

# HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Words by **EMMA-KATE WILSON** | Photos by **MANDY COUZENS**

**F**reshly opened in December 2020, Larnook is the perfect hideaway from the city. Though it is tucked away in the Dandenong Ranges, you would never guess its proximity to town, an hour outside of Melbourne. Meaning habitation or nest in the local Bunurong Aboriginal language, Larnook symbolises owners Michelle and Paul Rowse's appreciation of the landscape and pays homage to the rich history of the Bunurong people.

Larnook is on a flower farm, with vistas of florals as the backdrop to the private and secluded cabin. But the off-grid cabin has the flexibility to be transported anywhere – something that was key to its charm for the owners.

"I just really loved the way that people were using clever designs," Paul says. "To be able to live and function in a small space."

No strangers to a tiny-home lifestyle, when Michelle first met Paul, they lived in a caravan on his family farm for four years. Minimal living had long impressed Paul, so when their teenage daughters flew the nest, they decided to see what was really important.

"We took 12 months off and travelled around Australia with a four-wheel drive and off-road van," he says. "We had the opportunity to simplify life and live in a small space



## Cocooning off the grid

### WHILE IN SHERBROOKE ...



#### Mad Raven Pizza

As one of Larnook's favourite spots, getting a couple of woodfired pizzas from Mad Raven is almost non-negotiable. From a classic margarita to an intriguing The French Goat, they might become favourites. [madravenhotstonepizza.com.au](http://madravenhotstonepizza.com.au)



#### The Patch Store

Pick up a coffee and browse through the gourmet goods of this historical general store. A selection of local cheeses, preserves and house-made cakes will ensure sundowners you won't easily forget. [thepatchstore.com.au](http://thepatchstore.com.au)



PARKS VICTORIA

#### Sherbrooke Falls

Keep your eyes peeled for sightings of wombats and blue parrots as you meander through the ferns and tall ash trees. The Sherbrooke Falls are just one of many surrounding bushwalks to explore. [parks.vic.gov.au](http://parks.vic.gov.au)



SARAH GODENZI

#### Yarra Ranges Estate

For wine tasting with a view, don't miss out on the Yarra Ranges Estate. Picturesque scenes will develop as you sip a range of excellent pinot noirs and sauvignons. [yarrarangesestate.com.au](http://yarrarangesestate.com.au)





Larnook's construction and operation has left as small an environmental footprint as possible.

cocooning visitors with an extension of mother nature. Natural materials were chosen throughout, drawing on timber, rubber trees, and cork. Michelle then styled the property using locally sourced lamps, chairs, linen and cutlery.

"We started looking at organic materials like cork and the recycled material we used in the cabinetry," says Paul. "We used a timber called havia, which uses rubber trees out of Asia that have gone past their useful life as a rubber tree, and now they're recycling that into a laminate timber material that we made our kitchen cabinetry out of."

Suitable for any season, Larnook has an open floor plan with flow-through ventilation, overhead fans, and an outdoor shower to keep you cool in summer. At the same time,

the cabin heats up as a cosy retreat in the cooler months thanks to the gas log fireplace. However, no matter the season, it's always a perfect spot to order woodfired pizza, sample a local wine, light a fire in the outdoor firepit and watch the sunset. [m](#)

[larnook.co](http://larnook.co)



for an extended period of time, and we really liked that."

Jumping on his love of shipping containers, and after plenty of discussions around the campfire, Paul welded together two repurposed shipping containers for Larnook. With space for a bedroom, living area, kitchenette and bathroom, the cabin also has off-grid solar power and batteries, a composting toilet, a greywater treatment system, and a disposal system.

The basis of the material palette flows from "simple materials used a bit differently". The Rowses had previously completed a project with interior designer Kate Walker; they knew she'd be perfect for transforming Larnook into the high-end space they were after.

Walker avoided white in the palette to assist with the cosy, nest-like atmosphere within the cabin. As such, it is warm and welcoming,

Up to 60% Off  
Australian Made Furniture  
184 Chalmers St Surry Hills  
02 9332 1488

Next Weekend  
**Saturday 1st May + Sunday 2nd May**  
**9am – 5pm**

Sofas/Modulars/Chairs/Dining/+More

**arthurG**  
ARTHURG.COM.AU  
ARTHURGFURNITURE.SHOP

# WAREHOUSE SALE

