

mini CHILD

THE REAL GUIDE FOR PARENTS

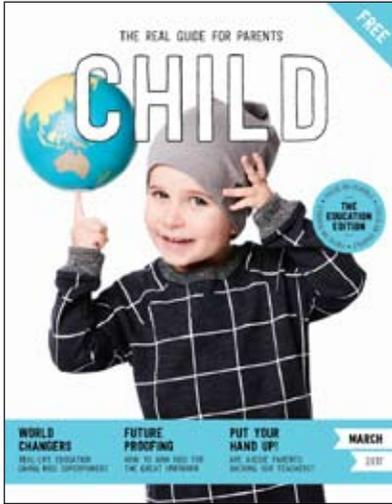
Nature

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- 18 NATURE ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS
- HOW TO DRESS LIKE AN EWOK
- SUSTAINABLE FAMILY LIVING
- + MUCH MORE!

FREE

MARCH 2017



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Ed's Letter

Welcome to the nature issue of CHILD mini mags.

Some of my fondest childhood memories have taken place in the great outdoors. Days were spent scavenging and collecting nature's beautiful treasures from fossils, oddly shaped rocks to cicada shells and pretty blooms.

At primary school, lunches were spent making daisy chains with my friends, and *Girl Guides* taught me how to live off the land and learn life skills like surviving in the wild.

Those days felt long, and anything felt possible. Today it seems kids give all their attention to technology, thinking that they have 'ultimate fun' at their fingertips. If only they knew!

So this season...and every season after that, we encourage you to get the kids outside to explore and make friends with nature – who knows what they'll find.

Happy exploring – don't forget your compass!

Jenna xo

COVER STYLING + PHOTOGRAPHY
JENNA TEMPLETON



18

NATURE ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

WORDS JENNA TEMPLETON

WHO NEEDS A LIST OF ACTIVITIES THAT WILL GET THE KIDS OUTSIDE IN NATURE A BIT MORE?

Remember those days as a child when you would leave home in the morning, spend the whole day exploring the neighbourhood and your backyard, only to return just before the sun went down (or because you got hungry?). Back in the day...

Although things are different now (seat-belts anyone?), it doesn't mean that our kids can't enjoy the outdoors and all its simple delights as much as we did.

We are sharing our favourite nature activities for kids – so chuck some sunscreen on them and send them out the door!



1. MAP OUT YOUR BACKYARD

Get one of the kids to hide some treasures and then draw a map of the backyard so their siblings can find them.

2. PLANT A VEGETABLE OR HERB GARDEN

Encourage them to start a kitchen garden by planting herbs, fruit and vegetables such as basil, baby tomatoes, lettuce and strawberries. They can water it daily, watch it grow and harvest for meal times.

3. COLLECT FLOWERS AND MAKE A FLOWER ARRANGEMENT

Send them out to pick flowers from the garden and arrange them in a vase. Show them how to put taller clippings in the back than filling the bunch with shorter flowers at the front. Leafy tree branches also make great foliage if you don't have many flowers to fill a vase.



4. PAINT ROCKS + STICKS

Painting faces or patterns on rocks and sticks is always a hit. They could also turn the sticks into a hanging wall mobile.

5. FAIRY GARDEN

Encourage them to collect mini flowers, sticks, rocks, sand and moss to make a mini fairy garden. Twine, sticks and bark can be used to make little furniture!



6. PRESS FLOWERS

Who of you used a flower press? You don't see them too much anymore but they are easily made using baking paper and a heavy, thick book.





7. DAISY CHAINS

Do you remember threading and tying daisies together as a child to make crowns and necklaces? Sigh, good times.

8. RECORD A YEAR IN YOUR GARDEN

How fun would it be to document the change in seasons by having the kids photograph or draw what they find each month in the garden.

9. PLANT SEEDS

Give them seeds to sow and watch them grow.



10. BACKYARD PICNIC

Make a picnic lunch to enjoy in the backyard.

11. NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

Write a list of things your kids might find outside – send them out to find them all and tick them off the list.

12. OBSERVE WILDLIFE + INSECTS

Get them to document what they hear and see whilst wandering around outside. Give them a magnifying glass to discover all the little things too!

13. BACKYARD CAMPING

During the day they can find shapes and animals in the clouds and at night you can point out star constellations.



14. HERBARIUM

For the scientific minded kids, encourage them to make a collection of outdoor finds and document them in a notebook.





15. DIY NATURE PAINT

Show them the wonders of making paint from crushed up rocks, sand, plants etc – Just add water!

16. BE A PET DETECTIVE

Challenge the kids to follow your pet around the yard without them knowing – be a super sleuth – identify their fave spots? Ask how they spent their day – and have them write a ‘The life of *your pet’s name here*’ story.

17. BUILD A CUBBY HOUSE

Get out there with them and build a cubby house.



18. DIY TERRARIUM

Make a terrarium using a giant bowl. Add moss, dirt, sand or grass and include some of their small toys.





A GUIDE TO
Keeping Backyard
Chickens





WE CHAT TO DAVE INGHAM AKA 'MR CHICKEN' ABOUT HIS FAVOURITE BACKYARD PET – CHOOKS AND HOW THEY CAN HELP YOUR GARDEN AS WELL BEING A GREAT COMPANION FOR KIDS, PLUS A FEW... HOUSEKEEPING TIPS.

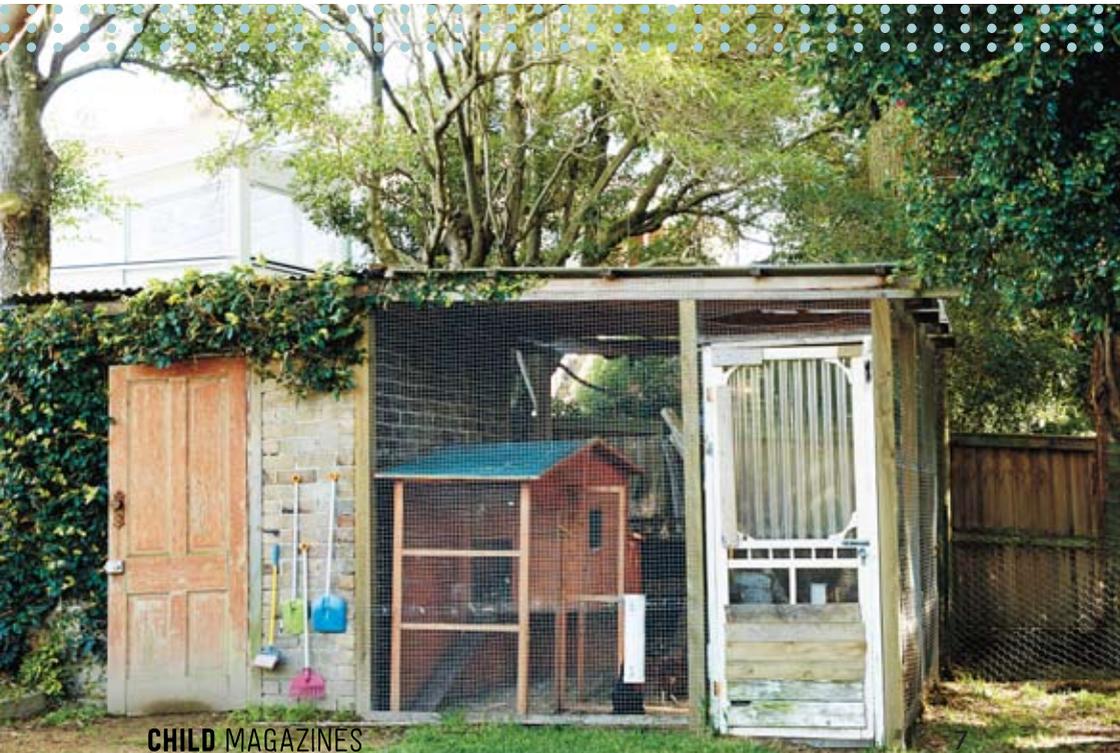
Tell us a bit about yourself and where your interest of chickens began?

I'm a tall, greying, slightly overweight, middle aged family man with an energetic approach to life and a great love of birds, especially chooks. I have three sons aged 9, 10 and 11.



I started keeping chickens as a uni student, living in a share house in Marsfield. It was a big old place with a vast garden, just awaiting redevelopment. My housemates and I decided to grow, brew and make as much food as we could and chickens seemed a natural addition to the mix.

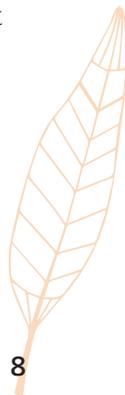
In 2001, I was speaking at an eco-living community event and, on a whim while waxing lyrical about the benefits of chooks, I decided to offer my spare coop and a couple of hens to the participants to trial hen keeping. That's how Rent-A-Chook (a chicken coop renting business) was coined and began.





8 reasons why you should keep chickens

- 1 The eggs (the best you have ever tasted!).
- 2 They are the only revenue positive pet. It costs less to keep chickens than to buy eggs.
- 3 Chooks are wonderful recyclers of food waste, and omnivorous. Between 10 and 15 Kg of putrescibles food waste, including meat and sauces goes to my chooks a week. That's between 500Kg and 750Kg a year that would otherwise end up in landfill.
- 4 They are charming, engaging creatures and very calming to watch, they make excellent pets.
- 5 They eat any and all ground dwelling bugs, including funnel webs and ticks. If there's a bug they can reach, they'll eat it.
- 6 If you have Trad (*Tradescantia Fluminensis*) formerly known as Wandering Jenny, or any other soft leaved weed that has taken over the unloved parts of your garden, don't break a sweat digging it out, let the chooks do it for you. Just pen off the area you want cleared with a simple chicken wire henrun, throw in the chooks and watch!
- 7 You can also use the chooks to turn over your veggie patch at the end of the season. Just let the plants go to seed a bit and the weeds grow up and then in with the chooks – Kerpow! Cleared for next season.
- 8 Chook claws are perfect for turning over compost heaps for you. You'd almost think they evolved for just that purpose.



**What types of backyard spaces are best for keeping chickens?
And what breeds of chickens do you recommend?**

Chooks are all one species (*Gallus Gallus Domesticus*) although there are many breeds and each breed has its own strengths and attributes you might like.

For starting out, first timers are best off with a good egg laying commercial cross breed like an ISA Brown or similar. These birds are placid, robust and prolific layers. The only downside is they are a little common-garden as a variety as compared with more beautiful pure breeds like the Wyandotte, Plymouth Rock, Sussex or Barnevelder. There is the Australorp which is the only recognised Australian hen breed. Inexplicably, it is black in colour. These are wonderful birds and every flock should have one.

I'm personally very fond of hens that lay eggs of different colours than the universal light brown egg. The Araucana which lays sky blue eggs, the Barnevelder that lays chocolate brown eggs and the Leghorn that lays white eggs are favourites.





How can we get our gardens chicken ready?



If you love your garden (as I do), put in a henrun. A simple waist high fence that will keep the chooks in their area for most of the time and you can let them out of there as often or as rarely as you like. But not to be confused with a coop which is weather protection and fox protection at night.

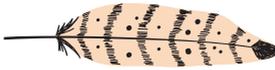
You may also wish to place a ring of stones or house bricks around the base of shallow rooted trees like citrus. This will stop the hens from scratching at the base of the tree or shrub and disturbing the roots.

What are the must-haves for your chicken coop?

You can go as gear-freak as you like, but there are very few must-haves:

1. The coop must be fox proof – secured at night and enclosed on all sides. If not, your chooks will be temporary pets...
2. A feeder and waterer – can be as simple as 2L milk bottles with holes cut in the sides;
3. Perches or perching space – a nice thick fallen gum tree branch works a treat, they are birds after all;
4. A nest box – can be anything, a lawnmower catcher, a pool chlorine bottle with the side cut-out, a repurposed plastic storage tub, wooden wine crate.
5. This one is very important for your enjoyment of the experience - the coop needs to be easy to clean. Don't go making the job any harder than it should be!





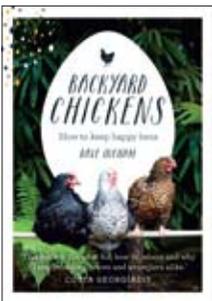
How can kids get involved with helping to look after chickens?

Lots of ways! Feeding them and changing their water (daily). Collecting eggs (as often as they find them). Cleaning out the coop and composting the straw (fortnightly to monthly).

Keeping the hens off the back deck and out of the house. Arm them with water pistols and tell them they can only shoot the hen if it enters a prohibited area. You may not be able to successfully train the hen, but it keeps the kids engaged for hours preparing the ambush.

What can readers expect to find in your brand new book *Backyard Chickens*?

Foxy predators, cute chicks, heatwaves, a wild ride of a book! More seriously though, I'm a very practical person, I have also been selling chicken coops to Sydney suburbanites for 15 years, so readers can expect to find plenty of those practical solutions in the book. In that time, I've had to come up with countless practical solutions to ensure the chook keeping experience of my customers was worth recommending. Chooks make great pets wherever you live.



For more info about keeping chickens check out Dave's book; ***Backyard Chickens* by Dave Ingham**, published by Murdoch Books, \$35, available now in all good bookstores nationally and online.



Click here for Dave's website, **Rent A Chook**



Apartment Gardening *with kids*

WORDS VERONICA ROELINK



GROWING PLANTS IS A FUN AND SIMPLE WAY TO TEACH KIDS ABOUT SUSTAINABLE LIVING, WHILE THEY HAVE FUN GETTING THEIR HANDS DIRTY.

If you live in an apartment or small inner-city dwelling, the concept might seem daunting. Here are some tips to get you started.



Vegetables such as lettuce, rocket and kale grow easily from seed and provide a steady flow of salad greens, since you can harvest leaves while plants are growing. Beetroot seeds need to be soaked overnight before planting, and leaves can be harvested for salads and juicing. Once the bulb has grown, beetroot is great to roast.





Cherry tomatoes and strawberries grow well in pots, and kids will love picking them. Basil, thyme, oregano, parsley and chives are great herbs to grow, and you can buy pots with separate compartments in which to plant them. All these vegetables and herbs need at least a few hours of direct sunlight a day. Mint can tolerate more shade, and is best planted in a pot of its own, as it grows vigorously.



Blooms such as marigolds are easy to grow from seed, add colour and attract pollinating insects. You can have fun picking your pot, and even spend an afternoon painting terracotta pots with your kids. There are also pots with a reservoir at the base to provide water on days you forget.

If you only have indoor-bench space, kitchen seed sprouters require no soil and give very fast results, keeping kids interested. You can grow your own tasty alfalfa and sprouts, as well as wheat grass to add to your vegie juice.

When it comes to composting (non-protein) food scraps, a worm farm works great on a balcony. They're not messy and the worms will eat most of your vegetable waste, producing a liquid fertiliser for your plants. It's best to position the worm farm out of direct sunlight.

Enjoy the fun of gardening!





Helping Kids To Find Wonder

IN THE EVERYDAY

WORDS **CAROLINE WEBSTER**

AUTHOR AND FOUNDER OF THE BLOG, CARO & CO, CAROLINE WEBSTER RECOLLECTS A TIME IN HER CHILDHOOD WHEN SHE DISCOVERED THE BEAUTY OF NATURE AND THE SENSE OF WONDER FOR THE FIRST TIME.

When I was little, my mother gave me a birthday card. Apart from the standard birthday greeting, she wrote, 'As you grow up, my wish for you is that you remember to use your words, love deeply and always strive to find wonder in the world around you.'

It was such great advice and something I've attempted to do every day since. Over the years I've asked over 500 people to name the one moment in their lives that filled them with



wonder. Over 90% have responded with a memory of a special time spent outside; most often when they felt they were alone and discovering something extraordinary by themselves. Finding wonder has always been easy for me. It can be found everywhere, in the simplest of places and in many of the activities we undertake everyday - you just need to know how and where to look. And, of course, wonder is amplified tenfold when you head outdoors.

Indeed, 'Go outside and find something to do' was a common refrain in my home when I was growing up. Each time I stepped outside, the outdoors quickly became a mix of the magical and the practical.





A densely leaved shrub was a hideout from monsters, our dogs and, every now and then, Mum. A large tree was a home away from home. Everything was dragged up there including the dog and an entire tea set. It was also where we went when we got cranky and decided to run away from home. The vacant lot a couple of blocks away was where magical creatures lived and where my sisters, brothers and I often set off on dragon-hunting adventures.

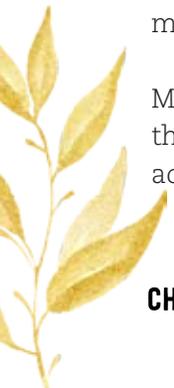
The muddy laneway beside our home was the ideal place for baking mud pies and jumping in puddles. We had the perfect lavender bush where fairies dwelled – and where I experienced my first bee sting. We became little explorers and collected an extraordinary array of objects, some of which I still have today.

With no structured play, we unwound, recharged and spent plenty of time sitting still and watching nature do its thing.

Being outside also taught us many lessons about the environment and our place within it. We learnt not to fear the outdoors, but to respect and love it. We also took the advice of our parents not to eat a berry without first checking with them and never to trust shiny black spiders.

We fought with free-range bantam hens for a patch of clean grass and still they rewarded us with delicious eggs each day. We tended our very small veggie patch with enthusiasm and love, the resultant vegetables, used to cook simple, delicious meals, made us wriggle with pride.

My own children are now teenagers and I regularly offer them the same advice I received all those years ago. Certainly, the advent of technology means I've had to work a little harder



to help them remember to look for wonder around them in everything they do, and to actively engage with the outdoors and nature whenever they can.

Writing my book **Caro & Co: Helping Kids Find Wonder In The Everyday** has been a joy. All the activities, either indoor or outside, are simple and inexpensive, and rely mostly on the ready imagination of your child. I might not be an educator but I am a mother who firmly believes that, if you are guided by your knowledge of your own child, together you can find a little wonder in everything you do. So go on. Open the door, step outside and find some magic.

This is an extract from **Caro & Co: Helping Kids Find Wonder In The Everyday** by Caroline Webster and is published by Sally Milner Publishing, \$32.99. [Click here for more info.](#)

[Click here to visit Caroline's blog Caro & Co.](#)





HOW TO DRESS LIKE AN EWOK

WORDS JENNA TEMPLETON

WE ARE CONFESSING OUR LOVE FOR AND GETTING STYLE CUES FROM THOSE CUTE AND CUDDLY STAR WARS CRITTERS – EWOKS.

As soon as I saw those cute-faced Ewoks for the first time while watching *Star Wars: Return Of The Jedi* as a child, I had found my tribe. Their '80s spin-off movie *Caravan of Courage: An Ewok Adventure* was also a regular rental from our local video store.

Fast forward to today and children are still loving these furry friends, thanks to a new generation of kids discovering *Star Wars* after the release of *The Force Awakens*. So much so that they want to dress up as Ewoks. I recently spent a fun weekend with my nephew talking all things Ewok, and enjoyed seeing the same wonderment in his face as when I discovered *Star Wars* myself.

So it's only fair I put together a modern kids' fashion guide on dressing up – Ewok style!



HOW TO GET THE EWOK LOOK

Shaggy vests, cute eared beanies, feathered accessories and wooden treasures all make up a super cute Ewok – adorable creatures of nature!

F&A Binoculars Leo & Bella / **Tiny and I Tokyo Fruit Loop Necklace** My Messy Room / **Compass Journal** Big Dreams / **Baby Knitted Beanie** Cotton On Kids / **Mountains Art Print** Blacklist Studio / **Wooden Film Camera** Lightly / **Lego Star Wars Ewok Village** Target / **Bobo Choses Waterproof Waistcoat** Leo & Bella / **Swallows Jumpsuit** Moppit & More / **Shaggy Vest** Moppit & More / **Fabric Headband** Seed Heritage / **All About Heidi Velcro Shoes** My Messy Room / **NUNUNU Baggy Pants** Leo & Bella / **Bobo Choses School Bag** Pixie Trunk / **Soopsori Wooden Chef Set** Big Dreams / **Urban Nest Designs Mini Rope Bowl** Hard To Find / **Gold Metal Feather Headband** Seed Heritage

A photograph of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a black sleeveless top and blue jeans, smiling and looking back over her shoulder. She is standing on a sidewalk next to a busy street with palm trees and blurred traffic. The background is filled with soft, out-of-focus yellow and green bokeh lights.

Wholefood Parenting

**WITH EMMA
GALLOWAY**

PHOTOGRAPHY **EMMA GALLOWAY**

ILLUSTRATION **MOLLY REEDER**



JENNA TEMPLETON CHATS TO EMMA GALLOWAY ABOUT COOKING FOR KIDS WITH FOOD INTOLERANCES AND EDUCATING CHILDREN ABOUT WHOLEFOOD FARMING AND LIVING.

I grew up in the tiny surf town of Raglan on the west coast of the North Island in New Zealand. At a time when many families were buying their first microwave ovens and tucking into ready-made meals, we were living an altogether different life...

My family lived in a wooden house my dad built, we collected rain water to drink, grew our own fruits and vegetables and made things like yoghurt from freshly collected goat's milk from a farm at the end of the winding gravel road. My parents provided us with food as it's supposed to be – fresh from the earth to the kitchen, seasonal, nourishing and delicious. It's this philosophy that natural, whole food should also be flavoursome, fun and easy to prepare that I've carried through to my life as a chef, author and mother.



I trained as a chef after working in cafes while finishing my final years of high school. I then went on to work in the industry for over eight years before having kids. I took a few years off when my kids were babies and in 2010 I decided to start my food blog My Darling Lemon Thyme as a place to share my newfound knowledge of allergy-free cooking. Everything has stemmed from my blog. I'm a self-taught photographer and stylist and have learned what I know from doing it a lot over the years since starting my blog. Writing, styling and photographing both of my cookbooks wouldn't have come about if it wasn't for the experience I gained from my blog.

Food was a central part of our daily life growing up. As vegetarians, we paid a lot of attention to what we ate, ensuring the right combinations of foods were eaten together to maximise the nutritional benefits. Eating seasonally was a way of life, not just a modern catch phrase, especially as so much of what we ate came straight from my parents' organic vegetable garden. Dried kelp and nutritional yeast were sprinkled onto everything, brown rice was the only rice we knew, we ate peanut butter and alfalfa sprouts on wholemeal bread at school instead of the usual vegemite and cheese, and banana cake was always made using wholemeal flour and topped off with icing flavoured with carob, never cocoa.

My childhood shaped so much of who I am as a person, but none more so than the food I cook and eat now. Making food from scratch, with love, is something I learnt watching my mother in the kitchen all those years ago, where she'd spend hours preparing the most beautiful meals from our homegrown produce, cooked in our wood fired coal-range oven that doubled as our water heater and clothes drier in winter. The simple

beauty of my childhood, without modern ‘necessities’ such as the microwave oven (something both my parents, my siblings and I have never owned) gave special meaning to the food we prepared and it’s this love for real food that I’m trying to pass on to my own two children.

I wish I’d know before I was pregnant how much of an impact my own gut health could have on my two children.

If I’d known this, I would’ve worked really hard to get it on track before risking passing on food intolerances to my children.

My daughter was about two and my son a baby when we finally found the reason for her discomfort (which she’d been experiencing since birth) – gluten and lactose intolerance. As a mother of two little ones, I found it really hard to get my head around changing our diet and as any mum will know, finding quick and easy things to grab whilst holding onto a baby, with a toddler hanging off your leg, isn’t always easy at the best of times, let alone when you find out huge parts of your diet can no longer be eaten. There were many times when I was breastfeeding my son where I’d look into the fridge or cupboard, hungry, only to close the door empty-handed and feeling sorry for myself! I learned to love roasted vegetables and quinoa, as for a good while there that’s all I could eat without it upsetting my son’s or my tummy. But I slowly got my head around cooking without gluten and most dairy and have never looked back.

I’m a vegetarian. However I do very occasionally eat a little fish sauce in dishes (especially if my Vietnamese mother-in-law is cooking!). My children eat vegetarian with me most of the time and then occasionally eat a bit of seafood, local fish or free-range chicken with my husband.



My children are pretty happy when I make pizza and sushi. They also love simple vegetable stir fries with rice and crispy tofu. My son is a little hard to please at times and prefers quite simple food, whereas my daughter eats pretty much anything and everything. Often when the boys of the family are eating chicken (something my daughter's not a huge fan of) I make up a big batch of roasted vegetables (Ada's favourite) and we eat them with quinoa, homemade sauerkraut and a fried egg.

My daughter's really getting into cooking her own breakfast at the moment – usually scrambled eggs on toast – which I love! They both also LOVE helping me with baking. Anything sweet and they're usually super keen to help! And they both help out in the garden when they can.

It took me a good year or two to really get my head around the dietary changes and it was around this time that I decided to start sharing my new-found knowledge via my blog with the hope my recipes and experiences would help out others who might find themselves in the same situation. The feedback I got over those first few years was the reassurance I needed to then go on to write my first cookbook, *My Darling Lemon Thyme*. The humbling success of that first book allowed me to then go on to write my second cookbook, *A Year in My Real Food Kitchen*. I receive emails and messages nearly on a daily basis from people saying how much my recipes have changed their lives. That's the best thing anyone could ever say and it totally makes all the hard work worth it.

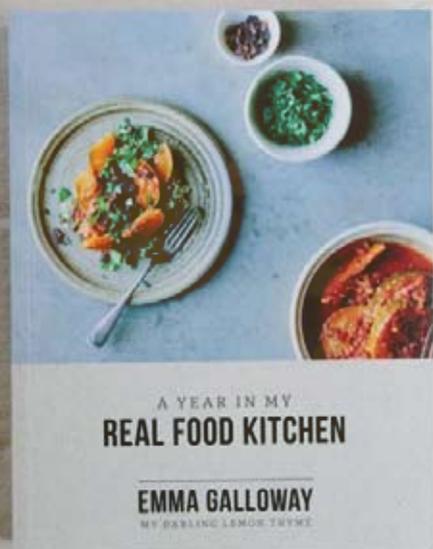
As a mother, it's super important for us to follow our own passions, doing what we love, to have an identity inside and outside of the home.

I feel like in doing so, we're showing our children what it means to follow your dreams. So that they can believe anything is possible if you're prepared to work hard. Sure, it isn't easy being a creative and a mother, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

Emma Galloway, 35, is a chef, food writer, photographer and mother. She lives in Raglan, NZ (she previously lived in Perth) with her husband Si and two children, Ada, 9, and Kye, 8.

[Click here to visit the blog **My Darling Lemon Thyme**.](#)

[Click here to purchase Emma's book **A Year In My Real Food Kitchen**.](#)





HOW TO Style A Dreamy Boho Picnic

WORDS **MELISSA COWAN**

MAKE YOUR BOHO PICNIC DREAMS COME TRUE BY FOLLOWING OUR AWESOME STYLE GUIDE.



My goodness I love a picnic. Birthdays, anniversaries and engagements all provide awesome reasons to have one. But really, isn't the beauty and fun of it reason enough?

The great thing about the boho theme is that you can put as much or little effort into it as you want – from chucking around some gorgeous rugs and cushions to more detailed touches.



Here's some tips on how to style a boho picnic:

Tunes and Snaps

Okay okay, bringing along a record player and a digital Polaroid camera to a picnic is pretttttty hipster. But how great to have instant memories of the event, and lovely melodies. For tunes, I suggest you play some Fleetwood Mac, Cat Power and Beach House. Why? I just like them. Anything fun and chilled that you love will do.

Picnic at Hanging Rock

Throw some rugs or an ottoman on a rocky surface to make your picnic super photogenic for those Polaroid snaps. Don't forget a cute tray of sambos as well!

Taste the Rainbow

Put out a huge wooden board with a wide selection of goodies like cheese, fruit and bread. The more colours and flavours you can introduce the better. Chuck a couple of flowers on the board for more zsa zsa zu.

Fur Baby

A combo of a beach boho picnic with fur rugs is divine. Bringing the table to the beach might require a bit of effort but hey, think of the Polaroids. Put flowers in random vases for a even more visual delight.





elle

Sustainable

Family Living

WORDS **BRON BATES**

KEEN TO GO GREEN? TWO MOTHERS SHARE HOW THEIR FAMILY LIVES SUSTAINABLY.

*Jo Hegerty is a mum of two who writes about sustainability, health and parenting at her blog **Down To Earth Mother**. We asked her how she walks the talk when it comes to all things eco.*

Why is it important for you to live sustainably?

There are many reasons, but the main one is I can't bear the thought of leaving the world in worse shape for my kids and future generations. Every non-renewable resource we use is something they'll never have access to; every scrap of toxic waste in the ocean or buried in the ground is a problem they'll have to deal with.

It's important to me to model sustainable living to my kids because of the ripple effect it will have as they influence people throughout their lives.



Are you concerned by 'greenwashing', where companies and their products pretend to be greener than they really are?

I certainly find greenwashing irritating. On more than one occasion I've bought something I thought was a green option only to find a dodgy ingredient or learn the production process left a lot to be desired. What concerns me about dubious green claims is that it discredits the whole movement and makes people think it's all too hard.



What are your top three tips for living sustainably at home?

Buy less stuff. We've gone nuts for cheap clothes, homewares and trinkets in the past few decades and much of it's simply unnecessary. Think about

every non-food related purchase and when you do decide to buy something, always seek a second-hand option.



Aim for zero food waste. Eat leftovers or magic them into a new meal; get a worm farm, compost heap, chickens and/or pet. If you can't do some of this, donate your food waste to someone with a garden.

Build community. Humans need each other; it's in our nature to support and co-exist. Make a conscious effort to become part of your community, no matter where you are. This means shopping locally, getting to know your neighbours, being involved in local events and keeping an eye on the elderly.



On her popular blog, **Veggie Mama**, **Stacey Roberts** talks about her favourite vegetarian recipes and life with her two daughters. We asked her for her views on sustainability and the environment.

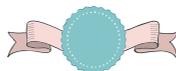
Is it important to you to live sustainably?

It's very important to me because it's important to be a good steward of the earth. We should treat everything with respect and common sense. We have to live here and ensure it's in the best condition possible for our children and future generations – so we buy thoughtfully, reduce, reuse, recycle and minimise our impact wherever we can. Well, we try!

Are you concerned by 'greenwashing', where companies and their products pretend to be greener than they really are?

Yes, very. It's in my nature to be cynical and dig deeper to find the truth. It bugs me when companies jump on the bandwagon just to boost their profits.

It also muddies the waters for the companies that are truly producing in a sustainable way. I appreciate when corporations at least attempt to do the right thing and I applaud baby steps, but I don't like straight-up lies to trick us into buying more.



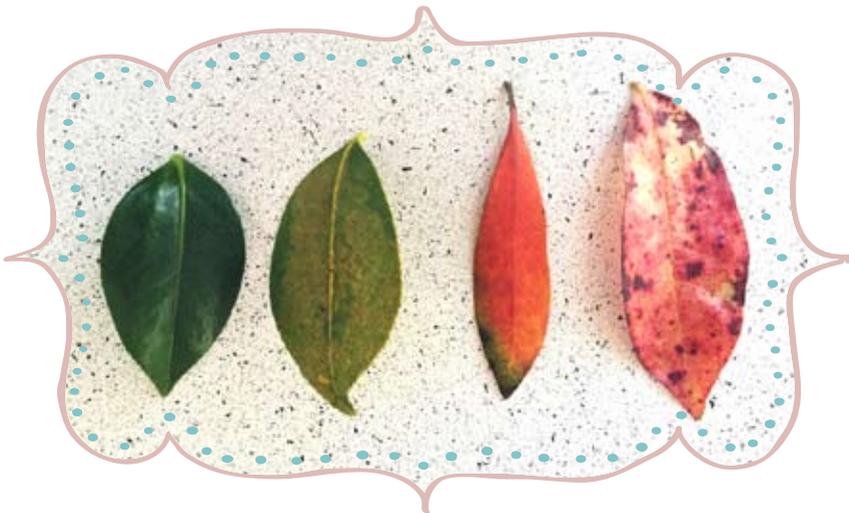


What are your top three tips for living sustainably at home?

- Buy less! How much do you really need, anyway? Try to buy things with the least amount of packaging.
- Recycle what you can.
- This one was hard for me, but I'm finally jumping on board – go digital with literature. Get magazines, newspapers and even books (if you can manage it) in digital form, instead of buying the paper versions.

*Click here to visit Jo Hergerty's blog **Down To Earth Mother**.*

*Click here to visit Stacey Roberts' blog **The Veggie Mama**.*





5

Treehouses in Australia YOU CAN STAY IN

WORDS BRON BATES



FROM ENID BLYTON'S MAGIC FARAWAY TREE TO THE SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON'S HAND-BUILT HOME, BRON BATES HAS BEEN ENCHANTED WITH TREEHOUSES EVER SINCE SHE WAS A CHILD. SHE'S HUNTED DOWN FIVE AMAZING AUSTRALIAN TREE DWELLINGS YOU CAN STAY IN.



When I was a kid, if I wasn't climbing a tree or building cubbies and forts, I was enjoying books with treehouses in them. I listened to Disney's *Swiss Family Robinson* read-along book on cassette over and over, studying the treehouse in the book closely. Enid Blyton's *Magic Faraway Tree* series and *Hollow Tree House* were firm faves, and I'd flip purposefully to the page picturing the treehouse up a eucalyptus tree in Norman Lindsey's *The Magic Pudding*.

One of the appeals of the treehouse were the promises of the freedom it held. It was a kid-built, kid-run universe where make-believe things were possible.



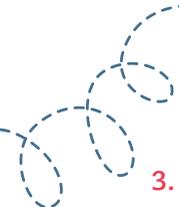
Even though I've grown up, I'm still enchanted by the magic of a house in the trees. Here are five that would be fun to visit:

1. Treehouse in Mullumbimby, New South Wales

Just big enough for two, you can rent this cute little backyard house among the trees in Mullumbimby near Byron Bay.

2. Rose Gums Treehouse, Malanda, North Tropical Queensland

If you visit the Rose Gums Treehouse, you may also be able to take a walking tour of traditional country at the Malanda Falls with Ngadjonji elder, Ernie Raymont. Bring the kids and stay in one of nine fully self-contained timber treehouses with king beds, spa baths and balconies.



3. Canopy Treehouses in Tarzali, North Queensland

Set on the banks of the Ithaca river, these luxury timber and glass treehouses have bathrooms, kitchens and hammocks. Visitors to the Canopy Treehouses can also expect to see cassowaries, rare Lumholtz tree kangaroos, red-legged Pademelon wallabies, brushtail possums and northern bandicoots.

4. Silky Oaks Lodge Treehouse Daintree, Queensland

Silky Oaks Lodge boasts a fancy Treehouse Restaurant and Healing Spa along with luxury treehouses. This destination lends itself more to a weekend away for grownups, but kids over eight are also welcome.

5. Treehouse in Bilpin, New South Wales

Complete with spa, kitchenette and fireplace, it's pretty cool hearing what award-winning owner/builder Lionel Buckettt has to say about the creative process of building this magical creation. You can stay in a one room treehouse set in 600 acres of private Blue Mountains bushland.

