



## AUSTRALIA'S BEST HOLIDAY HOMES CROWNED AT STAYZ'S ANNUAL HOLIDAY RENTAL AWARDS

*Daylesford, Victoria takes out People's Choice Award voted by the Australian public*

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**13 November 2017:** Australia's leading holiday rental website, Stayz®, has unveiled the winners of its 2017 Holiday Rental Awards (HRA). This year's winning properties have shifted away from the traditional 'beach shack' in favour of regional escapes in areas such as Berry (NSW), Kangaroo Valley (NSW) and Yandoit (VIC), with the exception of holiday hotspot Culburra Beach (NSW).

This year's awards also saw the stunning [Clifftop at Hepburn](#) property in Daylesford, Victoria take out both the Romantic category and the People's Choice category, the latter voted for by the Australian public. This home is not unfamiliar with the HRA, having won the coveted Interior Design category in the 2016 awards.

Stayz, which connects homeowners and property managers with travellers looking for the space, value and amenities of a whole rental home, appointed a panel of industry experts to judge the standout holiday accommodation across nine categories. The awards, now in its sixth consecutive year, recognise excellence across an impressive portfolio of over 40,000 holiday homes, in 2,000 unique Australian locations.

Stayz spokesperson, Simone McDermid said, *"We're thrilled to have had such a diverse selection of properties in this year's Holiday Rental Awards and extend our warm congratulations to all of the category winners."*

*"The awards are designed to celebrate Australia's most impressive homes and we feel this year's winners really offer a snapshot of the breadth of properties available on Stayz."*

*"The traditional Aussie holiday rental is no longer your beachside shack, although still popular, we hope these award-winning rentals across the country inspire and excite those planning their next trip, whether it be escaping the city for a rural escape or going coastal for a family beach holiday, we have options to suit all budgets and group sizes."*

**The Stayz 2017 HRA national winners are:**

**Best Unique Property:** [Yandoit Church – Country Getaway](#), Yandoit, VIC

- *Situated in Yandoit and built in 1884 by Giacomo Sartori, Yandoit Church served the local Swiss-Italian community until 1993*
- *Beautifully refurbished, the property is now enjoyed by those looking for a country getaway only 15 minutes' drive from Daylesford*
- *The church nave acts as the centrepiece of the home and includes remnants of the original hand-painted friezes, a vaulted ceiling and gothic windows.*



**Best Interior & Design Property:** [Eqeleni Byron Hinterland Retreat](#), Wilsons Creek, NSW

- *With an impressive key coded entry and private driveway, this beautiful resort home is nestled on the hillside of the Byron Hinterland*
- *Ideal for a group getaway or escape, Eqeleni offers open plan living and a chef's kitchen, outdoor entertaining decks, salt water pool and gazebo bar*
- *Additional features include a deluxe freestanding bath and rainforest shower, as well as natural cross ventilation, air conditioning for the summer and a luxurious log fireplace*



**Best At One With Nature Property:** [Wyadup House](#), Yallingup, WA

- *An original farmhouse set on 38 acres, it offers spectacular and tranquil views over Wyadup Brook, natural bushland and an olive grove.*
- *The house is surrounded by spacious lawns and terraced gardens going down to an unfenced brook with jetty.*
- *It has easy access to the ocean as well as wineries, restaurants, galleries and the nearby townships of Yallingup, Dunsborough and Margaret River*



**Best Family Friendly Property:** [Berry Beach Farm](#), Berry, NSW

- *Berry Beach Farm is located on a private 25-acre farm, with lots to do for the whole family*
- *There is a large TV/Games room for the kids and outdoor activities to keep everyone entertained, from kicking the football or a walk around the paddocks*
- *Relax by the double sided open fireplace in one of the sitting rooms gazing out at the view over the paddocks, or, in summer, around the pool and the alfresco dining area*



**Best Value Property:** [Saddleback Cottage – Pudding Hill Farm](#), Berry NSW

- *Pudding Hill Farm, is nestled in the emerald landscape of Foxground Valley, less than two hours from Sydney and under three hours from Canberra*
- *There are two cottages, Saddleback Cottage and Broughton Cottage allowing the choice of a relaxing couples getaway or book both cottages for two couples*
- *The farm starts at the foot of the valley and stretches up into the rainforest, with views of the escarpment and ocean, acting as a great base to explore the local area*



**Best Pet Friendly Property:** [Blue Island](#), Culburra Beach, NSW

- *With timber decking from each of the four bedrooms and both lounge rooms, Blue Island is designed for absolute coastal relaxation*
- *Guests can easily wander down to the most beautiful beach in the world that is just over 100 metres away*
- *The Blue Island home is fully fenced and has grassed lawn, secure for any pet*



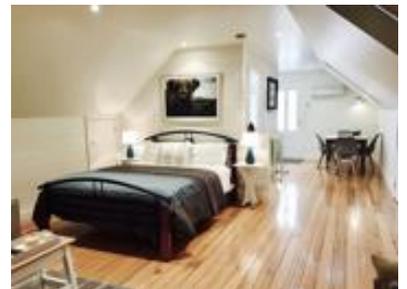
**Best Romance Property:** [Clifftop at Hepburn – Evoke](#), Daylesford, VIC

- *From the moment guests step into Clifftop at Hepburn, they're in another world, with towering windows frame and breath-taking panoramic views*
- *Perfectly tailored to romantic, Clifftop at Hepburn was created for travellers who value high design, natural beauty and wellness with an indulgent twist*
- *Guests can enjoy an escape where flames flicker in a hand-hewn fireplace and daybeds hang suspended in thin air*



**Most Valuable Property (MVP) – Homeowner Self-Nominated:** [Loft Over The Vines](#), Richmond, TAS

- *The 'Loft' is modern, yet comfortable, and the view takes everyone's breath away the instant they see it*
- *The kitchenette is stocked with breakfast provisions (locally sourced as much as possible). Guests can fill a bowl with fruit on the table that is sourced from the Loft's own orchard (when in season)*
- *If a special occasion is mentioned, guests also receive a local bottle of wine and/or chocolates*



The People's Choice Award was voted on by the Australian public in October and November at the Stayz website, demonstrating the popularity of holiday rentals amongst Australians:

**People's Choice:** [Clifftop at Hepburn – Evoke](#), Daylesford, VIC

- *From the moment guests step into Clifftop at Hepburn, they're in another world, with towering windows frame and breath-taking panoramic views*
- *Perfectly tailored to romantic, Clifftop at Hepburn was created for travellers who value high design, natural beauty and wellness with an indulgent twist*
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For a full list of all state and national winners, please go to  
<https://awards.stayz.com.au/2017-winners/>  
*(Website goes live 9am Monday 13 November)*

**ENDS**

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For images of the winning properties, to speak to the winning home owners or for more information on Stayz, please contact:

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### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

#### **About Stayz**

Australia's number one online holiday rental website, Stayz allows travellers to search and compare a huge variety of amazing holiday homes to ensure a unique and memorable accommodation experience wherever they break in Australia. With more than 40,000 holiday rentals in over 2,000 unique locations across Australia, Stayz offers whole homes ranging from the highly aspirational and unique to the everyday getaway, suiting every budget and family size. Stayz is part of online holiday rental global leaders HomeAway Inc.

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#### **About The Awards**

The following ten categories were judged in the 2017 Holiday Rental Awards:

1. Indulgence
2. Unique
3. Interior & Design
4. At One With Nature

5. Family Friendly
6. Value
7. Pet Friendly
8. Romance
9. Most Valuable Property (MVP)
10. People's Choice

#### **About The Judging Process**

- A team of Stayz experts nominated seven properties in each category based on:
  - How the property supports the chosen category?
  - Online Booking adoption
  - Conversion
  - Professional looking photography
  - Guest reviews
  - Quality of property description and features
- A panel of experts judges then selected their winners based on the following criteria:
  - How the property supports the chosen category?
  - Guest reviews
  - Quality of photographs
  - Quality of property description and features
- The Most Valuable Property (MVP) winner was judged on how well the property owners answered the following two questions:
  - *What makes your property the 'most valuable property' on Stayz?*
  - *What 'value add' do you use to stand out from other properties?*
- The People's Choice Award winner is based on the total number of votes the rental received.