

ICONIC SAFFIRE FREYCINET TURNS TEN

Saffire recently celebrated its 10th birthday with a community open day, welcoming locals inside for the first time since opening.

The luxury lodge welcomed nearly 100 local guests for a day of wine tasting, beekeeping, cruising, oyster farming and extensive tours of the property, followed by a lavish lunch of Tasmanian produce and East Coast wines.

"It was such a special event for the team to be able to open our doors to day visitors for the first time and to welcome so many people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience Saffire", said Ross Boobyer, General Manager Saffire Freycinet.

"One of the best things we get to do here is see the sense of awe and wonder on guests' faces as they experience Saffire. To see so many locals feel that wonder and sense of pride was so heart warming. It felt like a true celebration for us".

Saffire opened during the global financial crisis and is celebrating a decade of success amidst a global pandemic.

Saffire Freycinet has welcomed nearly 20,000 guests over the past 10 years and has won 36 state and national tourism and hospitality awards. It's been named the World's Best Boutique Hotel (Boutique Hotel Awards 2014), the World's Best All-Inclusive Hotel (Fodor's 100), Australia's Best Luxury Lodge (Australian Traveller) and Best Hotel in Australasia (Conde Nast Traveller).

During the community open day guests were introduced to Saffire's resident Tasmanian Devils, gaining a deeper understanding of their ecology and learning about the lodge's adopt-a-devil program, which has raised more than \$150,000 for Tasmanian devil research in the last five years. The devils that live in the one-hectare, free-range enclosure have retired from breeding in the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program and have come to live out their days in luxury.

Nicole Dyble, head devil keeper, said guests were pleasantly surprised, with many not realising devils were on-site as part of a broader long-term research project.

"As guides, we love what we do, and I feel very proud because today has been a way to showcase what we're passionate about to Tasmanians. I think a lot of Tasmanians share that passion for nature - it's something we have in common".

"We're all pretty down to earth here, and I think we altered a few preconceived ideas on what Saffire's all about amongst locals, which was really special" she said.

100% of the \$50 ticket price for the open day was donated to Wildcare Tasmania's Devil Fund, which has been the source of funding for the part-time research vet at the Menzies Institute of Medical Research to investigate the Tasmanian devil facial tumour disease.

Luxury Lodges of Australia's Executive Officer Penny Rafferty says when Saffire opened in 2010, it was a genuine ground breaker for Australia.

“Saffire Freycinet has really added an understanding of the sophistication of the Tasmanian lifestyle that wasn’t well understood or as widely desired as it is now,” she said.

“Everyone talks about the MONA effect, but Saffire was a precursor to that. It really put Tasmania on the stage for people who actively seek impactful, meaningful luxury.”

Local residents weren’t the only ones invited to the birthday celebration, with a host of local businesses that regular partner with Saffire showcased on the day.

“Saffire sources over 85% of its food and beverages from Tasmanian suppliers, and this was a great opportunity to recognise that the success of our regional producers has been a large part of our success”, Ross Boobyer says.

Rob Barker from Wild Hives Honey was one of Saffire’s suppliers showcasing their products at the open day, along with Splendid Gin, Craigie Knowe, Gala Estate and Freycinet Marine Farm oysters.

“I’ve supplied over 120 kilos of my raw East Coast honey to Saffire’s kitchen, but I’m also lucky to keep some of my hives here on Saffire’s bushland. I’ve suited up over 1200 guests in apiarist suits and shown them the inner workings of the hives on the beekeeping experience in just 18 months.”

“I get a real buzz out of the interaction with the guests – showing and educating them about what happens in the hive, and then they get to taste it. It’s invaluable for a producer to be face to face with people when they’re trying your product. They’re always amazed at how unique the taste is, which is just such a positive affirmation for me.”

Open day guests Alison and Rodney Smith said over lunch:

“We live locally, and are just blown away by the experience - the view, the architecture, incredible food and wine, and such lovely people. It’s just world-class, but so genuinely Tasmanian. we’re really impressed. It’s been wonderful to be given the opportunity to come and look around”.

So what’s next for Saffire Freycinet? Ross Boobyer and his team have some innovative plans to build some new experiences for guests next year.

“We won’t give away too much, but as a team we are always looking to evolve our experiences for our guests. We have an exciting new concept that showcases nature’s beauty in a whole new way, which we hope to launch in 2021. Watch this space!”.

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[Download photography from the day](#) – credit Rosalind Wharton (unless otherwise stated in title)

[Watch the video of the day](#)

[Access more information and images on Saffire Freycinet here](#)

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