

complimentary glass or premium tasting of the Helen and Joey Estate range. If romance is on the agenda, the superb restaurant is the place to be. Book a window-side booth table and enjoy the modern Australian menu with flavour influences from Helen and Joey's birthplaces in Chengdu and Zhejiang.

DON'T MISS Try the magical river-sledding experience offered by the Warburton Adventure Co. It's the Yarra River like you've never seen it before – on your belly.

FROM \$430 a night. *Melissa Fyfe*

The Keith

1929 Point Nepean Rd, Tootgarook; (03) 5987 8800.



Another once-dowdy motel gets a makeover, this one recalling the glory days of 1950s beach holidays.
CMCCONVILLE

THE LOCATION A 75-minute drive from Melbourne, this retro motel is in Tootgarook, a small Mornington Peninsula suburb sandwiched between the bigger ones of Rosebud and Rye.

THE PLACE Another once-dowdy motel gets a makeover, this one recalling the glory days of 1950s beach holidays, with jute rugs and paintings of local beach scenes. Its 16 rooms include three family rooms; the largest sleeps five. Each, though, has a kitchenette with fridge and microwave. Check-in is contactless – access your room and the rainy-day games room, with its comfy sofas and board games, via a PIN texted to you ahead of arrival. There's no pool, but none required when you've got Capel Sound Beach on the other side of the busy Point Nepean Rd.



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THE EXPERIENCE The new owners – the group behind Alba Thermal Springs & Spa – add luxe with essential-oil-infused toiletries and breakfast packs of locally made granola and banana bread (costs extra). But you don't come here to hang out indoors. The Keith means beach days, fish and chips, watching the sunset and sipping local wines. Come summer, a cocktail caravan is scheduled to pull up to The Cabana, the motel's outdoor kitchen.

DON'T MISS Hire a kayak from the hotel for a paddle or one of their bicycles for a spin along the foreshore's Bay Trail.

FROM \$169 a night; three-night minimum December 20-January 26. *Belinda Jackson*

[Harry's on Moodemere](#)

12 Moodemere Rd, Rutherglen; (02) 6032 9449.

THE LOCATION Rutherglen, home to more than 20 wineries, is a three-hour drive north-east of Melbourne while Lake Moodemere, a natural billabong and bird sanctuary, is five minutes from the vibrant town.

THE PLACE It's a dream come true for builder Harry Chambers who, fuelled by his childhood memories, has constructed two spacious villas overlooking his family's Lake Moodemere Estate winery. The Chambers family has been growing vines here since 1886. Recycling stars in the open-gabled ceiling and open-plan villas, with bricks rescued from nearby Seppelt ruins. A sleek kitchen, huge en suite with free-standing bath – a definite contender for best rural bath