



Try truffles

Truffles are the ultimate epicurean indulgence, this rich fungi is so costly it is often referred to as black gold. At around \$3000 per kilo, truffles are one of the most expensive natural foods.

Understandably most restaurateurs are rather nervous about putting truffles on the menu but Queensland Restaurant of the Year owner Bonnie Rodwell is an exception.

Bonnie says she is determined to offer Songbirds' guests the ultimate dining experience

"The pursuit of excellence means always offering something new. The truffle degustation menu is one of many exquisite dining experiences we offer. Degustation means to savour. This feast of small dishes is designed to be enjoyed slowly.

"Songbirds' staff can help select wines to match each course. We want people to linger; guests are never rushed at Songbirds. We enjoy seeing people take their time to appreciate the location, presentation, aromas, tastes and textures," she says.

Songbirds' truffle degustation menu starts with a warm salad of smoked duck, the next course is based on seared scallops and this is followed slow-roasted salmon fillet. The final savoury dish is Wagyu beef loin on parsnip mash with sautéed baby broad beans, mixed mushrooms and buttered spinach dressed with truffle oil.



Bonnie Rodwell

The grand finale is a dessert assiette – a selection of sweet temptations that proves truffles work with sweet and savoury tastes. The epicurean indulgence ends with coffee and petit fours.

The truffle degustation menu costs \$148 per person. Matched wines may be ordered from the wine list but a beverage selection of five wines is available at \$55. Diners planning to order the truffle degustation menu should let Songbirds' receptionist know when booking a table.

Romance in the rainforest



Valentine's Day and night was abuzz with romantic couples. Songbirds' villas were booked weeks in advance, the restaurant was busy at lunch and dinner. Diners enjoyed appetisers of tomato and lemongrass consommé followed by a selection of entrees.

The freshly-shucked Pacific oysters with green tea jelly and wakame salad and the black sesame and spring onion tempura battered

oysters with garlic aioli and Asian salad were among the most popular entrées.

Other options included blue cheese panna cotta, char grilled quail gremolata and char-grilled scampi with angel hair pasta and roasted shell fish sauce. The main course menu featured zucchini flowers in chickpea batter, oven roasted salmon fillet, beef eye fillet and confit duck leg.

Sweet treats included passionfruit soufflé, poached yellow pear and the valrhona chocolate and hazelnut brownie with brandied cherries and white chocolate mousse.

These dishes are all featured on Songbirds a la carte menu and guaranteed to create romance whatever the date. Take your partner and book a table at Songbirds any day for lunch or on Thursday, Friday or Saturday evening.

Make the occasion extra special by staying in one of Songbirds luxurious villas. Visit www.songbirds.com.au to see the special midweek rates with dinner or call 5545 2563 and ask Songbirds' receptionist for details.



Wedding bells



Songbirds in the Forest now offers exclusive wedding packages individually designed to suit each couple. One of the Gold Coast's most popular couples recently celebrated their special day at Songbirds.

They chose a traditional fairytale wedding with a 4pm garden ceremony. The bride and her attendants booked five Songbirds' villas and stayed on Friday evening. The group enjoyed dinner in the restaurant, spent the night relaxing in luxury and woke to the sound of songbirds on Saturday morning. They each enjoyed a relaxing massage before taking their time to get ready for the ceremony and the evening's celebration.

The father of the bride arrived at his daughter's villa a few minutes before

the ceremony and escorted her along the winding pathway through the rainforest to the lawn area near the restaurant.

About 120 guests attended the ceremony, most chose to stand to watch the formal proceedings but comfortable chairs were provided for those who preferred to be seated. The moment the wedding celebrant declared the couple husband and wife Songbirds staff appeared with trays of French champagne and canapés.

A band played on the covered garden deck while guest mingled in the grounds and gradually made their way into the restaurant. Songbirds' attentive staff served a five-course gourmet degustation-style menu of dishes featuring the bride and groom's favourites from the Songbird's menu that featured throughout their courtship.

Champagne and wine flowed throughout the evening as guests enjoyed the gourmet dishes. The band played and after dinner the floor was cleared to allow guests to dance. Many guests took advantage of the location and the cool evening breeze to stroll in the gardens and relax at the chairs and tables placed among the greenery.

Songbirds' rainforest grounds make an idyllic wedding setting, photographers couldn't wish for a more romantic backdrop. Plan a day dreams are made of with Songbirds' wedding planner. Choose an informal cocktail style wedding celebration (menus start at \$98 and beverages at \$50 per person) or a formal meal with menus from \$138. Call 5545 2563 for complete details of Songbirds' spectacular weddings.

Easter escapades

It seems only moments since Christmas but Easter is fast approaching. Songbirds in the Forest Restaurant will be open for lunch and dinner on Good Friday (April 6) and Saturday (April 7). Lunch will be served on Easter Sunday (April 8) and on Easter Monday (April 9).

Chef Philip Edwards has designed a special Easter holiday menu with a choice of three entrées, three main courses and three desserts. To avoid a public holiday surcharge Songbirds is offering diners a minimum three-course meal on Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Easter Monday at \$78 per person. On Easter Saturday a two-course menu at \$65 per person will be available as well as the \$78 three-course menu.

Please book early as the Easter long weekend is a busy time on Mount Tamborine and Songbirds is a very popular destination. Regular clients are the first to be offered the Easter weekend three-night accommodation packages for the period between Thursday, April 5 and Monday, April 9.



The three-night package costs \$1200 and includes three nights stay in a luxury villa for two people and one gourmet three-course meal for two at lunch or dinner during their stay. Please reserve a table for lunch or dinner when confirming villa bookings.