



# THROUGH THE WAVES

Steeped in history, culture and incomparable beauty, Pullman Bunker Bay Resort makes for a truly unforgettable and a life-learning experience

WORDS **CHRIS PARRY**

**W**RITING ABOUT RESORTS IS always interesting. I've just come to realise how much has changed for me in recent years when I am looking for a resort. Firstly, they're usually overseas. However, in the age of coronavirus, I had to look closer to home for the resort experience, and I found one that is not only in my backyard, but has developed a reputation for being more than luxury. It has been acknowledged for including the history of Indigenous people in their story and in an environment that feels like the resort that is part of the local bushland. It's not about keeping the bush out; it's about fitting in with the land how it's always been.

Pullman Bunker Bay Resort is just over a three-hour drive from Perth and sits at the top of one of the greatest wine growing areas anywhere on Earth - the Margaret River Region. These days it's also world renowned for

it's other produce, including everything from cheese to truffles and steaks to ice-cream. There's also world class surfing and fishing that can be experienced on a coastline that is both rugged and beautiful and if getting wet isn't your thing, you can trek the coastline along the Cape to Cape Walk, an unforgettable journey through national parks alongside coves and cliffs for a distance of around 120 kilometres.

Hang on. This is meant to be a story about a resort. Well I promise you it is, but it's nice to know that you'll be staying in a region that should be on the bucket list of anyone who loves good wine, great food, amazing adventures and awesome scenery.

But let's get back to the resort and just relax, maybe planning a few short trips around the region but also taking the time to adjust to the time you're in, resort time.

It's almost underwhelming when you arrive. It's not that it's not sophisticated or grand. You know when you





arrive at the big resorts and there are long, wide steps leading up to the huge atrium style space for the reception and the concierge area and there's also a community of staff to open doors, take your bags, offer you a refreshing drink and maybe there's even a local cultural performance going on, or local musicians? That's not the Pullman Bunker Bay way. There are lots of natural stones, a water feature, a simple driveway and an entrance that leads to a small reception counter.

But as I smile at the receptionist, I get distracted. Peripherally my vision is being pulled to the left and my mind is telling me to forget about checking in and to check out the view. This is why Pullman Bunker Bay Resort exists.

Nestled just to the east of Cape Naturaliste, this small bay is extraordinary for being a sanctuary of shelter, from the wild winds that batter nearby Cape Naturaliste to such an extent that a limestone lighthouse has been there for over a hundred years, warning ships from its rocky shores.

Bunker Bay is an aquatic paradise but probably not for those who seek the thrill of surfing. There's a lot of surf to be found in the region, but this little bay is for those who want to dip a toe in the water, maybe do some paddling or snorkelling, but whatever it is you choose to do, your heart rate won't take much of a jolt as this peaceful stretch



**PULLMAN BUNKER BAY RESORT IS JUST OVER A THREE-HOUR DRIVE FROM PERTH AND SITS AT THE TOP OF ONE OF THE GREATEST WINE GROWING AREAS-THE MARGARET RIVER**



of perfect sand and water will immerse and calm you. The resort is slightly elevated above the beach and the restaurant and pool have a view of Bunker Bay that is probably the only frustrating aspect of the resort. I don't know which way to look. This is a resort that provides meals that source produce locally and present it in a style that will make you regret leaving your phone in your room. The view needs photos. The food needs photos. I need to lie down. The resort has a community feel about it as you walk around. There are no hallways or corridors, just open paths and vegetation between small blocks of earthy toned rooms that feature massive floor to high ceiling windows that allow the light and colours of blue sky and green trees to pour in throughout the day, before being replaced by the brilliant starlight of a night sky that you only see when you're away from the city. So what has really changed for me in what I look for in a resort has probably been connected to the growing age and expectations of my children, but it's also linked to what we all have to learn when we start travelling widely again; thinking about our footprints and the footprints of the airlines, accommodation, travel services and experiences we all use. Beyond good sustainability and waste management, I'm looking for opportunities to engage with local culture as part of my luxury experience. I want local art in the rooms that are available to purchase to support local communities, I want to contribute in a way that's more than just coming to the area and staying, eating and drinking for a few days. I want to meet local people and learn why their world is even more amazing than the most instagramable drone photos of yet another beach.





Pullman Bunker Bay does this. I came home with local art, I came home having met local Indigenous Elders and having participated in a tour of the resort that opened my eyes not just to the worlds longest surviving culture, but to what the plants outside my room could do for my health, why the coastal plants down by the beach were so delicious, how to find frogs on trees and lizards in rocks, how to speak the local language and why the six seasons of the Wadandi people make so much more sense than our western understanding of the weather in Australia.


This is a resort that is more than a base while you tour the Margaret River Region. It's more than a family vacation or honeymoon destination. This is a resort that is like the best teacher you ever had. Remember those teachers who inspired you and made you forget to look at the classroom clock and as you made your way home at the end of the day, you were thinking about what you had learned in that lesson? That's what Pullman Bunker Bay Resort does for you. Sure, you'll swim in the pool, play at the beach, and groan with delight at the end of every meal but somewhere along the way you will also learn something about a beautiful culture and a remarkable landscape. This is the best lesson I've had in a long time.

**SOMEWHERE ALONG  
THE WAY YOU  
WILL ALSO LEARN  
SOMETHING ABOUT A  
BEAUTIFUL CULTURE  
AND A REMARKABLE  
LANDSCAPE**



**ESCAPE PLAN**

**COVID-19:** While vaccination programs continue to roll out across the world and Australia has a program in place to vaccinate its population by the end of 2021, international travel is still not likely to resume until 2022. Check regularly with police, health and customs authorities before travelling.

**GETTING THERE:** Flying to Perth is easy and most countries offer direct flights or you may choose to fly via Kuala Lumpur or Singapore for a quick shopping and eating spree. From Perth, the Pullman Bunker Bay Resort is an easy drive of just over three hours, all of it on good highway roads with regular service stations and the regional cities of Bunbury and Busselton along the way. 

Visit the following websites for more information:  
[www.pullmanbunkerbayresort.com.au](http://www.pullmanbunkerbayresort.com.au)  
[www.margaretriver.com](http://www.margaretriver.com)  
[www.westernaustralia.com](http://www.westernaustralia.com)

