

travel

# *A world away*

Wilderness glamping a slice of heaven

Silence. No TV, no phone and no “ding” of an email arriving on my phone, just the chirping of birds and gentle bubbling of Christmas Creek. I was sold on Nightfall Wilderness Camp from the very start. Hidden away on the border of Queensland and New South Wales, about a 90-minute drive from Brisbane, Nightfall is a glamping (glamorous camping) experience like no other.

For us city slickers it begins on the winding road through the Scenic Rim countryside towards Mt Warning in northern NSW with wallabies, cows and kookaburras acting as a welcoming committee the deeper into the bushland you drive. Stunning views of the Lamington National Park greet you as you come upon the camp and, as you drive down into the valley where the retreat sits against a World Heritage-listed backdrop, you know you have stumbled upon a little piece of paradise.

Our official welcome mat was laid by resident dog Mister the Jack Russell, followed closely by owners Steve and Heidi Ross. They are passionate about eco-tourism and leaving a “light footprint” guided by the touch-the-earth-lightly safari tent luxury camping experiences of Heidi’s African childhood and their principles of conserving and enriching the land that sustains them.

My partner Amy and I felt like we were visiting old friends from the moment we arrived. Heidi and Steve showed us around their home before leading us on a tour of the site, which took in the kitchen garden where fresh produce is picked daily for meals cooked in the retreat’s outdoor wood oven. Nearby Christmas Creek is where guests can eat their breakfast and later enjoy a massage (\$100 an hour) to the sounds of water pounding against the rocks. The communal dining area has a massive dining table, board games, books and comfy chairs.

I didn’t think it could get much better until we were shown to our tent. The handmade tents (welded by Steve and sewn by Heidi) sit upon raised wooden floors and boast a 360-degree rotating fireplace, two bathtubs, a shower, a kitchen, a lounge and a king-sized bed. The sink has been carved out of rock and the copper fittings are handmade.

Enjoy a massage to the sounds of water pounding against the rocks

**GLAMP IT UP...** Experience a massage by the creek (above) and then kick back in your luxury tent.

The placement of the luxurious fixtures in the open-planned tent allows for the most glorious part of the accommodation to shine – the amazing views. We wasted no time in rolling up all the sides of the tent to take in the brilliant show that is nature.

The creature comforts are all here, with a stocked mini-fridge holding champagne, a welcoming platter of locally sourced cheeses, fresh dips and dark chocolate-coated cranberries. And the decadent food didn’t stop there. Most of what you eat at Nightfall is organic and the lion’s share comes from local suppliers, making it fresh and bursting with flavour.

Dishes included home-made pizzas with herbs and vegetables picked from the garden, lamb slow-roasted to perfection and a two-course breakfast, all of which are delicious.

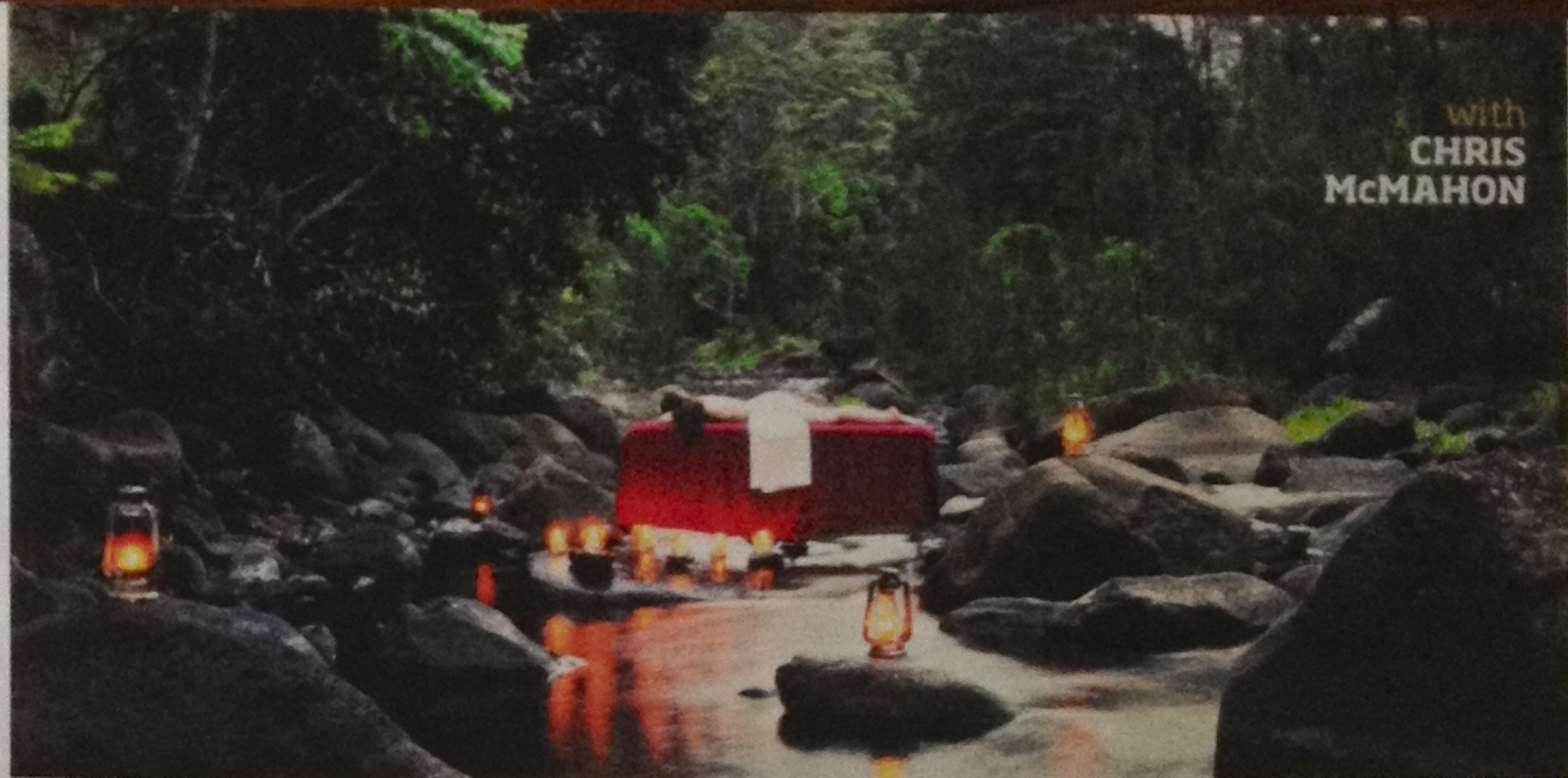
While we approached the dining room with food in mind, we stayed for the company, chatting with Steve, Heidi and the other guests in front of the fire, drinking beer and wine, laughing and talking about life as if with old friends.

Apart from eating and drinking, Nightfall offers opportunities to relax with a massage or the chance to stretch your legs with a hike into Lamington National Park.

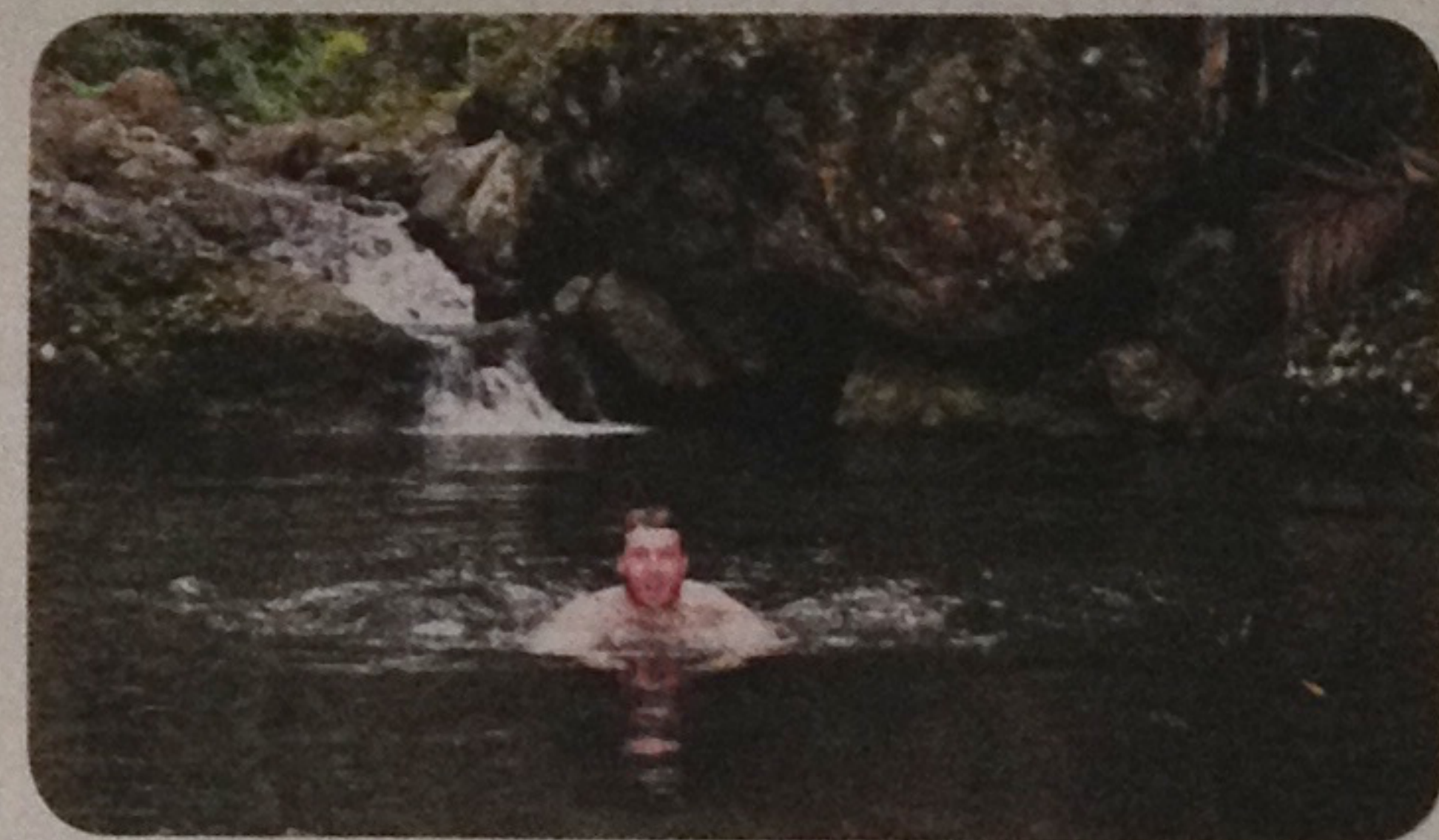
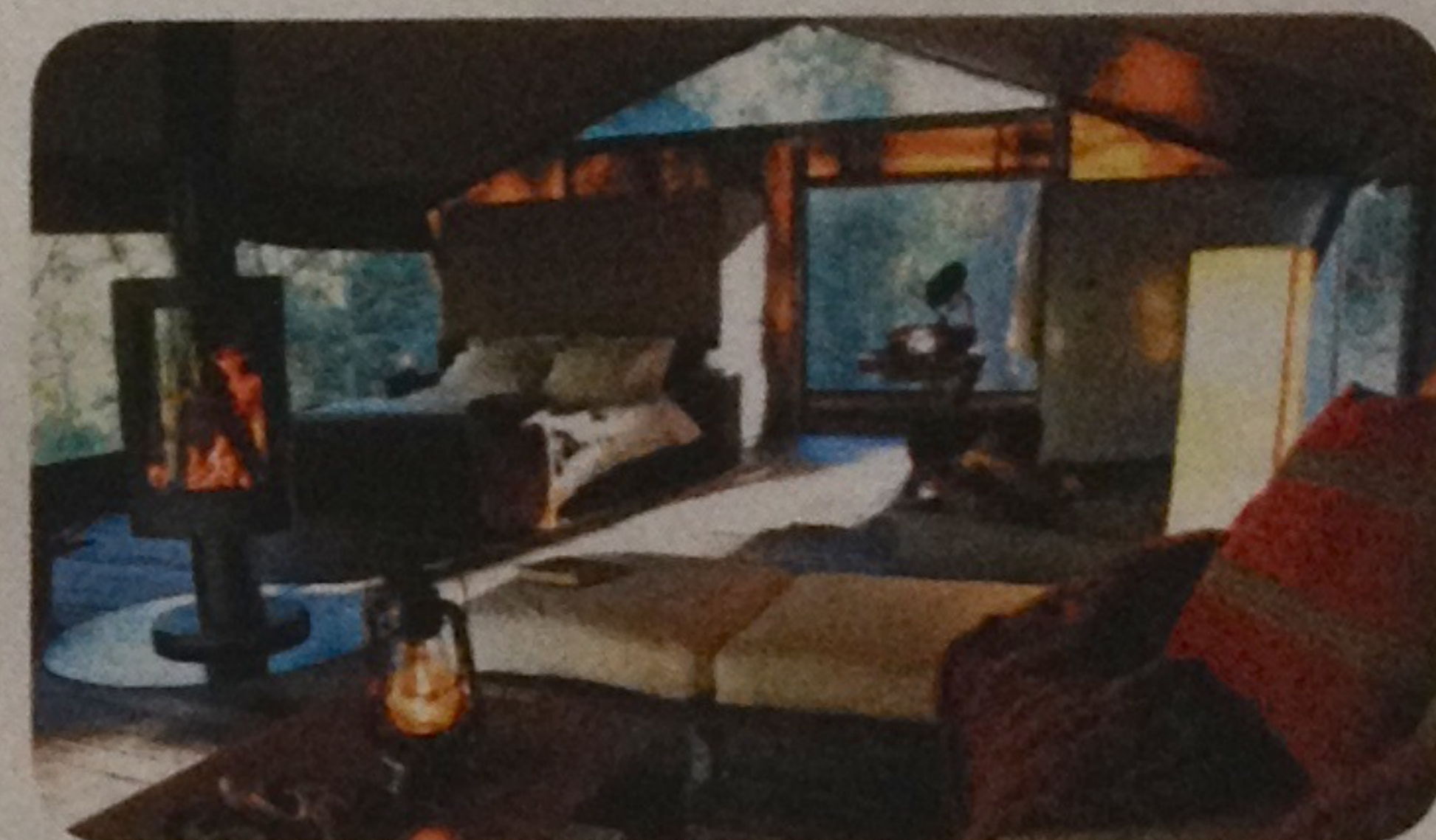
We discovered a trail which was green beyond belief and birds and animals that had us bobbing and weaving to get a better look.

The river has breathtaking waterholes and mini waterfalls where, if you are brave, you can take a bracing dip.

One highlight was a tree still standing after



with  
**CHRIS  
McMAHON**



being struck by lightning and burnt from the inside out. This is the beauty of glamping at Nightfall, aside from the stunning accommodation. It’s a place that gives you time to slow down and appreciate the things you might miss in everyday life. Whether that’s spending time with loved ones, getting back to nature or getting to know new people.

**THE WRITER** was a guest at Nightfall Wilderness Camp, 3009 Christmas Creek Rd, Lamington, ph: 5544 8070. From \$345 per tent, per night (incl breakfast); \$699 per tent, per night, for the Wildly Romantic package, incl all meals and relaxation massages. Due to demand, bookings well in advance is recommended. [nightfall.com.au](http://nightfall.com.au)

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