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But we are also pleasantly reminded that this region is about more than wine, when we visit some local producers; Heavenly Chocolate, Mt. StirlingOlives, TheBramblePatch and Jamworks. Like wine, olives are another weakness of mine, so I'm more than happy to be diverted before we visit the last winery, Felsberg, which boasts stunning views over the region.

At five o'clock we stumble to our snug room for a quick nanna nap before a pre-dinner drink with some other guests around the log fire. We decide to dine-in and a sumptuous gourmet platter arrives from Patty's Cafe, a favourite of locals and visitors in the know. Contented, with bellies full of the freshest local food, we rest easily.

A visit to the Stanthorpe Visitor Information Centre reminds us of the many things we won't get to see on this trip, but my brochure-addicted partner stashes as many pamphlets as he can fit into our glove-box in preparation for our next child-free escape.

Then it's time to stock-up on some non wine related goodies so the kids don't think we had too much fun without them. We visit the Crystal Ridge Lavender Farm, Pure Heaven (body products) and Sutton's Cider, and the car is now groaning under the weight of our tantalising treats.

There's just enough time for one more culinary experience and we devour a tasty salmon crepe and a hearty burger with-the-lot thanks to Michelle at the well-renowned Bella Rosa's Tea Rooms, before reluctantly heading home.

As we sit in the car, we agree that we've fallen in love (that's what happens when you travel without kids). Actually, we've fallen in love with this region; with its award-winning wines; with its knowledgeable, passionate and entertaining winemakers, farmers and locals; with its beautiful granite boulder-dotted countryside; and even with its toe-snapping temperatures.

We're lucky here on the Sunshine Coast - we can enjoy our great beaches anytime. If you really want to experience a culinary sensation in a stunning winter wonderland, then The Granite Belt is well worth the drive. ■

To plan your winter escape contact the Stanthorpe Visitor Information Centre on 1800 SO COOL or www.granitebeltwinecountry.com.au

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Last issue's winner of the winter trip to Brisbane was Melissa Ayre from Maroochydoore. Congratulations!