

> MY SYDNEY Tara Dennis

I LIVE on the upper North Shore, bordering the Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, with my partner Martyn and 15-year-old daughter, Avalon.

We moved there about 12 years ago. It's really peaceful and quiet, there's plenty of parking and the schools are great. My friends complain they need a packed lunch to come and visit, but they seem to enjoy it once they get here.

Every city has its own magic, but I love how so many places are free and accessible to all in Sydney. There are plenty of open spaces and trees to enjoy as well as parks and walks around our sparkling harbour. You don't have to drive far to get to the beach, the mountains or the city.

I would love to see more casual wine bars or dessert places in our city with longer opening hours like in Melbourne. Sometimes you just want to sit and talk with friends where the music isn't too loud or go out for coffee and dessert later in the evening. Those kinds of places can be hard to find in Sydney.

My favourite place to escape is Pearl Beach, up

on the Central Coast – it's beautiful and not too far to travel. We rent a house near the beach, take lots of books, food and wine and just do nothing for a few days.

We love to cook so dinner at home is usually a gourmet affair. Recently, we had a great meal at the Beach Road Restaurant at Palm Beach where my friend and colleague Ed Halmagyi is the chef. The food was superb and the atmosphere relaxed.

I'm often happier doing lunch and I love the cafe at Fratelli Fresh or the Oyster Bar in David Jones's city store.

I also rediscovered the Marble Bar in the Hilton Hotel and had a wonderful time there. For looks and atmosphere, the bars at the new Hilton are pretty hot.

I hate the gym scene and prefer to go running in the national park. I don't go in for much pampering, but I do get my hair done at Oscar Oscar at Paddington. I trust them completely and have been going there for years. My



TRANQUIL: Tara Dennis at Bobbin Head in Ku-ring-gai National Park.

Picture: ANTHONY JOHNSON

favourite way to relax is by cooking, gardening and just pottering around the house.

I enjoy taking visitors to the city to shop in the QVB and Strand Arcade, or on a ferry over to Manly and up to the northern beaches. This week I had a fabulous view of Sydney while

filming a story at the flower markets starting at 4.30am – lots of colour, characters and excitement.

ANDREW TAYLOR

Tara Dennis is one of the hosts on Better Homes And Gardens.