



One thing Covid has done to us all is slow our pace of life and entice us to explore our own backyard. Taking the time to immerse ourselves in local regions and discovering what international travellers journey to the end of the world to experience opens up a plethora of less discovered destinations.

Last week I went to an event at the Tweed Gallery – driving from the mountain past Hinze Dam to stop at Natural Arch to stretch our legs I regretted not taking a picnic; the beautiful drive through lush green countryside made us feel as though we had travelled to another world; pottering around Murwillumbah with her collection of art deco buildings (don't miss Gelato& Co in the main street) and delightful old houses was fascinating as we carried on to the gallery. It's been a couple of years since I visited and the location is wonderful, Bud Brannigan's architecture reflects traditional tin sheds and from the windows the glimpses of light and verdant rolling hills beyond enhances the experience of viewing the collection including the recreation of Margaret Olleys house. The restaurant offers glorious views with Mt Warning not too far, Cabarita a mere 20 minutes and Bangalow and Byron Bay not much further. This region offers much to be explored.

Of course, this is just one example nearby to holiday on a road trip. We did learn a lesson as we had not booked in advance we were unable to stay the night and had to return to the mountain after dinner. A shame not to linger longer. You would think I would know better than to leave it to the last minute!

If you are travelling close to home, take your time and explore at a leisurely pace. Make your reservation in advance and I urge you to either book direct or through your regular travel agent to support local. The growth of online booking engines like Expedia and booking.com are fine however they take all profits off shore with no taxes paid in Australia. You may be surprised to find the same or an even better deal is offered locally. Now more than ever we need to remind ourselves to support our local economy. Sorry for being political but I do think we need to consider this in all our dealings to help Australia recover post Covid.

There are so many places to venture in our region. Head north to explore Montville and the Green Mountains, the Sunshine Coast, the town of 1770 or head out to Straddie or Fraser Island. There are so many wonderful places to explore within a short drive. Travelling Places would love to help and share ideas.

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