

# Ultimate romance at Emily Moon River Lodge



By [Jessica Tennant](#)

15 Jun 2018

Legend has it that Harry Mallard built a magical place for his Emily, and the love they share is said to touch all who visit Emily Moon River Lodge today. Believe what you will, the lodge is understatedly one of the most romantic of places I am yet to find, and my wedding anniversary seemed the perfect excuse for a stay with my husband at this beloved spot on the bank of the Bitou River winding through the beautiful Plettenberg Bay.



Taken by [Page and Holmes](#)

Welcomed by the fresh, salty air, on arrival we took a moment to take in the mesmerising river valley below. Greeted by a pair of intricately carved antique wooden doors, we caught a glimpse of the quiet oasis beckoning us in, where behind its walls we felt transported to what we could only imagine paradise to be.

The windy afternoon wisped us into the sheltered reception where we were warmly welcomed and offered strawberry mojitos to enjoy while checking in for the night. We were soon shown to our suite, of which there are 10. The thoughtfulness of the layout and the way in which each is positioned, however, makes it seem as if you have the place to yourself, with each suite having its own private deck overlooking the river and wetlands below. Ours was just a few steps away along a path from our veranda, trailed by an indigenous garden to a view that couldn't possibly be of this world.



Taken by [Page and Holmes](#)

Besides the idyllic surrounding countryside and natural beauty of the place, the attention given to the décor and styling of the interiors definitely contributed to this feel. With one-off artifacts and collectables from all over Africa, Asia and Polynesia – similar to those found at [Amatuli](#) (owners Mark and Christine Valentine's eclectic trading store in Johannesburg along with Elize van der Merwe) – the overall style was Afro-Asian in the execution. Every single detail has been well thought through, from the design of the room and the lodge as a whole, to these treasures and finer finishing touches.

This thoughtfulness even extended to the bathroom, providing a special, embroidered face cloth to remove make-up to two sets of gowns – a toweling gown for drying off, ready and waiting beside the bath, and a warm, fleece gown for lounging. It's not often that this level of luxury is displayed, and it certainly contributes to a sense of escape from the every day.

Making the most of the remaining afternoon light, we took a leisurely stroll with towels and books in hand down to the residents' pool and river, where it was just us and the wind in the reeds. Hopelessly romantic and making the [legend of Emily Moon](#) completely believable, imagining the possibility of Harry sitting on the bank between the swaying grass, jotting down nostalgic thoughts for a letter he would write to his love.

The setting sun woke us from the warmth of this daydream, but the thought of a hot bath beside a crackling fire was a fair replacement.



Taken by [Page and Holmes](#)

Once ready for dinner, it was a short walk down to the guest entrance to Emily's Restaurant. Before being shown to our table, we enjoyed a glass of wine on the daybed at one of the poolside fireplaces, which is especially cozy with lanterns, fairy lights and various areas of interest catering for both intimate and more open and inclusive gatherings.

Simon's Bar, just above the pool, has the best woodfired pizzas in town we were told. What we found to be especially unique, though, is that both eateries attracted locals and other non-guests, which provided for a lively ambience in an incredibly intimate setting at the same time – a perfect balance quite different to the typical pin-drop silence presented by many mid-week boutique hotel dinners.

In addition to this, for the more discerning guest, the restaurant uses homegrown produce and sources locally, and the menu itself was impressive to say the least. The chicken liver starter was the best we've had, the venison fillet was cooked to perfection and the chocolate fondant heavenly. Comfort food with a modern edge is perhaps the best way to describe it.



Taken by [Page and Holmes](#)

Ready to call it a night, our bed with sheets turned down made it an exciting prospect, and a couple of chocolate truffles provided the sweetest of endings to one of the loveliest of days.



After a good and wonderfully comfortable night's rest, we went out to welcome the morning sun and enjoy some tea on the deck.

Breakfast at Emily's, only open to hotel guests, is not to be missed. No need to look at the hot menu; the buffet table has more than you could want: from all of the expected cereals and mueslis, yoghurt and fruit salad to toast, croissants and spreads, to the surprising baked egg and bacon muffins and potato fritters, to the most delightful carrot cake and lemon slice baked by the owner's mother herself. Notably, her love for serving others made us feel more like friends in her home than guests in a hotel. So satisfied and content as ever, we moved to a couch next to the fireplace in the restaurant where we continued a lovely chat with her over a cup of coffee about the history of the hotel and nearby attractions.

Sadly, our time at Emily Moon had come to an end, but we left without a doubt that we would return and next time definitely for more than one night. While it was wonderful, our stay was too short to fully rest and appreciate [all Emily Moon has to offer](#).

That said, we tend to agree with Harry, that we too think we have found paradise...

*Things to do in the area that I'd highly recommend:*

- [Robberg Nature Reserve](#) for a hike and walk on a more private beach to the big bay Plett is better known for.
- [Old Nick Village](#) for a self-tour of the new Mungo Mill, shopping for local artisan goods and a farm-style bite to go from Roost.
- [Newstead Vineyards](#) for a wine tasting and lazy lunch (also a magical venue for special occasions and events).

*\*Jessica Tennant was a guest of Emily Moon River Lodge in Plettenberg Bay. The lodge is an hour-and-half drive from the George airport. Contact [EmilyMoon.co.za](#) for rates and availability for your stay. Note: From 1 May to 31 August the lodge is offering a [winter accommodation promotion](#) and Simon's Bar is the place to be on a Friday night with half-priced drinks from 6pm to 7pm, R25 beer on tap all night and live music from 6pm to 9pm. Emily Moon also has an [events venue](#) that can be hired for weddings, conferences, seminars, product launches, art exhibitions and theatrical productions, and it specialises in elopements. Follow Emily Moon on [Instagram](#).*

## ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

Jess is Senior Editor: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com. She is also a contributing writer. [marketingnews@bizcommunity.com](mailto:marketingnews@bizcommunity.com)

- Cassandra Twala on this year's Sanlam Handmade Contemporary Fair - 21 Sep 2018
- Hemelhuijs x So Yum = a taste of Cape Town's most divine - 8 Aug 2018
- A conscious conversation with Roberta Thatcher of La Mano and The Pantry Market - 27 Jul 2018
- Ultimate romance at Emily Moon River Lodge - 15 Jun 2018
- Eat, shop, play in Knysna - 29 Nov 2017

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>