

LUXURY IN HANMER SPRINGS

By Gayle Dickson

On a recent trip to Hanmer Springs, I had the distinct pleasure of unpacking my bags at The St James. Being my first trip to this part of New Zealand, I wasn't sure what to expect. The website looked great and I was assured by all I spoke to that I was in for a treat. I wasn't disappointed.

Centrally located, within walking distance of all the shops, cafés, restaurants and even the spa, I found The St James easily enough. The flash new buildings and immaculate parking area had me a little worried – my hire car was covered in bugs, mud and grime and looked distinctly out of place!

The welcome I received put paid to any doubts I had – Paul and Rae were warm and inviting, unlike the cool breeze that was blowing through town. They showed me to my suite and allowed me time to freshen up a little before proudly escorting me on a tour of the property.

My suite was upstairs and large, with views over the adjoining Chisholm Reserve, complete with waddling ducks, to the mountains in the distance ... a true alpine setting – all it needed was the snow that would arrive a few months after my visit. There was space galore – a contemporary yet comfortable L-shaped lounge and dining area with open-plan to one side, a massive and extremely comfortable bed on the other, with the large ensuite tucked into the remainder of the space.

First things first – a wash and change of clothes. I had to toss up between luxuriating in the spa bath or grabbing a quick shower, eventually opting for the latter as I knew my hosts were waiting. Scrumptiously thick towels and the supplied hair dryer made light work of finishing off my ablutions, the efficient heat pump and under-floor heating removing any chill I'd felt earlier. A quick investigation of the kitchen provided further evidence of quality ... quality stemware and cutlery, a microwave, filtered drinking water, refrigerator, cooktop. In the lounge area there was a sound system, television with DVD and I loved that there were original artworks on the walls!

The St James offers a mix of accommodation, from the one bedroom suite I was in, through to spacious studio and executive studio units and two bedroom options. The St James Suite is the pièce de résistance with an ambient gas fire and separate bedroom. Each studio or suite has either a balcony or patio. Electric blankets, double glazing, personal safes, guest laundry, ski storage, BBQ area, DVD library and a collection of board games all go towards ensuring guests want for very little.

If additional space and privacy is what you're after, do enquire about 59 on St James – a stylish, executive 3-double bedroom residence that was voted Best Holiday Home in Hanmer in 2010! ❖❖
www.thestjames.co.nz

