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## **Aussie rediscover the perfect holiday lifestyle**

Australians are well-known for their laidback nature, love of the outdoors and passion for travel, so it comes as no surprise that touring holidays are becoming one of the most popular ways for Aussies to explore their own backyard.

Since the birth of the automobile, Australian families have been piling into their cars and setting out onto the open road to their favourite holiday destinations. In fact, this year alone Australians are expected to set out on over half a million touring holidays.

Caravan, RV and Accommodation Industry of Australia (CRVA) CEO Ben Yates says caravanning is the one holiday-option that allows Australians to combine their love of travel and the outdoors with the freedom and flexibility that is not always feasible in family holidays.

“Caravanning has always been a huge part of the Aussie way of life. For decades, families have piled the kids into the family car and hit the road to enjoy their summers at picturesque tourist parks all over the country,” Mr Yates says.

“Recently, Australians are rediscovering the freedom, flexibility and fun that come with caravanning. It’s the perfect experience to enjoy the outdoors or spend quality time with family.”

Stuart Yates and Judy Mann are two Aussies who have joined the increasing number of holidayers experiencing the wonders of Australia on an extended touring holiday.

In their mid 60s, retired and having the time of their lives, the couple have been on a caravanning holiday for three and a half years and say they’re not even close to slowing down.

Originally from the Mornington Peninsular in southern Victoria, Judy and Stuart have spent the past few “wonderful years” with a caravan in tow exploring the wonders of Australia’s big and beautiful backyard.

“Caravanning is all about freedom,” Ms Mann says.

“Stuart and I have always been the roaming type. We’re not much good in one place. So when we retired we decided to hit the road, have a look around and get a feel for the beautiful country we live in.

“When we started out, we didn’t really know how much we’d like it. It’s a big change, but it didn’t take us long to figure out it was exactly what we were after. We love it.

“Once you get out on the road, there’s a great release about it all. You don’t have the constraints of every day life. Your time is your own time, and you do your own thing. Every day is an adventure. And the beauty of our country is something else altogether.”



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Judy and Stuart say it's the little things that make life on the road such an appealing and addictive way of life.

"One of the great things about caravanning is the fantastic people you get to meet. Once you get out there, you meet new people and often discover random connections you have with them. It's then you realise it's not such a big world," she says.

"We've met hundreds of great friends along the way, and over the years we continue to reconnect with them. It's quite amazing really."

Although the couple love the spontaneity of life on the road, they are first to admit it's sometimes nice to return to the parks that they really enjoyed.

"There are so many places we'd still like to go, but it's always fun to go back and see how much a place has changed," Ms Mann says.

"To be honest, if we go to a particular place that hits the spot the first time, we enjoy returning to it every now and then. It gives us a sense of familiarity and comfort you sometimes miss out on when you're on the road."

Ms Mann says there are plenty of caravan parks all over Australia that offer a huge range of accommodation options and facilities to suit all tastes and budgets.

Over the years, caravan parks have developed from informal grass fields to sophisticated resort-style centres, with many variations in between, and the couple says great pools, games rooms and recreation facilities along with patrolled beaches are all features creeping into today's modern caravan parks.

So what does the future hold for these nomads? For the time being, the touring Aussies are in no rush to wrap up the hassle-free lifestyle that most people have only dreamed of.

"There will always be a reason not to do something like this. But I say, take the opportunity when the opportunity presents itself. You too often hear about people whose dreams get cut short," she says.

"We are in no hurry to settle back down again. We are going to keep caravanning for as long as we enjoy it and as long as we are able to.

"Once you get on the road, it's a bit like a good bottle of wine. The older you get and the longer you go... the better it gets!"