

# HAVEN ON *the hillside*

WORDS JACQUI WILLIAMS PHOTOGRAPHS PETER HOARE

AS ALWAYS, TAKING AN EARLY minute from the office proved more difficult than it should, but a comfortable one hour drive up the South Eastern Freeway saw us on the ferry crossing the Murray River at Mannum. There, perched on the hillside, are three self-contained studio apartments known as Riverview Rise Retreats. Perhaps best described as contemporary rural architecture, they are in keepin<sup>g</sup>s with the more happy-go-lucky shacks on the river's edge; but step inside and that's where the similarity ends.

Arriving just in time to sample a complimentary bottle of locally grown Heward Estates Chardonnay and watch the sun set from the sheltered verandah, we considered our dining options. Each studio has its own barbecue, and a gourmet barbecue platter with salads can be provided. Alternatively, it's an easy drive back into town for a meal at the Pretoria or Mannum Hotel but it's pretty hard to leave once you've settled into Riverview. Needless to say, it was barbecue for us.

Having identified a gap in the local market, hosts Michael and Wink Chorney have provided premium accommodation for couples. Turning your back on the river, you step into a room not unlike any international high quality hotel. The space is well used

and well equipped. A king size bed takes in the best views or the wide screen television. The large bathroom has a spa bath and double shower — with the essential fluffy white towels, bathrobes and slippers.

Should you be inclined to cook indoors, there is a fully (and I mean fully) equipped kitchen with all the utensils you could need for one night or for a longer stay. On top of the usual expectations, an espresso machine is also provided. The fridge is well stocked with local wines and breakfast provisions for a continental or cooked breakfast. For those who plan to linger longer, a washer and dryer are tucked away in the bathroom.

After a successful career as a set designer, Michael Chorney now designs sculptures, more often than not incorporating water features. Riverview Rise's three studios reflect his past. *Lazy Jane Lodge* takes its name from the paddle steamer Michael and his team created for the film *The River Kings*, while *Bob's Bungalow* and *Molly's Hideaway* are named after two of his sculptural characters. Michael's paintings are among the artworks on the walls.

Mannum is rapidly becoming an attractive tourist destination. Home base for many of the houseboats on this stretch of the river, the town is steeped in river history

and well worth exploring. Some of the best views can be taken aboard a river cruise. For more energetic exercise you might like to visit the Mannum waterfalls 10km out of town, or the nine green/18 tee golf course. Murray Bridge Golf Club is just 35km away. If you're really energetic you might try water skiing. But be assured, sitting in the sunshine with a good book on your private verandah is just as therapeutic.

Having recharged our batteries we chose an alternative route back to Adelaide, via Birdwood to take in the magnificent vineyard views around Gumeracha. It may have only been a short stay at Riverview Rise but, being so accessible, it's unlikely to be the last.

*Acknowledgements: SALife stayed at Riverview Rise Retreats as guests of Michael and Wink Chorney. Riverview Rise Retreats is on the outskirts of Mannum, about one hour's drive from Adelaide. There are three one-bedroom studios available at \$295 per couple per night. Volume corporate rates and gift vouchers are available. For more information or bookings, telephone 0400 310 380 or visit [www.mannumaccommodation.com.au](http://www.mannumaccommodation.com.au)*

*The Mannum Visitor Information Centre is on Randell St, next to the ferry. Telephone 08 8569 1303.*

