

## Central Tilba and the NSW south coast

Central Tilba and its neighbour Tilba Tilba are two Heritage villages on the south coast of New South Wales. Behind the village is spectacular Mt Gulaga (an extinct volcano) and the forests of the Gulaga National Park. In front, rich farmlands roll down to kilometres of uncontaminated beaches and freshwater lakes. The district is dotted with some of the State's most charming towns including Narooma, a short drive to the north; the laidback fishing town of Bermagui and the old port of Tathra, with its famous wharf and historic pub to the south. Central Tilba has a very rich indigenous and colonial history (dating from the gold rush days when the area was first settled).

This seven day, fully inclusive tour is based in fabulous, four-star accommodation on an eight-acre estate a short walk from Central Tilba. It starts with a guided heritage walk and dinner in Central Tilba and then includes with: a spectacular walk up Mt Gulaga; a walk along the rocky coast to Bermagui; another from the village through spotted gum forests to the Narooma inlet; a boat trip out to Monague Island (a nature reserve that is home to hundreds of seals and over ninety species of birds); as well as a private cooking lesson with a very accomplished local chef, whose credits, among many, include working as the producer and menu designer for 'River Cottage Australia'.

*Having grown up in Canberra, this beautiful part of the world has always been special to me and I'm very glad to have the opportunity to share it!*

### **The accommodation:**

The accommodation is in a very comfortable 4-star lodging in an eight-acre estate a short walk from Central Tilba. Each spacious room has an en suite bathroom, French-door access to the verandah, which has outdoor furniture and spectacular views over the park-like grounds and on to the surrounding farmlands and forests. There is a large lounge area with a fireplace. Breakfast will be served on the verandah or at the French farmhouse table.

### **Food and wine:**

As the popular TV program 'River Cottage, Australia' showed, the district around Central Tilba has a wonderful culinary tradition: excellent fruit and vegetables grown in the deep volcanic soil; the celebrated cheeses, butter and yoghurts produced from local milk; fresh seafood available at the wharves of nearby Bermagui and the oysters grown in the pristine estuaries behind Narooma. Our all-inclusive tour includes pop-up picnic lunches; visits to some of the regions best restaurants; two privately catered dinners and a cooking lesson conducted by the executive chef of 'River Cottage, Australia.' We will also have a wine-tasting at the lovely local vineyards.

### **The walks:**

Surrounded by mountains, national parks, rolling dairy farmlands, rivers, freshwater lakes and miles of pristine coastline, this area offers some fantastic walking. First and foremost, Mt Gulaga, an extinct volcano that dominates the whole coast, which is considered sacred by the local Yuin people. We also include country rambles through fields and forests and a lovely coastal walk. There will be two guides on each walk. Please see the itinerary for details of each walk.

### **Getting there:**

Central Tilba is on the coast of southern New South Wales, approximately five hours' drive from Sydney and approximately seven hours from Melbourne. The roads are good but we would recommend breaking the drive into two days, there are plenty of good places to stop along the way. The closest airport from Sydney is Moruya while Merrimbula has the closest airport for Melbourne.

## Central Tilba and the NSW south coast tour:

### *Day 1:*

Arrival in Central Tilba. Our tour starts with a twilight walk through Central Tilba with a local guide who will introduce us to the history and heritage of the village and district. We'll have dinner in town at the historic pub.

### *Day 2:*

This morning, we do an extraordinary walk through the neighbouring National Park to the summit of Mt Gulaga. The shaded trail climbs up through magical rainforest with a wide variety of birdlife. Mt Gulaga, the Mother, is central to many stories and connectedness to the land of the local Yuin people. Along the walk, our guide will introduce us to some of their history and traditions. **13 kms, 4 hours.** We will have a lazy lunch at lovely nearby before returning to our base.

In the afternoon, we will be taken on a tour of the villages best known service, the Tilba cheese factory. A variety of cheeses are produced onsite using milk produced by the Jersey cows that graze in the fields around the village. We will have a privately catered dinner at our accommodation.

### *Day 3:*

This morning we leave our accommodation, walking along an unsealed road, the original link between the Central Tilba morning and Narooma. It dips and climbs through forest and farmlands before coming down on Wagonga Inlet, a deep tidal estuary where some of Australia's finest oysters are farmed. We will have a gourmet picnic on the banks of the inlet before being picked up in a small boat and being taken to Narooma. We will have a privately catered dinner at our accommodation. **13 kms, 4 hours**

### *Day 4:*

Today we drive back to Narooma to take a boat out to beautiful Montague Island, nine kilometres off shore. Known as Barranguba, the errant son of Gulaga, this small island was a place of great significance for the Yuin people and is closely connected to the story of Mt Gulaga. Today it is a nature reserve and home to hundreds of seals and over ninety species of birds. Our visit will include a guided visit led by the National Parks Wildlife Service, a visit to the lighthouse and a fascinating walk around the island.

We will return to our base via Tilba Winery, which has been operating for over forty years. After a light lunch at the winery, we'll drive back to our base. Dinner will be at a lovely Italian restaurant in Narooma.

### *Day 5:*

This morning we walk down the hill towards the coast to explore Najanuga, a forest hill surrounded by forest and farmlands and topped with a spectacular granite outcrop. Najanuga, the good son, is also closely connected to Mt Gulaga. We will be joined by our guide who will tell us about the site's history and stories. We will then walk down to the beach where we'll have a gourmet picnic lunch before heading back to our base. **7 kms, 4 hours**

In the evening, we will explore the culinary heritage of the region with a visit to nearby Bermagui, where we will have a private seafood cooking lesson from a local chef who, apart from an extensive cooking career in Australia and abroad, worked as food producer for River Cottage, Australia. Dinner will be the result of the cooking lesson.

### *Day 6:*

This morning we walk south, following a trail that takes us along the beautiful coastline to Bermagui. After a light lunch, we'll head back to base, where you'll have time to explore the shops of Central Tilba. To finish the tour, we will have a private dinner at our accommodation in the evening. **9.5 kms, 3 hours**

### *Day 7:*

You will be free to continue your holiday on the Sapphire Coast.