

WEEKEND OCEAN INLET AT FAIRHAVEN

Hill of content



The snaking, blue inlet from a balcony at the Shorehouse.

Lisa Mitchell

Were it not for the Split Point Lighthouse, you might blink and pass through Aireys Inlet, but as the road climbs toward this beacon, finally giving way to froth-fringed coastal views, you're looking for any excuse to stop. Here you go, then: the Ocean Inlet at Fairhaven.

Just one kilometre past Aireys Inlet, Ocean Inlet's hill-top townhouse slices through the tired furnishings and twee touches of so many B&Bs down this way. It opened its two accommodation options in January this year. The sleek, contemporary Shorehouse adjoins the main home and has a private entrance. Walking into the large downstairs living area, gleaming pine floors and walls of golden-sand hues radiate a warm welcome. The faux suede modular couch in crushed colours of aubergine, ripe peach and lavender, has ample length on which to raise weary legs. With some cool jazz playing in the background (BYO CDs), the ambience is ripe for lazy afternoons by the gas log fire playing board games, flicking through the magazines provided or watching videos.

Floor-to-ceiling glass ensures no view is wasted on

either level. Upstairs, that means an unimpeded vista of the Split Point Lighthouse and snaking blue inlet that gives the town its name, from either your bed or the deep, black spa bath. Special features include the wood-crafted sun-and-mountain bedhead and Indonesian zambung (a kind of glockenspiel of earthier tone) and candle tower. A nice touch is the beautifully wrapped gift of bathing goodies in the ensuite.

Closer to camper heaven than indulgent treat, the Cabin and Gazebo are unique. Two teensy, pine-lined buildings, the Cabin squeezes in a shower, kitchenette and cute breakfast bar, while the Gazebo bedsit fits little more than a cushy sofa bed on its concrete floor. There's a CD player and a few books but it's the glass windows overlooking native garden and partial inlet views that win you over. The Gazebo also has a sunrise-view swing chair and outdoor setting secluded by twisted gums.

Dowson's at Scammell's Estate (03 5289 6996) in Aireys Inlet is the fabulous, semi fine-dining experience. Chef John Dowson has served Maggie Thatcher, Freddy Mercury and Kylie Minogue during his London days and there's jazz or flamenco guitar on Sundays.



COST The Shorehouse \$250 single night or \$200 consecutive nights, Gazebo and Cabin \$90 single night or \$85 consecutive nights, midweek or weekends. Prices include breakfast package and treats. **ACCOMMODATION** One executive-style townhouse with queen-size bed, huge spa and ensuite. Or, Gazebo bedsit with kitchenette and shower in separate cabin.

FEATURES Outdoor barbecue and sunset swing chair, licensed to sell wine.

NEARBY Aireys Inlet Pub

(great views), Angahook-Lorne State Park walks (1.5km to 12km return), Split Point Lighthouse, historic Bark Hut, Blazing Saddles horserides (5289 7322), mountain bike riding, canoeing, Great Ocean Road drive Lorne to Apollo Bay.

CHILDREN No **SMOKING** Outdoors only **ADDRESS** Ocean Inlet at Fairhaven 34 Wybellenna Drive, Fairhaven 3231 Melway's ref: 511 C10.

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