

Autumn indulgence in Elgin

 By [Ruth Cooper](#)

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A stay in one of the air stream trailers at Old Mac Daddy in Elgin has been on my bucket list since they opened. Luckily, last week, this item on the list was satisfactorily ticked off, with a stay in the aptly named trailer: The Dream.

While in the beautiful Elgin area I thought it best to do some exploring and, with the help of the kind folk of [Rabbit in a Hat PR](#) and [Elgin Valley Tourism](#), a tasty itinerary was set up - predominantly consisting of eating and drinking. Well, actually, only of eating and drinking - no complaints here.



I would strongly recommend exploring Elgin round about this time of year. The end of May, early June equals beautiful still days with autumnal reds and golds at every turn. We were blessed with sunny days throughout our stay, which were perfect for forest strolls or hikes to help offset the high calorie intake. The nights were breath-shockingly nippy and ideal for indulgent red wine quaffing and gourmet food scoffing in front of fireplaces. ([Plus there are some great winter specials around this time of year.](#))



Living the dream

We did just this on our first night in Elgin at Brinny Breezes, the [Old Mac Daddy](#) restaurant. Two roaring fireplaces kept us

toasty as well as hearty dishes of oxtail and mash and Durban-style chicken curry, both beautifully complemented by the cheekily named Horny Owl Shiraz.



After dinner we headed back to our dreamy trailer for an early night. Inspired by the painting of the same name by [Henri Rousseau](#), the trailer envelops you into a densely lush green jungle mural stretching from floor to ceiling. The trailer is attached to an airy living room, bathroom and balcony all boasting amazing views of the estate and Elgin Valley.



Image sourced from [Old Mac Daddy](#)



Image sourced from [Old Mac Daddy](#)

Old Mac Daddy offers many activities, such as nature hikes, fishing, zorbing, stand-up paddling and mountain biking; however we busied ourselves with a leisurely stroll around the property before checking out, taking in Instagram-worthy views from the edge of the dam, which include a little baby beach and bar with hammocks, loungers and beanbags.



Hickory country y'all

The next stop was the charming [Hickory Shack](#) just down the road from Old Mac Daddy for an overindulgent lunch. Only a few months old, this smokehouse and restaurant is already getting foodies to take note. Utilising a cantilever pit and old-style Southern barbecue flavours, the meat is all deliciously and subtly smoked and includes an array of chicken wings, baby back ribs, beef brisket and pulled pork. I sampled ribs straight out of the smoker as well as beautifully rich and sweet beef brisket with generous sides of tomato-ey beans, corn salad, the best buttermilk mash and crispy slaw. **Note:** Go hungry when paying a visit to the Hickory Shack. In fact it's preferable if you maybe haven't eaten in a few days. The chef Mac, enthusiastically explained the smoking process to us as well as the Hickory Shack history and even allowed us to sample every unique ice cream flavour on offer. What a doll!



Autumn on a plate

Substantially stuffed, we eagerly headed off to the next venue, a check in at Cottage 1902 at the [Oak Valley Wine Estate](#) for a necessary digestive nap upon its sun-kissed king-sized bed. The cottage offers the only self-catering accommodation at Oak Valley. As the name suggests, the estate is nestled amongst an oak forest and vineyard, and also houses the lovely [Pool Room restaurant](#), which mainly caters for breakfast and lunch; however it's open for dinner on a Friday night. Fortunately, we managed to digest our Hickory Shack mega lunch enough to take advantage of this. I sampled some of the Oak Valley's famous free-range acorn-fed pork accompanied with crunch reverberating crackling, pork-filled pancake, roasted baby carrots, sweet potato puree and apple compote. Basically, autumn on a plate - so elegantly warming and comforting.



The following day heralded the end of our two-night stay in the charming Elgin Valley; however there is one more stop you have to make when heading through or to Elgin, even if it's just for padkos. We ended our Elgin experience with brunch at the [Peregrine Farm Stall](#) café as well as picking up a few delicacies from the farm stall before heading back to the Mother City.



Ruth is the production manager at Bizcommunity. ruth@bizcommunity.com

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