

An aerial photograph of the Sequoia Lodge, a long, modern building with a dark roof and large windows, nestled in a lush, green forest. The lodge is surrounded by dense trees, and a winding road leads up to it. In the background, a vast cityscape is visible under a hazy, purple sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall scene is serene and picturesque.

SPLENDOUR IN THE HILLS

AWARD-WINNING SEQUOIA LODGE IS THE
LATEST ADDITION TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S
GROWING PORTFOLIO OF LUXURY STAYS.

Sequoia Lodge's 14 suites overlook the beautiful Piccadilly Valley.



Adelaide can get mighty hot in summer, but the lofty, leafy Adelaide Hills have always been a handy escape from the heat of the city. Back in the day, those who could afford it made their home in the hills, among them a prominent grazier and Great Gatsby-style statesman called Arthur Hardy, who in 1852 built Mount Lofty House. Hardy and his family lived in the stately manor for 10 years, during which time it became renowned for its lavish (not to say notorious) house parties.

These days the elegant old home is a state icon and an award-winning five-star boutique hotel. It's at the heart of Mount Lofty Estate, which offers luxury escapes, fine-dining and à la carte restaurants, a day spa, conference retreats

and a beautiful setting for glamorous weddings. It was voted No. 1 Hotel in Australia and South Pacific in the 2022 TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards.

The most recent addition to the estate is the very exclusive Sequoia Lodge, which celebrated its first birthday in September and which has just been voted Best New Tourism Business at the South Australian Tourism Awards.

The adults-only lodge, with its 14 suites carved into an escarpment on Mount Lofty Estate overlooking the patchwork Piccadilly Valley, took its name from the huge sequoia tree, planted by Arthur Hardy 170 years ago, that stands as its centrepiece.

The suites were built using local raw natural materials including Basket Range stone and spotted

gum. The 75-square-metre suites each include a sunken lounge and private balcony with 180-degree views. Many of the room functions operate via intuitive technology (which would no doubt leave the garrulous Mr Hardy speechless), while the standout feature of the spa-like bathrooms is an elevated stone bath positioned to make the most of the views.

Glass and ceramic pieces by South Australian artisans decorate the suites, each of which boasts an original oil painting of native flowers by resident artist Stephen Trebilcock, whose artworks appear throughout the property, turning the 12-hectare estate into a kind of living art gallery.

Part of Sequoia's philosophy is for guests to "connect with the land and its people" through a range of curated on-site experiences, many of which are included in their stay. Daily and seasonal experiences might include stargazing, listening to dreamtime stories around a campfire, tasting wine and learning from artisan winemakers, joining a sunrise yoga session or a guided nature walk, or just relaxing in one of the artesian spring-fed hot pools overlooking lovely Piccadilly Valley.

Local owner David Horbelt said he and business partner Malcolm Bean had set out to create one of Australia's finest luxury lodges – and the recent award had justified their commitment.

"Our vision to elevate Mount Lofty Estate to a destination for quality, luxury and grandeur was completed with the development and launch of Sequoia Lodge, and we're really proud of what we have created," he said.

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– OWNER DAVID HORBELT

"We set out to create something very genuine and authentic and share the treasures of the Adelaide Hills through our local suppliers, our experiences and through our storytelling."

There's no shortage of great produce and fine wines in the Adelaide Hills and the estate's fine-dining Hardy's Verandah Restaurant, under

head chef Jin Choi, has been awarded three hats (Australia's answer to Michelin stars) for its seasonal degustation menus and wine offerings. Its renowned wine list is curated by head sommelier Abhas Saxena, the winner of two *Wine Spectator* awards for excellence.

Martha Hardy's Kitchen, meanwhile, is an à la carte eatery serving fresh local produce for breakfast, lunch and dinner; its menu "a salute to Martha Hardy's home-style cooking". Both restaurants have picture windows with memorable views.

The AWL Lounge & Bar, with its open fireplace, big leather chairs and booths, is the place to sip one of the master bartender's inspired cocktails, a refreshing beer or a nightcap. In the warmer months it's nice to sit outside and enjoy the view.



Off-site adventures might include a three-hour drive through the Adelaide Hills in a Ferrari or Lamborghini.



The Gatekeeper's Day Spa offers relaxing rituals, rejuvenating experiences and beauty treatments.



The Gatekeeper's Day Spa takes care of wellbeing with a holistic menu of relaxing rituals, rejuvenating experiences and beauty treatments. Relaxing by the estate's swimming pool overlooking the gardens and valley is also encouraged.

Off-site adventures might include a wine-tasting day in the Adelaide Hills, a koala encounter in the Cleland Conservation Park, a scenic helicopter flight or maybe a three-hour drive through the hills in a supercar (Ferrari F8 Tributo, Lamborghini Huracán, McLaren 570S or Aston Martin Vantage – take your pick), an Adelaide city jaunt, a behind-the-scenes R.M. Williams tour or, for wine buffs, a chauffeured trip of the Barossa Valley.

On the other hand, once you've settled in to the elevated opulence of Sequoia Lodge, you may not feel like going anywhere... 🍷

www.sequoialodge.com.au