



The Stanley Hotel has a reputation for consistently high standard food all year round using the best fresh, seasonal local produce. Picture Circular Head Tourism

# This little town packs a huge flavour hit

**Emma Brown**

STANLEY is a town that punches above its weight for many things; scenery, history, and not to mention its culinary delights. Here are some of my favourite foodie highlights from a recent stay.

## Those lucky locals

It's warm inside the dining room at the Stanley Hotel and the vibe is decidedly convivial with large tables of happy diners enjoying good company and the anticipation of good food.

I order the fish of the day which happens to be a Blue Eye Trevalla. The hero of the dish is a large slab of perfectly cooked white fish, flakey, sweet and delicious.

It comes accompanied by a mound of fluffy white rice, fresh garden salad and an Asian inspired pouring sauce.

When I can prise my eyes off my own plate I see my companions meals are equally impressive with thick juicy steaks and chips that look crisp and golden.

## The big red crustacean

It is hard to ignore the big red crayfish sitting proudly astride the Hursey Seafoods building. Dining at Hursey Seafoods is a quintessential Stanley experience not to be missed under any circumstance.

The building houses the takeaway business downstairs and fine dining upstairs.

The company's fleet of red fishing boats dock next door so the fish is literally straight from the sea to your plate - to say it is fresh



Hursey Seafoods is a quintessential Stanley experience. Picture Circular Head Tourism

would be an understatement.

Upstairs, the restaurant is spacious and modern with jaw-dropping views of the bay. My entrée of scallops come in shells. Cooked in Saltbush garlic butter, they are plump, tasty morsels with the roe still on.

For mains it is hard to go past the local crayfish and it's just a small matter of choosing which of the tastebud tantalising ways to have it.

I finally decide on mornay but you can get it with garlic butter, chilli butter, Saltbush butter or natural with seafood sauce and lemon. You can also opt for a small, medium or large half cray to match your appetite.

## Refuel with real food

We stop by Marleys at Sticks & Stones Shells & Bones for brekky to fuel up for our climb up The Nut. There is no shortage of carb loading options such as toasties, hash browns, smokey beans (their signature dish), miso mushrooms a poke bowl and lots of egg and bacon options.

I try the smoothie bowl which is a delightful mix of light smoothie, topped with homemade granola and a variety of fresh fruit - a colourful, nutritious party in a bowl - just the thing to propel me up, not weigh me down on the climb ahead.

Open for breakfast and lunch, there are

lots of delicious, wholesome choices or try one of the damn fine looking fluffy scones if you just want good coffee and a snack.

## A tittle and a bite

Situated in a comfortable Victorian cottage, Stanley Wine Bar has a lively, bohemian feel. It is full of eclectic trinkets and curiosities that make for great conversation.

The wine menu showcases Tasmanian regional producers and the diversity and complexity of the islands premium cool climate varieties.

Accompanying the fine wine I try the pesto bites, King Island and local cheeses and some tart but sweet enough, sloe berry jam. There are also pizzas on offer if you feel like something more substantial.

The menu changes regularly, reflecting the seasonal nature of the produce served.

## Just down the road in Smithton

There's a fire roaring at Tall Timbers Hotel Kauri Bistro. After a big day exploring the Tarkine wilderness we're excited to eat.

If you're looking to try the local hand-selected, wholesome, grass-fed Cape Grim beef, then this is the place to do it.

I order a pasta seafood dish which is delicious, but when I see the Cape Grim beef short rib and braised beef cheeks I do have a little protein envy. The bistro's newest edition, the Cape Grim Grill, also has the finest selection of steaks, sure to satisfy the fussiest meat connoisseur.

*The writer was a guest of Circular Head Tourism Association and Tourism Tasmania.*

# Passion project brings life to Poet's Cottage

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LOVINGLY restored to arguably the best version of itself yet, Poet's Cottage is the ideal place to relax, recharge and immerse yourself in the history of delightful Stanley.

I felt like lady of the manor on my recent three night stay at this exceptional residence. Maybe my grandiose feels have something to do with the history of this place.

Built in 1849, the cottage's most interesting claim to fame is it was originally designed as a residence for one of King George IV illegitimate sons. Although he never lived there, it's a fascinating connection. Later it was turned into a private school from the mid 1800's complete with boarders.

It's most recent makeover is the passion project of hosts Geraldine and David Coy, who have installed all of the modern conveniences the savvy traveller demands while remaining sympathetic to the cottage's history.

No surface has been left unaffected in the extensive renovation which took almost two years to complete.



Above: The cottage is Georgian style with attic windows adding charm. Picture Emma Brown Right: The Sea View room is a cosy retreat. Picture Circular Head Tourism



pine and floors sanded back to the original Baltic pine. Outside, all of the chimney stacks were rebuilt.

There are five bedrooms all up. The Highfield Suite upstairs has two rooms offering a King bed, double bed and bathroom with clawfoot bath. Downstairs there are three double bedrooms all with their own private modern ensuite.

Furnished with antiques inherited from Geraldine's mother who owned the property previously, the rooms are super cosy as each has an electric heater in what were open fireplaces.

Added on to the cottage is a bright, well appointed

kitchen and breakfast is not to be missed. David an ex-chef, can cook for you here and, from all accounts, his breakfast game is legendary.

A hidden delight of the cottage is the fully restored cellar. It is well lit and snug with the recently white washed walls and dark roof rafters giving off an unexpectedly Mediterranean vibe.

Another string to the Stanley accommodation bow, Poet's Cottage is a great place to simply soak up the quiet and calm a solid 175 year old stone residence can bring.

The writer was a guest of Circular Head Tourism Association and Tourism Tasmania.

"When we began there were gale force winds blowing through the floorboards," Geraldine says.

"We had to literally gut the whole cottage - every room

was touched."

One of the most beautiful interior features is the exposed stacked stone walls that have been painstakingly uncovered and restored after

layers of coverings - timber palings, hessian, render, wallpaper and plasterboard - were sandblasted away.

Window frames were replaced using authentic Huon

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