

Rubble to riches

Rebirth of a honeymoon resort



Rebirth: After being demolished by cyclone Yasi, East Bedarra Private Retreat is back in business and ready to re-enter the honeymoon market after a multi-million dollar makeover.

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A LUXURIOUS island resort destroyed by cyclone Yasi has been rebuilt and is back in business after a multi-million dollar makeover.

East Bedarra Private Retreat on the eastern side of Bedarra Island 4km east of Hull Heads, is back in business with \$2 million spent on a new villa on the beachfront.

Co-owner Sharon Salvestrin said they were devastated after the retreat was

demolished by the cyclone.

"It was like the end of the world. It is hard to describe the feeling," she said.

But Mrs Salvestrin and her husband Gene were determined to rebuild and quickly

engaged Cairns builder Peter Davidson.

Mrs Salvestrin said insurance covered some, but not all, of the reconstruction, which took six months to complete, and having to use barges to

transport all the materials and goods was costly.

"But it has been worth it," she said.

Mrs Salvestrin said no expense had been spared in ensuring the new villa, which targets honeymoon couples, was the best.

"It is bigger and more luxurious. It is 100 per cent solar power, 100 per cent eco."

The original structure was a beach hut built in the 1940s and upgraded. Today it's a private and secluded hi-tech, two-bedroom luxury villa.

She said forward bookings were promising with the villa booked out until the end of January with some vacancies in February and March,

April, June and July with the rest of the year full.

The villa can be rented as a one or two-bedroom property with special re-opening packages from \$880 a night.

It includes a gourmet chef's kitchen with energy efficient appliances, one king suite beside the private saltwater plunge pool and one queen suite with reef views to the group of "family isles".

The master bathroom has Italian marble pedestal vanities, a bidet and rain shower.

There is a 3D digital moonlight cinema, a barbecue and alfresco bar, timber sculptures, an iPod docking station and iPad, and ceiling fans in each room.

