

GREEN GLOBE CERTIFIED COMPANY

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BINNA BURRA MOUNTAIN LODGE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA



BACKGROUND

Positioned amidst the sub-tropical rainforest setting of South East Queensland, Australia, lies the GREEN GLOBE Certified operation – Binna Burra Mountain Lodge. Binna Burra Mountain Lodge was one of the first nature-based resorts in Australia, having been established in 1933. Binna Burra's significance is further enhanced by its commitment to environmentally sustainable practices prior to the evolution of 'ecotourism'.

Binna Burra is centre stage to some of the most spectacular natural features of the Lamington National Park and located inland from the Gold Coast, to the Central Eastern Rainforest Reserve World Heritage Area. The park features ancient Antarctic Beech trees, a rich and diverse rainforest, and meandering mountain streams and waterfalls. It also includes some of Australia's most anciently derived flora and fauna species.

Binna Burra provides a cosy retreat accommodating up to 115 guests in rustic style timber log cabins. It provides modern amenities however the absence of radio, television, phones and clocks confirms this as an ideal getaway from everyday life and provides encouragement of its guests to indulge in and learn an appreciation of the natural wonders that surround Binna Burra Lodge.

Binna Burra is a model example of ecotourism accommodation, which is a title rightfully earned considering their continuing commitment to environmental management through innovative approaches such as energy and resource conservation and their social commitment to local community and industry.

GREEN GLOBE CATEGORY: Company

GREEN GLOBE SECTOR: Accommodation

CERTIFIED PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL POLICY

- Binna Burra has created and implemented their own environmental management plan which they incorporate into their day-to-day work routine. It addresses issues of management required to enhance and preserve its surroundings including: sustainable visitor numbers, policies concerning waste, pollution and energy, and upholding principles of sustainable management and development through guests' educational experiences and staff training.

Binna Burra's Mission Statement " *To provide visitors to national parks with learning experiences, accommodation and enjoyment, nourishing mind body and soul as only nature can* "

ENERGY

- Power is conserved with the use of energy efficient lights which use 85% less power than normal incandescent bulbs. This has resulted in a 20% reduction in electricity usage.
- Water supply is entirely energy-free, using gravity to deliver the fresh mountain water from high up in the mountains to the Lodge buildings.
- Further weather proofing of buildings will reduce energy consumption by 15,000 kWh p.a.
- Binna Burra is the first company in Queensland to become a partner of the initiative between the Queensland Government and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Cleaner Production Partnership Program.
- A move from a diesel fired water heater to one powered by gas has resulted in an 88% reduction in diesel consumption, and an overall reduction in energy with the added benefit of cleaner discharges to the atmosphere.

Improvements carried out at Binna Burra has led to savings of up to A\$15,000 and has reduced CO² emissions by 189 tonnes per year.

POTABLE WATER

- Constant pressure reduced flow taps helps to reduce daily water consumption.
- Signs are used to encourage water conservation practices by guests and staff.
- Binna Burra encourages guests to conserve water use and energy use through the re-use of towels.
- Drinking water is not used for watering the lawns and gardens.

SOLID AND LIQUID WASTE

- Waste is recycled wherever possible including guest waste and waste created from day to day operations.
- Glass and metals are collected for use by a local school.
- A worm farm is used to break down kitchen and paper waste.
- Biodegradable and environmentally friendly cleaning products are used throughout the dining room, kitchen and bar areas.

- A high performance sewerage treatment plant is closely monitored by the Environmental Protection Authority. This is located on the grounds and it efficiently handles all waste generated at Binna Burra.
- A waste minimization committee is in place that regularly meets and discusses new and innovative ways to reduce waste generation.
- Recycled products such as toilet paper, brochures, letterheads, fliers and envelopes are purchased.
- Techniques are used to minimize paper wastage through increased use of e-mail and I.T
- Programs and practices are continually monitored and updated as new innovative approaches are identified as they relate to waste minimization.
- Future aims for Binna Burra include further recycling of products, dispensers in guest rooms to minimize water and over packaging of current products; and to maximize the use of I.T to reduce paper consumption.

AIR QUALITY AND NOISE CONTROL

- Maintenance program is coordinated by the maintenance manager and transport department to ensure vehicles run efficiently and minimize emissions.
- Annual energy assessments are conducted
- No chlorofluorocarbons are used in air conditioning, refrigeration or fire extinguishers
- All areas at Binna Burra Lodge are non-smoking areas
- Regular maintenance is carried out to ensure that all machinery used at Binna Burra operates efficiently and with minimal noise emissions
- Use of machinery that is excessively noisy is kept to a minimum
- Noise minimization techniques are encouraged and improvements are identified which can be made in order to reduce noise emissions such as insulation.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION

- All new construction maximizes the use of recycled materials, with building strategies ensuring environmental impacts are minimised.
- All promotional materials are produced using 100% recycled materials.
- All cleaning products use by Binna Burra are developed by TRI-Nature. These products use ingredients that are completely derived from natural products such as sugar cane and citrus for use in solvents.

SOCIAL COMMITMENT

- Binna Burra is involved in and supports local organizations and programs that benefit the social and cultural development of the community and region.
- Environmental educational role through a special low cost schools training facility at the lodge and special education.
- Binna Burra organizes special environmental education training facilities and nature guides for children in the local area.
- Nature guiding programs and educational tours are conducted for guests.
- Binna Burra sponsors and assists researchers undertaking research programs into rainforest ecology and tourism use of the adjacent World Heritage Area

ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

- Rehabilitation programs are integrated into Binna Burra's Land Management Plan. This process is maintaining and improving the state of the natural vegetation in and around Binna Burra.

One of Binna Burra's policies is to provide sponsorship to organisations who promote the notion of landcare. The Wilderness Society is a recent recipient of this scheme.

Initiatives undertaken include:

- Planting of only native vegetation and non-native plants being replaced with native species. This is to provide food for birds and other wildlife and to re-establish endangered or rare species.
- Weed control and identification programs in place
- Any developments involve minimal disturbance of native vegetation and strategies are adopted to prevent wildlife disruption.
- On-going evaluation of rehabilitation practices and identification of problems at the onset are approaches being utilized in the Land Management Plan.
- A native plant nursery is used for regenerating local species for replanting.

Additional Notes:

Future initiatives being planned for Binna Burra over the next two years include:

- Dual/ low flush toilets;
- Installation of rainwater tanks;
- Smaller sinks;
- Integrate water conservation practices into staff training and guest information.
- Installation of timers and sensors to control lighting and heating of accommodation units, staff areas and offices.

In 1999, Binna Burra Mountain Lodge entered a landmark agreement with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service whereby Binna Burra took responsibility to share the upkeep of Lamington National Park.

CONTACT DETAILS

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