

# Living Gems\* Thrive

JUNE 2023

Going native

*Wild for Australian native flora*

Unbelievable

Helping sugarbag  
bees thrive

Thumbs up

Community garden green  
thumbs

Eco-friendly travel

Top Aussie eco-tourism  
destinations

[livinggems.com.au](http://livinggems.com.au)

# Message from the CEO

Welcome to the June issue of *Thrive!* With World Environment Day taking place on 5 June, this month's magazine focuses on sustainability and the environment with lots of great stories to inspire and educate, including a guide to creating your very own vertical garden, tips on how to grow vegetables from scraps, and for those looking to enjoy environmentally-friendly road tripping, a list of top eco-tourism destinations across Australia.

We also share a great story about Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront's active and enthusiastic garden group who put their hearts and souls into the resort's magnificent veggie garden and a Living Gems Toowoomba couple's lovingly curated native garden.

In news around our resorts, I'm pleased to share that the commercial construction team continues to make excellent progress on Amber by Living Gems' magnificent two-storey Country Club. Structural steelworks commenced last month, and the team anticipates completing the lower-level linings soon. We also look forward to an exciting milestone in June, with roof works being completed. When finished, this superb facility will provide a fantastic lifestyle hub for homeowners with everything from a swimming pool, ten-pin bowling alley, luxury cinema, bar and cafe. Watch this space for updates!

At our lovely lifestyle resort Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront, the residential construction team was excited to complete the last homes in the Final Stage. These lovely premium homes look stunning – all are set on oversized sites boasting wonderful green views – and are sure to impress. If you're interested in enjoying the fabulous lifestyle on offer at this friendly, established resort, contact the team today (see contact details on page 26).

Last month on the idyllic Darling Downs at Living Gems Toowoomba, it was wonderful to see our latest homeowners move into their brand-new homes in the Final Stage. Work has been progressing well on the new off-leash dog run with landscaping now completed. The final touches are being made to this new facility and we anticipate the space opening for our canine residents to enjoy in the first week of June.

I hope you enjoy reading the June issue of *Thrive* and I look forward to bringing you more Living Gems news and updates next month.



**Adrian Puljich**  
CEO



# Caboolture's top-tier bowls facility complete

Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront hit a major milestone last month with the resort's bowling green refurbishment now complete.

Living Gems Manager of Property and Assets Ben Livingstone said the quality of the facility was among the best on offer in Australia industry-wide.

"We made a significant investment to accomplish a top-notch upgrade," Ben said.

Director of Bioscapes Group and the man behind the refurbishment, Dave Bentley, said the facility's size and scope were top tier.

"In all the projects I've been involved with, Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront maintains the highest level of quality. It's one of only eight bowling green rinks we've done in this size and is undercover, so residents can play any time of day including nighttime," he said.

To celebrate the refurbishment, the Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront Bowls Committee hosted a barbecue with about 100 people attending, together with new resort managers Maureen and Kevin Johnson.

Ben said he was encouraged to bowl on the day and had gained a new appreciation for the sport.

"They pulled me into the game, and I really enjoyed it. I wouldn't mind making this an annual event with the crew," he said.

Bowls committee chairperson, John Skene expressed gratitude to Dave and his team at the event.

"A huge thank you to Dave from Bioscapes and his team for the great job they did on the new

surface and for supplying the meat for the barbecue," John said.

Dave said he was impressed with the high standard of all the facilities at Living Gems.

"There's more social hubs around Living Gems than other over-50s resorts I've seen," he said.

"It's great how residents interact with each other and how active they are within the community. It's just fantastic, you really notice the difference here."

The Final Stage is selling now with a limited number of premium homes remaining. If you're ready for a lifechanging move to Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront, contact the team today (turn to page 26 for details).



# Growing goodness

## *Veggie gardens given the thumbs up*

Joy, heartbreak but ultimately satisfaction - they've been the emotions felt by the dedicated Green Thumbs Garden Group volunteers in the three years since their bountiful vegetable gardens were established at Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront.

It all began in 2020 when a small group of residents took a walk along the parklands with the resort managers to find a suitable location for a community vegetable garden. With the support of Living Gems, raised garden beds were created and the homeowners went to work improving the soil and raising funds for garden tools and fertilisers.

“Our first plan of attack before we started growing anything was to feed the soil and build it up,” said organiser Rayda Wilson.

“Once we felt we could start growing seedlings, our appointed ‘purchasing officer’ Bob Pfeiffer was given the task of going to the Caboolture



Markets each weekend to buy small numbers of seedlings.”

The Green Thumbs Garden Group eschewed the use of pesticides to create an organic garden growing a wide variety of vegetables including beetroots, radishes, leeks, lettuces as well as Asian greens.

“We have had far more good results than bad, we’re happy to say,” said Rayda. “But we do know that aphids love bok choy – we lost a full crop to that pest!”

Heartbreak came in 2022 when the Caboolture River flooded. The parklands were metres under water – and so too were the vegetable gardens.

“It was heartbreaking to see all our hard work underwater,” said Rayda.

“But once we were given the all-clear to assess the gardens, we were determined to start again.”

Hamburger fundraising nights arranged by the homeowners, plus support from Living Gems, saw the gardens grow once more.

“We are ever grateful to our wonderful residents and park owner for supporting us,” said Rayda.

And finally, there is satisfaction.

“We’re only a few weeks off a good crop for 2023 and getting ready for our weekly market stalls at the resort,” said Rayda.

“We could not have done this without the support and hard work of our garden volunteers and also that of our resort residents and the park owner.”

The Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront Green Thumbs Gardening Group welcomes volunteers to join them. The group holds early morning working bees with plantings most Mondays and a weekly weeding and watering roster. Homeowners are welcome to contact Rayda or Barbara Petrie.



# Free and clear

## *Protecting nature by design*

There is a remarkable system that exists under the gardens and the roads around Living Gems resorts.

It operates silently and without fuss but plays an important role in protecting our environment. It's known as stormwater harvesting and it ensures runoff that eventually rejoins the waterways is free from pollutants.

At Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront, the only sign of this special system above ground is a garden on the southwestern corner of the site with grassy-style plants called a bioretention system.

"Bioretention systems provide significant sediment and nutrient removal from stormwater," said Fred Jedrasiak, head of Living Gems' in-house design team.

"It utilises a sandy loam soil to filter runoff. Sediment particles and suspended solids are trapped in the vegetation and the surface of the bioretention basin. Microorganisms and vegetation remove dissolved nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus."

While nitrogen and phosphorus are important plant nutrients, it is possible to have too much of a good thing. When that happens,

waterways can become clogged with algae which affects aquatic plants and animals that live in rivers and streams.

Comprehensive stormwater detention and harvesting systems like the ones used in Living Gems resorts are designed to minimise the impact on the surrounding environment.

Plants used in bioretention basins are sedges including *Carex appressa*, *Ficinia nodosa*, and *Lepidosperma laterale*. They are preferred to other types of plants as taller, denser vegetation provides better water treatment.

Then underground stormwater systems take the water runoff that comes off roads and filters it before it goes back into the waterways.

Living Gems' civil design team invests a great deal of time at each location to understand the topography of the site and develop a stormwater and waterways management plan to ensure water runoff meets environmental requirements.

"There is a lot of work which goes into calculating the size of stormwater treatment systems," said Frank. "The



most common is the Model for Urban Stormwater Improvement Conceptualisation (MUSIC) which allows us to work out the types and number of these stormwater filtration systems required across the resort.

“It’s quite a complex set of calculations which is why specialist software is used.”

The remarkable stormwater system receives regular checks throughout the year to ensure everything is working as intended and the maintenance management plan is reviewed each year to monitor changes in the vegetation, the presence of fauna, as well as its operational efficiency.

So, the next time when you’re watching the rain fall, just give a little thought to what happens to all that water before it reaches the river.

## Parts of a bioretention system

- A basin design allows evaporation of water while the plants naturally filter out excess nutrients.
- Beneath the planting is a filter media – typically a sandy loam which transitions to a layer of coarse sand and then gravel before reaching the native soil.
- A perforated pipe takes the naturally filtered water to the waterway.

## Be a hero with Zero

To celebrate World Environment Day on 5 June, *Thrive* is giving you the opportunity to make an environmental clean sweep in your kitchen with a chance to win a Go For Zero zero-waste cleaning pack.

The pack includes:

- Bottle brush
- Scrubbing dish brush suitable for kitchens and bathrooms
- Long handle dish brush
- Replacement dish brush head
- Reclaimed wood soap holder to help make soap last longer
- 4-in-1 dish and laundry block (300g) with anti-bacterial and anti-fungal benefits that cleans dishes, clothes, surfaces and hands

All products are made from plant materials and can be used on multiple surfaces.

To win, be the first to email [content@livinggems.com.au](mailto:content@livinggems.com.au) with ‘I want to be a hero’ in the subject line.

The winner will be announced in the July edition of *Thrive*.

**go for zero**  
good for you & the planet





# Glorious grevilleas!

## *Going wild for Australian natives*

When Lex and Jenny Van Der Stoep left their large home and garden in Bracken Ridge for a simply lifechanging move to Living Gems Toowoomba, the one thing they were determined not to leave behind was a beautiful native garden.

Over the past nine months they've worked to create a beautiful bird-attracting garden featuring mostly native plants with a smattering of exotics for variety.

"Lex and I will be away travelling for the next two-and-a-half months," says Jenny. "We love the great outdoors, heading west to the bush and away from the big cities.

"It was important for us to have a garden that was self-sustaining, which this one is. It requires only minimal watering and for that we have an automatic system or one of





The Van Der Stoeps won't be the only ones. Prominent in this native garden are four beautiful species of grevillea that will attract plenty of birds for its sweet nectar.

**Grevillea 'Canterbury Gold'**

A dense low spreading shrub with soft grey-green leaves, and bunches of gold flowers most of the year.

**Grevillea 'Canberra Gem'**

Medium-sized evergreen shrub with an abundance of small pink to red spider-like flowers during spring.

**Grevillea 'Rosy's Baby'**

Well suited to Toowoomba's temperate climate, this grevillea features little strawberries-and-cream flowers perfect for small nectar-feeding birds to get their beaks into. This flowers from winter through to early summer.

**Grevillea 'Honey Gem'**

This large, orange flowered grevillea is one of the most popular varieties to grow and makes a great screening plant.

In addition to the grevilleas, Jenny has introduced the Hardenbergia Mini Haha. It's a native climber with long, dark green, leathery leaves and masses of little purple flowers which bees and butterflies love.

Rounding out the garden are strappy ornamental grasses - the Carex Dusky Fountain which has cinnamon-red colours foliage and the Evergreen Giant Liriope which offers bell-shaped purple-blue flowers in spring and summer.

Among the birds the Van Der Stoeps are likely to see are Red-browed Finches, Brown Honeyeater, Striated Pardalote, Willie Wagtails, Superb Fairy-wrens Pale-headed Rosellas and King Parrots - all of which are native to the Toowoomba area.

Including native plants in your garden is an important way you can support the environment in a sustainable way, while providing a natural habitat for native birds.

Not sure how to include native plants in your garden? The Australian Native Plant Society has great information and resources: [anpsa.org.au](http://anpsa.org.au).

*“It was important for us to have a garden that was self-sustaining, which this one is.”*

our lovely Living Gems neighbours comes in and waters for us.”

Forget the out-of-date notion that native plants are finicky and difficult to grow, the secret is in the preparation.

“We spent a bit of time laying out the garden and giving it a natural feel with logs and a dry riverbed effect,” said Jenny. “We put the focus on bird attracting plants and we’ve included a bird bath too.”

“It looks lovely now, but we are looking forward to spring when everything comes into flower.”



# Lending a helping hand

## *Championing the cause to help those in need*

Combining a love of cooking and gardening, Punitha Le Jambre has championed the cause to help the homeless and those in need in the Maleny area.

A Living Gems Maleny over-50s lifestyle resort homeowner for the past decade, Punitha has been using her cooking skills to create some healthy vegan meals for the less fortunate using vegetables from her own and neighbours' gardens.

"I volunteer at Mother's Kitchen which is based at the Nambour Community Centre and with the help of my generous neighbours here at Living Gems, we are able to provide fresh produce such as lettuce, spring onions, snow peas, broad beans and more. I also cook up meals and donate them," said Punitha, who spends most of her time helping others.

Mother's Kitchen began in August 2020 and is a monthly service, offering nutritious two-course lunches from the Nambour Community Centre for the homeless and those in vulnerable situations.

Punitha regularly cooks up a delicious selection of vegan meals such as red lentil curry, mixed vegetable curry, curry leaves with coconut, pumpkin and desiccated coconut chutney, papadums, lovely

gourmet salads plus desserts such as her special apple crumble.

"I taught myself how to cook and specialise in nutritious, economical and flavoursome meals," she said.

While cooking is a favourite pastime, spending time in the garden takes precedence, according to Punitha.

"I sacrifice a lot of time to the garden and particularly like to help others with their gardening, especially my neighbours. There is something very special about putting your hands in the soil, planting new seedlings, and seeing them grow and flourish."

Grateful neighbours often give back by donating money or goods to the charities Punitha helps.

"The residents have been wonderful and so generous. I regularly take a wheelie bin around to collect donations such as blankets, clothes, bed sheets, doonas, hygiene packs, non-perishable foods, utensils for the kitchen, and other small things, plus people drop their bottles to us for recycling and everyone is always so supportive," said Punitha.

Husband, Leo, has also been extremely helpful both in the garden and in supporting the long hours Punitha puts into her charity work. In addition to vegetables, the couple's garden also has some orchids which is a passion of Leo's.

The couple has also been maintaining the two parking area gardens at the resort.

Punitha's charity work is ongoing and sees her donating to Mother's Kitchen and their pantry on a monthly basis, cooking meals and also participating in fundraising events.

"I dedicate a lot of time to my charitable work, but it makes me happy, and it is so worth it to see how much delight it brings to others. What I do comes from the heart and is so fulfilling," she said.





# Hive of activity

## Getting a buzz out of helping sugarbag bees thrive

Bee populations are rapidly declining around the world due to pollution, the use of pesticides and habitat loss, among other factors - a fact that saw an Amber by Living Gems couple choose to establish a miniature beehive in their backyard.

Kathy Clarke and Peter O'Sullivan have only been in their beautiful new home within the over-50s lifestyle resort for eight weeks but already their hive of tiny Australian tetragonula carbonaria or sugarbag bees have become a focus in their back garden.

"We are into sustainability and want to do all we can to safeguard the environment for the future. It is the reason we have bees. We don't do it for the honey they produce, but because they are in such decline and we want to help increase their population," said Kathy.

The bees are great pollinators, and the couple currently hosts a few hundred of the tiny, sugarbag variety that are stingless and about the size of a fly. They will fly up to 500 metres from their hive to carry out their important work which entails transferring pollen from the male parts of a flower to the female parts.

Kathy explained that the process helps flowers produce seeds, which grow into new plants.

"Without bees, many plants and fruits would not be able to reproduce. This would have a devastating effect on human food supplies."

The eco-conscious couple decided to start small when it came to their bees which were given to them by Kathy's sister who also keeps bees.

"We plan to get another larger hive in which the bees could produce honey," said Kathy.

The couple has always tried to live sustainably, including on a hobby farm they called home in Tasmania for seven years.

"We had about 20 fruit trees, grew vegetables and tried to be self-sufficient and care for the environment wherever possible," she said.

Now settled back in their home state of Queensland, the couple's hive of sugarbag bees brings them much pleasure and are extremely easy to look after.

"You really don't have to do anything at all. Most days we enjoy sitting out on our alfresco area, sipping on a coffee, and watching them

come and go. They are fascinating little creatures and so good for the environment," said Kathy who encourages others to take steps to help the ecology of the planet.

"If everyone did just a little bit towards sustainability, it would really help a lot."

### Six reasons why bees are so important to the survival of humans

1. Bees are the world's most important pollinators of food crops.
2. Bees help to keep ecosystems in balance by pollinating plants.
3. Without bees, humans would not have many fruits, vegetables and nuts.
4. When bees pollinate plants, they ensure that other animals in the ecosystem have food.
5. Bees provide honey.
6. Bees are a vital part of the global food chain.





# Let's grow up

## *Vertical gardens - the latest craze in the name of sustainability*

Helping the environment by becoming more sustainable, while remaining a practical gardener, has never been easier with vertical gardens. And the best part? You are contributing to the sustainability movement!

Gardens usually grow outward along the ground. This is great when you have a large piece of land to work with, but you don't have to sacrifice on your garden if you have limited room. With vertical gardens, trellis gardens and living walls becoming more fashionable in backyards, now is the perfect time to consider one for your home.

Here's eight reasons why you should plan yours.

### *Grow more in less space*

Growing upwards saves space and provides extra garden room in small yards. Maze verticals are good to grow herbs in small spaces, and not only look great but also save ground space.

### *Better circulation and exposure*

Plants receive better sunlight exposure and air circulation in vertical formations rather than clustered together on the ground.

### *Less pests*

Bugs and insects find it more difficult to get into vertical gardens. They are mostly ground crawlers and burrowers. Infestations are easier to control when pests are at eye level.

### *Compensates for poor soil*

Vertical gardens help with soil irrigation as air and water exposure is more viable.

### *Easier access and weed control*

Weeds are better spotted in vertical gardens, making weeding easier not just on the eyes, but the knees too. Accessing plants is also simpler.

### *Creates microclimates*

Just as terrariums create their own microclimates due to moisture, vertical gardens do also. The restricted areas provide different climate opportunities.

### *Provides shelter, protection and privacy*

Depending on how you construct your living walls and vertical gardens, your design can create shelter from the sun, protection from wind, as well as desired privacy.

### *Easier and cleaner harvest*

Plant vines like cucumbers are vertical climbers. Keeping vegetables off the ground decreases risk of rotting and damaged flesh.

### *Aesthetics*

Living walls and vertical gardens are stunning to look at due to their architectural design and can create a masterpiece that's easy on the eye.

# Waste not want not

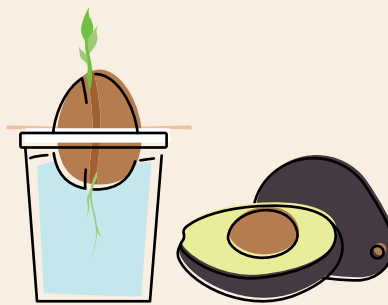
## 11 tips for growing vegetables from kitchen scraps

According to the National Food Waste Strategy Feasibility Study, Australia wastes 7.6 million tonnes of food each year, with 70 percent of edible food wasted.

This contributes approximately three percent of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions and 25 percent of water used - a wasted equivalent to five times the size of Sydney harbour.

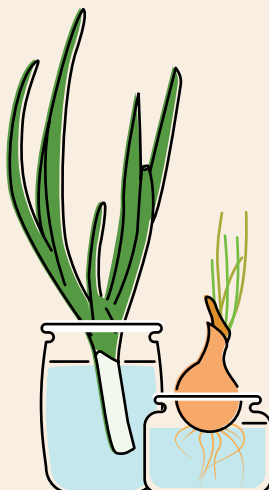
You may not already know, but certain fruit and vegetable scraps regrow and can provide your kitchen with fresh produce, saving you money while helping achieve Australia's sustainability goals. Next time you purchase plant produce, don't throw the scraps away, use these fun and simple vegetable-growing hacks.

For more information  
Food Waste Facts | Foodbank Victoria  
[bit.ly/3MGHFXk](https://bit.ly/3MGHFXk)



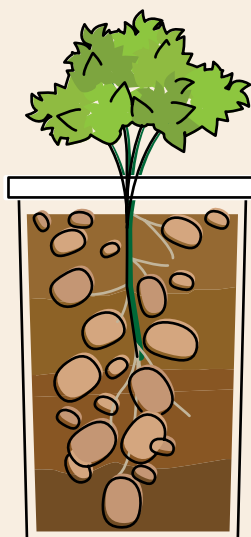
### Avocados

Save your avocado seed and place three toothpicks in a pyramid sequence into top half of seed. Submerge bottom of seed into glass of water, using toothpicks for balance. Change water weekly, ensuring pointy side of seed is facing upwards. Sprouts and roots will appear in approximately six weeks. Transplant into garden once two to three leaves are present.



### Onions, green onions and shallots

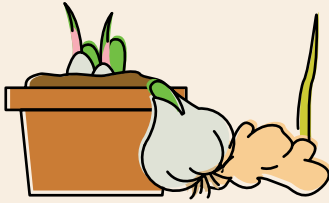
Plant bulbs into soil if roots remain or, place bulbs into glass of water in a sunny place until sprouts and roots appear. Transplant into soil. Onion bulbs will grow into a new plant, while green onions and shallots provide continuous vegetation to cut for salads and cooking.



### Potatoes

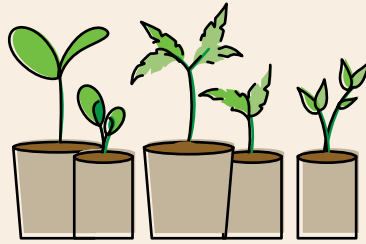
It's best to plant whole potatoes once shoots appear. Potatoes grow upwards and require the bottom of plant to be topped up with soil for maximum harvest. Use planter boxes if possible. As plants grow, top up with soil leaving approximately 10cm of foliage peeking out. Harvesting can be done after yellow flowers die and plant starts to brown. Takes approximately three months.





### Ginger and garlic

Ginger and garlic sprout naturally in dark places. Transfer sprouted pieces directly into soil and watch them grow. Harvest will be ready in a couple of months.



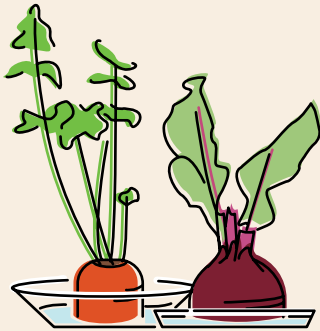
### Tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchinis, chillies, capsicums and pumpkins

Take seeds from seeded vegetables and plant seeds into pots. Once sprouts appear, replot into garden beds or grow directly in large pots.



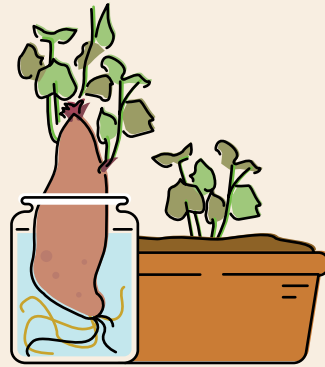
### Celery and fennel

Cut plant base off and place into bowl of water on a windowsill or in natural sunlight. Cut and use foliage that grows. Once roots sprout, plant directly into garden and cut what you need when required.



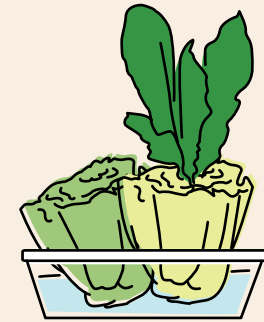
### Carrots, turnips, beetroot, radishes and parsnips

Root vegetables can regenerate from tip of plant. Cut tops off root vegetables and place in flat bowl with water and wet cotton in natural sunlight. Once tops sprout new green foliage, transplant into loose soil directly into garden. Harvest in approximately three months.



### Sweet potatoes

Snap shoots off the base of a potato and add to a glass of water until roots appear or plant a whole potato into a large pot or garden with shoots remaining above ground. Shoots are climbers but can grow at ground level if given enough room. After plants have flowered, sweet potatoes are ready to harvest at about three months.



### Lettuce and cabbage

Cut base off plant and place into bowl of water. Sit on windowsill or in natural sunlight, keeping water topped up. Sprouts will appear within a week and regrowth is completely edible and delicious in salads. Best varieties to use are romaine, radicchio, boston leaf, leaf lettuce and all cabbages.

### Pineapples

Break off the top/crown by hand or slice with a knife and let dry for a day or two. Plant foliage directly into pots of soil or garden with the cut area covered with soil and foliage exposed to sun. Water regularly and new pineapple will appear within two years.



### Herbs

All herbs can be grown from cuttings. Put plant stems into glass of water and wait. Once roots appear, plant directly into pots or garden.

# Nature at its best

## Travellers seeking out eco-friendly destinations

Ecotourism is tourism centred around the natural world, with a focus on sustainability, and it is a concept gaining popularity around the world.

This type of tourism encourages domestic and foreign travel that preserves the integrity of a natural environment and positively impacts the area's local people.

According to the International Ecotourism Society, ecotourists should be guided by the following principles:

- Minimise social, behavioural, and psychological impact
- Focus on environmental and cultural awareness
- Contribute to conservation, either physically or financially
- Respect and empower locals to ensure that your presence has a positive impact

In Queensland, ecotourism is a huge part of the \$23 billion tourism industry and the guiding principles and best practices of ecotourism aim to ensure that visitors, locals, and the environment can all benefit from a sustainable tourism industry.

Best practise guidelines ensure key considerations are habitat preservation, waste management and clean-up, species interaction and conservation, and protection of cultural heritage.

Among the biggest benefits of ecotourism is that it supports the maintenance and improvement of the areas used as tourist attractions.

Being a sustainable traveller helps us to keep exploring the eight million square kilometres of wilderness in Australia, taking enjoyment from the planet while preserving its beauty and healthy ecosystems.

The choices range from national parks and bushlands through to the urban and rural landscapes we live in – the options are endless. Produce that is ethically and sustainably sourced is also not hard to find on your travels with many roadside farm gates, clean-eating restaurants and cafes embracing a paddock-to-plate philosophy accessible on a drive through the country.

*Thrive* presents the following list of top eco-tourism destinations in Australia.



### *The Daintree Rainforest*

The Daintree Rainforest located in tropical North Queensland is over 135 million years old, making it the oldest rainforest in the world.

The largest rainforest in Australia, the Daintree Rainforest is over 1,200 square kilometres and is home to many animal and plant species not found anywhere else in the world.

The Daintree Rainforest is a popular day-trip destination from Cairns and Port Douglas. Visit Mossman Gorge, experience a croc cruise on the Daintree River, cross the river on the ferry and travel to Cape Tribulation.

### *Capricorn Caves*

Capricorn Caves is a multi-generational family-owned attraction located 23km north of Rockhampton and just minutes off the Pacific Coast Way.

As an advanced eco-tourism attraction, Capricorn Caves is home to an abundance of native wildlife and endangered species which you can discover on tour.



Experienced local guides deliver the captivating stories of this ancient Australian landscape on small-scale interpretive tours.

Set on 32.3 hectares, the spacious fully self-contained cabins and caravan sites are perfect for a short getaway or an extended stay.

### *Fraser Island*

Fraser Island, also known as K'gari, is the world's largest sand island and an area of remarkable natural beauty. It was listed as a World Heritage Area in 1992 to recognise the island's internationally significant nature features including its evolving dune, lake, soil and forest systems, the extent and age of which are outstanding examples of ongoing geological and biological processes. It also has many unique, natural landscapes.

Top places to see include Lake Boomanjin, Central Station, Boorangoora, Lake Wabby, Eli Creek, Kingfisher Bay and Lake Allom.

### *Mon Repos Beach*

Mon Repos is home to Australia's largest concentration of nesting sea turtles where you will find the Mon Repos Turtle Centre, which is located just a short walk to the beach. Historical, environmental and leisure activities are on offer at Mon Repos.

From mid-October to the end of April (during turtle season), public access to the beach is restricted from 6pm to 6am.

Mon Repos is well known in aviation history as the location of Bert Hinkler's first hangar trial flights in 1912.

Known as one of Queensland's longest beaches, and the most undeveloped, you will find basalt rocks bordering the beach and a rocky outcrop midway up the beach - a gorgeous location to capture the sunrises of the region.

### *Blue Mountains*

The Blue Mountains is a rugged region west of Sydney in New South Wales. Known for dramatic scenery, it encompasses steep cliffs,

eucalyptus forests, waterfalls and villages dotted with guesthouses, galleries and gardens.

It is best known for its soaring sandstone ridges blanketed in native bushland. Nestled within the wilderness lies charming mountain towns, ancient Aboriginal rock art and the iconic tourist attraction of Scenic World.

Katoomba, a major town in the area, borders Blue Mountains National Park and its bushwalking trails. Echo Point affords views of the storied Three Sisters sandstone rock formation.

### *Jenolan Caves*

Jenolan Caves is one of Australia's great natural spectacles: the most ancient open caves in the world with arguably the most beautiful limestone formations.

Tucked into a remote valley in the southern Blue Mountains National Park, this labyrinth of stalactite-lined chasms carved by pure underground rivers is a must-do extension for any visit to the Blue Mountains.

## Tips for planning your trip

### Choose a destination

Consider the time of year both in terms of school holidays and weather, as well as the duration of your trip, and then select a destination of interest. There are many from which to choose in Australia ranging from quaint seaside retreats to iconic outback locations and vast national parks which provide the optimum in eco-friendly experiences.

### Create a list of things to do

Australia is full of exciting and interesting things to do when visiting different locations. Research each area online and put together a list of some of the major attractions and activities to enjoy.

### Plan your itinerary

A travel itinerary is a great way to plan your time. There are many options available, especially for self-drive journeys and roadtrips where you are able to choose everything from the locations to the durations at each stop. You don't want to miss anything of interest. Always leave a little time between activities for added flexibility.

### Book accommodation

Finding the perfect accommodation for your holiday can make all the difference to your trip. The popular use of caravans and motorhomes has eliminated the need for some travellers to book accommodation in advance but if it is required, Australia has a plethora of options. Of course, caravan parks can also be booked in advance or staying off-the-grid is another option.

## Travel to these eco-friendly destinations in Australia

### Queensland

- Great Barrier Reef
- Fraser Island
- Mon Repos Beach
- Australia Zoo
- Daintree Rainforest
- Bungalow Bay Koala Village
- Capricorn Caves
- Reef HQ Aquarium
- Lizard Island Resort
- Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary

### New South Wales

- Surfing kangaroos at Pebbly Beach
- Lord Howe Island
- Blue Mountains
- Taronga Zoo
- Mount Kosciuszko
- Dolphins in Port Stephens
- Willandra Lakes Region
- Whale watching in Eden
- Jenolan Caves
- Royal National Park

### Victoria

- Moonlit Sanctuary
- Great Ocean Walk
- Peninsula Hot Springs
- Penguin Parade
- Grampians National Park
- Healesville Sanctuary
- Dandenong Ranges Botanic Garden
- Polperro swimming with dolphins
- Gippsland High Country tours
- Enchanted Adventure Garden





# Tips in nature's favour

## 12 eco hacks for the home

The 21st Century has introduced an environmentally friendly attitude towards living. Becoming more sustainable has never been simpler, so now is the time to upskill your knowledge on what to do to help the planet and start living a healthier and eco-friendlier life.

Once you decide you want to live more sustainably, just stick to the three Ps: plan, prepare and preserve. Here's 12 eco home hacks to get you started.

### 1. DIY natural beauty products

Research DIY chemical-free beauty products and make your own. Not only will you save money you will be using natural ingredients that are healthier for your body.

**Bodywash recipe:** Mix 90ml each of coconut oil, honey and castile soap together.

### 2. Dry clothes in sun

Dryers use between 1800-5000 kWh of energy per cycle. Hang washing outside and let nature do its job.

### 3. Plan weekly meals

Plan meals to decrease your weekly food wastage. You are less likely to overbuy and waste food this way. Consider batch meal cooking among friends. E.g. Four people, four different meals.

### 4. Reduce water waste

Use a bucket in the shower to catch running water to water plants with. Another easy tip is to turn off the tap while brushing your teeth.

### 5. Share your meat

Get a group of friends together and purchase an entire pig or cow. You will get better cuts, higher grade quality meat and the opportunity to use all of the animal. Talk to your butcher about meat sharing.

### 6. Compost

Throw vegetable scraps into a container while cooking and make your own compost that can be added to your garden.

### 7. Renew, reuse, recycle

The 10c per bottle program will include wine bottles later this year, so remember to keep saving bottles and get cash back from a recycling centre. Consider doing it as a community project.

### 8. Plant indoors

Plant some indoor plants in pots for the home. Not only are they pretty, indoor plants help filter the air you breathe.

### 9. Upcycle or buy second hand

Get creative and start thinking about upcycling an old piece of furniture or check out your local opportunity shop for unique, one-of-a-kind pieces to use in your home.

### 10. Grow your own

Grow your own herbs and vegetables, to help save you money each week. Check out pages 16-17 for growing hacks.

### 11. Family fun nights

Host family fun nights and preserve energy in the home. Bring candles out and turn off all lights, including any appliances and play games by candlelight with family and friends.

### 12. Learn to preserve and ferment

Preserving and fermenting food is easy and not only helps decrease food waste, but fermented foods are also rich in probiotics and good for healthy gut bacteria. Do some research and find 'how to' guides.



## Vegetable fermenting

### Ingredients

- Chopped vegetables of choice
- 2 cups of filtered water
- 1.5 tbsp sea salt or kosher salt
- Herbs and spices of choice – pickling spices work well
- Wide-mouth sealable jar

### Method

1. Chop vegetables and fill jar together with herbs and spices, leaving 2cm of space from top of lid.
2. Mix water with salt and fill jar, making sure all vegetables are covered and water level is 1cm below rim.
3. Seal and store in pantry for a minimum of one week before placing in fridge for a further two weeks to ferment.
4. Lasts up to one year or more.

# Amber

## Sales Managers' Message

Stage Two at Amber is selling quickly - now is the time to secure your site!

Excitingly, 25 concrete slabs will be poured within Stage Two at Amber by Living Gems by the end of June, which means we'll be welcoming new homeowners very soon. Sales are moving at an impressive rate, with almost 50 percent of Stage Two now sold.

Homeowner and major events coordinator Ken Brown has arranged for a group of residents to visit the Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary. The residents will start their venture from Brisbane and make their way by charter boat to the sanctuary, enjoying an informative and relaxing cruise taking in views of the city's waterfront mansions. Residents are also looking forward to a boat cruise to Southport on the Gold Coast coming up in August.

Amber residents, staff and contract holders are thrilled that we have a roof in place for our stunning Country Club. The commercial construction team continue to work on the ground floor services and will soon be installing level one services. In a few short months, homeowners will be able to enjoy the luxurious ambience and impressive amenities within this architecturally designed building.

With limited sites remaining for deposit at Amber, we welcome you to phone us on 1800 317 381 and book in a time to visit our blossoming community, view our stunning display homes and find out why your move into Amber by Living Gems will be simply lifechanging.



For illustrative purposes only



### Amber by Living Gems Sales Team

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# It's good for your eco

*With World Environment Day falling on 5 June, check out some local eco-friendly events this month.*

## *Discovering our Nature Spaces information session*

The Logan Eco Forum is hosting a free information session on 4 June from 11:15am to 12 noon. Join avid gardener and TV personality, Paul West, and local citizen science expert, Michelle Neil, on the Think Tank stage as they discover the area's nature spaces.

The event is suitable for all ages and all you need to bring is a fully charged phone. Visit Griffith University Logan Campus, 68 University Drive, Meadowbrook.

**For more information, email [environment@logan.qld.gov.au](mailto:environment@logan.qld.gov.au)**

## *Creating our Nature Spaces activity day*

This is another event to check out from the Logan Eco Forum. A fun-filled day for all the family will be held on 10 June from 9am to 1pm. This free event offers activities to help you design and plant gardens that will benefit Logan's amazing local wildlife and your homes. Adults and children will have the opportunity to create wildlife homes, get up close to native creatures, hear from experts, and have some nature play fun in the playground.

Tickets are required to select workshops on the day.

**For more information, email [environment@logan.qld.gov.au](mailto:environment@logan.qld.gov.au)**

## *Garden Club*

Logan Central Community Centre is hosting another Garden Club event on 6 June between 9am and 11:30am at 9-11 Jacaranda Avenue, Logan Central. Tickets are \$4 with an annual joining fee of \$5. For most activities you will need to wear enclosed shoes, bring a water bottle, wear suitable clothing and bring a towel, hat and sunscreen for outdoor activities.

**For more information, contact Janette Zygis on 07 3299 6050 or at [jeanette.z@bigpond.com](mailto:jeanette.z@bigpond.com)**



Villa 200 | Facade Modern

## Goulburn

\$530,000



Your new home awaits, ready to move into today! From the raised ceilings to the open-plan layout, this Goulburn design home has everything you could want. The designer kitchen is a chef's dream with integrated appliances, stone benchtops, and a walk-in pantry. The living and dining areas boast plenty of natural light, while the alfresco area can be opened to let in sunshine and breezes. Enjoy your privacy with the master bedroom situated at the rear of the home with a spacious walk-in robe and double vanity ensuite bathroom.



# Caboolture Riverfront

## Sales Manager's Message

Isn't it time you made the simply lifechanging move to Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront?

With eight homes ready to move into, there has never been a better time to rightsize and start enjoying a life you deserve. Each home features three bedrooms and is located on a premium location with green views at the rear.

Homes feature luxurious inclusions such as walk-in pantries, ducted air conditioning, solar, and more. So, what are you waiting for? Move in today! We can also arrange a consultation with our interior design team if you desire brand-new furniture for your beautiful new home.

These homes are all open to view by appointment, so give me a call today to avoid disappointment.

Caboolture is a beautiful location that is the gateway to the stunning Moreton Bay region and the Sunshine Coast. Featuring comfortable year-round temperatures, this area also offers plenty to do and see. Why not make a weekend of it and drop into the Caboolture Show which is happening between 9 and 11 June?

Glenys Lowry  
Sales Manager



Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront Sales  
Glenys Lowry, Sales Manager  
M 0438 660 436 | E [info@livinggems.com.au](mailto:info@livinggems.com.au)



# Bottling up a good cause

*Lance and Aileen Cause from Living Gems Caboolture Riverfront showed a can-do spirit back in January 2019 when the Cash for Containers program was announced.*

"I was at the bar – which is not a usual thing at all - and suggested that we should collect the cans and bottles and take advantage of the program," Aileen notes with a laugh.

"Someone said, 'oh, no one is going to bother for ten cents', so I called over to Lance and said we'd do it."

How many bottles and cans have they collected over three and a half years?

"Oh goodness! I'm not sure of the number, but it's a lot," said Aileen.

"To the end of last year, we've collected \$13,000 for the Home Owners' Committee," adds Lance. "And at ten cents a piece you can do the maths. This year, so far, we've raised \$1,200."

Homeowners have thrown their support behind Lance and Aileen by regularly donating their empty cans and bottles to add to the collection from the Country Club bar.

"The money we raise goes to a special fund

which gives money out to groups in the resort who might be struggling with fundraising," said Lance. "For instance, last year when the Green Thumbs Gardening Group lost the vegetable garden to floods, we were able to help them rebuild with the funds raised." Read this story on pages 4-5.

But it's more than just the fundraising opportunity that drives the Causes, it is also the opportunity to actively recycle cans, bottles and plastics.

"It's so important to us that things don't go to waste if they don't need to," said Aileen.

The couple are delighted by the news that wine and spirit bottles will be eligible for the Cash for Containers program from November.

"We'll be able to turbo charge our fundraising then," said Aileen. "At our functions most people buy a bottle of wine for the table, so there will be quite a few of them!"



Villa 316 | Facade One

## Snowy

\$820,000



Enjoy sunny mornings on your east-facing alfresco living space in this beautiful three-bedroom home, which is located on a spacious corner site. You'll also enjoy the serenity and privacy in the master bedroom, with walk-in-robe and double vanity ensuite, located at the rear of the home. The Snowy features a delightful kitchen with island bench and walk-in pantry.



# Toowoomba

## Sales Manager's Message

Living Gems Toowoomba has achieved an incredible milestone. After five years, construction has now come to an end and there are only three new homes left to purchase and just one premium block remaining.

This is a lovely resort with plenty of friendships being made and lots of activities taking place in the Country Club. If you're looking for a great community and a beautiful new home which has been thoughtfully designed for modern living, then give me a call to arrange an inspection.

It's not just the two-legged residents who enjoy our resort. Four-legged friends are wagging their tails in anticipation of a new dog park which is also nearing completion. This location is sure to be a hit!

Looking for a laugh? The Melbourne International Comedy Festival

Roadshow will be making a stop in on 22 June at the majestic Empire Theatre.

If your entertainment tastes are more cultural, The Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery always has interesting exhibitions. The gallery was established in 1937 and is the oldest public art gallery in regional Queensland.

Michelle Perry  
Sales Manager



Living Gems Toowoomba Sales

Michelle Perry, Sales Manager

M 0417 973 819 | E [michelle.perry@livinggems.com.au](mailto:michelle.perry@livinggems.com.au)



For illustrative purposes only

# There's a chook in Robert's garden

*You could say that at almost 92, a man has earned the right to put up his feet and take it easy in retirement, but not Living Gems Toowoomba resident Robert Hickin who likes nothing better than to keep active and fit while tending to his beloved front garden.*

Robert, who was one of the first residents to move into the resort six years ago, nurtures his stunning front garden where he grows beautiful flowers like petunias, phlox and calibrachoa, every day.

He started his garden the moment he moved in and has no plans of slowing down.

"I just love gardening so I thought I would put in a few plants and it continued from there," Robert says. "I love colour so I keep planting more and more and have a dripper system that slowly waters the garden to not waste water, because I hate to waste anything."

The locals have certainly noticed Robert's garden.

"They compliment my garden and say they love looking at it every time they pass," he says. "It's not the best time of the year because it is autumn right now but it does stay lovely all year round nonetheless."

Robert says there's not much growing currently with the season change, but he is already preparing his spring planting plan for

maximum colour effect. He had an acreage in Withcott before moving to Toowoomba, so a garden is a must for him, and it is important that it is well taken care of.

"I use a mixture of slow-release fertiliser that has organic matter in it which works a treat, and I also spray regularly for bugs as they are a bit of a pest."

"I also have a chook in my garden," he says in banter. "Not a real one but she guards my garden."

Gardening isn't all Robert loves at the resort.

"I do line dancing and put my name down for the Sunday dancing which helps keep me fit," he says. "I love it here. The entertainment and good meals and especially the people. They are so friendly and look out for one another and it's just a great place to retire."

"It is really lovely here and together with my therapy garden and friends I have made, I enjoy everything I do."



Villa 198 | Facade One

## Alice

\$595,000



Designed for entertaining, this two-bedroom plus multipurpose-room home is situated on a premium block with a large rear yard ideal for hosting friends and family. The Alice design offers a separate living and dining area, along with a bright, functional kitchen with plenty of drawers for storage. As standard, the home comes with Fisher & Paykel appliances including an integrated fridge and dishwasher. The generously sized master bedroom features a walk-in robe and double vanity ensuite.



# Resort Round-up

Another month over and our Living Gems communities have been at it again with lots of fun activities, roadtrips, King's Coronation celebrations and fundraising events for Cancer Council Australia's Biggest Morning Tea.

Firstly, congratulations to all new Living Gems Toowoomba residents who celebrated their settlements last month. Little Jack, Toowoomba's newest furry resident, who moved in with mum and dad Peter and Carolyn, is very excited about the new off-leash area and can't wait to hit the green.

Opal residents partied in style to celebrate the King's Coronation with a high tea, and it was hard to be unimpressed by the authentic Royal Albert Moonlight Roses tea set – a truly beautiful British collection fit for a King. In other resort news, 205 scones were baked by residents for their May Market Day and sold out to Amber and Opal residents within the first hour. Well done, Opal!

Ruby put on some great gigs including a White Cocktail Gala where residents had the chance to dress up to the nines and enjoy some dancing and fine dining. Their *All at Sea* movie night was also a smashing success. It's a fabulous black comedy-drama sure to float your boat.

Not only did Amber get their hands on Opal's scones, but residents also ventured to Platypus Place at

Harrigan's to enjoy a drink together. Placing a bet with the flushed bookmaker was also on the cards at the Beaudesert horse races and Amber's first State of Origin night was a hit with snags, a big screen and plenty of maroon and blue competitive spirit on display.

It was reported that a luncheon at Landsborough Hotel with some of the Caboolture gang was a blast, and the Guitar Gems and Starlight Singers put on great performances for their Cancer Council Australia's Biggest Morning Tea fundraiser, which included trivia games and delicious sweet goodies. Congratulations also to Fay Fairbrother for her milestone 80th birthday.

We look forward to hearing from the resorts again for next month's show and tell.









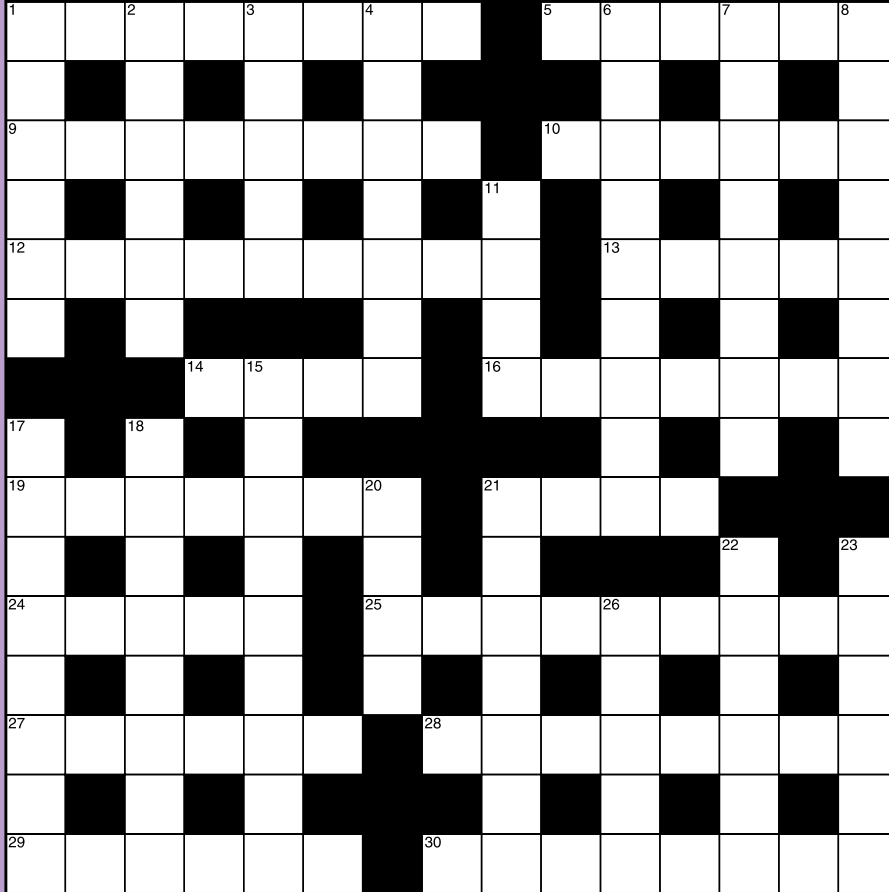


## Share your photos and news with us!

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](mailto:content@livinggems.com.au)



# Crossword



## Across

1. Petrol in US
5. Turkish capital
9. Spanning (gap)
10. Ontario city
12. Slyest
13. Immobile
14. Red gem
16. Filthier
19. Transmission casing
21. End, ... up
24. Cave-dwelling monster
25. Alpine landslide
27. Rescue team, ... party
28. Superficial (4-4)
29. Shoulder wraps
30. Flattered to excess

## Down

1. Return (2,4)
2. Ringlet curve
3. Illumination
4. Convent
6. Nourishment
7. Scholar
8. Plug converters
11. Fawn's father
15. Baby's ... oord
17. Arrogant people
18. Wide view
20. Skeleton image (1-3)
21. Hit hard
22. Pronunciation style
23. Stole a look
26. Declare void

## Solution





# Roasted Thai Pumpkin Soup



## Warm up with a hearty and healthy soup

Soups are a hearty and healthy meal. This Thai-inspired roast pumpkin soup is also packed with nutrition.

To develop better Thai flavours in your base stock, add a knob of ginger, kaffir lime leaves and lemon grass to your vegetable stock and simmer to infuse deeper flavours. Feel free to add extra ingredients if you like.

### Ingredients

*Makes 2 litres / Serves 4*

Whole pumpkin about 1kg  
2 tbsp of coconut oil or olive oil  
1 onion, chopped  
3 cloves of garlic, minced  
1 tbsp of ginger, grated  
4 kaffir lime leaves  
400ml of coconut milk or cream  
3 cups of vegetable stock  
1 tbsp of red curry paste or to taste  
Salt and pepper to taste  
1 lime, peeled and juiced  
2 stems coriander leaves and roots

## Method

1. Pre-heat oven to 180-degrees C.
2. For the best flavours, roast the pumpkin whole with the ingredients inside to get a lovely roasted but infused flavour through the flesh. To do this, cut the top of the pumpkin around the core to make a lid you can remove but put back on as a lid. Scrape out the pumpkin seeds.
3. Put peeled lime, garlic, coriander roots, ginger and kaffir leaves inside the pumpkin cavity. Put the pumpkin lid back on. In a tray, roast the pumpkin whole until it's tender and caramelized, around 1-1.5 hours depending on size.
4. After it's roasted, cut the pumpkin into quarters, remove the lime, ginger and kaffir lime. Leave the garlic and coriander. Scoop out the pumpkin flesh and set aside. Alternatively, you can just peel and dice up the pumpkin and toss it in oil and seasoning and roast in the oven on a tray.
5. Heat up a pot with the coconut oil over medium heat. Add the diced onions and cook until the onion is soft and translucent. Next, add in some Thai red curry paste and cook for a few minutes until the paste is fragrant.
6. Pour in some vegetable broth and stir to combine. Add the roasted pumpkin and bring the soup to a boil. Reduce the heat and let the soup simmer for about 20 minutes.
7. If you have added ginger, lime peel or kaffir lime leaves, remove them from the stock soup before blending.
8. Using a stick blender, puree the soup until it's smooth. Add the coconut milk and add a squeeze of lime and stir to combine. Season the soup with salt and pepper to taste and bring back to a simmer for 5 minutes then remove from the heat.
9. To serve, fill your bowls and garnish with some chopped coriander and a drizzle of coconut cream. You can serve the soup with some crusty bread or baked wonton crisps.

*Thai pumpkin soup is the perfect meal for the cool winter months, as it is both healthy and delicious. Enjoy!*

# Frame that shot

Living Gems has launched a 2023 photo competition to highlight some fabulous destinations, favourite local spots, macro shots, action photos, best pet shots and lots more from our homeowners. So, get your cameras and phones ready this year (or dig through your archives)!

As a Living Gems resident, you can submit as many photos of

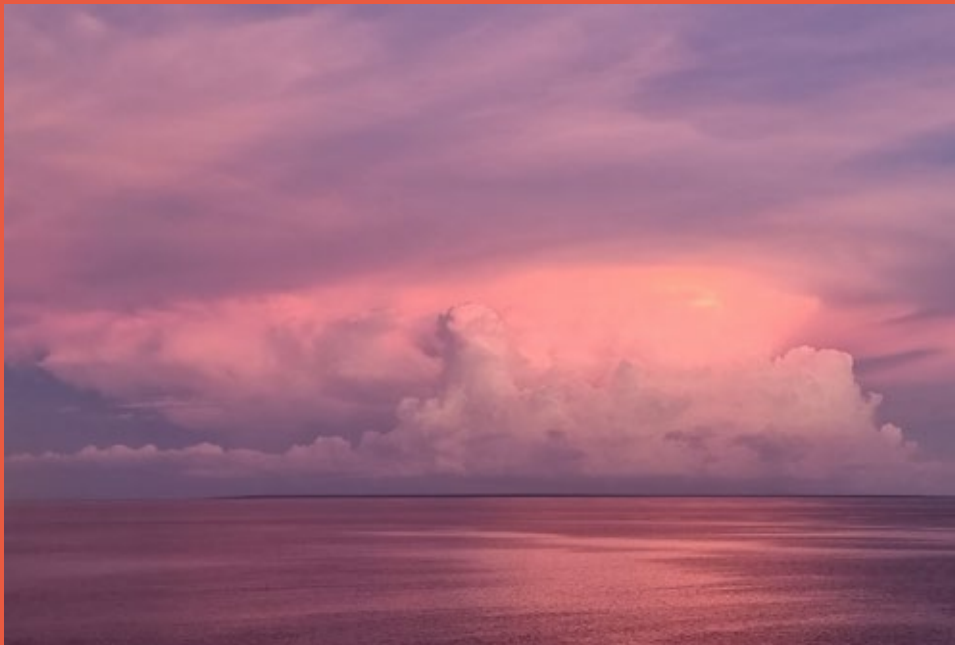
your choice each month and be in the running to be selected as the month's overall photo winner for the Living Gems community.

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 masterpieces with us.

Send your submissions, with your full name, resort name and where the photo was taken, to

[content@livinggems.com.au](mailto:content@livinggems.com.au)



## June Photo Winner

Congratulations to this month's winner, Isabel Clarke, from Living Gems Toowoomba for her stunning photo entry of majestic clouds over an ocean landscape.

## 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**

## Toowoomba

500 South Street  
Glenvale QLD 4350

**1800 348 977**

## Ruby

225 Logan Street  
Eagleby QLD 4207

**07 3386 1771**

## Gold Coast

70 Hansford Road  
Coombah QLD 4216

**07 5577 5899**

[livinggems.com.au](http://livinggems.com.au)

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