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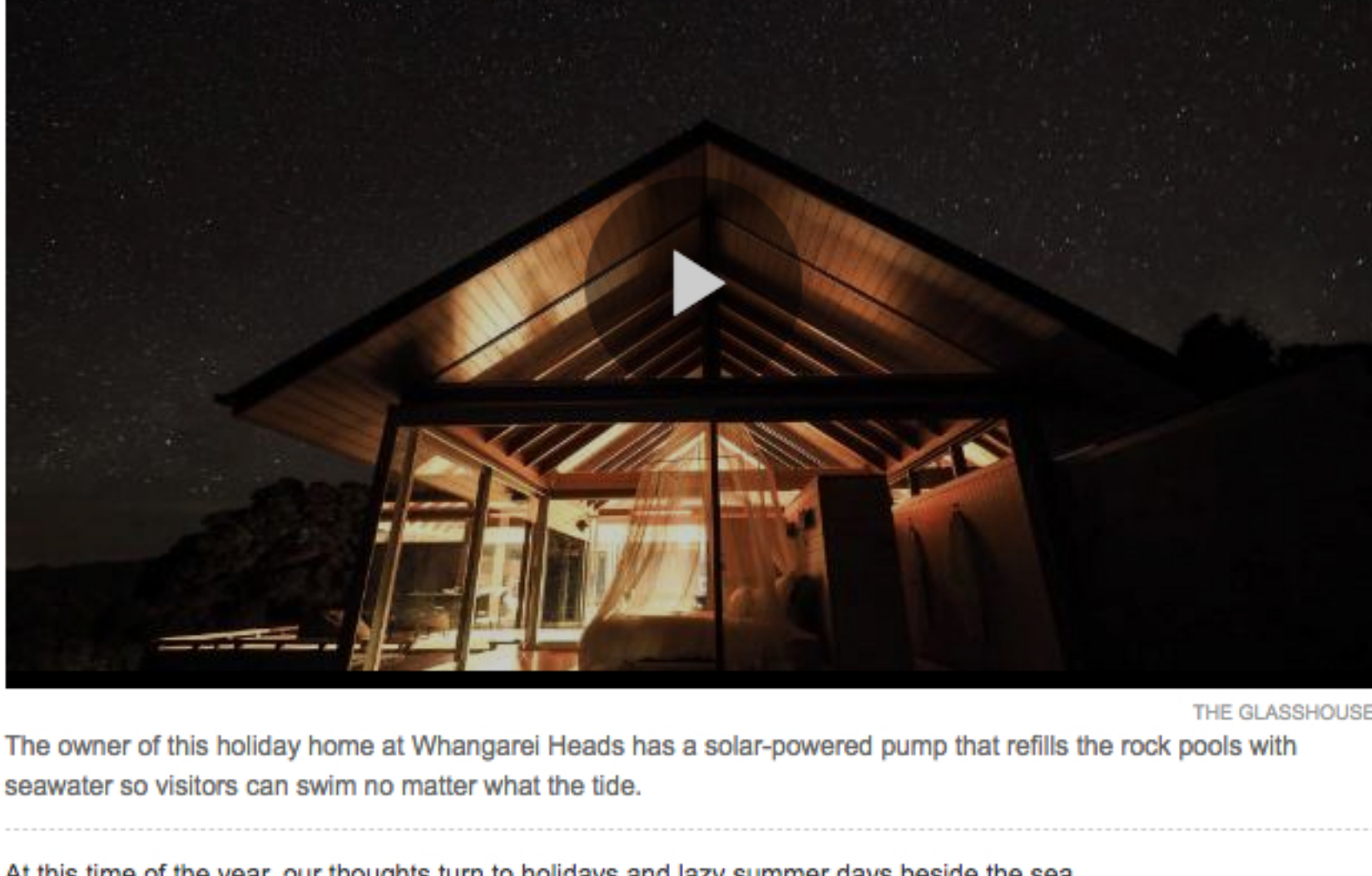
RS RAPIDSET

2015

POINTER

# 'Lovers' cottage' cliff-top hideaway comes with secret rock pools

COLLEEN HAWKES  
Last updated 11:46, December 19 2017



THE GLASSHOUSE

The owner of this holiday home at Whangarei Heads has a solar-powered pump that refills the rock pools with seawater so visitors can swim no matter what the tide.

At this time of the year, our thoughts turn to holidays and lazy summer days beside the sea.

For a few lucky travellers, that may well be a stay in the Glasshouse, which is John Fulton's amazing cliff-top holiday home perched high above the rocky foreshore at Kauri Mountain Point, Whangarei Heads.

Fulton was an expat who spent 17 years travelling and working overseas, but he came back to New Zealand in 2015 with a view to buying a property and taking advantage of the upswing in tourism.



GLASSHOUSE

As locations go, they don't get much better than this. The Glasshouse sits on this Whangarei Heads peninsula, high above the rocks.

"I was after something really unique," he says. "I had looked for a couple of years and sent my poor parents on wild goose chases from Muriwai to Piha and all over Northland. It wasn't until I had actually put an offer in on a place at Tutukaka and John Greenwood from Bayleys called and literally instructed me to visit Kauri Mountain Point. This was during a ferocious storm and it was like love at first sight – the sea was boiling and we only managed to walk around a fraction of the 10ha property. It was quite amazing. This property was a dream come true."

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Designed by architect Paul Clarke of Studio2 Architects, the Glasshouse is a 'lovers' cottage', private and tranquil, yet wide open to the view.

Designed by architect Paul Clarke of Studio2 Architects, the Glasshouse is one of two houses on the land, and it was always going to be the "romantic retreat" for couples, being right at the end of the property, and surrounded by pohutukawa trees.

Clarke says the Glasshouse was designed for the original owner and it was always known as the "lovers' cottage".

"We designed the building so it would nestle into the site at the back, then explode out to connect with the view – an incredibly crafted piece that lets you completely remove yourself from everything else.



GLASSHOUSE

The cedar lining has been bleached with rock salt.

Clarke says the design also explores the idea of transition – there's the long track down to the house, and there's also the transition between the house and the separate bathroom pavilion, which furthers the sense of escape. The bathroom also has glass walls that maximise the views and connection with nature.

The Glasshouse itself is lined with cedar that has been treated with rock salt to bleach the timber. The rafters are also cedar, but these have been oiled for a darker tone. The roof features corrugated copper, and copper also wraps the bathroom pavilion.



GLASSHOUSE

The canopied bed is perfectly positioned to enjoy the view.

In keeping with the ordered, Zen-like ambience, Clarke specified chains in place of downpipes, which would have been visually intrusive. Rainwater runs down the chains, adding to the feeling of refreshment and tranquillity.



GLASSHOUSE

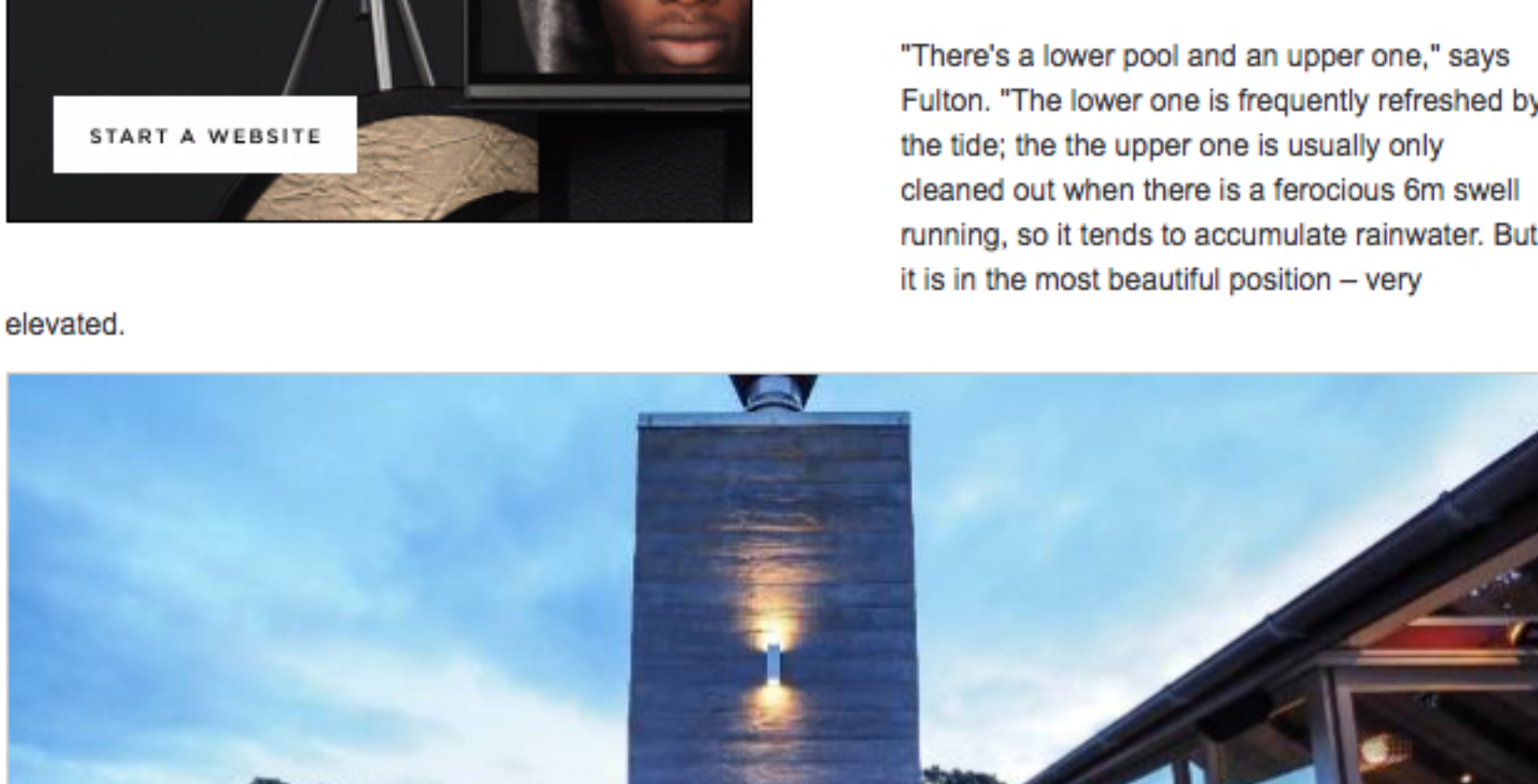
The bathroom is a separate pavilion, a little removed from the house.

Fulton says in order to create an international five-star resort, he has undertaken extensive landscaping work in the past two years, including new pathways.

But the piece de resistance is probably the rocky foreshore and the deep rock pools that are filled automatically by a solar-powered pump.

"There's a lower pool and an upper one," says Fulton. "The lower one is frequently refreshed by the tide; the upper one is usually only cleaned out when there is a ferocious 6m swell running, so it tends to accumulate rainwater. But it is in the most beautiful position – very

elevated.



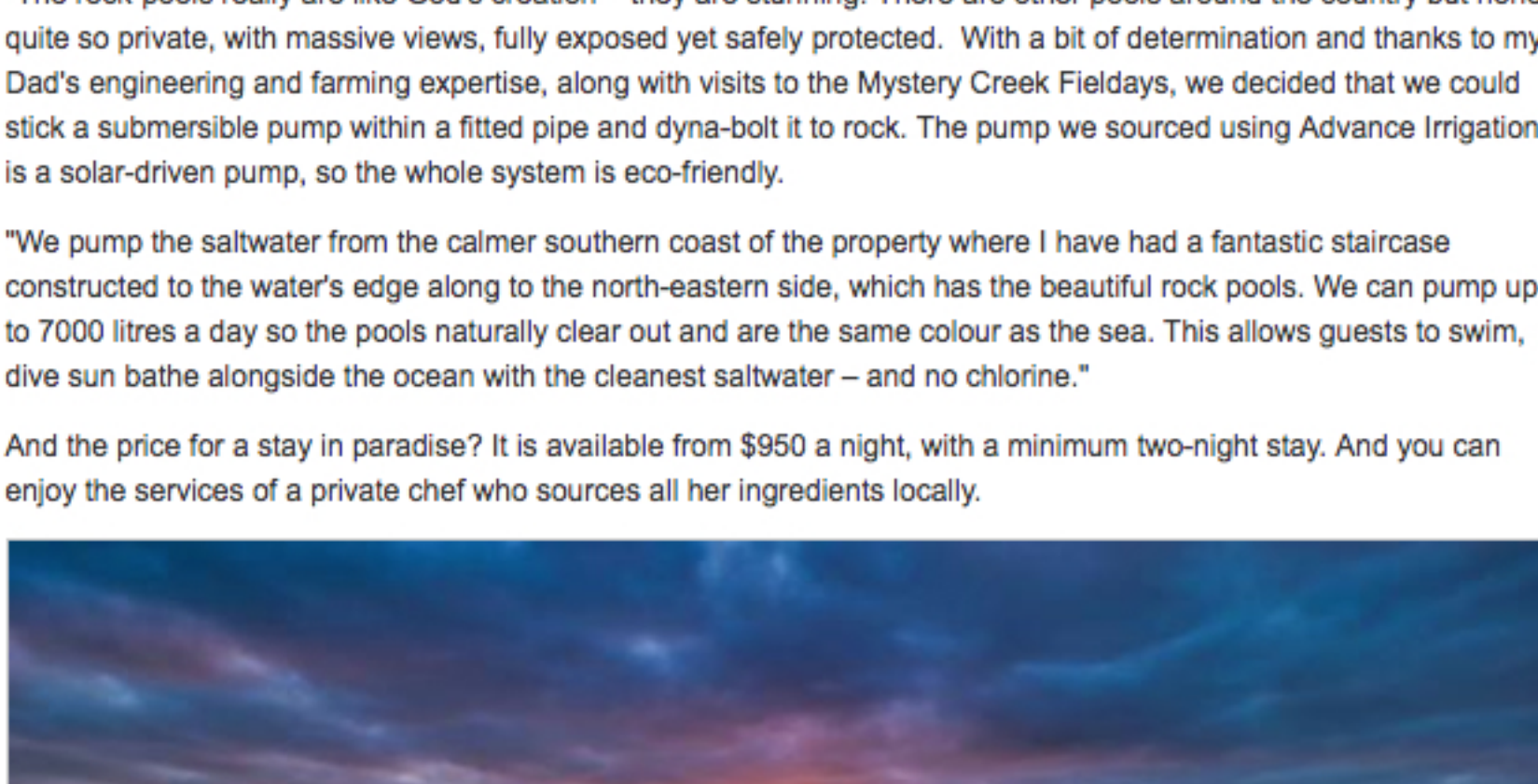
GLASSHOUSE

Whether indoors or outdoors, there is always a close connection to the natural landscape.

"The rock-pools really are like God's creation – they are stunning. There are other pools around the country but none quite so private, with massive views, fully exposed yet safely protected. With a bit of determination and thanks to my Dad's engineering and farming expertise, along with visits to the Mystery Creek Fieldays, we decided that we could stick a submersible pump within a fitted pipe and dyna-bolt it to rock. The pump we sourced using Advance Irrigation is a solar-driven pump, so the whole system is eco-friendly.

"We pump the saltwater from the calmer southern coast of the property where I have had a fantastic staircase constructed to the water's edge along to the north-eastern side, which has the beautiful rock pools. We can pump up to 7000 litres a day so the pools naturally clear out and are the same colour as the sea. This allows guests to swim, dive sun bathe alongside the ocean with the cleanest saltwater – and no chlorine."

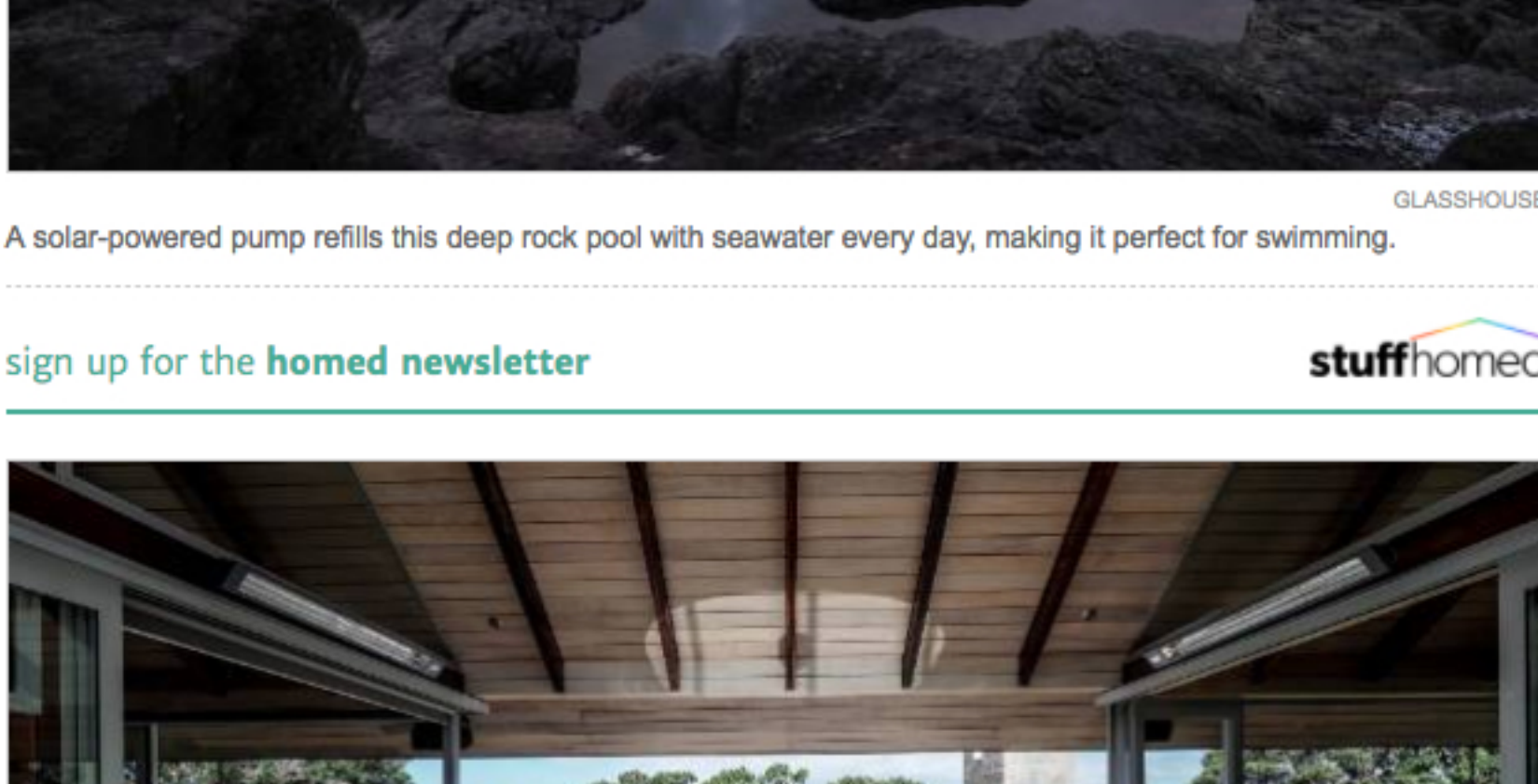
And the price for a stay in paradise? It is available from \$950 a night, with a minimum two-night stay. And you can enjoy the services of a private chef who sources all her ingredients locally.



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A solar-powered pump refills this deep rock pool with seawater every day, making it perfect for swimming.

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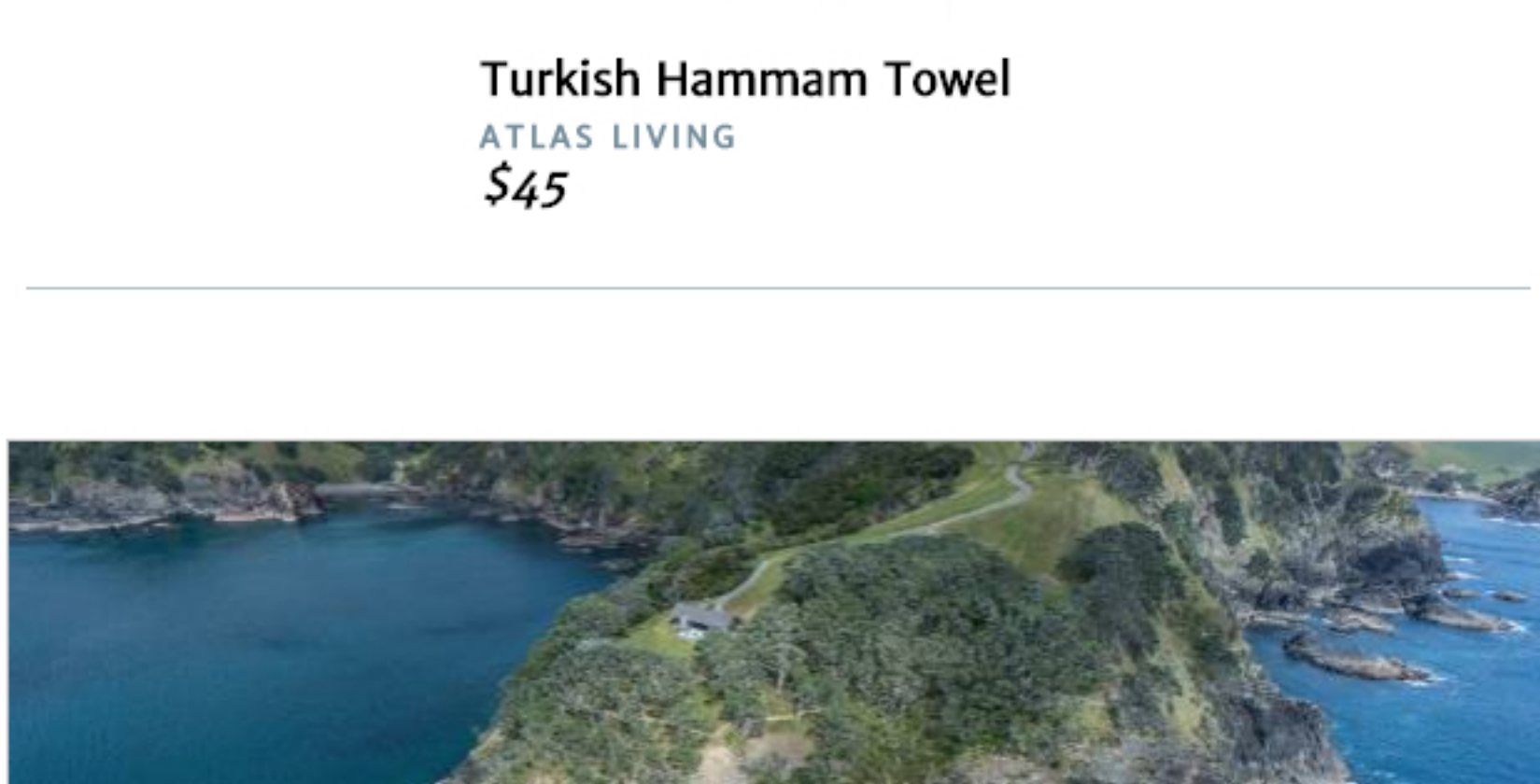
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The two large rockpools can be reached via a staircase on the cliff.

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