



ABOVE & OPPOSITE PAGE - Artist Impressions of Trentham Waters Resort, scheduled for completion in early 2025.

# Trentham Waters Resort

A SLICE OF PALM SPRINGS

WORDS **KIRSTEN LLOYD** PHOTOGRAPHY **ARTIST IMPRESSIONS**

For anyone unfamiliar with Palm Springs, it has long been considered one of America's leading resort cities, tucked into the picturesque desert county of Riverside, in California. With a mild, dry climate, the city is home to chic resorts - think expansive pools, art-deco-white-walled architecture, and towering palms - offering an enviable escape for the young and the young-at-heart. Now, thanks to the vision of Rick Kelly and the expertise of his parents' commercial construction company, Malidot, Sunraysia is getting its own little slice of Palm Springs.

"Working alongside dad is a privilege. His ability to sketch the concept for the project and turn it into reality is mind blowing. It wouldn't have been viable without him because, to put it simply, he just gets things done."

Trentham Waters Resort, scheduled for completion in early 2025, is a passion project for former Bathurst champion, Rick. Racing took him to the world's more exotic places but nowhere had more impact on him than Palm Springs. Rick was immediately taken with the way Palm Springs architecture connects to the environment and to the people who live there. The style is at once sophisticated and entirely uncomplicated.

"I've been lucky enough to go there a few times and I think it's unreal, I love the mid-century buildings and the lifestyle, it has a vibe like no other."

Upon retiring from racing, Rick decided to harness his passion for the Californian holiday mecca and, with his family, create a

resort inspired by it, in their hometown of Mildura. Our climate and semi-arid landscape mirror that of Palm Springs and Rick believed that positioned beside one of the wider stretches of the Murray River, Sunraysia was the perfect place to create a resort that pays homage to the Palm Springs vibe while delivering a uniquely Australian experience.

"Aesthetically, Trentham Waters will have a Palm Springs feel throughout the design, but it's not a replica, it's our take on it and it should link in well with the original themes while creating something entirely new."

The partially constructed, gleaming white buildings of Trentham Waters rise from the landscape, much like a phoenix, but a cleverly chosen Palm Springs interior colour palette with tonal shades that also echo the surrounding Mallee - earthy reds and oranges, sky blues and cactus greens - anchor the resort to its place. Upon completion, the planned vegetation that will include native plantings, distinguished, rather than dominated by, statuesque palms, will further embed the development to its environment.

The central buildings will house a restaurant and events space open to both overnight guests and locals. While the final concept is yet to be confirmed, the restaurant will offer quality food using local produce, and independent of the location and other attractions, will be a drawcard for visitors. The events space will have the capacity to host at least 150 people in a room boasting floor-to-raised ceiling windows overlooking what will be a marquee swimming pool.



THIS PAGE - The main resort will initially include powered ensuite caravan sites and one, two and three-bedroom villas.

### SUSTAINABILITY

At Trentham Waters Resort, sustainability is a key priority, with recycled products, like the EKODECK decking which is made from 80% recycled materials, used wherever possible. They have also adopted energy-efficient designs, and this included the installation of extensive solar arrays. The resort will also have EV charging points for guest use. During design and construction, there was a focus on preserving 200 acres of natural bushland and billabongs along the Murray, with an ongoing robust environmental management plan in place.

### STAFFING

The construction project has between 20-40 people working onsite at any given time, with priority given to local suppliers and trades, when possible. On completion, it's estimated there will be 24 full-time positions with potential to double this figure once the restaurant opens.

### GUEST NUMBERS

Projected visitor numbers: 33,255 overnight guests (based on an average stay of 3.5 nights) once fully operational (excluding the Lifestyle Village) This translates to an additional \$10.6M in revenue for the region (calculated as 33,255 visitors x \$321, the average spend per trip in the Wentworth region pre-COVID). This surge in tourism expenditure represents a remarkable 50% increase over pre-COVID levels once Trentham Waters Resort is fully operational.

Mildura has long been calling out for more conference and event facilities and with the introduction of Trentham Waters, this is exactly what it will get, all be it, in an escape-from-reality setting.

The main building will also have a gym, a welcome addition to the New South Wales side of the river, and an impressive Reception area that will set the scene for guests upon arrival.

Whilst a partnership with Big 4 is providing Rick with the resources, advice and support he needs to establish Trentham Waters as a sought-after holiday destination, the development is a departure from what most people would consider to be a traditional Australian holiday park.

"I wanted this resort to have a point of difference, in terms of the experience people will get - the music they hear around the pool, the restaurant, the villas - it will have a unique vibe.

"I've done a lot of research and in my opinion, there's nothing like this in Australia. There are some impressive caravan parks but nothing that has this look and feel."

The main resort will initially include powered ensuite caravan sites and one, two and three-bedroom villas, while nestled among the bushland overlooking the river, will be a series of luxury elevated eco-villas for couples looking for an exclusive retreat. The range of accommodation options that will be available reflects the diversity of tourists Rick wishes to attract.

"We aren't looking to take visitors away from existing hotels and caravan parks, this is about attracting a new sector of the market. People looking for a true resort experience, with access to the river, to all the facilities and unique accommodation."

For people with boats, Trentham Waters will appeal, thanks to direct access to the river via a launch, boat (and caravan) wash bays and undercover storage. Parents will appreciate the array of



ABOVE LEFT - Parents will appreciate the array of activities to keep kids entertained. ABOVE RIGHT - Trentham Waters has been several years in the making, but as the saying goes, good things take time, better things take a little longer.



activities to keep kids entertained, from the stunning forty-eight-metre pool and splash park, complete with water slide, to the tennis court and mini golf course. Couples staying in the eco-villas will fall in love with the solitude while soaking away tired muscles in their private bush spa.

Rick is a man of ideas. During our conversation, he talks with equal enthusiasm about everything he is working on now and about a whole host of other concepts he has in mind for the future. His brain must be a busy place. More than anything, Rick wants to introduce people to Mildura and the Murray - to give them an unforgettable experience - and he is confident that for most people, their first visit to Trentham Waters will not be their last.

"With my career, I travelled all around the world, but Mildura always stood out, I just love it here, it has everything on offer that I love doing, and I want to share that with people.

"You go to other places along the Murray and the river narrows, it's crowded, and there are accidents. People go there because it's closer to Melbourne but why wouldn't you drive a couple more hours and have a river like we have, in a town like

Mildura, with this place to stay? I mean really, why wouldn't you? Once they've been here, they'll keep coming back."

Trentham Waters has been several years in the making, but as the saying goes, good things take time, better things take a little longer.

"Everyone is excited about this project; it has taken a while to find the right path to go down to bring it all to life in the way we envisaged but we're getting there."

With the development rapidly taking shape, Rick can now talk in tangibles, about the boost it will deliver for the region - jobs, investment and tourist dollars - and perhaps most importantly, you my fellow holidaymakers and day trippers, can soon plan your own visit to Sunraysia's answer to a Palm Springs resort; a holiday destination that can be whatever you want it to be. ✨

*Trentham Waters Resort will also cater for people wanting a Palms Springs lifestyle full-time, in an exclusive gated community, Trentham Waters Living. More information coming soon via [www.trenthamwatersmildura.com.au](http://www.trenthamwatersmildura.com.au)*

Come and experience local hand crafted wines in serenity.

Our cellar door is a just short 15min drive from Mildura.

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