

The Cottage

My journey to Australia started as a crazy idea that suddenly came real when I finally gathered my courage to book a flight to Melbourne in 2016.

I am so grateful that I got a chance to pack my bags, jump into a plane and leave the dark cold Finland behind for three months. I knew from what I had heard from the other backpackers that the farm I was going to stay was lovely, but I had no idea how much it would change me as a person.

The location of The Cottage is perfect. One-hour train trip from Melbourne to Frankston. You can easily take a bus or a train to explore Melbourne on your days off. There are plenty of things to see for example in Frankston, Mornington beach, Portsea, Moonlit Sanctuary... and the list goes on. There are two separate houses for backpackers including kitchen, Tv, washing machine, showers etc. You can also borrow working clothes, shoes, hats and other equipment you might need, so you really don't have to bring your whole wardrobe with you. Everything is clean and there for backpackers to use.

The farm work itself doesn't necessarily require a long history of working with horses, but your own attitude towards work and motivation to learn new things are more important. It really depends on you, how much and what kind of work you'll be doing but daily routines include feeding, taking care of the horses, working with them and some gardening and other farm work depending on what's going on. The days are mostly nice and easy if you are used to working with horses. The horses are well-behaved and the safety of a backpacker is a number one thing! The main reason that made my three months worth of staying is people. All the backpackers I met during my three months were easy to get along with, and I got some good friends to stay in touch with. Some of them stayed shorter periods but there have been backpackers staying there up to two years.

All my gratitude and love goes to Chris and Debbie. They took care of us like we were part of their family. Debbie understanding and taking care of our needs I felt safe and got some really great advice to improve my riding. Debbie has a long history of competing and riding and "a good eye" for nice, gentle riding and to spot all the mistakes as well. Chris was always there or at least one quick phonecall away. He made sure that everyone knows what they are doing and always offering to share his endless knowledge and skills with horses. And if you didn't know something, it was clear that he was there to help you. I learned so many new things, and I feel so honoured that I got this chance to be part of their every day life for a while. It is hard for me to put in words how grateful I am, and how much I miss waking up to magpies singing, knowing all the horses are waiting us in the field to get their morning feed.



With Love,
Vilja