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Glamping on sunshine

BRYDIE WRIGHT escapes to the Sunshine Coast for a weekend of family fun, in style.

Leaving the hustle and bustle of city life behind, the sparkling blue waters of Maroochy River beckons my family north for a long weekend in the Queensland sunshine. Arriving at **Rivershore Resort BIG4**, we are instantly struck by the peace and quiet; the reception foyer and its modern décor have that effortless, laidback feel and the promise of riverside tranquillity waits in the complex beyond.

Built from scratch

With our three-year-old, Robert, in tow, my family are relatively new to the world of holiday parks and I will admit we have never actually

camped out before. So when BIG4 announced the opening of its newest Sunshine Coast holiday park, we couldn't resist the chance to dip our toes in the waters of modern camping. No cheek-by-jowl living here; Rivershore is the first southeast Queensland holiday park built from a green field site in 30 years, giving it the advantage of planning. With a minimum of 10x12-metre camping sites, the resort feels natural and spacious, offering opportunities for socialising, without comprising on privacy.

Out of Africa

Moving just beyond the campervans and trailers, we could be forgiven for thinking we've

stepped onto the banks of the Zambezi River. Like a scene straight out of Africa, a row of luxury tents appear before our eyes. Beautifully landscaped and immaculately presented, we choose one of the 13 self-contained King Safari tents – with a camp bed included for our little munchkin. Alternatively, the resort has two fully equipped Family Safari tents or for families with older kids simply invest in a mini-glamping tent next door – the coolest cubby house ever – so mum and dad can have some alone time.

Robert's eyes light up in unrestrained excitement as we open the wood-framed doors of our very own glamper and he beholds the four-poster king bed – all his to play on. The use of space is ingenious with a kitchenette and a luxury ensuite bathroom tucked away behind the main bed and living space. While Robert bounces off the walls, I relax on the balcony and enjoy the views.

Fun for all

A fun-filled afternoon lies before us and the first stop is the pool, one of the biggest we've swum in and heated to a comfortable temperature. Within the space of an hour my little tadpole goes from dog paddler to Evel Knievel as he hurtles down Rivershore's two "awesome" water slides – his words, not mine. The kids will never get bored here. While parents may choose to relax drink in hand by the bar, snack on the cafe's delectable gourmet pizzas or simply recline by the pool, the resort offers its young guests a smorgasbord of activities from playgrounds to mini-golf, kayaking to cycling, to list just a few.

Resort owners, the McGovern family, are onto something special here and it's not by chance. Will McGovern believes that Rivershore has "the BIG4 stamp of approval"

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combined with the welcoming charm of a local family business and the lure of a modern take on camping for first-time or occasional campers. Certainly for my little family of glamping newbies, we couldn't have hoped for a more complete experience of Rivershore's mantra: escape, relax and enjoy. ●

BIG4 RIVERSHORE RESORT REPORT CARD

Stay

www.BIG4.com.au/rivershore

Getting there

Virgin, Jetstar and Qantas fly direct daily from Sydney and Melbourne to the Sunshine Coast Airport. From 30 September, Jetstar will fly direct from Adelaide.

Getting there

Maroochydore is a 1.5-hour drive from Brisbane.

CLICK HERE to watch a behind-the-scenes video of the Wright family's holiday to the Sunshine Coast.