

By Belinda Henley

I AM NOT a camper, never have been, never will be. The idea of moving what seems to be the entire contents of your house, to another site, setting it all up and then trying to relax seems, well, anything but relaxing. However, the idea of 'glamping' is a whole lot more appealing.

Clifton Glamping is the newest addition to Hawke's Bay's ever increasing and improving accommodation offering. Perched on a hill, overlooking the stunning Maraetotara River, it feels a world away from reality. But the beauty of it is that it isn't. Located on the historic Clifton Station, a working sheep and cattle farm, the site is just 20 minutes from Hastings, Havelock North and Napier.

Imported from Holland, the 'tent', if you can call it that, is a sight to behold. It is spacious, light and airy and owner Lucia Gordon has used her eye for detail and design to ensure it is comfortable, unpretentious and luxurious.

And while you do need to bring your own food, everything else has been catered for. An incredibly comfortable king size bed, an outdoor bath and shower stocked with French toiletries, a well appointed kitchen with a

Weber barbecue, fridge and selection of Harney and Sons tea and Hawthorne coffee. There's cards, candles, stashes of magazines, a bountiful herb garden and an outdoor fire stacked up and ready to be lit, with the obligatory marshmallows.

Glamping sites are popping up around NZ and it's not hard to see the appeal. Stripping back some modern amenities makes you feel slightly intrepid, without having to sacrifice any of the comforts of a 5-star hotel. The site is bathed in sun, and the combination of birdsong and the river below provides the ultimate holiday soundtrack.

We were there for just 24

hours but for longer stays there is plenty of occupy you, if you can bear to drag yourself

away. Cycling trails, walking tracks and some of the region's top wineries including

Elephant Hill and Clearview are just a few minutes away. Clifton Glamping also shares a driveway with Cape Kidnappers, if you fancy a round of golf, a spa treatment or to have someone else do the cooking.

We certainly had no intention of going anywhere. As dusk fell I sat in front of the open fire, glass of wine in hand, while watching my partner fish in the river below and I thought, maybe I could be a camper after all.





ROTORUA Daily Post

Christmas Appeal 2016

THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE HAPPINESS OF OTHERS LESS FORTUNATE.

The community is invited to give a helping hand to local people in need by giving money and non-perishable food.

Make your Foodbank donations at the NZME Rotorua Daily Post office or you can drop food off at the Salvation Army's Community Ministries, 1115 Haupapa St.

DONATIONS CLOSE: Friday 23 December, 2016



