

52 WEEKENDS AWAY

OUR ANNUAL INDEPENDENT GUIDE TO THE BEST
SHORT BREAKS **GOOD WEEKEND**

PLUS
CARS
HOMES
& JOBS

Drive

Domain

MyCareer

THE



AGE

PUBLISHED IN MELBOURNE SINCE 1854

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2008

\$2.40 INC GST

Moonshadow Villas

Darwin

6 Gardens Hill Crescent,
The Gardens, Darwin, 0820
Phone (08) 8981 8850 or 0412 890 662
info@moonshadowvillas.com
www.moonshadowvillas.com or www.escapeforabreak.com

Moonshadow Villas is up there with the best accommodation I have stayed in. My partner felt the same way. As we chatted about what made it so special, she identified the quality that elevated it from good to splendid. "It's been built with love," she said.

The five villas are constructed on a large block just 10 minutes' walk from the centre of Darwin. Each has been cleverly designed for maximum privacy, giving the feeling they are located in some lush and isolated rainforest, rather than suburbia. The complex was designed by the architect Hully Liveris, and built by one of the owners, Peter Buckley, and has won a host of architecture, building and tourism awards.

Our villa, the Orchid Villa, had two large double bedrooms with comfy king-size beds. The furniture and the artwork were beautiful and individual, from the Singaporean wood and leather chairs to the Chinese fish bowls. The two bathrooms were tiled with small pieces of grey marble, tumbled to look like river stones. The kitchen was fully equipped and contained a modern coffee machine with an array of fine coffee to go with it – and even I could drive it.

A good bottle of bubbly was waiting in the fridge, alongside a couple of iced beers. In the middle of the villas are two small but deep sandstone and greenstone pools fed by a waterfall and shaded by a grove of tall palms. It was here that we spent a languid afternoon, reading the Saturday papers, *The New Yorker* and Geraldine Brooks, sipping that bubbly and those beers, and occasionally sliding from our deckchairs, crocodile-like, into the cooling waters. Darwin is not the frontier town it once was. **Greg Bearup**



1-6



\$\$\$

Cost: from \$369 to \$750 a villa a night, depending on the season and the number of people.

Distance: Darwin is a 5-hour flight from Melbourne and 4 hours from Sydney. Moonshadow Villas is 6km

(10 minutes' drive) from the airport.

Accommodation: four self-contained two-bedroom villas and one three-bedroom villa.

Features: cable TV, wireless internet access, large veranda; all villas have direct access to the waterfall pools.

Nearby: Darwin's great galleries, good restaurants and bars with a vibrant live music scene.

Bookings: essential during winter, but flexible at other times.

Children: yes.

Wheelchair access: no.

Pets: by prior arrangement.