with baking paper. Use 2 teaspoons and place small amounts of mixture on the tray. Bake until golden brown, 18-20 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.



For illustrative purposes only.



Vanillekipferl

Ingredients

(Makes 30-40)

300g plain flour

125g caster sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

3 egg yolks

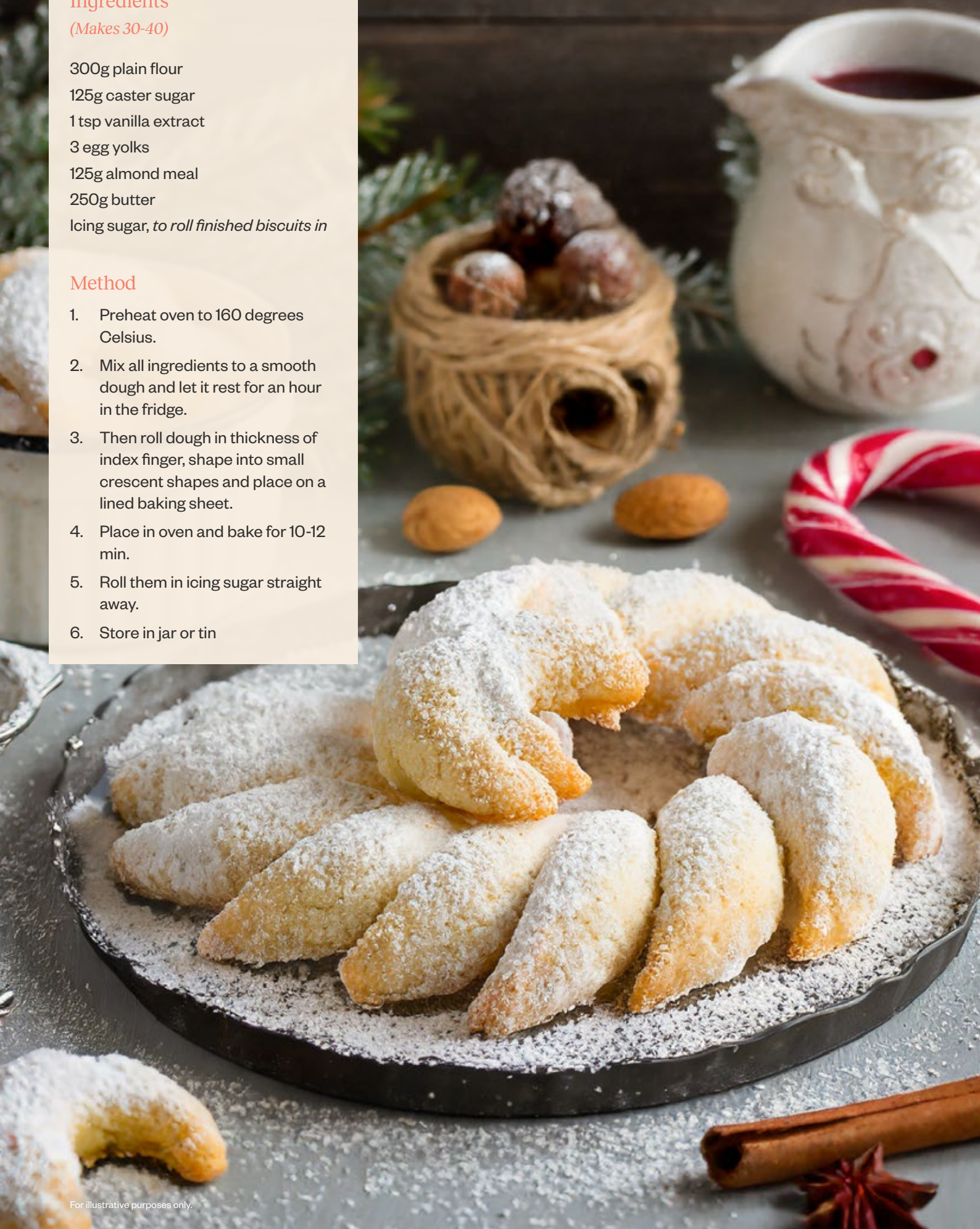
125g almond meal

250g butter

Icing sugar, to roll finished biscuits in

Method

1. Preheat oven to 160 degrees Celsius.
2. Mix all ingredients to a smooth dough and let it rest for an hour in the fridge.
3. Then roll dough in thickness of index finger, shape into small crescent shapes and place on a lined baking sheet.
4. Place in oven and bake for 10-12 min.
5. Roll them in icing sugar straight away.
6. Store in jar or tin



All the trimmings

Rum balls a favourite festive treat

When it comes to preparing festive fare for Christmas, Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront resident Judy Hilton is most certainly ahead of the rest especially when it comes to her delicious rum balls which are a huge family favourite.

"I only make them once a year and cure the cherries for 12 months to ensure they are mouth-watering and have a nice punch when devoured. They are rather decadent, and you wouldn't want to drive after eating a few but the kids and my husband, Stephen, love them," said Judy, with a big smile.

She said the rum balls are sweet because they are made with chocolate, and they freeze well. They go perfectly with her other traditional Christmas recipes which include Daffy's Christmas Plum Pudding, Aunty Norma's Prawn Christmas Entree, and Daffy's Christmas Punch.

"Daffy was a dear friend of my mother's who passed on her mum's recipes for us to enjoy."

Married 50 years with three children, five grandchildren and one great grandchild, Judy and Stephen have always loved Christmas with all the trimmings and traditions.

"We enjoy a hot meal and still put the sixpences in our puddings like our parents did when we were young. I've kept them all these years just for Christmas and there is nothing like seeing the kids' faces light up when they get one in their pudding. It's precious!"

Judy also cooks up a delicious caramel slice which has proved particularly popular with the kids and neighbours and so that the Christmas treats, puddings, cakes and hot meals can be part of many festive celebrations in the future, she has put together a special recipe book with all her family's traditional Christmas favourites and handed them down to her children.

"Christmas has always been a big occasion in our family. As kids, I remember going to my grandmother's place with my sister. They always prepared a hot roast and put the presents under the tree. Then we'd play cricket in the backyard and by the end of the day we would be like carpet snakes, curled up and asleep on the bed before rising again to graze on the leftovers. It was beautiful and gave us so many happy memories."

The enthusiastic home chef says she learned how to make all her Christmas cuisine from her mother and since having her own family,

has enjoyed delivering Christmas with all the trimmings for her loved ones.

"It is always a lot of work for me, and the food is gone so quickly but to receive the compliments and know they enjoyed it makes everything so worthwhile in the end," said Judy.

She said the festivities also keep the family linked together which is always special and such an exciting time for everyone.

"It truly is a family affair. The best part for me is seeing all our family together and the kids' smiling faces when they see the rum balls and caramel slices."

Judy is someone who likes to spread the joy over the entire year, and she does that by cooking up treats and gifting them to local gardeners, friends and neighbours.

"Doing nice things for others gives me a lot of pleasure, and the gardeners do such a good job at keeping our resort looking lovely."





Rum Balls

Ingredients

250g shortbread biscuits (1 pkt home-brand Scotch finger biscuits)
1 cup desiccated coconut
2 tbsp (or more) castor or icing sugar
6 tbsp (heaped) cocoa
1 small bottle of cream, you probably won't need it all
200g dark chocolate
4-6 tbsp dark rum
Glace cherries
Coconut or chocolate sprinkles to roll (Judy uses shredded coconut too)

Method

1. Place cherries in a jar or bowl and cover with rum. Marinate for anything from two days to many months. If you don't have months and months, go with what you've got. Judy puts hers in a jar with a lid and puts them away until she needs them.
2. Crush biscuits and add all dry ingredients together, blending well. Melt chocolate in microwave and slowly add rum (Judy puts chocolate in jar in saucepan of water on stove to melt to avoid burning it). Mix the lot together thoroughly. Gradually add cream until right consistency. Roll mixture around cherries, then roll in coconut or your preferred coating.
3. Set in freezer and keep in refrigerator.

Note: 4-6 tablespoons rum is a conservative guideline only. Use more rum and less cream to suit your personal preference. Judy says most people will probably use 2 packets of whole cherries, and some people choose to use other liqueurs like Frangelico, for example.



For illustrative purposes only.

Daffy's Christmas Plum Pudding

Ingredients

- 30g margarine
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups milk
- 500g mixed fruit
- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 dessert spoon mixed spice

Method

1. Combine margarine, sugar, milk and mixed fruit in saucepan and bring to boil. Add flour and mixed spice. Boil approximately 2 hours.
2. Remove from stove and let it cool down just a little. Add 2 cups of plain flour, sifted together with 1 desertspoon of mixed spice.
3. Place mixture in a steel or ceramic bowl and place of a cake cooler placed in a large 2-3 litre steamer or saucepan. This ensures the base doesn't burn. Then cover with foil and tie it down around the top of the bowl, tight enough so it holds in place.
4. Pour in water to fill to about half-way up the pudding. Bring to the boil then simmer for approximately 2 hours.
5. Remove from the water and place in oven bag stored in the fridge until Christmas Day. Serve with brandy custard.

Judy still puts sixpences in her puddings. She boils the coins and places them in the pudding mixture to cook together.

Daffy's Christmas Punch

Ingredients

- 3 litres of water
- 1kg sugar
- 1 large can pineapple, crushed
- 6 passionfruit
- Juice of 9 lemons and 12 oranges
- 4 large bottles lemonade
- 1 large bottle ginger ale
- Orange slices and party ice for garnishing

Method

1. Melt sugar and water, and cool.
2. Add fruit juice and pulp and chill.
3. When using this mixture, add 4 large bottles of lemonade and 1 large ginger ale. Garnish with orange slices and party ice.



Aunty Norma's Prawn Christmas Entree

Ingredients

(Serves 4)

- 10 king prawns
- 1 avocado
- 1 mango
- ¼ bottle French dressing
- 2 tbsp mayonnaise
- 2 tsp chilli sauce
- Pepper to taste

Method

Combine all ingredients. Add parsley and serve on a bed of lettuce.



Nibblies that delight

Nuts and Bolts a family favourite at Christmas

If you are looking for nuts and bolts at Christmas, Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront homeowner Gail Hartigan has jars filled with them.

Of course, it's Christmas and we are not talking about the metal variety of nuts and bolts but the more delicious crunchy, tasty, sweet and savoury snack that is great to nibble on all day long.

Gail has already started to make the popular treat for the festive season using a traditional family recipe handed down to her by her mother.

"I've had it for over 40 years and can remember mum making it when we were kids. It's a little different to the normal recipes making it something you just can't buy," said the enthusiastic home cook, who has built up quite an impressive following from residents who like to buy her jars of Nuts and Bolts to give away at Christmas.

"They make delicious nibblies that can be enjoyed throughout the festive season or on Christmas Day itself."

Gail and her husband Gary, who met when they were both in the Navy, have two children, and three grandchildren aged from 7 months

to six years old. They moved from Burrum Heads to live at Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront over five years ago and couldn't be happier.

"We are here for the long haul. Just love it!" said Gail.

When their kids were young, the family had a six-foot Christmas tree for which Gail, who loves to sew, made all the decorations. She has now gifted all of them to her youngest son and his family to carry on the tradition for future generations.

Christmas is often celebrated at their eldest son's place and it's a big affair with more than 20 attending each year.

"We all prepare something to take along and, of course, my Nuts and Bolts is a must while Gary, who is a retired Navy chef and even cooked for Prince Andrew and Fergie at the 75th Anniversary of the Royal Australian Navy in 1989, does the ham," said Gail, who makes sure everyone gets a jar of her Nuts and Bolts to take home.

Her festive spirit also shines at the resort where she often gifts her special treat to some of her friends and neighbours whom she says just love them.

Gail is a great lover of Christmas and always puts her tree up, a Christmas lantern that lights up on the front porch, and a wreath on the front door on 1 December.

What is it that Gary and Gail love most about Christmas?

"We just love seeing the grandchildren happy and having all our family together to enjoy the occasion. We look forward to Christmas every year. It's so special!"





Nuts and Bolts

Ingredients

113g melted cophera	4 cups Nutra Grain
2 tsp curry powder	1 tsp chilli powder
2 tsp salt	1 packet French fries
2 tsp onion salt	500g mixed nuts
1 tsp black sauce	

Method

1. Mix then bake in slow oven 100 degrees Celsius for 1 hour, tossing every 15 minutes.



Santa's stock take

Gift ideas for all ages and budgets

Christmas is the time for giving and if you're stuck for inspiration, Santa's little helpers have given us a sneak preview of some fun, interesting and practical gifts many will find under the tree this year.

Heartfelt homewares



Coconut Bowl Gift Set for Two
\$52.70

Start the summer holidays with a tropical vibe with a coconut bowl gift set for two. The set includes coconut cups, bowls, wooden fork and spoon, bamboo chopsticks and straws. This gift not only looks great, but it is also environmentally friendly! Every purchase results in a tree being planted. So far, Coconutsy has planted more than 1500 trees from the Sunshine Coast to Byron Bay.

Available from: coconutsy.com.au/products/gift-set-for-two



Festive Spiced Biscuit Candle
\$59.95

Keep the warm and cosy spirit of Christmas close with a limited-edition festive candle from Glasshouse Candles. The visually appealing packaging by Michelle Pereira gives a hint of the sweet and spicy scent within. Top notes of orange, almond and caramel are balanced by the mid notes of cedarwood, cloves, cinnamon, ginger and black pepper and grounded by the base notes of vanilla, tonka bean and amber.

Available from: bit.ly/47sgnLK



Wildflowers Bamboo Jug and Tumbler 5 Piece Set | **\$39.98**

Stylish outdoor entertaining doesn't have to cost the Earth. Made from bamboo fibre, this Maxwell & Williams setting is lightweight, durable and very pretty, thanks to its wildflower motif. This set will be at home on the most elegant dining table as well as in modern alfresco settings.

Available from: bit.ly/47ELC6y

For the kids



Bluey kids bedside night light and torch | \$19.00

Everyone's favourite animated blue heeler, Bluey will keep your grandchildren feeling safe and secure because she is also a nightlight and a torch! This battery powered nightlight is portable and, when activated, will switch itself off after ten minutes.

Available from: amzn.to/3FZK4bn



Take Along Modern Doll House \$35.00

This delightful portable doll's house has vintage vibes with its classic design. The Take Along Modern Doll House by Playmobil is easy to carry and comes with so many fun bits and pieces that will bring hours of fun.

Available from: theiconic.com.au/take-along-modern-doll-house-1919411.html



Bug About | \$119.99

Toddlers will love scooting about on this gorgeous little ladybug. Made by Bello, the Bug About comes with a lifetime guarantee and is made from durable, non-toxic, chew-friendly materials and features a cushioned seat, contoured design and smooth, free-wheeling castors.

Available from: theiconic.com.au/bug-about-1877212.html

For the family



LEGO IDEAS Tales of the Space Age | \$72.99

The big kids will have just as much fun as the younger ones in building this set. With four connectable brick-built 3D postcards, each depicts scenes inspired by 1980s sci-fi myths, films, books and posters.

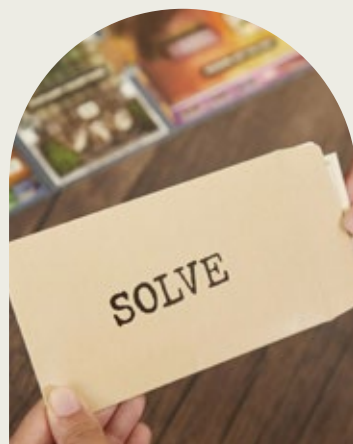
Available from: bit.ly/47eav9j



Capture the Flag | \$109.00

Get the whole family involved for hours of fun. Capture the Flag uses glow-in-the-dark wrist bands to identify friend from foe, as well as the glowing orb your team needs to capture.

Available from: giftsaustralia.com.au/capture-the-flag-game



Cluedo Escape Robbery at the Museum | \$39.99

The classic boardgame of Cluedo now comes with a twist! Escape the museum. Catch the traitor.

Available from: gamesworld.com.au/product/cluedo-escape-robbery-at-the-museum

Gifts for the grown ups



Golfer's Buddy Gold Multi-Tool
\$29.95

The golfer in your life will love this handy gadget. This titanium-finished multi-tool includes a divot tool, groove cleaner, spike tool, screwdriver and bottle opener in speckled paint design.

Available from: dadshop.com.au/golfer-s-buddy-golf-multi-tool-by-gentlemen-s-hardware



RM Williams City Washbag
\$149.00

The rugged and stylish RM Williams full-grain leather wash bag makes the perfect addition for travel. At 26cm long, 13cm wide and 9cm high, this bag is the only toiletries carrier he'll need.

Available from: rmwilliams.com.au/rmw-city-washbag-whiskey-full-grain-leather.html



Kindle | **\$179.00**

Enjoy reading your favourite books on the lightest and most compact Kindle. Featuring a high-resolution display, adjustable front light, dark mode, a USB-C single charge that lasts 6 weeks and a 16GB storage capacity to store thousands of books.

Available from: amazon.com.au/dp/product/B09SWTG9GF

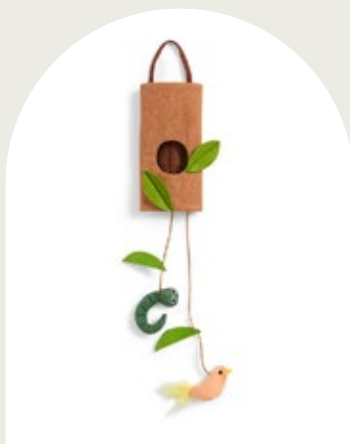
Presents for pets



Pooch Treats Christmas Pooch Stocking Dog Treat 5pk | **\$22.99**

Santa knows all dogs deserve a special treat for Christmas. This pack includes two baked biscuits, two dog-friendly candy bars and natural fruit drops.

Available from: bit.ly/49INIUX



All Day Tree Trunk Doorknob Hanging Teaser Cat Toy | **\$11.00**

Save your Christmas tree ornaments and entertain your cat at the same time. Simply hang the teaser onto the doorknob for you cat to play with.

Available from: petbarn.com.au/all-day-tree-trunk-doorknob-hanging-teaser-cat-toy

Happy holidays!

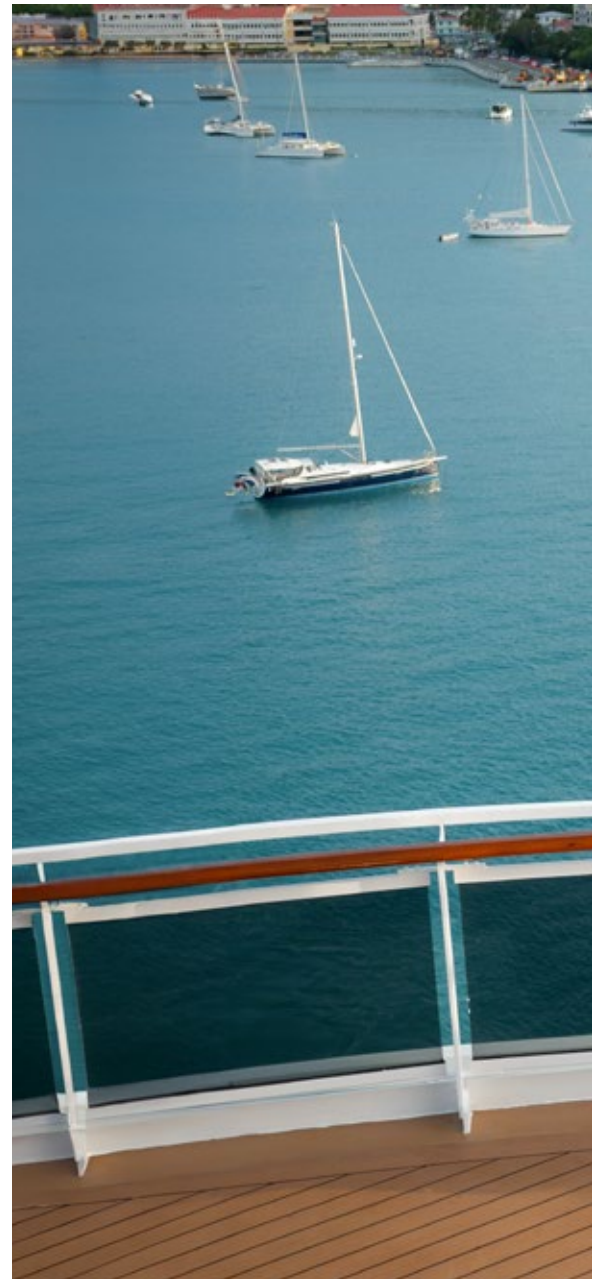
Cruise into the New Year

It's the end of the year - the perfect time to think about adventures for 2024! Experienced travel agent Norman Pressey from Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront shares great tips and special offers available to all Living Gems homeowners.

"We've had a great response to the group holidays featured in *Thrive* magazine this year," he said.

In response to demand, Norman has created a website - integritytravel.com.au - for those who want to check out a curated list of holidays, many of which he and his wife Carol will join as guides.

"I also appreciate that people may not want to commit to a holiday in advance or may wish to choose their own adventure, so I've also included some helpful tools that will make booking that dream holiday much easier," he said.



Important insurance

Did you know that 11 countries have reciprocal health care agreements for Australian Medicare card holders? While that can give you a little peace of mind, it is no substitute for travel insurance as services vary from country to country.

"And that's not to mention having coverage for luggage loss and trip cancellations," said Norman.

By booking via Norman's website, Living Gems homeowners can save up to 25 percent on Nib Travel insurance.

Money matters

Understandably, many people don't like using their credit cards overseas, but you can arrange a Mastercard Cash Passport.

"This allows you to hold up to 11 different currencies on the card which is ideal for holidays across numerous countries," said Norman. "Just nominate how much money you want to keep on the card and the exchange rate is locked in. The card can be used at overseas ATMs and in stores.

"It is really easy to top up the card if you need more spending money."

See the sights

It can be daunting to visit a new city for the first time. Worldwide City Sightseeing operates hop-on-hop-off buses that operate in 90 countries around the world.

"You can see all the highlights without having to worry about finding a taxi or using public transport," said Norman. "You can purchase vouchers before you go which will be valid for use for between three months and 12 months depending on the city."



Choose to cruise

Norman is also adding a booking engine to his website that will enable anyone to book a cruise anywhere in the world. The service also features upfront pricing and cabin preference. This means you can get a group of friends together and create your own group holiday.

At right is one of the great package deals Norman has put together for Living Gems homeowners.

Autumn in the Canadian Rockies and Alaskan Inside Passage Cruise

9 September to 1 October 2024

Experience Canada and Alaska at a gorgeous time of year. Starting in Vancouver, discover the natural splendour of British Columbia and with visits to iconic national parks of Banff and Jasper and an overnight stay in the stunning ski resort of Whistler, home of the 2010 Winter Olympics before heading to Vancouver Island. Then enjoy a cruise from Seattle to Alaska, visiting Juneau, Skagway and Glacier Bay returning to Victoria via Ketchikan's breathtaking wilderness. Return flights to Australia depart from Seattle.

From \$8675 per person twin share. Includes economy airfares, transfers, cruise, accommodation, breakfast and some dinners.

Amber

Sales Managers' Message

Everyone at Amber by Living Gems is feeling the festive spirit after a smashing open day and the resident Christmas dinner and luncheon.

With more than 150 in attendance, the recent open day was a huge hit with guests enjoying a gourmet lunch and a tour of the five display homes on show. With several expressions of interest received from the day, Amber residents will soon be meeting new neighbours.

Further progress to the Country Club has seen installation of doors, architraves, skirting and joinery. Residents are thrilled that external club facilities such as the lawn bowls shade structure foundations have commenced.

Amber residents celebrated the Christmas spirit with a special event at the stunning Whitehouse Waterford. Dancing, live music and lucky door prize draws were enjoyed along with the tasty cuisine served.



Amber by Living Gems Sales Team

Tameeka Manson, Sales Manager
M 0407 766 414 | E tameeka@livinggems.com.au

Lynda Ruddell, Sales Manager
M 0456 383 269 | E lynda@livinggems.com.au

The New Year ahead is looking bright with the opening of the Country Club and construction of final homes at the resort expected to be completed in 2024.

We wish our valued residents, contract holders, and colleagues, a very merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

If you are considering a move into Amber by Living Gems, this may be your last chance to secure a stunning new home within our resort. Call Lynda or I on 1800 317 381 – we look forward to answering all your questions.



Christmas presence

If you're looking to keep Christmas in your heart, just as Ebenezer Scrooge promised, there's no better place to begin than in Logan.

A Very Dickens Christmas | Friday, 8 December

After last year's successful event, A Very Dickens Christmas twilight markets and carols returns bigger and better than ever to the Beenleigh Historical Village and Museum between 4pm and 9pm. Featuring plenty of stall holders with unique Christmas gifts, food and live music, don't forget to bring the grandkids so they can say hello to Santa. Entry is \$2.

Address: Beenleigh Historical Village and Museum, 205 Main Street, Beenleigh

For more information: bit.ly/47dnubu

Christmas lunch at Grand Chameleon | Sunday, 10 December

Bring family and friends together for a wonderful traditional Christmas lunch at the Grand Chameleon restaurant on Tamborine Mountain. Experience the authentic flavours of an Australian Christmas with succulent roast pork with apple sauce or traditional roast beef with Yorkshire pudding and pavlova topped with ripe summer fruits for a truly Down Under celebration. Bookings are essential.

Address: Grand Chameleon, 216-222 Long Road, Tamborine Mountain

To book: grandc.com.au

City of Logan Christmas Carols

Saturday, 9 December

Head to the Kingston Butter Factory Cultural Precinct for the City of Logan's largest Christmas event. Bring your own picnic or enjoy a fantastic variety of delicious foods. Have a free photo with Santa, enjoy free face painting, and get on board the fun amusement rides. It wouldn't be a Christmas celebration without carols so get ready to sing along! Finish off the night's festivities with a beautiful fireworks display. The event starts at 2pm.

Address: Kingston Butter Factory Cultural Precinct, 270 Jacaranda Avenue, Kingston

For more information: bit.ly/47enasZ



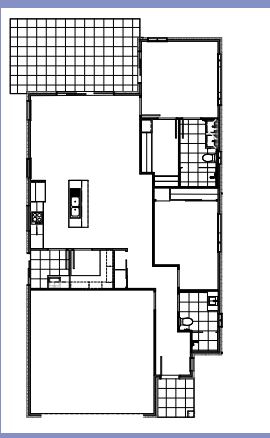
Villa 210 | Emu

Darling

\$540,000

-  2
-  2
-  2
-  1
-  WIP

The Darling is a smart two-bedroom home that is ready to move into today. Featuring an expansive alfresco area with direct access from both the living room and the master bedroom, this home features a thoughtful layout designed for both relaxation and entertaining. The light and airy kitchen also features a walk-in pantry. Make a lifechanging move today to Amber by Living Gems!



Caboolture Riverfront

Sales Manager's Message

I would like to wish all the staff and residents of Living Gems a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

It has been a fabulous year being back at Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront, meeting residents past and present and being able to show off their beautiful amenities to prospective buyers.

I always tell our buyers that you are buying the lifestyle, and it is residents who make this resort so special. You can feel this as soon as you enter the gates at Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront, and it continues as you walk through the wonderful facilities.

There is always something happening here at Living Gems. Our Country Club is now decked out with decorations and ready for the festive season with carols in the

gardens and twinkling lights making the summer nights glow bright. If you have friends or family looking for a place to call home, I still have three brand-new homes remaining and resales which become available from time to time.

Call in and see me or call 1800 718 417 to schedule a tour. The sales office will be closed from Friday, 22 December and will reopen on Tuesday, 2 January 2024.

Glenys Lowry
Sales Manager



Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront Sales
Glenys Lowry, Sales Manager
M 0438 660 436 | E info@livinggems.com.au



For illustrative purposes only



Christmas cheer in Caboolture

December is a time for thrills and spills in Caboolture, so grab a group of friends together and enjoy the many activities you'll find at the Caboolture Showgrounds this season.

Caboolture Rodeo Finals | Saturday, 2 December

Find that little bit of country that lives in all of us and enjoy a day of entertainment and skilful riding at the Caboolture rodeo finals. The junior events begin at 7am with the senior events starting at 5pm followed by an after party with Dee Jaye Bux live on stage.

Address: Caboolture Showgrounds, 140 Beerburrum Road, Caboolture

For bookings: bit.ly/3QVCO6G

Caboolture Christmas Twilight Markets | Saturday, 16 December

Get that last-minute Christmas shopping done at the Caboolture Christmas twilight markets. Browse through fascinating market stalls, enjoy delicious street food and keep an eye out for Santa who will have a treat for all the good children this year. The markets run between 4pm and 9pm.

Address: Caboolture Showgrounds, 140 Beerburrum Road, Caboolture

For more information: caboolturecountrymarkets.com.au/#information

Monster Thrillmasters | Friday, 29 December

Cap off 2023 with an event that the grandkids will love (not to mention the big kids too!). The monster trucks are back at the Caboolture Showgrounds with incredible stunts from the FMX back-flipping dare devils, flame-throwing jet van, wheel-standing Jeep, and comedy cars. The evening will end with a thrilling fireworks display. Tickets start at \$45.

Address: Caboolture Showgrounds, 140 Beerburrum Road, Caboolture

For bookings: bit.ly/3SGqAA3



Villa 311 | Facade Two

Snowy

\$850,000



3



2



2



1



WIP

Ready to move into and as impressive as its river namesake, the Snowy is the ideal entertainer. It hosts dining and living spaces that open out onto the charming alfresco area while the home chef will be delighted with the amazing gourmet kitchen that includes a large island bench and walk-in pantry as well as a skylight over the dining area. A beautifully proportioned master bedroom features a double vanity ensuite bathroom and walk-in wardrobe. Two more bedrooms are separated by a central bathroom.



Resort Round-up

Welcome to another edition of our Resort Round-up. There is never a dull moment at our Living Gems communities with so many activities and fun things happening all the time.

The skeletons came out of the closets, the ghouls were awaiting, and the zombie wait-staff served such delights as 'chilled monkey brains' and 'blood transfusion bags' at **Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront** recently.

The Halloween-themed dinner was in full swing and ghosts, spiders, witches and other frightful characters were everywhere to be seen.

The king and queen of the night were named with the voodoo high priestess and pirate skeleton (aka Maus and Kev, the resort managers), taking out the crowns and goblets on the night. Entertainment was by the residents with many taking part in karaoke throughout the evening.

The residents of **Living Gems Pacific Paradise** have breathed new life into their Country Club by making it a hub of artistic expression.

Every month they take turns displaying new art, turning the club into an ever-evolving gallery. Following up on a highly successful talent show held in October which saw residents draw inspiration from the world of musical theatre and modern plays, the resort achieved another significant milestone by organising a highly successful fundraiser.

A fabulous fun-filled and inspirational 'Illuminating India'

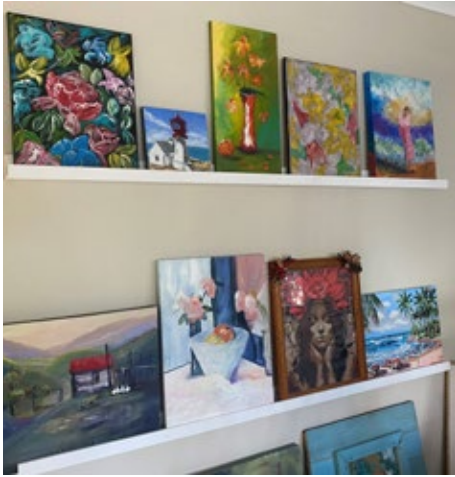
event delivered a soiree of sights, sounds, and experiences to 104 attendees who supported the wonderful cause. The funds raised will support women in India.

Sapphire by Living Gems is well known for the community's generosity and care for others. During the past year residents donated about \$7000 to charity through the staging of several events. These included a cent auction charity night which raised money to assist research into Motor Neurone Disease. A dinner was then held and a cheque for \$3222 was handed over to the MND and Me charity.

The Sapphire Art Group held a market day with sales from Devonshire teas, art sales and a raffle, raising \$1100 for the Night Light, a charity helping the homeless in and around Beenleigh. In addition, the Sapphire Card Making Group with Pam, organised the making of over 400 cards, and these were donated to Care Outreach, who send parcels to farmers and others at Christmas. A job well done! Thank you to all who took part.

Residents at Amber by Living Gems have enjoyed a number of social get-togethers including a very successful street party hosted by Teresa and Bob Johnson and a most enjoyable card afternoon held by Dave Skinner.









Share your photos and news with us!

If you would like to have your photos featured in the *Thrive Resort Round-up* next month, or have a story idea to share, we'd love to hear from you. Send your photos to us before the 15th of each month to ensure your shots can be included in the next edition. Email us at content@livinggems.com.au



Santa's Reindeer Word Search

Find all the words listed hidden in the grid of letters. They can be found in straight lines up, down, forwards, backwards or even diagonally. To reveal the mystery answer, look for a word that is hidden in the puzzle, but not in the word list.

CARIBOU
 REINDEER
 DASHER
 DANCER
 PRANCER
 VIXEN
 COMET
 CUPID
 DONNER
 BLITZEN
 RUDOLPH
 RED-NOSED
 FLYING
 SPEEDY
 ANTLERS

HOOVES
 HERD
 ROOFTOP
 LISTEN
 WATCH
 BELLS
 MAGICAL

C	D	W	Y	S	R	A	R	B	N	K	M	C	P	S	G
A	I	A	F	L	E	E	N	E	D	E	A	Q	R	Y	N
R	P	T	Z	L	I	E	N	A	D	R	Z	E	Z	Y	I
R	U	C	A	E	N	R	S	N	I	N	L	T	D	H	Y
O	C	H	K	B	D	H	M	B	O	T	O	E	I	P	L
T	H	O	O	V	E	S	O	A	N	D	E	S	L	L	F
S	K	P	J	R	E	U	T	A	G	P	G	I	E	O	B
R	E	C	N	A	R	P	O	E	S	I	S	M	D	D	A
R	E	C	N	A	D	R	F	V	M	T	C	R	I	U	U
N	E	X	I	V	B	B	N	X	E	O	E	A	W	R	P
R	O	O	F	T	O	P	O	N	I	H	C	M	L	F	J

QUESTION: WHAT FOOD DO REINDEER LIKE BEST? **ANSWER:** _____

Christmas Crossword

Celebrate this festive season by tackling our jolly christmas crossword. It is sure to bring a smile to your face!

Across

2. Hook-shaped confectionery, ... cane
4. Christmas song, Jingle ...
5. Satin strip for a present
8. Twists
9. Christmas tree topper
12. Tiny twinkling ornaments, ... lights
14. Wine gums & fruit drops
16. Heavenly being
17. "City sidewalks, busy sidewalks; Dressed in holiday style; In the air; There's a feeling of Christmas," begins the song... Bells (6)

20. Crackers (3,4)

23. "All I want for Christmas is my ... front teeth"
24. Wax light
25. How many drummers were drumming (along with the eleven pipers piping)
26. The Holly And The ...
27. Wreath colour

Down

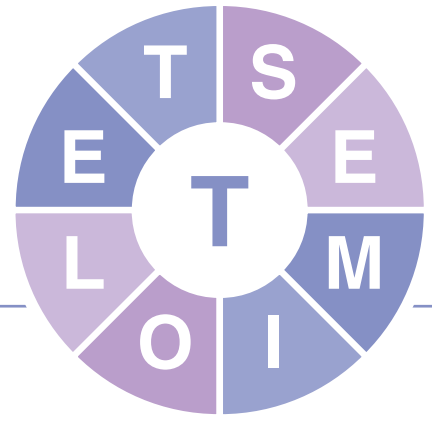
1. Who, according to the song, was kissing mummy underneath the mistletoe
3. Reply to Virginia's famous letter to the New York Sun

4. Small fruits

6. Spheres
7. Handheld firework
8. What you hang by the chimney
10. "And so up to the housetop the reindeer soon flew, with the sleigh full of ... and St Nicholas too"
11. Xmas glitter
12. Metallic paper
13. Home-made decoration, paper ...
15. Yuletide fir, Christmas ...
17. "In the meadow we can build a ...; And pretend that he's a circus clown," went Winter Wonderland
18. Frilly fabric

Wheel Words

Create as many words of 4 letters or more using the given letters once only but always including the middle letter. Do not use proper names or plurals. See if you can find the 9-letter word using up all letters.

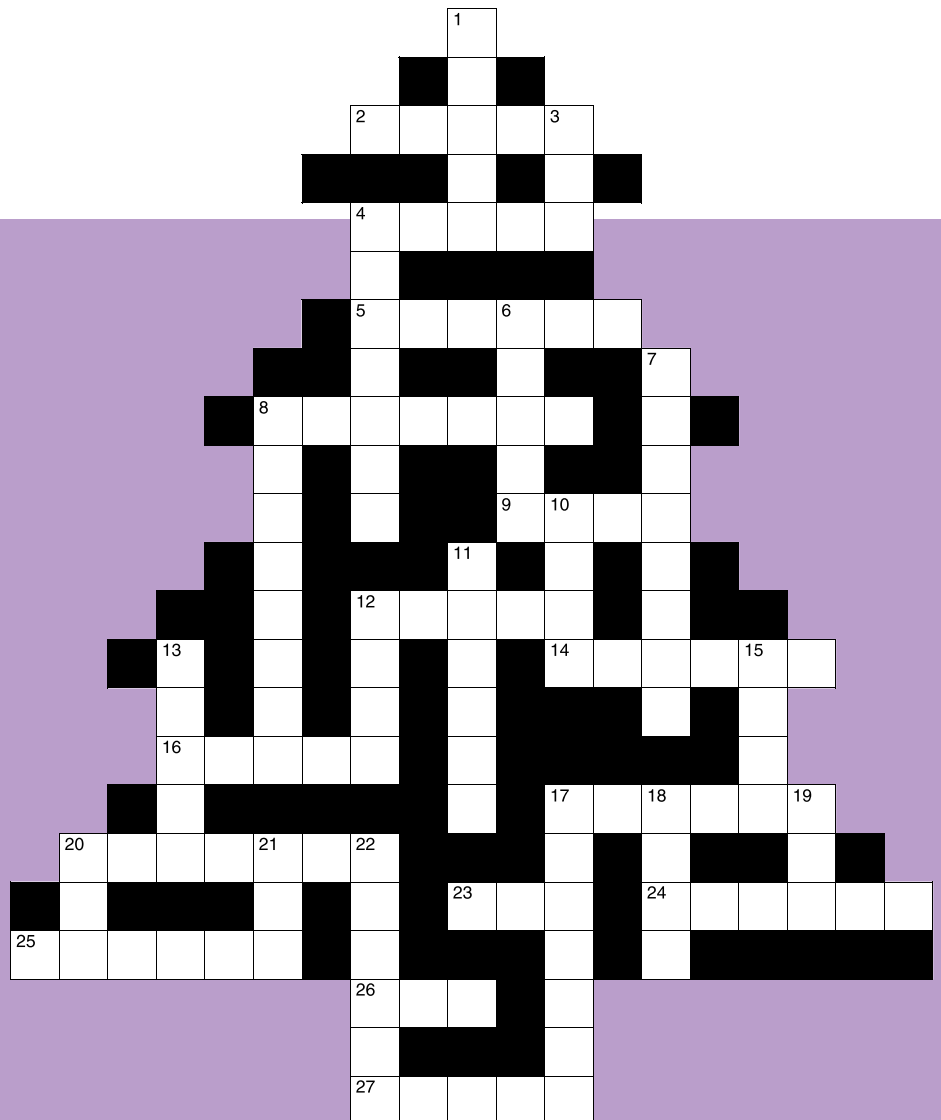


22 Good | 26 Very Good | 30+ Excellent

- 19. Santa's favourite colour
- 20. Gift adornment
- 21. How many partridges my true love sent to me
- 22. Great for tying up packages

Last months solution

G	R	A	B	I	S	M	K	A	T	E		
I	E	A	R	T	H	T	R	E	M	O	R	L
B	E	R	N	E	R	O	N	I	R	O		
E	A	D	A	M	E	W	A	G	S	P		
S	A	T	L	F	E	W	T	I	R	E		
E	S	P	E	T	A	M	E	N				
W	A	S	H	M	E	S	S	Y	A	G	E	D
A	O	V	A	L	T	A	R	S	O			
D	A	R	T	R	E	C	A	P	E	A	S	E
U	S	E	R	A	G	F	L	U				
G	A	P	E	S	U	E	I	T	W	O		
A	T	A	L	K	S	L	E	G	O	W		
P	A	U	L	N	T	A	O	P	E	N		
E	R	E	P	O	S	I	T	I	O	N	S	E
S	E	E	S	B	C	R	E	Y	E	D		





White Christmas Trifle



White Christmas trifle is a delightful dessert that's perfect for the holiday season.

Chef Matt Conquest shares his tried and true recipe for this easy to make and oh-so-delicious festive favourite. This trifle can be made in individual glasses or made in a trifle stand for all to enjoy.

Ingredients

(Serves 4-6)

For the White Christmas layer:

200g white chocolate, chopped
2 cups Rice Bubbles
1 cup desiccated coconut
1 cup mixed dried fruit, such as raisins, cranberries, and chopped apricots
395g can sweetened condensed milk

For the trifle layers:

1 litre of vanilla custard
1 pack of your favourite jelly
1 cup heavy cream, whipped
500g of sponge cake
1 pack mini marshmallows
Fresh berries, strawberries, blueberries and raspberries, for the layers and garnish

For the top

Additional whipped cream
Toasted coconut flakes
Mini marshmallows
Ferrero Rocher, chocolate and coconut varieties
White chocolate shavings

Method

Start by making the White Christmas layer:

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the Rice Bubbles, desiccated coconut, mixed dried fruit.
2. In a separate microwave-safe bowl, melt the white chocolate in 20-30 second intervals, stirring between each interval until smooth.
3. Add the melted white chocolate and sweetened condensed milk to the dry ingredients. Mix until everything is well combined.
4. Pour this mixture into a lined baking dish and press it down firmly.
5. Allow it to set in the refrigerator for a couple of hours or until it's firm. Once set, cut it into shapes (stars or Christmas trees). Cut the rest into small cubes or break it into chunks.

Prepare the trifle layer:

1. In a trifle dish or individual trifle glasses, start by layering a portion of the white chocolate Christmas mixture.
2. Follow with a layer of sponge cake. You can optionally drizzle a bit of sherry or liqueur on the cake layer if desired.
3. Spoon a layer of vanilla custard over the cake layer.
4. Add a layer of whipped cream on top of the custard and then your soft set jelly.
5. Repeat the layers until the trifle dish is filled, ending with a layer of whipped cream.

To finish, add the topping:

1. Garnish the top with more white chocolate shapes, whipped cream, Ferrero Rocher, assorted summer berries, coconut flakes, and white chocolate shavings.

This dessert is a beautiful and delicious addition to your holiday table, combining the sweetness of White Christmas with the richness of trifle. Make this the day before for a hassle-free Christmas dessert. Enjoy!

Frame that shot

This is our last photo competition entry for 2023! Thank you to everyone who shared their wonderful snaps with us over the past 12 months. We've enjoyed seeing some fabulous destinations, favourite local spots, macro shots, action photos, best pet shots and lots more from our homeowners.

As a Living Gems resident, you can submit as many photos of your choice each month and be in the running to be selected as the month's overall photo winner for the Living Gems community.

Each month, one winning photo will be chosen from across all Living Gems resorts and featured on

the back page of *Thrive* magazine and shared on the Living Gems Facebook page, so get your exclusive bragging rights ready and share your shots with us.

Send your submissions, with your full name, resort name and where the photo was taken, to content@livinggems.com.au



December Photo Winner

Congratulations to this month's winner, Valerie Cole from Opal by Living Gems in Logan Village. This lovely country idyll is well-known to homeowners, as it is in their own backyard!

Submission Guidelines

Photos must be:

- Taken horizontally
- At least 2MB in size
- Taken by you

Amber

1 Manuka Road
Logan Village QLD 4207

1800 317 381

Pacific Paradise

596 David Low Way
Pacific Paradise QLD

1800 978 388

Maleny

23 Macadamia Drive
Maleny QLD 4552

07 5429 6108

Caboolture Riverfront

176 Torrens Road
Caboolture South QLD 4510

1800 718 417

Opal

42 Quinze Creek Road
Logan Village QLD 4207

07 5547 2333

Sapphire

196 Logan Street
Eagleby QLD 4207

07 3804 7655

Gold Coast

70 Hansford Road
Coombabah QLD 4216

07 5577 5899

Ruby

225 Logan Street
Eagleby QLD 4207

07 3386 1771

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