

AWAKINO RIVER LODGE

A WORLD APART



Blink and you will miss Awakino — the tiniest of towns (population of eight to ten) located just off SH3 on the peaceful Awakino River. It is the sort of place you may drop in to when driving from Auckland to New Plymouth for a burger and chips or a cup of tea at the local takeaway joint, or to stretch your legs along the river bank prior to hitting the road again.

Back in 2004, Garry Wycherley did just this, when he came across a property for sale. What had caught his attention was an old dilapidated general store building built in 1887. It was on the river and there was something about it that shouted potential so he put in the offer and bought it as the family bach.

The transformation was hugely challenging but the results are perfect. The shape and façade of the building remain the same — but everything else speaks of French Provincial country mansion. What was once a basic trading post has been transformed into a luxury lodge.

A few years ago, Garry decided to advertise the property on bookabach and,

since then, a steady stream of tourists has been to stay.

I stayed there in late May and found Awakino River Lodge to be special in so many ways. The interior décor is an artwork in itself and the gardens are equally charming. A log fire added winter warmth and that special ambiance, and a dip in the spa pool under a night sky glittered with stars, was unforgettable. Waking up to the birdsong and views across the river made my heart leap for joy.

It is the sort of place where you could be equally happy to have the whole house to yourself or to fill it with family and friends. There are four double bedrooms, all beautifully appointed, and the living area is very generously proportioned. Awakino River Lodge would be the ideal place for celebrations like big birthdays, or even an intimate wedding.

Jump on to bookabach and be dazzled by choice; so what makes Awakino River Lodge so special? For me the reasons are many... the solitude and serenity, the wild coastline just minutes away, with its black beaches and crashing waves, the closeness

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“Out of every window is a masterpiece.”

— Ray —

to nature, the languid river that runs past the front door, the well-equipped kitchen for those who love to cook and create, the sense of permanence and history, the luxury and comfort, the space.

So, if you truly wish to get away from it all but value your comfort and enjoy a little luxury done in the most tasteful of ways, then I can recommend Awakino River Lodge highly — you won't be disappointed.

Words: F Harrison

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