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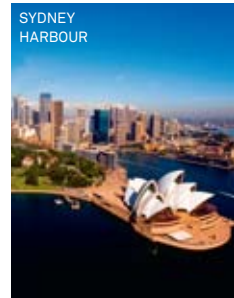
WELCOME...

to this special travel and lifestyle guide, produced in association with *Harper's Bazaar* and *Esquire*, detailing all the very best that Australia has to offer. It is brought to you in partnership with Etihad Airways, Queensland, Sydney and New South Wales, Trailfinders and Dannii Minogue. Etihad Airways, with 10 weekly flights from Dublin to Abu Dhabi, offers onward flights to Australia's most famous destinations – Sydney, New South Wales, and Brisbane, Queensland. Sydney and New South Wales offer the very best in beautiful surroundings and stunning scenery, food and things to do; while Queensland offers that ideal Australian lifestyle – beaches, islands, rainforest, not to mention the Great Barrier Reef. This guide to the best of Australia gives some great suggestions about where to eat, stay and go out when you visit, and I do hope you take the trip Down Under very soon.



ETIHAD AIRWAYS

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the UAE, was voted the World's Leading Airline at the 2009 World Travel Awards. With flights to more than 60 destinations from its home in Abu Dhabi, it offers competitive fares to Sydney and Brisbane from Dublin. Onboard, guests have more than 600 hours of in-flight entertainment, as well as free limo transfers and chic airport lounges for Pearl Business and First Class fliers. And with Etihad's Guest Shopping service, you can use airmiles to spoil yourself with high-end shopping and preferential rates on hotels and sports packages.



SYDNEY HARBOUR



WILSON ISLAND, GLADSTONE

TRAILFINDERS

As the pioneer of tailor-made travel, Trailfinders is your one-stop shop for the ultimate escape. On-hand seven days a week, its expert staff have travelled the globe extensively, so their advice is first-hand – and completely impartial. Whether you want to combine Queensland island-hopping with Sydney sightseeing, top off a free-spirited road trip with a luxe resort break, or organise your very own Aussie Grand Tour, Trailfinders has access to the best rates on hotels, flights, tours and vehicle hire – so no matter what your budget, quality and expertise are guaranteed. To begin planning your trip of a lifetime, ring 01 881 4965, or visit www.trailfinders.ie.



SYDNEY PHOTOGRAPH: STEVE BACK



SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE AND HARBOUR BRIDGE

SYDNEY & NEW SOUTH WALES

Boasting the hottest boutiques, restaurants and cultural events, sexy, sophisticated Sydney has to be Australia's most stylish destination. Its stunning natural environment has created a cool crossover of urban and outdoor living, providing a constant panoramic backdrop to any activity, with balmy temperatures and year-round sunshine to boot. Sydney also makes a chic starting-off point for New South Wales' diverse destinations – from bohemian Byron Bay to the lush Blue Mountains or the south coast's pearl-white sands. Wherever you choose to relax, be it on a beach or in a sensational spa, a host of luxe escapes await your discovery.



THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

QUEENSLAND

Tropical rainforest, paradise beaches, rugged Outback... take a deep breath and launch yourself into the big wide open. From the desert-island allure of the islands around the Great Barrier Reef to the laidback tropical north and the vibrant streets of Brisbane – a hotbed of cultural, epicurean and stylish pursuits – Queensland begs to be explored. Blessed with more than 300 days of sunshine a year, its profusion of natural beauty goes hand in hand with an enviably relaxed way of life; the most taxing decisions you'll ever have to make are those concerning the chic hotels and world-class restaurants that are a trademark of this remarkable territory.

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Celebrate Australia's diverse landscape and culture with our lowdown on what to see and do in the year ahead





QUALIA, HAMILTON ISLAND



BEDARRA ISLAND



MAGNETIC ISLAND

RELAXING RETREATS

QUEENSLAND

Forget having a slice of the good life – have it all in Queensland, where year-round sunshine, friendly locals and diverse scenery combine for an awe-inspiring experience. Home to some of the world's best beaches and islands, as well as coral reefs, Outback, rainforest and a buzzing city scene, it offers an enviable lifestyle. Here's a selection of its must-visit highlights.

THE WHITSUNDAYS

These 74 islands on the Great Barrier Reef offer seclusion amid sparkling waters. For VIP treatment, stay at qualia (www.qualia.com.au) on Hamilton Island, where modern pavilions take in jaw-dropping views; while Peppers Palm Bay (www.peppers.com.au/palm-bay), with its intimate hideaway rooms and private beaches, is perfect for honeymooners. Paradise Bay (www.paradisebay.com.au) offers a

DANNII'S TIP
 'MY TOP BEACH HANGOUT WHEN I'M IN SYDNEY IS PALM BEACH, WHERE HOME & AWAY LOCATION SHOTS WERE FILMED. AND IN QUEENSLAND, MY FAVOURITE RETREATS ARE HAYMAN ISLAND AND PORT DOUGLAS - I LOVE SNORKELLING AND BEING SO CLOSE TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF'



SPF40 BODY CREAM, £17, CLINIQUE

carbon-friendly alternative, combining eco-practicality with full-on luxury.

THE SUNSHINE COAST

Just 90 minutes north of Brisbane, stylish Noosa is the Aussies' holiday destination of choice – and it's fast becoming a must for in-the-know tourists, too. Golden sands and gentle waves make it a magnet for first-time surfers, while a chic crowd enjoys the shopping and dining scene and relaxed beach vibe.

DESERT-ISLAND EXPERIENCE

Tiny Wilson Island (www.wilsonisland.com) is the place to indulge your inner Robinson Crusoe. Taking up to 12 guests, its luxury tents and hammocks overlook the ocean, with communal meals that give evenings the feel of an exclusive house party. It's a nature-lovers' paradise – loggerhead turtles come to lay eggs on the beach, and the water provides a show of Technicolor marine life.

TROPICAL-ISLAND RETREATS

North Queensland offers an abundance of island boltholes, from diving favourite Lizard Island (www.lizardisland.com.au) to private tropical paradise Bedarra Island (www.bedarra.com.au) and its contemporary rainforest pavilions. Seek out wildlife on Orpheus Island (www.orpheus.com.au), which has its own national park, or Magnetic Island, home to one of Australia's largest koala colonies, where the Nahmahlu house (www.nahmahlu.com.au) offers the ultimate decadent house party for up to 14 guests.

BOOK YOUR BEACH HOLIDAY WITH TRAILFINDERS

To discover the best beach getaways and idyllic islands in Queensland and New South Wales, Trailfinders can tailor make the perfect itinerary for you. Ring 01 881 4965 or, for more information, visit www.trailfinders.ie.

NEW SOUTH WALES

From the city-chic of Sydney to the unique natural paradise that is Lord Howe Island, New South Wales offers countless opportunities for kicking back in style. With hundreds of miles of national parks and world-beating beaches – including some of the country's hottest surf spots – you'll be spoilt for spectacular backdrops, wherever you choose to stop.

SYDNEY HARBOUR AND BEACHES

No visit to Australia would be complete without soaking up the cuisine and culture of Sydney's buzzing harbour life. As well as the must-see Opera House and Harbour Bridge climb, there are plenty of chic spots in which to unwind – from picnics in the Royal Botanic Gardens to island-hopping in the harbour or surfing at Bondi and Manly beaches.

BYRON BAY

Those in need of rest and relaxation should head north to Byron Bay – the capital of laidback cool. With its glorious beaches, lush rainforest and vibrant arts and restaurant scene, this is where riviera glamour meets bohemian simplicity. True escapists should head to Rae's Spa on Wategos Beach (www.raes.com.au), a boutique retreat designed for total relaxation in opulent seclusion.



JERVIS BAY

South of Sydney, the pristine beaches, charming towns and ruggedly beautiful interior of Jervis Bay will lure anyone with even a hint of wanderlust. Surrounded by 30 National Parks, the coastline boasts some of the world's whitest sandy beaches, strung out like pearls around the bay – unspoilt, secluded and utterly captivating. And, the dolphin and whale watching, (May to December) in the bay are not to be missed.



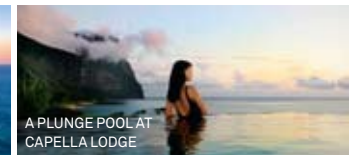
HALTER BIKINI TOP, £38; BOTTOMS, £35, BOTH SEAFOLLY, WWW.MY-WARDROBE.COM

LORD HOWE ISLAND

Less than two hours by air from Sydney, this tiny island in the Pacific – a Unesco World Heritage Site – evokes images of explorers with its craggy mountains and turquoise lagoon, and rewards visitors with wildlife found nowhere else in the world. For the ultimate in barefoot chic, stay at Arajilla Retreat, or Capella Lodge, commanding the most breathtaking views of the island; for both, visit www.lordhoweisland.info.



BYRON BAY LIGHTHOUSE



A PLUNGE POOL AT CAPELLA LODGE



JERVIS BAY



60'S RHYTHM SWIM, £45, AUSSIEBUM

AUSSIEBUM
 SYDNEY-BASED LABEL AUSSIEBUM ([WWW.AUSSIEBUM.COM](http://www.aussiebum.com)) HAS ATTRACTED A CULT FOLLOWING THANKS TO ITS ÜBER-COOL SWIM- AND LOUNGEWEAR FOR MEN. CHECK IT OUT FOR GREAT PRINTS AND SUPER-HI-TECH FABRICS WITH SERIOUS SURF-APPEAL.

ETIHAD PEARL BUSINESS CLASS

Begin your route to relaxation long before you reach your destination with Etihad's Pearl Business Class. Begin and end your journey with a chauffeur-driven limousine service, enjoy a glass of champagne as you recline into 6' 1" flat beds (with luxe linen and in-built massage), and indulge yourself in the à la carte dining for a supremely serene experience.

SPA HEAVEN

NEW SOUTH WALES

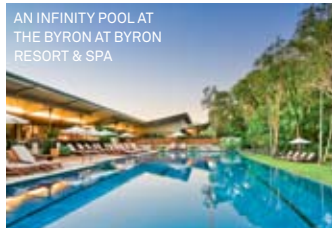
With its unspoilt beaches, breathtaking natural treasures and, of course, one of the world's most vibrant cities, there's no shortage of action to be had in New South Wales. But it also offers peace and tranquillity. Here, tucked away in the rainforest, down a bustling street or among the mountains, are some of the finest spa retreats in the country.

SYDNEY

Take a break from all the shopping and sightseeing at one of the city's many health and beauty sanctuaries. After exploring the historic Rocks district, try a treatment at the Observatory Hotel (www.observatoryhotel.com.au), whose Day Spa offers a range of scrubs and wraps to smooth away tension and nourish the mind, body and soul. At Endota Spa (www.endota.com.au), modern-day technology meets total relaxation; and the Milk Day Spa in Paddington (www.milkdayspa.com) offers a range of beauty treatments, including the tempting Chocolate Obsession package.

BOOK YOUR SPA BREAK WITH TRAILFINDERS

To find the best spa hotels and holistic retreats in New South Wales and Queensland, Trailfinders' can tailor make the perfect itinerary for you. Ring 01 881 4965, or visit www.trailfinders.ie.



AN INFINITY POOL AT THE BYRON AT BYRON RESORT & SPA



RAINFOREST RELAXATION AT THE BYRON AT BYRON

BLUE MOUNTAINS

There can be no better place to step away from civilization than the World Heritage Area of the Blue Mountains – 1 million hectares of tall forests, sandstone cliffs, canyons, waterfalls and bushland. The attractions are many – from going Walkabout with an Aboriginal guide to abseiling – but don't miss a relaxing treatment at the spa at Lilianfels Blue Mountains (www.lilianfels.com.au), where guests are encouraged to discover a state of peace and calmness within themselves.

NORTHERN RIVERS

The Northern Rivers, with its subtropical rainforest, deep river gorges and Pacific Coast beaches, boasts a number of world-class spa retreats, from the spa at Byron at Byron (www.thebyronatbyron.com.au), where nature is the inspiration for a

DANNI'S TIP
"THE BYRON AT BYRON RESORT & SPA IS A REAL TREAT – THE STAFF ARE SO FRIENDLY, AND REALLY HELP ME UNWIND. IN QUEENSLAND, IT HAS TO BE THE NOOSA SPA – ANYWHERE I CAN DRIFT OFF INTO A DEEP SLEEP IS A WONDROUS RETREAT FOR ME!"



JASMINE HAND CREAM, £33 FOR 125ML, WWW.JURLIQUE.CO.UK

range of luxurious treatments; to the sanctuary of flowing waters and peaceful ambiance that is the Buddha Gardens Day Spa (www.buddhagardensdayspa.com.au); and the rejuvenating hydrotherapy experience of the Kiva Spa & Bathhouse (www.byron-bay.com/kiva).

SOUTH COAST

At the other end of New South Wales, known for its pearly white beaches, national parks and nature reserves, the Chalet Suisse Spa in Batemans Bay (www.chaletswissespa.com.au) offers papaya facials, herbal baths and sea-clay body wraps amid excellent ocean and mountain views; and Bannisters Day Spa in Mollymook (www.bannisters.com.au) specialises in organic body treatments designed to relax and rejuvenate.



THE INFINITY POOL AT BANNISTERS DAY SPA



SPA HAYMAN



GWINGANNA LIFESTYLE RETREAT

suites or two signature villas. Hugh Jackman enjoyed his visit so much, he bought into the business.

THE WHITSUNDAYS

After a day's sailing around the Whitsundays – 74 islands in the Great Barrier Reef – unwind at Spa qualia (www.qualia.com.au), where treatments capture the essence of Australia; the spa at Daydream Island Resort & Spa (www.daydreamisland.com), a sophisticated spa offering iridology; or Spa Hayman (www.hayman.com.au), whose signature Ocean Massage experience is not to be missed.

QUEENSLAND

When it's time to indulge mind, body and soul, you'll find an array of spa retreats in Queensland that reflect the variety and abundance of the state's natural resources. Treatments are inspired by the healing waters of the world's oldest rainforest, the marine marvels of the Great Barrier Reef, mystical Aboriginal medicines and an array of flora and herbs.



GOLD AVIATORS, £118, RAY-BAN. STRAW TRILBY, £60, PAUL SMITH, BOTH WWW.MYWARDROBE.COM

Cairns in Tropical North Queensland, is emerging as Australia's spa capital. The Angsana Great Barrier Reef (www.angsana.com), the Sebel Reef House & Spa (www.reefhouse.com.au) and the Sea Temple Resort & Spa Palm Cove (www.mirvachotels.com) all offer world-class dining, sumptuous accommodation and a stunning beachfront location alongside award-winning in-house spas.

PALM COVE

With its palm-fringed streets and award-winning beach, it's clear to see why the resort village of Palm Cove, just 20 minutes north of

GOLD COAST

If you're looking to change your life, not simply escape from it, the Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat (www.gwinganna.com) helps guests overhaul their health through innovative wellness programmes, spa treatments and organic cuisine. Set in the Gold Coast hinterland, the spa sanctuary includes 33 themed treatment rooms; accommodation is in heritage houses, orchard



70'S MARBLE SWIM, £35, AUSSIEBUM



ETIHAD'S SIX SENSES SPA

Kick off your Australian spa experience before you even arrive, with a luxurious treatment in Etihad's lounge in Abu Dhabi. Its world renowned Six Senses Spa, with a range of pampering 15-minute treatments, including facial renewal, scalp massage and more, is just what you need to help you relax and rejuvenate while travelling.



SOUTHBANK MARKETS, BRISBANE

DANNII'S TIP
 'AUSTRALIA HAS GREAT SHOPPING OUTLETS AND HIGH-CLASS DESIGNERS IN ABUNDANCE. WAYNE COOPER AND ALANNAH HILL REPRESENT SYDNEY PROUDLY, AND SASS & BIDE AND EASTON PEARSON, WHICH ORIGINATED IN QUEENSLAND, ARE NOW WELL-KNOWN DESIGNERS WORLDWIDE. THE ONLY PROBLEM WITH SHOPPING IN AUSTRALIA IS FOCUSING ON WHERE TO GO'

über-glam Palazzo Versace hotel. Indulge in a stylish mix of designer boutiques, art galleries and award-winning restaurants, all in a stunning waterfront location on this glamorous stretch of coast.

LOCAL MARKETS

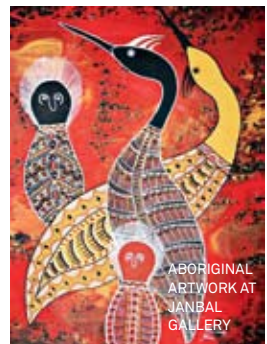
Many of Queensland's convivial local markets have become cool cultural hubs, well worth a detour. Two hours north of Brisbane, near Noosa, Eumundi Markets (www.iloveeumundi.com.au) offer an irresistible selection of arts, crafts and great fresh produce; while in Queensland's tropical far north, Port Douglas' Sunday markets (www.portdouglas.com.au) feature fabulous regional items.

ABORIGINAL ART

North Queensland is now a key location for Aboriginal art galleries, giving visitors a taste of Australia's indigenous culture. Pandanus Gallery (www.pandanusgallery.com.au) in Palm Cove sells a wide range of artworks, from pieces by emerging artists to rare collectibles. In Mossman, Janbal Gallery (www.janbalgallery.com.au) specialises in Aboriginal works by local and national artists.



WOVEN JACKET, £789; DRESS £525, BOTH SASS & BIDE, WWW.SASSANDBIDE.COM



ABORIGINAL ARTWORK AT JANBAL GALLERY

SHOPPING & STYLE

QUEENSLAND

Whether you're looking for high-end designer fashion, one-of-a-kind souvenirs or indigenous Australian artworks, seek and you shall find it in Queensland. From the vibrant streets of Brisbane to the state's tropical north – with miles and miles of beautiful coastline in-between – there's no end of chic and unique places to discover.

BRISBANE

Focusing on up-and-coming labels and cool boutiques, Brisbane is fast making a name for itself as a hip shopping destination. Hit funky Fortitude Valley for edgy urbanwear, cult Australian labels (including Sass & Bide) and luxury

shopping precinct Emporium (www.emporium.com.au), or catch the Young Designers' Market (www.southbankmarket.com.au) held every first Sunday of the month, for the hottest new design talent. For fashionistas, the Queensland Art Gallery (<http://qag.qld.gov.au>) is a must – after the current Stephen Jones show 'Hats: An Anthology' (until 27 June), a new Valentino retrospective runs from 7 August.

GOLD COAST

An hour south of Brisbane, the shopping experience just gets slicker, thanks to the recent multimillion-dollar redevelopment of Marina Mirage (www.marinamirage.com.au), located right by the

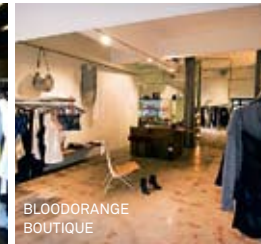


NEW SOUTH WALES

New South Wales is home to Australia's fashion capital, Sydney – and if shopping is on your agenda, there's no better place to indulge. From the city's historic centre to the beach-chic of Bondi and cutting-edge boutiques of Paddington, Sydney's diverse shopping districts are a treasure-trove of cool and edgy fashion finds.

CITY CENTRE

Arguably the highlights of downtown Sydney are its 19th-century Strand Arcade and Queen Victoria Building. With their ornate architectural features and towering glass roofs, they are home to luxe boutiques



aplenty. Over on Castlereagh Street, the bright lights of Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Gucci et al lure big spenders and window-shoppers alike.

THE ROCKS

Beside Sydney Harbour Bridge, the centuries-old buildings of the Rocks district conjure Australia's convict history (it was once an open-air gaol). These days the former warehouses, slums and dens of iniquity host a cool mix of shops, restaurants and galleries,

'AUSTRALIA IS BECOMING A REAL MELTING POT FOR FASHION DESIGN TALENT'

SARAH CURRAN, FOUNDER & CEO OF MY-WARDROBE.COM



POLO TOP, £69, BOSS BLACK. SKINNY JEANS, £115, NUDE, BOTH WWW.MY-WARDROBE.COM

FIVE TOP AUSTRALIAN DESIGNERS

COLLETTE DINNIGAN A-LIST FAVOURITE FOR BEAUTIFUL DRESSES. JOSH GOOT HI-TECH PRINTS ON EASY-CHIC PIECES HAVE MADE GOOT A FAVOURITE WITH FASHION EDITORS. AKIRA IGOSAWA MIXES JAPANESE AND WESTERN INFLUENCES IN HIS 'FUSION FASHION'. 18TH AMENDMENT THE HIP JEANS LABEL THAT PUTS A DIRECTIONAL SPIN ON DENIM. DION LEE CLEAN LINES AND BOLD SHOULDERS ARE SIGNATURES OF THIS NEW KID ON THE BLOCK.

as well as markets and street entertainment.

PADDINGTON & ELIZABETH BAY

A short distance from the city centre, Paddington has fashion lovers flocking. Head to Oxford Street – the 'Style Mile' – for clothing including cult Australian label Hussy. Belinda, the Corner Shop and Poepke (all on William Street) and Land's End (Glenmore Road) are great boutiques for slick edits of international collections, alongside vintage and up-and-coming labels. In Elizabeth Bay, Bloodorange is the local epicentre of cool.

BONDI

Bondi is Aussie surf culture distilled. It's the place to come for beachwear, as well as all manner of jewellery, homewares and vintage buys at the beachfront Sunday markets. For those in need of a fashion fix, Westfield mall is packed to the rafters with high-end brands.

WATERLOO & SURRY HILLS

Seemingly overnight, these former industrial districts have transformed themselves into cool arts hubs, the gritty warehouses and factories forming the perfect backdrop to a hip bohemian scene. With its homeware shops and vintage stores, Surry Hills has made a name for itself as Sydney's design centre, while Waterloo is great for buzzing delis, antiques and galleries galore.



ETIHAD SHOPPING

With Etihad Guest shopping, you can earn Etihad Guest miles as you fly and use them to treat yourself. Whether you want to indulge in luxury brands – Prada, Gucci, Swarovski, to name a few – or spend on exclusive holiday packages (including special rates at luxe hotels, or great golfing and family offers), you'll be spoilt for choice on an Etihad flight.

YOU CAN SHOP HUSSY ONLINE FROM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD NOW AT WWW.HUSSY.COM.AU





SYDNEY'S OPERA BAR

DANNI'S TIP
 'COSTA PLENTI IN DOUBLE BAY IS THE COOLEST OF BOUTIQUE HOTELS: IT ONLY HAS ONE ROOM! STEP OUTSIDE FOR SYDNEY'S COOLEST CAFÉS AND SHOPPING. IN BRISBANE, THE ROOFTOP POOL AND CABANAS AT EMPORIUM HOTEL MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE A MOVIE STAR'

of the city scene, Paperbark Camp (www.paperbarkcamp.com.au) is a peaceful bush retreat in Jervis Bay, on the South Coast. Here, you'll sleep under the stars in a luxuriously appointed tent and enjoy the area's wealth of natural beauty – as well as pampering fine dining and massage treatments. The Greater Blue Mountains play host to Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa (www.emirateshotelsresorts.com), a six-star homestead-style hideaway set within its own 4,000-acre private conservation and wildlife reserve, surrounded by native forests and sandstone cliffs. Or, to get away from it all during a Sydney vacation, take an afternoon to fly by seaplane to the award-winning Cottage Point Inn, perched on the water's edge in the heart of the Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park (book with www.seaplanes.com.au). After a leisurely three-course lunch, rebound your seaplane and return to Sydney, flying a circuit of the harbour over the Bridge and Opera House before landing at Rose Bay.

BOUTIQUE-HOTEL CHIC

NEW SOUTH WALES

Grab a cocktail, hit the dancefloor, join the beautiful people or escape the crowds – rest and play the Sydney way, or travel far beyond the city for an indulgent out-of-this-world experience that's sure to stay with you long after you're back on more familiar ground.

SYDNEY HOTELS

A visit to Sydney is all about the views – so max out on those jaw-dropping vistas with a stay at Sebel Pier One (www.sebelpierone.com.au) or the Sydney Park Hyatt (<http://sydney.park.hyatt.com>). Both are built on the water's edge and enjoy fabulous Sydney Harbour views, as well as all the convenience and fun of being located in the historic dining and entertainment precinct of the Rocks.

SYDNEY BARS

Sydney's nightlife is among the most vibrant in the world, and there's no more exciting venue than the Ivy (www.merivale.com), a sprawling complex of bars, lounges, restaurants and a live music venue – not to

mention a rooftop pool and two super-swanky hotel suites – where the city's platinum party crew hang out. For a different kind of thrill, enjoy a cocktail or home-brewed beer at the Opera Bar (www.operabar.com.au), as you watch the sun set against the city skyline. For panoramic views of Sydney's legendary Bondi Beach, visit the Icebergs Dining Room and Bar (www.idrb.com/icebergs).

BEYOND THE CITY

A world away from the hustle



SWIMSUIT, £92, BOSSAMARE, WWW.MY-WARDROBE.COM. SHOWGIRL PALETTE, £55, BECCA, WWW.BECCA COSMETICS.COM



WOLGAN VALLEY RESORT & SPA

QUEENSLAND

Whether you want to be right in the centre of the action – to see and be seen in some of the country's hottest, clubs and bars – or to take yourself away from it all and decompress at a luxurious, secluded retreat or hotel, no one does boutique chic quite like Queensland. Welcome to the high life...

BRISBANE HOTELS

If you're looking for more than just a place to lay your head while in Brisbane, the Emporium Hotel (www.emporiumhotel.com.au) offers an unparalleled level of hospitality and service, right down to its Exquisite Sleeps menu, which allows guests to choose from no fewer than eight different pillow options. Located in the heart of the Emporium precinct, the hotel also offers guests a rooftop lap pool, sauna, gym and cocktail bar, and custom-designed, individually furnished suites.

BRISBANE BARS

The leafy city suburb of Fortitude Valley has built quite a reputation for its buzzing cafés, nightclubs, live music venues, renovated pubs and great restaurants. Its latest nightspots include Laruche Bar & Supperclub (www.laruche.com.au), an art nouveau-inspired site combining art, fine design and a European tapas-style menu; and Alloneword (www.alloneword.com.au), a



DOUBLE ISLAND



EMPORIUM HOTEL



LARUCHE BAR

stylish, exclusive space with a cool bar and outdoor area that plays cutting-edge music to a super-hip crowd. For a drink in a remarkable setting, visit Cloudland (www.cloudland.tv), with its retractable roof and waterfall.

BEYOND THE CITY

A jewel in the Gold Coast's coastline, the Palazzo Versace (www.palazzo.versace.com) is one of Australia's most luxurious hotels, with 205 elegant rooms, 72 condominiums, three award-winning restaurants, a private marina, designer shopping and the Salus Per Aquum day spa all under one roof.



SHIRT, £75, AQUASCUTUM, WWW.MY-WARDROBE.COM

Midway along Queensland's coast, rent a beach house in the tiny settlements of Agnes Water, or nearby 1770 for total privacy (<http://1770beachaccommodation.com.au>). Tropical North Queensland also boasts outstanding luxury retreats, including Daintree Rainforest's Shangri-La, the über-private Bali Hai, and Altitude One40, with its own private helipad, at Mission Beach (www.executive.retreats.com.au). For the ultimate in escapism, why not hire your own island? Double Island (www.doubleisland.com.au), off Palm Cove, is a five-star haven for A-listers seeking guaranteed seclusion.



DIAMOND FIRST CLASS FLIGHTS WITH ETIHAD

You may be just one of Etihad's millions of passengers a year, but one-on-one attention and service mean you'll always feel the personal touch. From luxurious flatbed seats with 600-thread Egyptian cotton sheets and five-star à la carte dining to 23-inch personal TVs and limousine transfers, you decide how you spend your journey – and when and how you are served.



QUAY INTERIOR



FOOD AT TETSUYA'S

the remarkable libations. Rock Restaurant (www.rockrestaurant.com.au) in Pokolbin is garnering rave reviews for its contemporary Australian cuisine with a classical French influence; and Bistro Molines (www.bistromolines.com.au) in Mount View delivers a regional French menu against a captivating vineyard backdrop.

BLUE MOUNTAINS

The Blue Mountains is at the forefront of the slow-food movement, and one of the best examples of this can be found at Vulcans (+61 2 4787 6899), an exceptional but tiny restaurant housed in an old bakery in Blackheath village. Much less modestly outfitted is Darleys restaurant at Lilianfels hotel in Katoomba (www.lilianfels.com.au), an award-winning dining establishment where modern Australian food is served in a romantic space featuring stained-glass windows, fireplaces and crystal chandeliers.

BOOK YOUR GOURMET GETAWAY WITH TRAILFINDERS

To uncover top eateries and wineries in New South Wales and Queensland, Trailfinders' can tailor make the perfect itinerary for you. Ring 01 881 4965 for more information, or visit www.trailfinders.ie.

enjoy stunning harbour views. Just a 50-minute drive from the city, the restaurant at Jonah's (www.jonahs.com.au) sits above Whale Beach, serving a seafood-focused menu. Sydney's bar scene is also thriving. Surry Hills' Vini (www.vini.com.au) and Yullis (www.yullis.com.au) have become local favourites; Wine Odyssey (www.wineodyssey.com.au) in the Rocks district lets you help yourself to 44 delicious Australian wines in its Wine Journey Room; and the Water Bar at Blue Sydney (www.tajhotels.com), which as been named one of the top 10 bars in the world, has a cocktail menu second to none.

HUNTER VALLEY

Only two hours from Sydney, the Hunter Valley is Australia's oldest wine region, with more than 120 wineries and superb cuisine that is more than a match for

DANNII'S TIP
'SPICE TEMPLE IN SYDNEY IS ONE OF NEIL PERRY'S RESTAURANTS, WHILE CATALINA IN ROSE BAY HAS BEEN A CONSTANT FAVOURITE OVER THE YEARS. NAUTILUS RESTAURANT IN PORT DOUGLAS, QUEENSLAND, IS A REAL TREAT FOR A ROMANTIC DINNER - YOU CAN DINE UNDER THE STARS AMONG THE TREETOPS'



COTTON BLAZER, £365, MARC BY MARC JACOBS, WWW.MY-WARDROBE.COM

WINING & DINING

NEW SOUTH WALES

Though Sydney is undeniably the hot destination for foodies – reaping the benefits of more than 140 different cultures, world-renowned chefs and great produce from all over Australia – wherever you go in New South Wales, you'll find fresh flavours to suit all budgets and palates, from incomparable seafood to Asian-inspired cuisine and world-class wines.

FOOD & WINE IN SYDNEY

A fusion of flavours, cultures and fresh food amid vivid scenery, Sydney's dining scene is one of the most buzzing in the world. And some of the most exciting tables to be had in the city are those with a view. Rated one of the world's top 100 restaurants, Tetsuya's (www.tetsuyas.com) overlooks a Japanese garden and serves elegant Japanese-French food; Quay (www.quay.com.au) and Pier (www.pierrestaurant.com.au)

QUEENSLAND

Food and drink in Queensland are as diverse as the geography of the state and the people who live in it – but, wherever you go, you can expect a warm welcome, a diverse array of options and world-class food inspired by the surroundings. Whether you're looking for a fresh seafood platter, a smooth Semillon or a kangaroo steak, Queensland serves it up with style and panache.

BRISBANE'S HOT SPOTS

Brisbane offers many high-class restaurants and bars. For spectacular river views, there's Jellyfish (www.jellyfishrestaurant.com.au), which serves eight different types of fish a day; or Aria in the Eagle Street Pier precinct (www.aria-restaurant.com), serving a contemporary menu using fresh Australian produce. Alternatively, head to South Bank for dinner, followed by a stroll along Riverwalk, a three-kilometre scenic path beside the Brisbane River. From here, you can take in the city skyline, the majestic Kangaroo Point cliffs and the city's famous Story Bridge.

BEYOND BRISBANE

Mount Tamborine, inland from the Gold Coast, is a stunning area and home to diverse artistic communities. Taste locally made, award-winning cheeses, handmade chocolates, fudge and local coffee. One place

not to miss is Songbirds (www.songbirds.com.au), home to an award-winning restaurant set in acres of lush rainforest.

With more than 50 wineries and cellar doors (tasting venues), you'll be sure to find something you love in the Granite Belt, three hours south-west of Brisbane. Here, in Queensland's leading wine region, opt for a Cellar Door Pass (www.cellardoorpass.com.au) for a VIP experience throughout the region's premier wineries. Make sure to book a table at Restaurant Lurleen's (www.sirromet.com), too – it's ranked one of Australia's five best winery restaurants.

FRASER ISLAND

If it's authenticity and a true back-to-nature experience you crave, visit Fraser Island, a 45-minute flight from



DRESS, £160, TWENTY8TWELVE, WWW.MY-WARDROBE.COM

Brisbane. The eco-friendly Kingfisher Bay Resort (www.kingfisherbay.com) offers a menu blending local produce, fresh seafood, bush tucker and island living at its award-winning Seabelle Restaurant – you can even dine outdoors in the bush.

THE CHEF'S TABLE ON HAYMAN ISLAND

Held once-weekly by Hayman resort (www.hayman.com.au) on Hayman Island in the Whitsundays, the Chef's Table is a magnificent culinary experience. Hosted by Hayman executive chef Glenn Bacon or a Hayman master chef, the evening takes resort guests behind the scenes, into the kitchen, for a six-course dinner with matching wines, and includes a visit to the famous La Fontaine wine cellar and the Hayman chocolate room.



ARIA RESTAURANT, BRISBANE

FIVE-STAR DINING WITH ETIHAD

Foodies can savour the high life before touching down, with Etihad's dining options both in-flight and in the Abu Dhabi lounge. Diamond First Class passengers are treated to à la carte fine dining, while Pearl Business Class passengers enjoy a wide choice of dishes from around the globe served in a five-star ambiance.



DIARY DATES 2010/2011

VIVID SYDNEY



SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES

3-7 MAY ROSEMOUNT AUSTRALIAN FASHION WEEK
Established and emerging designers from Australia and the Asia-Pacific will present their collections against the spectacular backdrop of Sydney Opera House and city skyline (www.rafw.com.au).

27 MAY-20 JUNE VIVID SYDNEY

Sydney Opera House is the focal point of this festival of light, music and ideas, which includes the spectacular 'illumination of the sails' (above) and music performances (www.vividsydney.com).

1-31 OCTOBER CRAVE SYDNEY

A month of food, outdoor art and fun, culminating in Breakfast on the Bridge, when 10,000 square metres of turf is laid on the Sydney Harbour Bridge for a public picnic (www.cravesydney.com).

28 OCTOBER -14 NOVEMBER SCULPTURE BY THE SEA

The spectacular Bondi to Tamarama coastal path is transformed into a giant sculpture park (<http://sculpturebythesea.com>).

JANUARY VIVACITY

An incredible celebration, starting with Sydney's magical New Year's Eve festivities (right), and incorporating the Sydney Festival (9-30 January), a rich programme of music, dance, theatre and visual arts, the Medibank International tennis tournament and the 5th Test of the Ashes cricket series between Australia and England (www.vivacitysydney.com).



26 JANUARY AUSTRALIA DAY

Take to the beaches, backyards and parks of Sydney to celebrate what makes Australia great in the country's oldest and biggest city (www.australiaday.com.au).

REEF & RAINFOREST CARNIVALE



QUEENSLAND

NOW-27 JUNE 'HATS: AN ANTHOLOGY' BY STEPHEN JONES
The Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, is hosting this touring exhibition (right) curated by the world-renowned milliner (<http://qag.qld.gov.au>).



21-30 MAY REEF & RAINFOREST CARNIVALE

Celebrate life in the tropics, its culture, art and cuisine, with the North Queensland townships of Port Douglas, Mossman, Daintree and Cape Tribulation (www.carnivale.com.au).

7 AUGUST-7 NOVEMBER 'VALENTINO, RETROSPECTIVE: PAST/PRESENT/FUTURE'

The Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, celebrates 50 years of Italian fashion house Valentino, encompassing haute couture from 1959 through to pieces from A/W 09 (<http://qag.qld.gov.au>).

20-28 AUGUST HAMILTON ISLAND RACE WEEK

A thrilling combination of world-class yacht racing (right) and some spectacular off-water events (www.hamiltonislandraceweek.com.au).



3-4 SEPTEMBER BIRDSVILLE RACES

Horse-racing and live entertainment abound during this world-famous two-day carnival in a tiny Outback town (www.birdsvillerraces.com).

25-29 NOVEMBER AUSTRALIA VS ENGLAND ASHES TEST

Brisbane's famous 'Gabba' cricket ground is the venue for the opening Test match of the Ashes series between Australia and England (www.cricket.com.au).

VIVA SYDNEY PHOTOGRAPH: HAMILTON LUND; 'HATS' IMAGE: © CHRISTOPHER MOORE/CATWALKING

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