

**SUNDAY LUNCH WITH ACCLAIMED  
CHEF GUILLAUME BRAHIMI**

---

**BOMMIE'S AWARD-WINNING  
ALICE JAMES ON HER CULINARY JOURNEY**

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**CORAL PLANTING EFFORTS TO  
HELP OUR RESILIENT REEF THRIVE**

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**STORIES AND SERENITY AT  
DENT ISLAND'S MAGICAL LIGHTHOUSE**

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**BEST WAYS TO ENJOY THE  
WONDERS OF THE WHITSUNDAYS**

**R**

**REEF MAGAZINE**

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ISLAND  
& THE  
GREAT  
BARRIER  
REEF



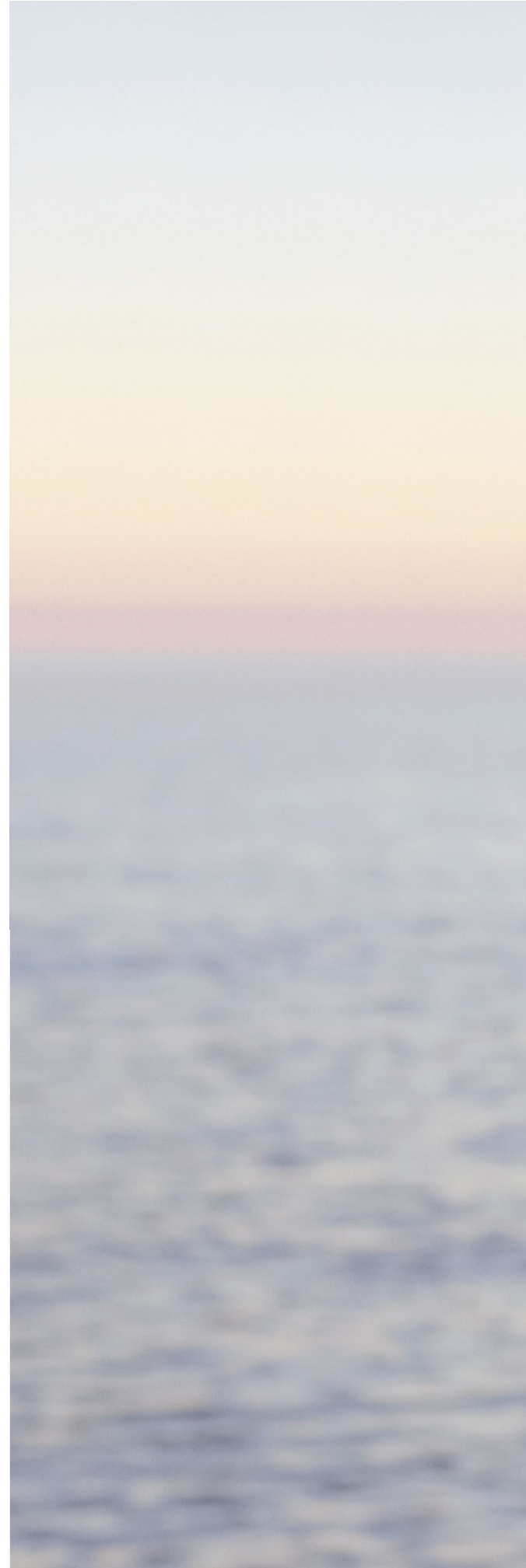
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ISSUE 26  
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PASPALLEY





# INTRODUCTION



**W**elcome to the latest edition of *REEF* Magazine, your gateway to the wonders of Hamilton Island. This issue arrives just in time for the highly anticipated Hamilton Island Race Week, now in its 38th year. With an impressive fleet of close to 200 boats taking to the start line and a week packed with racing and onshore entertainment, Race Week promises an unforgettable experience that transcends the boundaries of the sport. Australia's winter months are the perfect time to visit Hamilton Island, with its mostly sunny, clear days that provide an escape from the

southern chill. Nature lovers will be delighted by the opportunity to spot majestic humpback whales as they migrate from the Antarctic to the warm, protected Whitsunday waters. It's a spectacle that showcases the island's unique connection with the natural world. In this edition of *REEF*, we embrace the nostalgia of travel, where writer Ute Junker explores the joy of just this. On Hamilton Island, we are proud to offer a world-class luxury destination where cherished memories can be made and shared with loved ones. We see many guests return to our shores to rekindle the magic of their past visits and to also create new memories for the future. No visit to Hamilton Island would be complete without immersing yourself in the aquatic wonders that have captivated the world and are right here on our doorstep. In this issue, discover just some of the many breathtaking ways to encounter the majestic Great Barrier

Reef and the pristine beauty of Whitehaven Beach. Prepare to be inspired and gain fresh perspectives on these beloved landmarks. This year we celebrate a significant milestone — it is 20 years since the Oatley family acquired Hamilton Island in 2003. Since then, the island has benefitted from many spectacular additions, turning it into the world-class Australian holiday destination it is today. On behalf of the family, we express our gratitude to you for choosing Hamilton Island. Whether you are a returning guest or enjoying your very first visit, we wholeheartedly wish you a wonderful and unforgettable stay.

Pete Brulisauer  
CEO, Hamilton Island

*Hamilton Island would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of The Whitsundays, the Ngāro people, and their connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and future generations to come and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.*

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PHOTOGRAPHY: OLIVER ROSE

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# CONTRIBUTORS



## MELANIE COLWELL, EDITOR

**BEST SAILING ADVENTURE?** Sailing around Croatia and partying till dawn in my twenties. Oh, to be young.

**FAVOURITE WAY TO RELAX ON HOLIDAY?** A long boozy lunch with an excellent view.

**YOU ARE LISTENING TO?** *The Imperfects* podcast's interview with chef Ben Shewry

**READING?** *Yellowface* by R.F. Kuang

**SUNDOWNER?** Limoncello spritz

**IF YOU COULD TIME TRAVEL?** I'd jump forward to when my daughter is old enough to go to Disneyworld. My inner child can't wait to have an excuse to visit again.

**IF YOU COULD REVISIT SOMEWHERE?** I'd return to Edinburgh Fringe Festival. There are so many incredible artists to see and discover, the atmosphere is unreal.

**SAILING TO-DO LIST?** The Greek islands ... in t-minus three months.

**DREAM DESTINATION?** Modenain Italy. Dining at Massimo Bottura's Osteria Francescana is on my bucket list.

**FAVOURITE PART ABOUT TRAVELLING?** Being blissfully uncontactable.

## UTE JUNKER, WRITER

**BEST SAILING ADVENTURE?** Exploring the underwater marvels of Raja Ampat, Indonesia.

**FAVOURITE WAY TO RELAX ON HOLIDAY?** A swim, a walk, a snooze. Rinse and repeat.

**YOU ARE LISTENING TO?** ABC Radio, to stay in touch with home.

**READING?** *L'Appart*, David Lebovitz's memoir about house-hunting in Paris.

**SUNDOWNER?** Champagne.

**IF YOU COULD TIME TRAVEL?** Ancient Egypt. Imagine the magnificence.

**IF YOU COULD REVISIT SOMEWHERE?** East Africa, for the astonishing wildlife.

**SAILING TO-DO LIST?** The classic Greek islands odyssey.

**DREAM DESTINATION?** Berlin, always and forever a beguiling city.

**FAVOURITE PART ABOUT TRAVELLING?** Knowing that every day will bring a new surprise.



## FRANCES HIBBARD, WRITER AND EDITOR

**BEST SAILING ADVENTURE?** A Sydney harbour ferry. It's so rooted in the everyday and yet so remarkable. And Botswana's incredible Okavango Delta: the elephants were swimming alongside our boat.

**FAVOURITE WAY TO RELAX ON HOLIDAY?** Find a mountain and climb it.

**YOU ARE LISTENING TO?** Unhealthy amounts of Harry Styles. Also Donny Hathaway, L'Impératrice, Yacht Rock Essentials, and HBO's official *Succession* podcast.

**READING?** Helen Garner's diary trilogy. For about the fourth time.

**SUNDOWNER?** Campari and tonic.

**IF YOU COULD TIME TRAVEL?** Art Deco-era New York. For the jewels. And the Chrysler building.

**IF YOU COULD REVISIT SOMEWHERE?** It's a tie between Aro Hā wellness retreat in New Zealand, with its fierce hikes and ice baths, or Claridge's London for a whisky sour at the Fumoir bar.

**SAILING TO-DO LIST?** Greek Ionian islands or The Marquesas, French Polynesia. Either will do nicely.

**DREAM DESTINATION?** Rajasthan, India: palaces, tigers, ceremony, thali, difference.

**FAVOURITE PART ABOUT TRAVELLING?** Every single moment. I even love airports.

## CROSBIE LORIMER, WRITER

**BEST SAILING ADVENTURE?** Most rewarding/scary: finishing the stormbound 1998 Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. Biggest buzz: racing on board *Andoo Comanche* at Hamilton Island in 2022.

**FAVOURITE WAY TO RELAX ON HOLIDAY?** Walking, eating, sketching, reading, swimming and hanging out with my wife and world's best travel buddy, Dale.

**YOU ARE LISTENING TO?** Tamara-Anna Cislowska playing a piano rendition of Joe Hisaishi's music for *Princess Mononoke*.

**READING?** *The Bookbinder of Jericho* by Pip Williams and *The First Astronomers* by Duane Hamacher.

**SUNDOWNER?** Standard Margarita, unbeatable

**IF YOU COULD TIME TRAVEL?** 18th century Leipzig, to see J.S. Bach conducting any of his sublime cantatas at Café Zimmermann.

**IF YOU COULD REVISIT SOMEWHERE?** Cork and West Cork in Ireland. I spent most of my childhood summers there, my touchstone.

**SAILING TO-DO LIST?** Learning how to sail a foiling dinghy.

**DREAM DESTINATION?** Paris. Been many times. Food, architecture, landscape, culture, language and a nation of confident people.

**FAVOURITE PART ABOUT TRAVELLING?** Anticipation: the hour before we fly. Destination: early morning walk and breakfast. Homecoming: flying over Sydney as we approach the airport.





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Andy Lee and Rebecca Harding.



## Castaway ... ANDY LEE

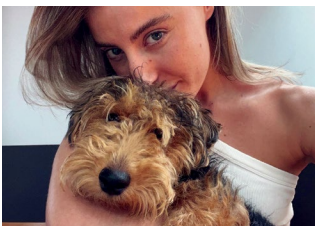
Imagine you're about to be stranded on a remote desert island but are allowed to take a few essentials. What you pack will, after all, define who you are. Comedian, television presenter, musician and author Andy Lee tells us how he would survive and thrive.

**Three essentials to pack?**

"Beer, Esky and Bec."

**What would you most regret not packing?**

"Something for Bec to drink. She doesn't like beer and she'd be giving me the death stare knowing I was in charge of the three items."



**What would you miss most about reality?**

"Our dog Henrietta. In fact, Bec is lucky she got packed ahead of her."



**Dream companion?**

"Bec, if she is reading this. Scarlett Johansson if she isn't. Hamish would also be fun."

**Which book would you bring with you?**

"*The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. I love this book. A simple story about pursuing your dreams and Bec got it for me when we first started dating."



**Your island accessory?**

"I love snorkelling, so a mask and snorkel would be great to have."

**What would you wear?**

"I'd possibly need to wear a long-sleeved top and long pants considering I didn't put sunscreen in my top three items."

**What spirituality lessons would you apply to your time spent stranded on the island?**

"Slow down and take in the beauty of the surrounds (this would include Bec and/or Scarlett)."

**Your island mantra?**

"No drinks before midday."

**Island hobby?**

"Golf would be my preference. How big is this island?"



**Favourite island movie for inspiration?**

"*The Beach* ... mainly the first half of the film."

**How would you send your SOS?**

"I'd attempt a fire and when I couldn't get one started, and after Bec yelled at me for bringing an Esky and no matches, I'd write SOS in the sand."

**Who would rescue you?**

"A passing cruise ship ideally because straight into an all-you-can-eat buffet would be heaven."



**If you could channel one fictional character in your island downtime, who would it be?**

"Superman would be handy as I'd be able to fly off the island and find some help for Bec. It just occurred to me that I could have carried Bec while flying like Superman but too late ... I've left now."

**What would you grow to eat?**

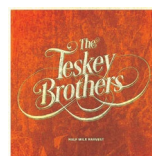
"Beer nuts, to go with the beer."

**Catch of the day or?**

"I'd have visions of catching some amazing, edible fish but I probably couldn't even catch the worm to use as bait."

**Top island tune?**

"The Teskey Brothers."



**Dream meal once you've been rescued?**

"Lasagne."

**First place you'd go after being rescued?**

"To play golf."

PHOTOGRAPHY: SHUTTERSTOCK.

# TOP 10 TO DO



## HEAVEN: WHITEHAVEN BEACH

It is its perfect seven kilometre-long stretch of bone-white silica sand, bordered by clear, turquoise sea that makes Whitehaven Beach a perfect paradise. It is one of the world's most unspoiled and beautiful beaches, located on neighbouring Whitsunday Island. This unreal reality is merely a short trip from Hamilton Island by helicopter, seaplane, speedboat, sailboat or high-speed catamaran, and there's a good choice of tours with half- and full-day options. Walk, swim or simply relax here on the white sands and marvel at this magical natural wonder.

## 2 PANORAMA: SERIOUS SCENIC FLIGHTS

Take to the sky with Hamilton Island Air and appreciate the jaw-dropping scale and beauty of Hamilton Island, the Great Barrier Reef and the Whitsunday islands. There's a range of scenic tours from which to choose and experiences range in price, with the one-hour Heart Reef & Whitehaven Beach Express aeroplane flight the most affordable way to see the wondrous Heart Reef and also take in Hill Inlet, Whitehaven Beach and the Whitsunday islands from above. The Best of Both Worlds tour affords amazing views of the Great Barrier Reef and includes a landing at the Reefworld pontoon and at Whitehaven Beach, with time to swim, stroll or just relax. The ultimate bucket-list option is Journey to the Heart, a James Bond-style experience where you will enjoy a heli trip out over Hill Inlet and Whitehaven Beach before heading to the Heart Island pontoon. Here, relax and enjoy the lounge before taking a glass-bottom boat ride around Heart Island and snorkelling in the lagoon. Exclusively available to Hamilton Island guests.

## EXPLORE: GREAT BARRIER REEF

A Hamilton Island holiday is made complete by taking a trip to the Great Barrier Reef to see the incredible tropical fish and coral up close. There are many ways to enjoy the World Heritage-listed reef. One is to join Cruise Whitsundays and head out to Reefworld for a full day of snorkelling and exploring beautiful Hardy Reef. Cruise Whitsundays also offers a once-in-a-lifetime overnight Reefsleeper. This is a magical experience of sleeping in a swag under the stars onboard the Reefworld pontoon. Explore Group tours the secret spots on The Whitsundays' fringing reefs or outer reefs with the option of half- or full-day trips.



## RELAX: SPA WUMURDAYLIN

Spa wumurdaylin offers a selection of authentic, rejuvenating and soothing beauty treatments. This is where the real holiday rest and relaxation happens. The highly skilled therapists provide treatments using LaGaia UNEDITED, a pH-balanced, scientifically formulated Australian skincare range packed with potent vitamins and botanical extracts that are hydrating and deliver our kind of results — bliss. Please reserve all of your treatments prior to arriving.

## NATURE: HAMILTON ISLAND FAUNA

Hamilton Island Wildlife is a great activity for the whole family, giving everyone an opportunity to see some of the most familiar members of Australia's animal kingdom (bonus: the entry fee includes unlimited park visits). Take a guided tour with one of the expert keepers to learn about Australia's unique fauna. Or book a Wildlife Encounter, a group activity with a choice of animals: a koala, reptile (python or lizard) or dingo. For the ultimate adventure, choose the Wildlife VIP Experience, which includes a 30-minute one-on-one experience with an animal keeper and a koala, dingo, python or lizard, as well as some all-important souvenir digital photographs and the chance to ask questions and learn all about these amazing creatures. Afterwards, enjoy a coffee or lunch at the wildlife park's café.





## 6 DISCOVER: BUSHWALKS AND THE ICONS TRAIL

Touring Hamilton Island

on foot is a good way to enjoy its natural beauty at your own pace. Discover secluded sandy coves, stunning views, or enjoy some lunch at one of the many picnic spots. The Icons Trail takes in four Hamilton landmarks: a three-metre-tall chair, a giant swing, a hammock, and a panoramic viewing platform in a breathtaking setting. Be sure to share your selfies with the hashtag #HamiltonIslandIconsTrail. Never swim alone at an isolated beach and if walking alone, let someone know.

## 7 KIDS: HOLIDAY TO DO LIST

The Clownfish Club is the island's kids club, offering a wide range of exciting activities and the chance

to meet and play with new friends while visiting Hamilton Island on holiday. Kids Fun Zone happens throughout the week with special arts and crafts sessions; join table tennis competitions and other games; create souvenirs to keep; or get involved in beach activities. If you fancy learning to paint, classes for the budding mini Michelangelo are hosted by Hamilton Island's artist in residence, with something for all ages and levels of experience.

For the ultimate off-road adventure head to the kid-friendly, purpose-built dirt track and ride a mini 50cc quad bike.

At Hamilton Island's bowling alley and amusement arcade, there's a nine-pin version of the game and also child-friendly bowling balls, bumpers and ramps. And family favourite, mini golf is also on offer. The course is a maze of tropical plants and palms with all kinds of different challenges along the way.

## SPEED: FOUR-WHEEL THRILLS AND FUN

The go-karts at Hamilton Island's Palm Valley track are fun and easy to drive, and they're a great way to let off some city steam. No licence is required and the karts can reach up to 45km/h around the track. Kids too young to drive can still join in the fun, riding as passengers in a double kart. Offroad Adventure Tours offers exciting experiences for riders aged 20 years old and above. Drive an all-terrain vehicle (this requires a full driver's licence) or let an expert guide you through scenic fire trails and up to the Resort Lookout. For children aged six to 14 years, Hamilton Island's Quad Bikes for Kids operates a short, child-friendly circuit that gets the adrenalin flowing. Classic on-land experience in the fast lane.



## SUNDOWNERS: WAYS TO WATCH AND ENJOY

Hamilton Island sunsets are renowned and one of the best ways to enjoy them is on the water. A privately chartered sunset cruise can be booked on one of three luxury vessels: *Alani*, *Palm Beach* or *La Mar*. Explore Group offers a daily sunset sail onboard their catamaran *On The Edge*, around the Whitsunday islands, and a longer barbecue-dinner cruise aboard their *Ocean Explorer*. Ricochet Yachting's sunset sail is onboard their supersleek 47-foot catamaran, which takes up to 16 people or can be booked privately for a more intimate experience. One of the best places for sunset drinks on land is at One Tree Hill where everyone gathers to watch the sun sink into the sea, or enjoy a sundowner at Hamilton Island Yacht Club's Bommie Deck. As darkness falls, enjoy live music each Sunday at Marina Daze, or head to the Hesperus Lawns for the weekly complimentary Moonlight Movie with the whole family.



## PLAY: HAMILTON ISLAND GOLF CLUB

The Hamilton Island Golf Club, designed by five-time British Open champion, Peter Thomson, is an incredibly beautiful course. Play a 9 or 18-hole round but prepare to be distracted by the views of The Whitsundays and beyond. At the 19th hole, enjoy a delicious lunch at the Clubhouse, which has the type of menu that will satisfy a hungry golfer after a round. There's also a well-stocked pro shop for any last-minute needs. The 10-minute ferry ride across to Dent Island is a wonderful way to begin and end a day's play, too.

PHOTOGRAPHY: SALTY WINGS; RILEY WILLIAMS; JASON LOUCAS; HAMILTON ISLAND PHOTOGRAPHY.

Booking ahead of your stay is highly recommended for all tours and activities. Scan the QR code to book, visit the Hamilton Island website and submit an Online Tour Booking Request, or call the Tour Desk on 07 4946 8305. To find out more, download the Hamilton Island app or visit the Tour Desk, next to Sails restaurant.





### WONDER OF THE WORLD

Hamilton Island has an active flatback turtle population off Catseye Beach and a snorkelling session can sometimes afford a glimpse of them gliding through the sea grass. After mating at sea, females seek out a sandy beach several times during the course of the nesting season, digging burrows and laying approximately 50 spherical, soft-shelled white eggs each time. At five centimetres in diameter, these are the second largest eggs of any turtle and take 50 days to hatch. The temperature at which the eggs are incubated determines the sex of the hatchlings; this is known as temperature-dependent sex determination. Earlier this year turtles were seen hatching late at night from nesting sites on Catseye Beach that were known and barricaded by staff to help protect the hatchlings. Incredibly the hatching event also included additional spots that had previously eluded rangers, showing the true magic of nature at work.



Turtles are often seen in the waters off Catseye Beach.

# BULLETIN BOARD

Hamilton Island celebrates 40 years of holidays; protecting and regenerating the environment; the Endurance Series heats up; and honours for two of our island's restaurants.

### GOING THE DISTANCE

The annual Hilly Half Marathon returned to the island in April with a challenging course run on Hamilton's walking and fire trails. This course offers diverse terrain, making for an exciting and ever-changing running experience. Daniel McDonnell took out the 23-kilometre individual open race for the third consecutive year, with a time of 1.49.27. McDonnell beat out event ambassador and two-time Olympic triathlete Courtney Atkinson, who finished in second place with a time of 1.57.06.

The Great Whitehaven Beach Run took place in June on the white sands of Whitehaven Beach. Event ambassador and four-time Olympian Lisa Weightman joined the runners on the course, sharing her experiences as Australia's third fastest-ever marathon runner. The day was emceed by our regular Endurance Series legends, Bondi Lifeguards Dean Degan and Andy Reid.

### THE AWARD GOES TO ...

qualia's Pebble Beach restaurant and Bommie, the island's signature restaurant at the Hamilton Island Yacht Club, were each named winners in the 2023 *Australian Good Food Guide* Chef Hat Awards. Congratulations to qualia's executive chef John Kennedy and the team at qualia, along with Bommie's head chef Alice James and her team. Read more about Alice and her work at Bommie on page 48 of this issue of REEF.

*The Australian Good Food Guide* Chef Hats were originally inspired by the Michelin and Gault Millau guides in Europe and have been awarded to restaurants around the country since 1982. The awards are the result of careful deliberation, with appointed inspectors dining anonymously at thousands of restaurants. Their reviews and the opinions of the dining public together determine the results. Book a table now.



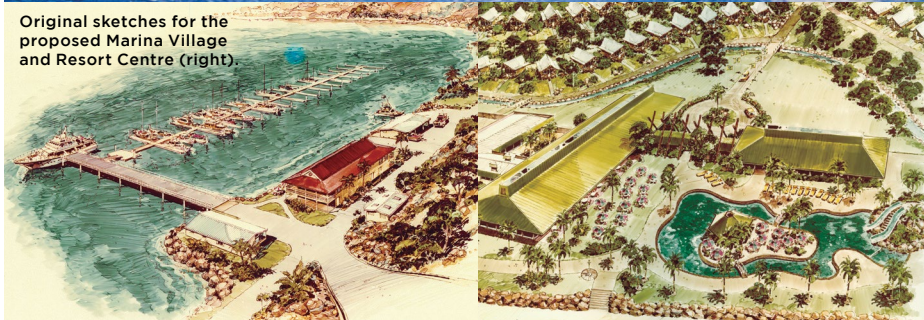
Bommie's award-winning food.

Running the Hilly Half Marathon.





Poolside in the 1980s.



Original sketches for the proposed Marina Village and Resort Centre (right).



Front Street in the Marina Village.

## ROARING FORTIES

Hamilton Island is celebrating 40 years since the island was first developed and opened by pioneering developer Keith Williams. The entrepreneur discovered Hamilton Island on a motor-yachting trip around The Whitsundays and immediately realised the potential thanks to its north-facing beaches.

Williams purchased the island shortly after and began to lay in the infrastructure for what would become Australia's first tropical local holiday destination. The opening was staggered in phases between 1982 and 1984, with the airport one of Hamilton Island's first major developments, followed by the harbour and the resort.

This year also marks 20 years since Bob Oatley purchased Hamilton Island. Oatley, too, first spotted the potential and magic of the island while sailing in The Whitsundays years prior and when the opportunity to purchase the island arose, he moved swiftly and invested deeply in a world-class development program.

In the past two decades this has included working with renowned Queensland designer Chris Beckingham on both quality and the Golf Clubhouse, along with the development and opening of the 18-hole championship Hamilton Island Golf Club, plus the Hamilton Island Yacht Club and adjoining luxury villas.

Hamilton Island has become many things to the thousands of people who have holidayed here in the past 40 years, enjoying the environment, the natural beauty, the bushwalks, the beaches, the views, the sailing, the marina precinct, the local food, and the many tours by sea or air to see the reef and the splendour of The Whitsundays.

PHOTOGRAPHY: HAMILTON ISLAND PHOTOGRAPHY; JASON LOUCAS.

## CHANGE OF SCENE

Hamilton Island Wildlife recently welcomed Michael Shiels as its new resident wildlife park manager and curator. He joins the island from the team at Taronga Zoo. As part of his commitment to sustainability and conservation, he has reviewed the diets and food-purchasing pipelines of all animals within the wildlife park and changed these to reflect the natural diet of our animals. Plans for the park include a new irrigation system for lush, greener enclosures and increasing preventative health screening for animals via a program of additional vet check-ups.



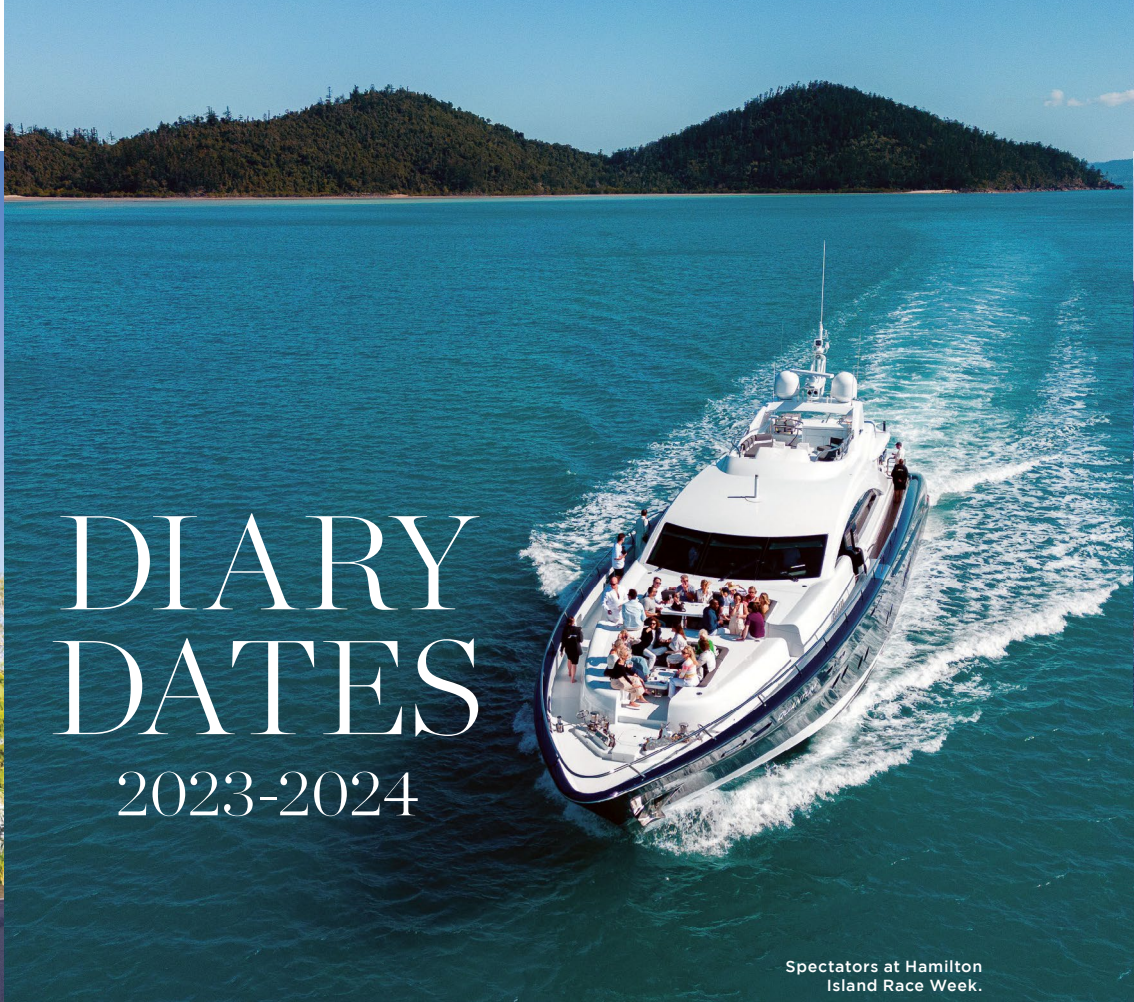
Hamilton Island Wildlife resident.

## TREE OF LIFE

Hamilton Island is the largest inhabited island in The Whitsundays, surrounded by the World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. As current caretakers, it is our responsibility to look after our unique environment and native wildlife. In 2023 the environment and resort presentation team planted 500 eucalyptus saplings, with 1000 more planned for later in the year. The harvesting of the leaves to help feed the koalas is all part of the sustainable approach to living here, including water recycling and waste-management initiatives.



Triathlete Emma Hogan in the Hamilton Island Triathlon.



# DIARY DATES

## 2023-2024

Spectators at Hamilton Island Race Week.

### 2023

#### AUGUST 4-8 BRISBANE TO HAMILTON ISLAND YACHT RACE

Think of this as the lead-up to Hamilton Island Race Week. We welcome competing yachts and crews as they arrive at Hamilton Island Marina, at the end of one of Australia's longest tropical category 2 offshore races.

#### AUGUST 19-26 HAMILTON ISLAND RACE WEEK

This is undeniably Australia's favourite yachting regatta and one of the world's most prestigious. Race Week features a well-planned series of short races staged close to Hamilton Island, plus longer passage races around The Whitsundays. It attracts an amazing array of boats, from the serious superyachts to trailer-pulled family favourites, and the week has become a much-loved annual social event for competitors, their families and guests. Onshore celebrations are plentiful and include special events hosted by a lineup of great guest chefs. From daylight, when the crews begin preparing their yachts, to dusk as everyone heads to the marina after a long day on the water for some après sailing drinks and dancing, all agree that Race Week is rewarding.

#### NOVEMBER 25 HAMILTON ISLAND TRIATHLON

The combination of a hard and fast swim in bright blue waters, with a testing cycle leg and a run with amazing views and challenging hills

Hamilton Island is a destination fuelled by great sporting and social events. It is this unrivalled blend of action and relaxation that makes for treasured holiday memories in the heart of The Whitsundays.

makes Hamilton Island Triathlon a standout. The spectator-friendly course is designed so that everyone can watch the action as it happens. The triathlon is followed by the Junior Triathlon and a splash'n dash event, guaranteeing a day of family participation and fun.

#### NOVEMBER 26 HAMILTON ISLAND OCEAN SWIM

The Hamilton Island Ocean Swim takes place in the clear, calm waters of Catseye Beach and is part of the island's Endurance Series. There are two choices: a two-kilometre swim or a 750-metre course plus a hotly contested junior event run across 350 metres, for competitors aged 13 and under. Everyone agrees that the hardest part is the post-race choice between recovering on the sand or getting weary muscles back into the sea for some much-needed hydrotherapy.

#### DECEMBER 24 CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

The island's Christmas festivities are best enjoyed at the Beach Pavilion as the sun goes

down. Enjoy the entertainment and carols, followed by the fireworks display lighting up the skyline. Light a candle to support the Hamilton Island State School as a special guest dressed in red and white arrives with a stocking full of treats. Pack a picnic or pick up food and drinks at the Beach Pavilion kiosk. It's a great evening with all the magic and anticipation of the holiday season.

#### DECEMBER 31 NEW YEAR'S EVE

Start 2024 with a street party that will have everyone up and dancing to much-loved classics. There is live entertainment at the Marina Tavern forecourt from 9pm and then of course a wonderful fireworks display when the clock strikes midnight. Events are held at the Beach Pavilion near Catseye Beach and include family-friendly fireworks at 8.30pm. Guests of qualia can enjoy live music and a midnight fireworks display, too. Hamilton Island's celebrations are one of the most memorable ways to see in the new year with family and friends.



Hamilton Island Race Week.



The Great Whitehaven Beach Run.



Hamilton Island Hilly Half Marathon.



Pas de deux in paradise at qualia.



Hamilton Island Ocean Swim.



Hamilton Island Race Week.



a relay, and there are three distance options for children. The diverse terrain makes this an interesting and ever-changing run experience that challenges athletes of all levels as the courses weave through the island's bushland, along roads, fire trails and walking tracks.

**MAY 17-20  
PAS DE DEUX IN PARADISE**

The Australian Ballet performs under the stars at qualia in what is a truly unique event held every two years on the island. Pas de deux in paradise is a beautiful showcase of the company's dancers under the exciting artistic direction of David Hallberg. Prepare to be mesmerised by the repertoire and also to enjoy some exclusive behind-the-scenes moments in the lead up to what are the most incredible performances in the most incredible setting.

**JUNE 16  
THE GREAT WHITEHAVEN BEACH RUN**

The Great Whitehaven Beach Run takes place at low tide on the sands of one of the most photogenic and whitest beaches in the world. The run suits a range of abilities, with races including the half-marathon, five-kilometre and 10-kilometre events, plus a run for the kids. Crossing the finishing line is a memorable achievement on what is an epic day out.

**2024  
APRIL 25  
ANZAC DAY**

The annual dawn service, held at the time of the original landing at Gallipoli during World War I, is a poignant reminder of the men and women who served this country. Like those who congregate at memorials in our cities, suburbs and towns across Australia, here on Hamilton Island we gather to commemorate the lives of all Australians who have been lost in military operations. Join friends and families at the Beach Pavilion for the dawn service, followed by a classic sausage sizzle and then games of two-up to follow at the Marina Tavern. Gold coin donations are directed to Airlie Beach RSL.

**MAY 5  
HAMILTON ISLAND HILLY HALF MARATHON**

This is an epic endurance run like none other and demands some serious training to be ready for the challenge. The event includes a half-marathon for the super fit and fearless,

PHOTOGRAPHY: JUSTIN RIDLER; DELLY CARR; SALTY DINGO; HAMILTON ISLAND PHOTOGRAPHY; KEN BUTTL



For the latest event information and more details, visit [hamiltonisland.com.au/events](http://hamiltonisland.com.au/events)



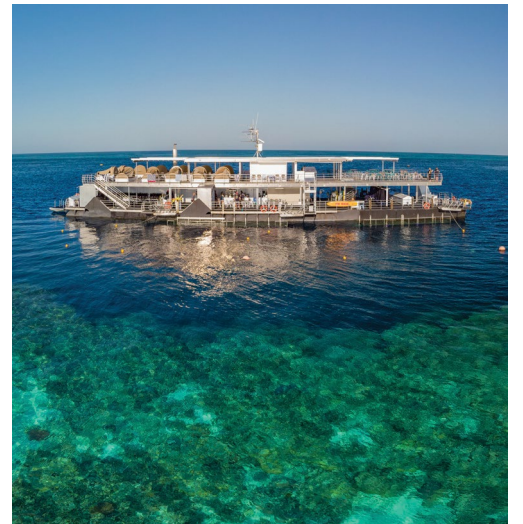
# Reefsleep



WHITEHAVEN BEACH & HILL INLET



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# Eyes on the PRIZE

Every year Hamilton Island Race Week attracts a diverse and dedicated fleet. In 2023 one boat, *Blink*, will sail from Wellington, New Zealand to compete. Crosbie Lorimer charts its course.



“Tony was busy being a very dedicated medical professional, and I just thought we both needed a new hobby” says Vesna Wells, from Wellington in New Zealand, describing the moment in late 2006 when she signed up the pair for a sailing course in the Bay of Islands. “So we drove all the way from Wellington in our 1995 Nissan Terrano — which we still own — with two kayaks tied on the roof, thinking that if sailing wasn’t our thing we’d just go for a wee kayak!” she says with a broad grin. “But those kayaks never came off that roof.” And so began the story of this adventurous couple’s foray into sailing. No gradual

progression from dinghies to keelboats and then yachts for this pair either. The following year they bought a Young 11, which they learned to master with the help of many of the friends with whom they still sail. Barely a handful of years after that original sailing course they’d commissioned Craig Partridge Yachts to build the powerful canting-keeled Rob Shaw-designed Shaw 12; they named her *Blink* and were soon tackling some of the toughest offshore races around New Zealand’s rugged coast. It’s impossible to hear the Wellses describe the stories of *Blink*’s numerous and extraordinary sailing ventures without smiling at this couple’s

engaging go-get attitude. You have only to ask their experienced boat captain, Craig Shearer, what it’s like to sail with the couple, and you’ll hear him describe a scenario more often associated with a bunch of feisty young guns let loose on someone else’s race yacht. “Unlike most owners they just want to push harder and go faster; there’s many times you’re telling Tony that it’s time to back it off a bit! But it’s been pretty exciting and it’s been great.” The Wellses’ gratitude to those who’ve joined and supported them on the journey is fulsome, too. “Our crew on *Blink* are not only experienced sailors but they are wonderful people. Not a day goes by that we don’t count ourselves lucky and

PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRIS COAD.

*Blink*, a canting-keeled Shaw 12.



“IT WAS ANOTHER STEEP LEARNING CURVE FOR SURE BUT THAT’S HOW WE ROLL.”

grateful for our team to have sailing adventures with” says Tony. As if sailing a fast 40-footer wasn’t challenging enough — typically *Blink* is raced with a crew of eight — the Wellses opted to compete double-handed in the 2017 Round North Island Race, repeating the boat’s double-handed win of 2014 when Tony had raced with the yacht’s designer, Rob Shaw. “It was another steep learning curve for sure” says Vesna, “but that’s how we roll, isn’t it?” she says while looking at Shearer, who vouches for the couple’s modus operandi. “Bite off more than you can chew and just deal with it!” he summarises with a laugh.

Vesna considers Tony the better sailor but the couple evidently works well together on the boat. “We’re a really good team and have been for 30 years” she says, adding that she had three very simple objectives for the completion of the 2017 double-handed Round North Island Race that she completed with Tony: “Alive, married and first!”. While evidently capable of playing any role on the boat while double-handed, Vesna describes her preferences for positions when fully crewed

in musical terms. “I’m not so good on the bow — it’s quite a string quartet up there — but I prefer to be on keyboards” she says, referring to the boat’s cockpit, operating the clutches that lock and unlock halyards and other lines. In the decade since *Blink* was built, her owners and crew have put an impressive number of sea miles under her keel with local Wellington club racing, competing in most local offshore programs and racing to Noumea and Fiji. “We’ve had a strong core local crew since the boat was built and that’s been key to the boat’s success” says Shearer. “Tony and Vesna have always had a rule that they only want nice people on board and that’s been good for us.” The Wellses’ appetite for new ventures also means they were easily talked into entering *Blink* for Hamilton Island Race Week in 2023 by Gordie McDougall, another experienced crew member, and Shearer, who has competed previously. They only had to mention warm waters, balmy breezes, magnificent island scenery and a great social vibe to have them

signed up. Not that getting *Blink* there and back will be easy; for the 1800 nautical mile delivery *Blink* will need to be put into cruise mode and be ready for some tough sailing, particularly off the Kiwi coast. “We can fit a hot shower, a fridge, a gas oven and even an extra double bunk if we need to” says Vesna,

adding that they have given themselves a week to 10 days for the delivery to The Whitsundays. But Tony highlights an important prerequisite: “First thing’s first, we need to get to the start line and it is a heck of a long way. Anything after that is definitely a bonus!” We can’t wait to see her competing in our Whitsunday waters come August.



Vesna and Tony Wells.

# HISTORY in the making

For almost 40 years, Hamilton Island Race Week has brought energy, excitement and people together for winter fun — on and off the water — in the glorious Whitsundays. By Lisa Ratcliff.

Winter racing in The Whitsundays is a longstanding tradition connected to Australia's history-making America's Cup success 40 years ago at Newport, Rhode Island. Having purchased Hamilton Island the year before the cup was finally wrested from the Americans, property developer Keith Williams travelled to Hawaii for the Clipper Cup Series then on to the 1983 America's Cup. He returned home with a vision to make Hamilton Island a centrepiece for sailing. The following year, 1984, Hamilton Island Race Week was born. In the decades since, the regatta has mirrored social norms, the economic prosperity of the times and evolution in the sport. The makeup of the modern Hamilton Island Race Week fleet is very different to those early years. What was then the domain of heavy ocean-going monohulls is now a diverse fleet of cruising and racing multihulls, trailable yachts, production cruiser-racers and all-out grand-prix yachts. Race Week remains a hugely popular pre-summer sailor's reunion in paradise and has realised the Oatley family's vision — to stage a sophisticated and internationally regarded destination regatta where partners, friends and family are welcome and are very much part of the planning process. Hamilton Island Race Week is the perfect blend of Bob's Bakery treats and self-catering via the IGA meets an exclusive Paspaley luncheon. It's salt-crusted and zinc-faced yachties in thongs meets media personalities and famous faces on the Front Street dancefloor when the live music rings out across the bustling marina each evening. Some sailors like to think of Race Week as a choose-your-own adventure on a stunning Whitsunday island that offers as many land-based options as blue-water fun. During the August 19 – 26 event, regatta director Denis Thompson and his team of officials select daily from a smorgasbord of more than 40 potential round-the-islands courses. They factor in yacht size and the prevailing winds and tides to bring the fleet home by sunset and allocate start lines for the divisions in Dent Passage as well as to the south and north of the island. For guests who happen to book a visit the same week as 2000 or so sailors and their families, ask a yachtie or grab an event guide and head

down to Hamilton Island Yacht Club's Bommie Deck each morning to watch some of Australia's highest-calibre racing yachts in action. Among the fleet are names synonymous with the world-renowned Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, the best-known being the Oatley family's Hamilton Island *Wild Oats XI*, the 100-foot record-holder of nine line-honours wins in the ocean classic. In 2022 the Winning family's same-sized *Andoo Comanche* dominated Hamilton Island Race Week's two-boat maxi line-honours contest. This August the *Wild Oats* team will bring boat upgrades to the battle while *Andoo Comanche* will sport a crisp new set of sails plus mechanical and electrical upgrades. Similar to the Oatleys, the owners of Hamilton Island, campaigning a maxi is a family interest, says *Comanche's* sailing master Iain Murray AM. "The Winnings had the whole family on or around the boat at Race Week last year. Having known the family through three generations, it's great to see the common enjoyment and collaboration." Other than a dramatic maxi duel, other highly anticipated Hamilton Island Race Week highlights include the giant multihull *Rex* doing fly-pasts off the Yacht Club up on one hull, the glamorous TP52 fleet and tiny trailables that by comparison seem too small for open-water passage races. Each afternoon Olympic, America's Cup, SailGP, The Ocean Race and Rolex Sydney Hobart royalty blend into the busy Front Street crowd, when tales of the day's race are re-told and the Queensland winter sun sets spectacularly. Hamilton Island CEO Pete Brulisauer and the Oatley family are proud to host the annual event, which attracts sailors and sailing enthusiasts from all over the world. "We are delighted to once again welcome back sailors and supporters to Hamilton Island Race Week," says Brulisauer. "This event embodies our island's passion for sailing, world-class hospitality and celebrates our stunning natural surrounds. "We are committed to providing an exceptional experience for all participants and we look forward to witnessing the competitive spirit and camaraderie that this event fosters."

For information and results go to [hamiltonislandraceweek.com.au](http://hamiltonislandraceweek.com.au)



Incredible views await competitors.

Vantage points aplenty for spectators.



Sunset drinks on the Bommie Deck.



Wild Oats XI at Hamilton Island Race Week.

PHOTOGRAPHY: SALTY DINGO; RHIANNON TAYLOR; KEN BUTTL



Onshore fun after a day of racing.



Supermaxis put on a Race Week show.



Andoo Comanche on the Whitsunday waters.



The Indulgence crew hard at work.



Paspaley's popular lunch at qualia.



Whales welcome guests to Hamilton Island Race Week.

## TOP 10 RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES FOR NON-SAILORS DURING RACE WEEK

1. Head to One Tree Hill for boat spotting and to enjoy stunning 360-degree views.
2. Drink the sailor's drink — rum and coke — at the Marina Tavern.
3. Kit yourself out in official Hamilton Island Race Week gear from the Race Week Merchandise Shop on Front Street.
4. Walk the marina and check out the boats. Sailors are friendly so be sure to have a chat.
5. Make your way to the Bommie Deck at Hamilton Island Yacht Club to get amongst the start action between August 20 and 26, or just watch boats coming and going from the marina while sipping on a cocktail.
6. Head to the Main Pool on the Wednesday layday (August 23) for the traditional Pool Party.
7. Dress the family in matching shirts to look like a race crew.
8. During July to September, catch a glimpse of whales frolicking in the warm Whitsunday waters.
9. Treat yourself to a long lunch if you are staying at qualia, similar to guests at one of Race Week's onshore highlights, the Paspaley luncheon, or enjoy a picnic lunch at Catseye Beach.
10. Hire a couple of catamarans or dinghies and unleash your competitive spirit.



# Back to the FUTURE

In a world fuelled by newness and discovery, there is something deeply beautiful about the familiar. Ute Junker muses on the joys of nostalgia travel.

I've lost count of the number of times I've been to Rome. I love everything about the city, from its terracotta-coloured townhouses to its sunny piazzas, its ancient churches filled with masterpieces to its mouth-watering gelaterias. Most of all, I love Rome's history, its complexity. This is a place where you can tread the same paving stones walked on by Julius Caesar or bathe in the beauty of Baroque architecture. And if, like me, you keep coming back to Rome, you are likely going to cross paths with your own history, too. When I stroll through Rome these days, what I recognise is all sorts of landmarks you won't find on a map. The three-star hotel near the Pantheon I stayed at on my first trip. The trattoria where I first tried limoncello. The church where I first looked upon a Caravaggio canvas. Younger versions of me walk the streets, unseen by other passersby: the wide-eyed first-timer, the business traveller, the holiday-maker exploring the city with friends. And to be honest, the chance to encounter those earlier versions

of me is part of why I keep returning to this incredible city.

We tend to think of travel as a boundary-pushing experience. Travel pages are filled with firsts: accounts of exploring a new destination, trying a new activity, trips that push you out of your comfort zone. We like to think of ourselves as intrepid voyagers rather than creatures of habit, returning to favourite haunts from our past. Yet in a world that feels increasingly fraught and frustrating, is it any wonder that more of us are looking for a different sort of travel, one that transports us back to more innocent times? Nostalgia travel is less about what you see, more about how you feel. Revisit a place you already know and love and you never have to join the queues outside the major attractions (although you may make an exception for your favourite museum). Instead you tend to follow a more personal route: to the café where you ate the most delicious cannoli ever, the flea market where you found your favourite vintage handbag, the bookshop where you randomly bumped into an old friend who lives on the other side of the globe

but just happened to be in town for the weekend. Number of items ticked off bucket list? Zero. Number of happy smiles? Countless. Some cultures have long embraced the power of the familiar. For our First Nations people, there was no such thing as discovering a landscape. The topography of their terrain mapped how their ancestors roamed the earth, reshaping the landscapes across which they travelled. Who needs travel guides when your songlines tell how the very chasms through which you walk or the features which you pass were shaped by your forebears? At Mutitjulu Waterhole on the southern flank of Uluru, for instance, where Kuniya the python woman fought a Liru warrior, the Anangu people still see signs of that battle, including two deep cracks on the western wall. In fact, Kuniya herself is captured in a sinuous black line on the eastern wall. Indeed, Uluru's sacred status derives in part from the marks left on the rock by other ancestors and spirits, including the massive paw prints of Kurpany the devil dog, heading south and east. Right across the country the tales that



The terracotta-tinged beauty of Rome.



Mutitjulu Waterhole on the southern flank of Uluru.



PHOTOGRAPHY: SHUTTERSTOCK.

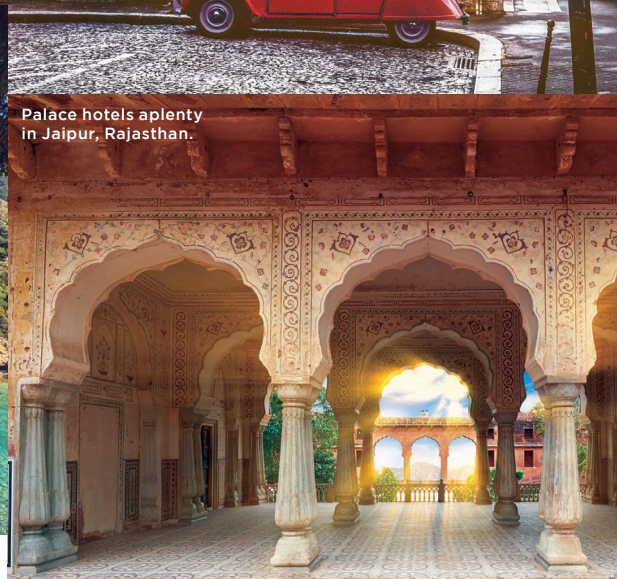
Indigenous people tell about their sacred places carry the force of memory, strengthened by being told and retold over countless generations. In the eastern Kimberley, the striped sandstone domes of Purnululu (the Bungle Bungles) are said to have been created when two flying foxes fought a fierce battle both in the skies and beneath the ground, pushing the rocks up as they attacked each other. The nearby Echidna Chasm was created by an ancient echidna fleeing from a cockatoo. The echidna pushed against a crack in a cliff face, which split open to create a narrow gorge in which it could hide. Indigenous parents and grandparents tell these stories in the early morning, when the sun peeps over the horizon, and in the evening as dusk drapes itself across the Earth. For many of us, evenings are the time when we turn to our modern storytellers, tuning in to streaming services for tales that transport us to special places from our past, or even places we have never been but feel familiar nonetheless. For nostalgia isn't limited to places from our own travels. There are places to which we have been transported – by books, by films, by television series – that have lodged themselves so vividly in our minds that they have the strength of memory. The sun-baked wild beauty of Corfu so vividly conjured up by Gerald Durrell in *My Family and Other Animals* feels almost stronger to me than memories of my own week-long holiday there. The impressions from my first trip to India are overlaid with the dazzling, boldly-rendered



Paris exudes elevating small moments.



The rugged, raw beauty of Corfu in Greece.



Palace hotels aplenty in Jaipur, Rajasthan.



Eat, Pray, Love fed travellers' adoration for Bali.

“THAT’S THE THING ABOUT NOSTALGIA – THE SIMPLER THE JOY, THE MORE POWERFUL IT IS.”

depictions in Vikram Chandra’s *Red Earth and Pouring Rain*, a book which I devoured upon my return home. And how many armchair travellers have fallen into reveries on the delights of Italy, India and Bali as conjured up by Elizabeth Gilbert’s *Eat, Pray, Love* or the highs and lows of the Pacific Crest Trail as depicted in Cheryl Strayed’s *Wild*? Then there are the destinations and experiences that transcend the individual. They are cultural touchstones, places that seem programmed into our psyche, so deeply planted that they defy our conscious control. I am both a republican and a believer in democracy but I’m as much a sucker for a grand royal residence as the next person. Ornate Ottoman palaces, alpine royal retreats, marble-clad maharajahs’ residences and moated castles in Ireland – I’ve done them all. I know that the beauty of these magnificent buildings serves as a polished veneer for regimes that were often oppressive and exploitative. I know that the money funnelled into their construction could have been better used to alleviate the suffering of the poor. But you know what? I read fairytales as a young child and, like all of us, I carry my younger selves inside me. I may have no time for royalty, but I still remember what it feels like to go

to bed and desperately yearn to wake up as a princess. In a palace hotel, I can do just that. A handful of places have become destinations that we dream about collectively. Top of the list, of course, is Paris, a city steeped in nostalgia. Measured by any standard, Paris has plenty to draw visitors – from 140 museums to 2000 historic monuments – but the lure of the city lies not in its monuments but in its romance. Strolling the banks of the Seine, savouring croissants in a sidewalk café, getting lost in the cobblestoned alleyways of the Marais, enjoying a Champagne toast in a neighbourhood bistro: Paris is a city that knows how to elevate small pleasures into major moments. It is the specificity of those moments that gives them their power. That, and the endless repetition of these motifs decade after decade. We see them over and over again on our screens, whether it is a lovelorn Audrey Tatou wandering the streets of Montmartre in *Amelie*, Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke in the Marais in *Before Sunset*, or even Leslie Caron and Maurice Chevalier in *An American at Paris*, glorifying the Place de la Concorde and the Bel Ami Café (or rather, their stand-ins: the entire film was shot at MGM’s Lot 44 in Hollywood.) Most recently we have seen them showcased

PHOTOGRAPHY: KARA ROSENBLUND, SHUTTERSTOCK.

Hamilton Island for that most evocative of Australian travel memories, the beach.



in one of Netflix's biggest hits. Ask around and you will find that many people who have binge-watched every series of *Emily in Paris* find the American heroine somewhat grating but are willing to put up with her in order to enjoy the beautiful backdrop and the clever way the showrunners riff on our time-tested nostalgia for Paris, improvising new melodies in a feedback loop that never ends. For that is the thing about nostalgia – the simpler the joy, the more powerful it is. Nostalgia is, after all, about connection. Connection to our past, connection to the people with whom we share that past, connection to the emotions that drive us, happiness and love and comfort. Which may be why so many Australians have a strong sense of nostalgia for one of our most ubiquitous landscapes: the beach. We all remember the joys of family holidays by the sea. The pleasure of frolicking on the sand as a toddler and the thrill of learning to bodysurf, propelled along by the awesome power of the ocean. Gazing into the miniature worlds contained within a rock pool, sending a frisbee flying down the beach, or jealously guarding your fish and chips from patrolling seagulls. For most of us, beach breaks are

among the most evocative of memories from our childhoods.

Part of it is purely physical, of course. The warmth of the sun, the tang of the sea air, the soft powdery sand beneath your feet, the tranquillity of sheltered waters and the exhilaration of pounding waves all relax and restore our physical selves.

Just as important, however, is the simple fact that, more than most holidays, beach breaks bring families together. There are no queues and no ticket prices, no need to arrive early for the best seat in the house. There is always room to relax on a beach, and every family member gets to dial the activity levels up or down to suit themselves, from building a sandcastle to diving under an endless series of breakers, or simply lying on the sand and letting the warmth soak into your bones. No wonder then that no matter how old we get, it is hard to resist the lure of going back to the beach. Gather your nearest and dearest and whether it is the quick hit of a day trip to Bondi or the slow release of a week on Hamilton Island, those salt-tinged memories will linger for decades, ready to teleport you back to happy days whenever you need a lift.



## SUPERCHILL PLAYLIST

*For relaxing poolside or  
entertaining at home.*

1. *Abusey Junction* by Kokoroko
2. *Summertime* by Rosinha De Valença
3. *White Gloves* by Khruangbin
4. *Pale Blue Eyes*  
by The Velvet Underground
5. *Fantasies* by White China
6. *El Sol Avenue* by Hermanos Gutiérrez
7. *Unstoppable* by Daniel Caesar
8. *Exotica* by Parcels
9. *Inundated* by Tora
10. *Plus le même* by Miel De Montagne
11. *Baby Benzing* by Eli Smart
12. *Look* by Sébastien Tellier
13. *Fading* by Colouring
14. *The Look* by Metronomy
15. *Warm Winds*  
by SZA featuring Isaiah Rashad
16. *Slow Love* by TENDER
17. *But What if We're Wrong*  
by Move 78 (Supertaste remix)
18. *Waterloo Sunset* by The Kinks
19. *Opendoors* by Jitwam
20. *Mermaid* by Stephan Kreussel

To listen, scan the Spotify code below.



# SUNDAY BEST

with

## Guillaume Brahimi

Long lunches by the outdoor fire with a bottle of wine are a weekly tradition for the French chef and restaurateur. He likes to prepare his shared dishes — such as roast chicken and creamy seafood soup — the day before, so he’s free to spend all afternoon with family and friends. By Emma Joyce.



Guillaume Brahimi (centre) as a young chef at La Tour d'Argent in his native Paris.

From sweet, caramelised onion soup to creamy Paris mash and juicy roast chicken, Guillaume Brahimi’s most loved dishes are the epitome of comfort food. The Paris-born chef and restaurateur says rich sauces, soups and decadent desserts are the foundation of French cooking, but above all it’s about simple, quality produce. “Respect the produce, 100 per cent,” says Brahimi. “In France we say *l’amour du travail bien fait*: the love of the work well done.” It’s a rule the 55-year-old chef learned as a teenager, working at Aux Charpentiers, La Tour d’Argent and Joël Robuchon’s Jamin in Paris before moving to Sydney in 1993. Some 30 years later, “Guillaume” has become almost shorthand

for French cuisine in Australia. The acclaimed chef is best known for running Guillaume at Bennelong, his multi-award-winning restaurant set within the sails at Sydney Opera House from 2001 to 2013. He is the author of several cookbooks, also operated Guillaume in Paddington (now closed) and has helmed Bistro Guillaume at Crown Melbourne and Crown Perth for more than 10 years. “There was a really big boom in dining around the 2000 Olympics in Australia,” Brahimi says. “But I think Australia realised we had good cooks, great produce and that we love to go out, and we love to entertain. “One of the things I love about Australians is that we love to travel the world but that we

always come back. To me, Sydney and Melbourne are now world-class cities for dining, without a doubt.”

Brahimi is a regular face on the small screen, too. His annual *Plat du Tour* series on SBS charts the food of the locations of the Tour de France, and returns again this July. The all-new *Guillaume French Authentic*, which covers dishes from the east coast of France, launches later this year. And last year he hosted *Guillaume’s Paris* for SBS Food, which explored the 20 arrondissements of his native city through a culinary lens. This August, Brahimi is cooking an exclusive dinner for guests at qualia during Hamilton Island Race Week. “Obviously we’re going to showcase the great

PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDY BAKER.



produce of Australia,” he tells *REEF*. “I’m thinking along the lines of a great family meal, ... In France we eat at the table every day, but we’d have a big family lunch on Sunday. Friends come. Family come. It’s very traditional.” The father of four admits that although his family meals growing up would be a time to reconnect and were always at the table – “no social media, no television,” he says – it’s not always possible to instil the same routine with his children today. “It’s not so easy,” he laughs.

His menu for Hamilton Island Race Week is still under wraps, but one thing’s for sure: there’ll be seafood. “Oh, you have to. My god. Not using seafood at Hamilton Island would be ... no, no, it’s not possible,” he says, laughing. “It’s always beautiful on Hamilton, but as it is winter, I’m thinking of seasonal vegetables like mushroom, Jerusalem artichoke, celeriac and truffle from Western Australia.”

Showcasing the earthy, comforting crop of the season is a key part of Brahim’s ethos. Cooking in line with the season is his No.1 rule: “Always use local and think global. I try to get inspired by the world, but I don’t want to use produce that’s spent 24 hours on a plane.”

In the three decades Brahim has called Australia home, he’s built his reputation on cooking traditional French bistro-style dishes such as buttery steak frites; light, fluffy souffles; and a spicy, rustic bouillabaisse.

When making bouillabaisse at home, the chef uses saffron, potatoes and garlic in his rouille,



Fire, friends and feasting is a perfect Sunday for Guillaume Brahim.



Brahimi’s roast chicken with Paris mash.

which he spreads on top “like a mayonnaise. It’s beautiful. It doesn’t overpower the fish”. It takes time to perfect the traditional Provençal fish soup, but “it’s all worth it”, Brahim says. “The key to this dish is not to rush it. Go to the fish market to get the best produce.” Brahim uses rockfish, mussels, scallops and Moreton Bay bugs, but an abundance of any seasonal seafood will suffice. His tip? “Do it the day before.” And: “If the fish isn’t good enough, don’t do it”. At his home in Sydney’s Watsons Bay, Brahim’s outdoor fireplace is usually on and ideally everyone’s over at 2pm for that perfect lunch/dinner time slot. “Linner’. We love that word,” he says. “At home I just want people to have fun. I want to spend time with them, not spend all day in the kitchen. For me there’s nothing better than



Bouillabaisse ticks all the Sunday-lunch boxes

## GUILLAUME BRAHIMI'S BOUILLABAISSE

**SERVES 6**

### INGREDIENTS

2kg rock fish  
 ¼ cup olive oil  
 2 garlic cloves  
 1 fennel, roughly chopped  
 2 leeks, roughly chopped  
 1 onion, peeled and roughly chopped  
 100g tomato paste  
 1kg ripened tomatoes  
 Zest of one orange  
 1L fish stock  
 3g saffron  
 10 mussels  
 10 scallops in half shell or no shell  
 5 Moreton Bay bugs, out of the shell  
 1 small bunch tarragon, chopped  
 Sea salt, to taste

### ROUILLE

Small pinch of saffron threads  
 4 garlic cloves  
 100ml olive oil  
 Salt and pepper, to taste  
 2 desiree potatoes  
 100ml bouillabaisse soup

### CROUTONS

1 baguette  
 100ml extra virgin olive oil

### METHOD

1. Place a roasting pot on medium to high heat, add the oil.
2. Add the garlic, fennel, leek, onion and rock fish, reduce heat to low and cook without browning for 8 to 10 minutes.
3. Turn heat to high and add tomato paste, fresh tomatoes, fish stock, saffron and orange zest. Cover with the lid and bring to a boil, reduce heat and cook for 45 minutes.
4. Meanwhile to make the rouille, cook potatoes until soft. Mash with a fork and add bouillabaisse soup, saffron, olive oil, and garlic.
5. To make the croutons, slice the baguette into 1cm-thick pieces, then place the croutons on a baking tray, brush both sides with oil and place in the oven until golden brown on both sides. Set aside.
6. Using a blender, puree all the bouillabaisse ingredients with the liquid and pour through a sieve back into the bouillabaisse pot.
7. Place the bouillabaisse back into the pot, bring to the boil then reduce to a simmer. Add mussels, scallops and bugs, place lid on pot and simmer for 8 minutes or until the mussels have opened.
8. Spread rouille on top of the bouillabaisse.
9. Top with croutons and fennel fronds to serve.

“NOT USING SEAFOOD AT HAMILTON ISLAND WOULD BE ... NO, NO, IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!”

having friends over for a glass of wine.” Home cooking is at the heart of Brahimí’s passion for food. It was the smell of his mother’s roast chicken permeating through the house when he was young that felt like a comfort blanket after tough days at school.

“Oh, the smell of it,” he exclaims. “I always say smell is so important. When my school results were not perfect, coming home if I could smell the chicken I’d think ‘If the chicken is in the oven, I’m doing OK.’”

It’s possibly why roast chicken with Paris mash is one of those dishes Brahimí would never take off the menu at his bistros. “It’s a home away from home,” he says. “That’s what a bistro is; you know what you’re going to have. Eighty per cent of the people who come to my venues don’t look at the menu – and we love that.”

PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDY BAKER.



Sunday lunch with seafood calls for clever pairings.

PHOTOGRAPHY: KARA ROSEN LUND.



# Come for lunch

It is the ultimate in comfort eating. Sunday lunch is that gathering of family or friends where everyone just tucks in, enjoys a glass of something lovely, and then does little else for the rest of the day. Bliss, writes Darren Jahn.

**W**eekend cooking and eating is about pleasure. My advice? If you're hosting, keep it simple. Don't be afraid to ask one or two guests to contribute a dish or course. Keep things casual. This is a meal that doesn't need to be fancy. Sunday lunch wines can be as varied as any other meal, it all depends on the flavour focus. Here are my four favourite themes and the wines to suit. I bet you've paired up some of these matches without even thinking about it. Yum cha is my first thought for Sundays. Whether at your local city Chinatown or suburban Chinese restaurant, yum cha is the best value Sunday lunch around. And BYO is often encouraged. Aromatic whites such as off-dry (kabinett) riesling work brilliantly as do light-bodied reds such as pinot noir or the new wave of minimally-oaked grenache. But to be honest, I often stick with a Tsingtao beer. Growing up in Perth, I revelled in the abundance of shellfish we caught along Western Australia's pristine coastline. Seafood, free of charge via Mother Nature, was our family's regular summer Sunday treat. Swan River prawns, blue swimmer crabs and sweet little crayfish (rock lobster) established my expensive tastes in the spoils of the ocean, bought these days at the wonderful Sydney Fish Market. Nowadays, my summer seafood feast is paired with celebratory Champagne or quality Australian fizz and wines with citrus notes: a bone-dry Clare Valley or Great Southern riesling or Hunter Valley semillon, either young or old. Winter leads me to roasts but then, why leave them only to winter? The good news is they're very forgiving so almost any red you enjoy will tend to fit the bill. If you want to raise the game, give thought to the type of meat being served:

**CHICKEN** – subtly oaked chardonnay works well with chook, as do lighter-bodied reds such as pinot noir or a cooler climate shiraz. Young and fresh is fine but some age bodes well.

**PORK** – as with chicken, both white and red partner here. Try a chenin blanc, or my favourite, chardonnay from Margaret River. Red wine-wise, it's the Rhône Valley trio of grenache, shiraz and mataro (also known as mourvèdre), whether singly or as the Côtes du Rhône Aussie GSM blend (incidentally, pioneered by Hamilton Island's Oatley family in their Rosemount Estate wine heyday).

**LAMB** – young spring lamb is unbelievably good with pinot noir, and slower-cooked, I'd generally go with a nice chianti or medium-bodied shiraz, ideally with some age.

**BEEF** – these days it is generally served rare, rather than in the style of the traditional British roast with all the trimmings. This is where the wines or varieties of Bordeaux come into their own, their structure and tannin pairing well with beef's strong flavour. So, cabernet sauvignon, merlot and the hard-to-find cabernet franc are ideal, again, the older the better.

To my mind, barbecues work all year round. Charred, smoky meats and bowls of brightly coloured salads make for an easy shared meal requiring none of the full table set-up. Start with an ice cold beer or bubbles then add a few bottles of your favourite red and you're set – I have no real guidelines here, just ensure they're ready to drink (something from the cellar, perhaps) so my choice would be a Margaret River cabernet that's at least six years old, as they age so darn well.



## GUILLAUME'S SUNDAY BEST

It would be rude to turn up empty handed to Sunday lunch at Guillaume's. With advance notice of his menu – caramelised onion soup followed by creamy Paris mash and juicy roast chicken – I'd take any or all of these delicious drops. Each will work equally well with both dishes, so keep things simple and take a couple of bottles each of white and red. If choosing others, the brief is dry, medium- to high-acid wines with low tannin and with a light to medium body.

### JOSEPH DROUHIN VAUDON CHABLIS (France)

A typical chablis, dry and fruity, with mineral notes. Vigorous and lively, with aromas of lemon and grapefruit and light in the body. Dangerously easy to drink. Wino secret: all chablis and white burgundy is made from chardonnay, the latter generally richer and more oak-influenced.

### OAKRIDGE HAZELDENE PINOT NOIR (Australia)

One of a number of fabulous pinots from Oakridge's talented chief winemaker Dave Bicknell. This one is from the Hazeldene Vineyard at Gladysdale in the upper Yarra and is laden with red cherry, strawberry and cranberry, underpinned by delicately spiced oak and forest-floor notes. Crisp acidity and gentle powdery tannins round out this pedigreed pinot.

### ROBERT OATLEY FINISTERRE CHARDONNAY (Australia)

This gorgeous Margaret River chardonnay is masterful – textured and complex, with flavours of ripe peach, citrus and a lovely integration of oak. It has a fine line of acidity that will work well with the saltiness of the soup and the herby-fatty goodness of stuffed chicken.

# A journey to remember

A holiday to The Whitsundays is about creating amazing memories and thankfully, here on Hamilton Island we are only a stone's throw from some of the world's most incredible natural wonders. This is our rundown on a few of the most spectacular ways to see the icons, guaranteed to tick a thing or two off the best of bucket lists. Pack a sun hat, sunscreen, water, swimsuit and towel. And press play ...

Journey to the Heart.



PHOTOGRAPHY: SALTY WINGS; CRUISE WHITSUNDAYS; TOURISM AND EVENTS QUEENSLAND.



Great Barrier Reef Day Trip to Reefworld.

## JOURNEY TO THE HEART

If you have ever seen a James Bond movie ... well this comes close. A pontoon glistens in the distance, onto which your chopper slowly descends. You disembark and a host guides you down onto the super sleek pontoon, where a glass-bottomed boat, complete with viewing platform, is lowered into the water. Enjoy a guided cruise around the lagoon and Heart Reef before arriving back at the pontoon to change into snorkelling gear and explore the surrounding waters at your leisure. This is the Journey to the Heart experience, a scenic helicopter ride over some of The Whitsundays' most renowned sights, such as Whitehaven Beach and Hill Inlet, before journeying to the spectacular Heart Reef. The experience is exclusively available to guests of Hamilton Island, with a maximum of six people enjoying the three-hour tour at any one time. Finish your adventure with a glass of Champagne in the lounge before your spectacular chopper ride home.

## GREAT BARRIER REEF DAY TRIP TO REEFWORLD

On this adventure, take to the water aboard a 24-metre fully-air-conditioned and purpose-built catamaran and journey out to the Reefworld pontoon on the Great Barrier Reef. The day trip takes approximately eight hours and includes snorkelling gear, or scuba diving for those qualified or anyone wanting to take an introductory session with the onboard certified experts. Prepare to see some of the most amazing tropical fish, or if you prefer, take it all in from the underwater viewing chamber. A 10-minute helicopter ride over the Great Barrier Reef to see the incredible Heart Reef from above is also on offer as an added option. Afterwards, enjoy a delicious buffet lunch, another snorkel perhaps and then sit back and enjoy the peaceful return journey to Hamilton Island.

## HALF DAY HILL INLET AT WHITEHAVEN BEACH

Jump aboard a high-speed catamaran and relax on the nets of the sailing vessel while cruising through the calm Whitsunday waterways. Sights to take in include Pentecost Island, which locals say looks like a Gorilla's head from the side – can you see it? As the catamaran moors off Tongue Bay, climb onto a tender that takes you across to the island for a 20-minute guided tour, stopping to take some memorable shots as you head up to the Hill Inlet lookout. After enjoying the incredible scenery – the swirling sands of the inlet and surrounding aquamarine waters are mesmerizing – head down to Betty's Beach for a swim and possibly spot some rare ghost crabs and stingrays in the water with you. All up this tour is approximately four hours.



Half Day Hill Inlet at Whitehaven Beach.

# ADVENTURE



Whitehaven Beach  
Getaway by Helicopter.

## WHITEHAVEN BEACH GETAWAY BY HELICOPTER

This two-hour experience begins at Hamilton Island Air and, following the all-important safety briefing, you'll be directed to your waiting helicopter. The pilot will provide comprehensive tips and point out highlights along the way, ensuring a flight that is as fascinating as it is breathtaking. One of the most spectacular ways to see The Whitsundays is from the air, and you'll take it all in as you circle over Hill Inlet before landing on the southern end of one of the world's whitest strips of sand, Whitehaven Beach. Enjoy a picnic, all set up and waiting for you, followed by a dip in the transparent turquoise waters. Pop a bottle of Champagne and enjoy 75 idyllic minutes at one of the most magnificent and secluded areas of Whitehaven Beach. This is a true getaway in your own piece of paradise.

## WHITEHAVEN BEACH HALF DAY CRUISE

Meet at Hamilton Island Marina first thing in the morning or in the early afternoon, for the half-day (four-hour) Whitehaven Beach



Whitehaven Beach  
Half Day Cruise.

Half Day Cruise. Enjoy the 40-minute journey aboard a ferry-style catamaran, out and around the beautiful cliffs and sandy coves of Whitsunday Island, before arriving at the incredible destination of Whitehaven Beach. The first glimpse of this magnificent stretch of white sand is one of the most amazing experiences. As the boat moors, prepare to immerse yourself in the clear waters and walk on the soft sands of this pristine, seven-kilometre beach. Head up to the Solway Circuit on the southern side of Whitehaven Beach for the very best views overlooking the beach. Or simply laze on the sands that are 98.9 per cent pure silica. It is an easy and laidback way to enjoy a memorable couple of hours on what is one of the most beautiful beaches in the world, before a leisurely and scenic return journey to Hamilton Island.

## POSTCARDS FROM PARADISE

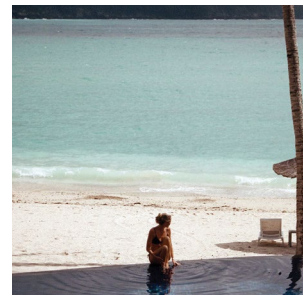
*Dear Instagram followers,  
we are having a wonderful  
time here on Hamilton ...*



"Having a nice quick holiday, promise I'll be back in the studio Monday. Thank u for all my lovely messages. omg I want to swim forever x" @amysmark



"It was a lightning fast trip, but we managed to splash and eat our way across Hamilton Island like a pack of wild animals ..."  
@ladyandacat



"Our last morning on Hamilton on film"  
@fakander



"Relax mode"  
@andytomlee

PHOTOGRAPHY: RILEY WILLIAMS; ANDREW CAITENS.

A man wearing a grey cap with the 'SAIL RACING' logo and a bright red zip-up hoodie is looking down. The background is a blurred view of a marina with boats.

SAIL  RACING®

AVAILABLE IN STORE AT THE DECKHOUSE (MARINA SIDE)

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SCAN ME

# All aboard

Time to upgrade the Hamilton Island holiday wardrobe. Ready and destined for adventures packed with a certain stylish seaworthy swagger.



Maui Jim sunglasses, \$517, from The Hut.



Billabong shorts, \$59.99, from The Hut.



Tigerlily shirt, \$139, from The Hut



Sail Racing hoodie, \$199, from The Deckhouse.



Sea Level swimsuit, \$139.95, from Salt.



Billabong cap, \$35.99, from The Hut.



Sea Level swimsuit, \$139.95, from Salt.



Swims loafers, \$229.99, from The Deckhouse.



Sail Racing shorts, \$189, from The Deckhouse.



Whitsunday splendour.

PHOTOGRAPHY: SALTY DINGO.

# ISLAND RETAIL THERAPY

AUSTRALIA THE GIFT  
07 4946 9015

FLORAL COLLECTIONS  
07 4946 8335

FOOT'S ARTWORKS  
0427 761 975

HAMILTON ISLAND DESIGNS  
07 4946 8565

HAMILTON ISLAND JEWELLERY  
07 4948 9857

THE DECKHOUSE  
07 4946 8180

PRO SHOP (HI GOLF CLUB)  
07 4948 9760

QUALIA BOUTIQUE  
07 4948 9473

RESORT CENTRE LOBBY SHOP  
0427 148 952

REEF VIEW LOBBY SHOP  
0427 148 623

SALT  
07 4946 8221

THE ART GALLERY  
07 4948 9657

THE HUT  
07 4946 8273

TRADER PETE'S  
07 4946 0907



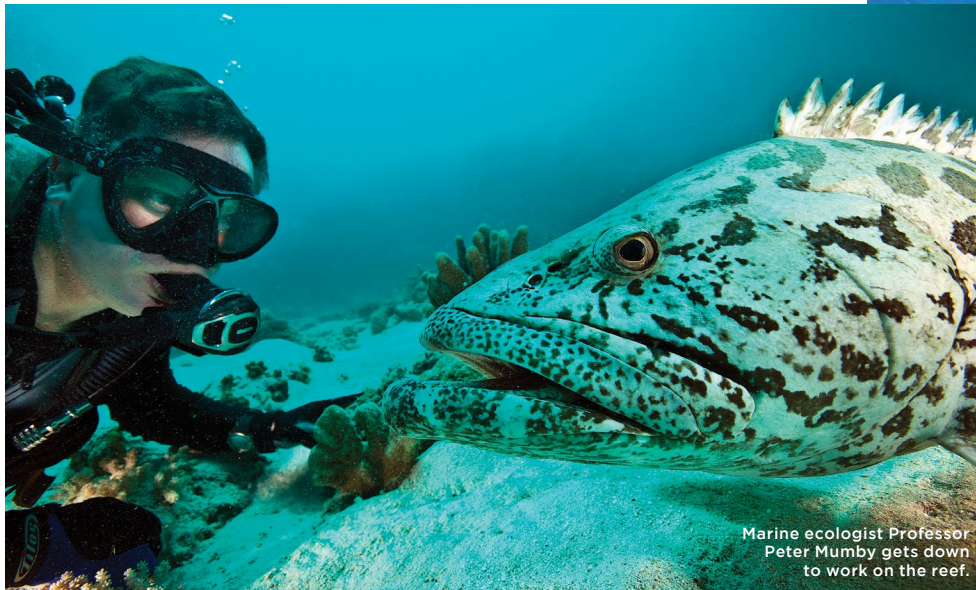
Sail Racing knit, \$159, from The Deckhouse.

Ray-Ban sunglasses, \$220, from The Hut.

Billabong bikini top, \$59.99, and bottoms, \$55.99, from The Hut.

Swims thongs, \$99.99, from The Deckhouse.

Billabong dress, \$79.99, from The Hut.



Marine ecologist Professor Peter Mumby gets down to work on the reef.

“I find everything about coral reefs interesting. I always wanted to study marine biology, ever since I was about seven years old, when I watched *Jaws* and realised that you can have a career being the guy who knows all about sharks. But then when I was a 19-year-old student, I got to volunteer on an expedition to a coral reef in Belize and absolutely fell in love. The colours, the marine life, the vibrant systems ... I wanted to understand how it all worked. The first time I came to Australia and the Great Barrier Reef [GBR] was in 1994. It was the first time I'd seen a coral reef in the Pacific, and it was overwhelming – the complexity, but also how much healthy coral there was. The Caribbean is interesting, but it's got about one tenth of the number of species that the Great Barrier Reef has. I finally moved to Australia in 2010 to work at the University of Queensland. I'm still as overwhelmed by the brilliance of the reef now as I ever was. The first remarkable thing about the Great Barrier Reef is how well protected it is. Dive or snorkel and you can encounter marine life such as big fish and whales and dolphins so frequently that they're rarely frightened of people. Around The Whitsundays, you can get closer to amazing marine life, such as Māori wrasse or bumphead parrotfish and Napoleon wrasse than almost anywhere else in the world, where they're hunted more severely. Just stepping off a boat, you'll see stingrays and eagle rays. One of the most striking things you'll ever see are reefs dominated by plating acropora — it looks like the whole reef is covered in huge plates that might be a metre in diameter. The natural engineering that's gone into building

these corals is incredible. Then you've got thickets of branching corals providing habitat for thousands of tiny chromis, those iridescent turquoise reef fish that dance around in the water feeding on plankton as it drifts past. As you're swimming along, you're surrounded by these brilliant fish swimming up to feed then diving down to hide. The reef is still a beautiful, dynamic environment. But we can't be complacent about the challenges of climate change and other threats to the reef. We have had five really huge bleaching events on the Great Barrier Reef in the past eight years and that is sobering. There are parts of the reef that will be seriously degraded. But if we can do better than we have been doing as a global society, and as individuals, to aggressively action climate change, I believe there is a future for the reef and it is vibrant. There are large areas that will continue to look fabulous. What is not often recognised is that, although it is vulnerable, the reef is terrifically resilient. Its enormous scale, at about the size of Italy or Japan, is one of its greatest strengths. Each time there's a coral-bleaching event [when coral is stressed, usually by warm water, and loses its colour, exposing its white skeleton], although thousands of square kilometres might be affected, there are patches that don't get hit. That includes areas found offshore from Hamilton Island and The Whitsundays. Places such as the Hardline Reefs and the Swain Reefs, are likely to be the real survivors. And these resilient locations function as highly connected hubs that can help many other reefs recover. When a lot of shallow-water coral dies in a bleaching event, new corals have to come from another, healthy reef. One of greatest wonders



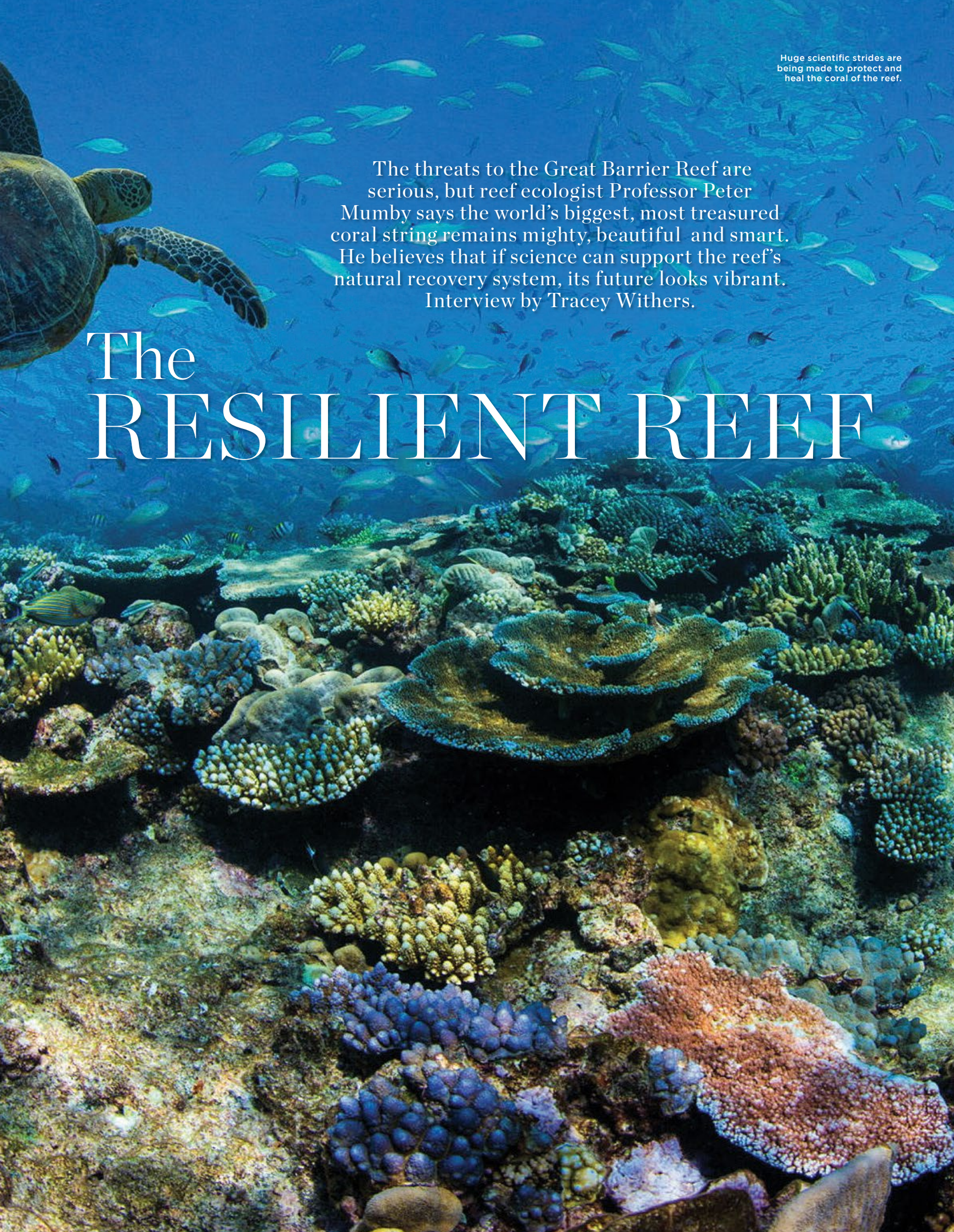
PHOTOGRAPHY: GREAT BARRIER REEF FOUNDATION.



Huge scientific strides are being made to protect and heal the coral of the reef.

The threats to the Great Barrier Reef are serious, but reef ecologist Professor Peter Mumby says the world's biggest, most treasured coral string remains mighty, beautiful and smart. He believes that if science can support the reef's natural recovery system, its future looks vibrant. Interview by Tracey Withers.

# The RESILIENT REEF



of nature is that about November or December every year, the corals have this mass reproductive spawning. They all release their millions and millions of eggs and sperm one night, and then the fertilised eggs drift in the ocean currents looking for a home. When they are a few days old, they'll come down to settle onto a patch of dead coral and start growing. The thing is, we suspect that 99 per cent of the eggs released are simply lost at sea. So, if we can capture even a small percentage of them and take them to a place where new corals are sorely needed, it is a practical way of boosting natural recovery. In future, this is something that tourism boats could be adapted to help with. Tourism can get a bad rap, but I don't see it being at odds with conservation at all. I think that the more people experience the reef, the more people will care and change their behaviour in ways that will have a positive impact, from changing how they recycle or commute to actively getting involved in conservation efforts.

I'm particularly proud of The Great Reef Census program I helped develop with the not-for-profit Citizens of the GBR as a means of engaging citizen scientists. We worked with tourism operators to get people out on reefs, particularly at strategic locations, taking photographs with their GoPro cameras and uploading them to be interpreted.

All that information shows us which reefs are in pretty good health, which are in an early stage of recovery after being damaged, and where priority reefs are for crown-of-thorns starfish control. There are 4000 reefs on the GBR, and the Australian Institute of Marine Science can only monitor about 90 of them. That's a terrific lot — nowhere else monitors reefs like we do in Australia. But it still means that we don't know very much about the majority of reefs. Getting people into the water really helps.

It's heartening that there is an enormous amount of science and research being done. There are so many PhD students who are desperate to make sure that their career contributes something positive and there's considerable funding. There are interventions that we know work which we can do more of. And there are intriguing innovations, such as the development of thermal-resistant breeds of coral, brightening of clouds, coral probiotics and cryo-preservation [see Bright science, vibrant future breakout] being investigated.



Manta alfredi are reef regulars.



The Great Barrier Reef is vulnerable but also resilient, says Mumby.



But nature itself can always still astonish us with its own capabilities. In 1998, when the most severe global coral-bleaching event ever happened, I was doing some work around Tahiti, where sea temperatures rose to 36°C and fried some of the oldest corals in the region. On these huge corals that are about 10 metres wide and 10 metres high, all that was left were a few patches of live tissue about the size of your finger. We predicted it might take 100 years for those corals to come back but 13 years later, they'd entirely recovered. We have those same types of coral in Australia.

Here in The Whitsundays, Cyclone Debbie of 2017 was devastating for some of our islands. When looking at reef damage, we found some parts that were pretty much untouched. And it's not obvious why. There are often fabulous reefs in places you wouldn't expect. That's one of the great things about spending your life on the ocean here. Whether you are a tour operator, a dive guide or a scientist, you can keep seeing the reef and it will keep surprising you.

## BRIGHT SCIENCE, VIBRANT FUTURE

*Reef-saving strategies giving marine experts fresh cause for hope.*

### CLOUD BRIGHTENING

"The idea is that we could essentially blast salt crystals from the ocean up at existing clouds to make them a bit whiter, which reduces the amount of light hitting the sea surface and its temperature," says reef ecologist Professor Peter Mumby. "It's a nice idea because we could protect reasonably large patches during the warmest times of the year. But this one is still in the early stage of research and development."

### GENE BANKING

"There is a cryopreservation program trying to bank some of the existing genetic diversity of corals," Mumby says. Scientists are collecting and analysing the sperm and eggs of different coral species, which they may be able to use in the future to help potentially regenerate the Great Barrier Reef. "It's a no-brainer to try and do it, but there's still a lot of work to be done."



Larvae nursery pools on Heron Island. Above: Releasing larvae from floating pools.

PHOTOGRAPHY: GARY CRANITCH, QUEENSLAND MUSEUM; JOHNNY GASKELL; SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY; SHUTTERSTOCK

### REEF PROBIOTICS

Much like the human gut, corals are populated by microbes, some healthy and some less so. Mumby says: “We’re learning that whether a coral survives a heatwave or not can depend on its microbes. Great progress has been made in identifying good bacteria, so we can culture those bacteria and potentially introduce them in places where they’re lacking.”

### CROWN-OF-THORNS VERSUS VINEGAR

These starfish, which can grow up to one metre in diameter and are capable of producing up to 11 million offspring, have voracious appetites and love to eat coral. One on a reef is normal but pollution and overfishing of predators are the likely causes of plague outbreaks, which can be

incredibly destructive. The DIY-sounding solution? “An injection of a shot of vinegar is enough to kill a crown-of-thorns starfish. Although it’s labour-intensive, with this method, marine park managers can control about 200 reefs a year,” says Mumby. “We try to protect some of the important reefs that spawn and send new corals to other reefs.”

### HEAT RESISTANT BREEDS

There is major research going into the development of climate-hardened corals. “Nobody is doing any genetic modification,” Mumby highlights. “Instead, researchers collect corals in the field, subject them to heat stress in the lab, identify ones with better genetics for withstanding heat and then breed or fragment them to be deployed to reefs damaged by warmer water.”

## HOW YOU CAN HELP RESTORE THE REEF

with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation

Corals are one of the most vulnerable species on the planet due to rising water temperatures. It will take an enormous effort to restore the Great Barrier Reef and we all need to help plant corals at scale to rejuvenate degraded reefs and bring back wildlife to critical habitats. Help create a better future for the Great Barrier Reef: join the Great Barrier Reef Foundation’s annual *Plant A Coral* appeal. Donate today and help plant corals in priority areas of the reef that have suffered damage.



\$30  
DONATION

Your gift helps grow corals to restore the Reef.



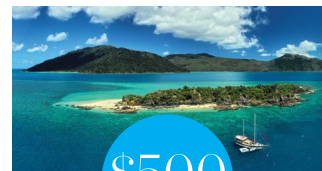
\$60  
DONATION

Your gift helps fund innovative research into heat-tolerant corals.



\$120  
DONATION

Your gift helps to restore critical reef habitats for threatened species.



\$500  
DONATION

Join our community of Reef Builders by giving \$500 or choose your own transformational gift.



Great Barrier Reef Foundation

To donate or find out more, visit [give.barrierreef.org](http://give.barrierreef.org)



# NATURAL BORN LEADERS

Embrace risk, act with courage, always keep striving,  
know your customer and believe in your vision.  
How these Australian creative powerhouses get it done.

## DEBORAH SYMOND O'NEIL

Founder and director, Mode Sportif

YOU HAVE POWERED UP AN INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS WITH MODE SPORTIF. CAN YOU SHARE SOME OF YOUR INSIGHTS WITH US?

"I started Mode Sportif nine years ago, and leading into our 10th anniversary next year, it's been a fantastic opportunity to reflect on the business evolution and growth ... Mode is a great study in adapting to market needs. From starting as an athleisure business and pure online player, we have now evolved into a contemporary and designer fashion and accessories business with two retail stores in addition to our online presence. It's been a fantastic journey adapting to customer needs, and I personally loved developing and growing our retail and physical store presence that we introduced in Sydney's Mosman and Double Bay. Building a strong and female-led team has been a key factor to business growth and success and I am extremely fortunate to work with such inspiring and talented people."

WHAT OR WHO GAVE YOU THE COURAGE TO DO THIS?

"Growing up with entrepreneurial and extremely hardworking parents led me to always strive to build and grow a successful business. I saw a gap in the market which gave me the confidence to take the leap to start Mode originally. I also think being a dancer from a young age instilled great discipline and perseverance, both of which are necessary when starting and building a business."

DOES LEADING COME NATURALLY?

"Not necessarily no, but I love working with people and I understand different personality types and working styles. I thrive in busy and high-pressure environments. Decisiveness has come with confidence and experience. I am learning every day."

HAS BUILDING THE BUSINESS MEANT TAKING MANY RISKS AGAINST MORE PRUDENT ADVICE?

"Absolutely. Without calculated risks, we certainly wouldn't be where we are today in business."

ARE YOU A NATURAL RISK TAKER OR RISK AVERSE? ... DO YOU HAVE TO PUSH YOURSELF OR DOES IT COME EASILY?

"While it is easy to stay in my comfort zone, a lot of the time growth goes hand in hand with change. I have to remind myself of that, but to be honest, making those changes is where I thrive the most."

WHAT'S THE SCARIEST DECISION YOU HAVE MADE SO FAR?

"While opening new stores has always been a big step, I think ultimately changing our business concept from athleisurewear to a majority of multi-brand fashion was the biggest risk ... It paid off in the end."

WHAT HAS GONE WRONG? IS THERE EVER A WRONG?

"So much hasn't gone to plan. Something I love about small business is the ability to pivot, change, reflect and act quickly. It's one of the greatest strengths of Mode Sportif. We are always on our toes and if something doesn't work, we change it."

BEST MOMENT THAT MAKES YOU PROUD?

"Most days, on the street, at a restaurant, at an event, I see someone wearing something from the store, and it just makes me so happy. I get a thrill every single time, I love seeing each person's individual style and how they wear the product to make it their own."

HOW DO YOU REMAIN INSPIRED, AND IN TURN BE ABLE TO INSPIRE YOUR TEAM?

"I'm constantly inspired. Everywhere I go I am inspired by people, places, colours, textures. Travel is the ultimate inspiration, and often provides a physical and emotional reset that allows for a fresh perspective."

THE FASHION BUSINESS IS SO MUCH ABOUT DESIRE. HOW DO YOU CREATE THIS WITH MODE SPORTIF?

"We aim to share our Mode curation to inspire our clients and allow them to feel confident and



empowered. Our messaging echoes this. Our clients also love to see clothes worn in real life and an everyday setting. Nothing is as inspiring as a travel wardrobe. Travel edits and curations are always some of our most popular edits."

ARE YOU HANDS-ON AT THE BUYING STAGE OF THE BUSINESS?

"Absolutely! I work closely with our head of buying and merchandising to provide the best edit for our clients. We have a diverse customer demographic, which makes buying so fun and so rewarding."

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN YOUR TEAM?

"Passion, independence, drive and confidence. Each skill set is different, but these traits are a common thread among our incredible team."

HOW IMPORTANT IS DOWNTIME FOR YOU IN ALL THIS?

"Between two small children and owning a business, downtime isn't something I get a lot of if I am honest. It's the little moments — coffee



in the morning, catching up with friends – that leave me feeling recharged. My husband and I recently escaped to qualia for three nights to celebrate our fifth wedding anniversary. It was such a wonderful break from the busy day-to-day, I felt completely reset.”

YOUR MANTRA?

“Customer first, always.”

WHAT PART DOES HAMILTON ISLAND PLAY IN YOUR LIFE?

“It is the dreamiest of escapes, so close to home. For years we have been visiting the island and as soon as we get off the plane I am immediately relaxed. From getting married on the island, to sharing so many wonderful [times] with friends and family there, it truly is our happy place.”

FAVOURITE THING TO DO ON ISLAND?

“Lunch at Pebble Beach. It overlooks where we got married, it is so peaceful, beautiful and filled with nostalgia. I absolutely love it there.”

CHRISTINE SALTER

*Creative director, Paspaley*

WHAT OR WHO GAVE YOU THE COURAGE TO DO THIS?

“Pearls, in particular Australian South Sea pearls, are incomparable. Timeless, unique and so exceptionally beautiful – crafting unique jewellery true to this gem is a privilege. The creation of our business, one that is sustainable, working hand-in-glove with nature, has been honed over decades. It was built on courage, pioneering adventure and perseverance. With this setting, courage is easily drawn.”

WHO HAS HELPED YOU BECOME SO DECISIVE?

“Each of the systems that sets Paspaley a part from all other pearl producers have been established through trial and error, and each trial started with an idea, an understanding of the risks, followed by a decision to give it a go anyway. My family had evolved this for almost a century, across three generations. Making decisions is the fastest way to learn the best way forward. I’d rather try something and fail, than do nothing at all. Making decisions that your intuition tells you is right is a pretty good principal to use in order to strive for improvement or innovation, so I don’t fear decision making at all.”

DOES LEADING COME NATURALLY?

“No one can lead without first earning respect. My family taught us that we had to understand the importance of every role to appreciate how it helps the business function as a whole. So my first job with Paspaley was cleaning the toilets on our pearling ships. I am one of a team, and we each have a role to play. A big part of leadership is mentorship, and encouraging each team member to reach their full potential. I’ve learned this from my own mentors that I’ve had throughout my career with Paspaley.”

HAS BEING PART OF BUILDING THE BUSINESS TO SCALE MEANT TAKING MANY RISKS AGAINST MORE PRUDENT ADVICE?

“We wouldn’t have a pearling business if we were risk averse, although we consciously manage our risk through diversification. Our industry is built on adventure and experimentation, and this has placed Paspaley as the leaders in luxury and pearling. As leaders of a such a niche industry, our ships and systems have been thought of, designed and developed in-house. We learn what works through our

own experimentations. The long time it takes to grow a single pearl means it can take three years before we see if an experiment has worked, and of course the risk is that it doesn’t work and we have incurred three years of expenses nonetheless. When they don’t work, it’s still a learning. But when they do, we get a little further ahead in our quest for excellence.”

ARE YOU A NATURAL RISK TAKER OR RISK AVERSE ... DO YOU HAVE TO PUSH YOURSELF OR DOES IT COME EASILY?

“I’m not afraid of failure, and my position requires that of me. I have to be willing to take a risk and try new ideas, in order to break through boundaries. We aim to continuously surprise our customers with something new and extraordinary. For example, when we first crafted Paspaley’s brand icon, Lavalier, it was so different to any other piece that the design became internationally recognised, and synonymous with Paspaley and our design ethos. With an undrilled pearl, selected by the wearer, and encased in a golden net – it’s beautiful, and the purest reflection of pearl-led design. But of course the production of a piece that is so different always comes with a risk. We are certainly glad we took that risk in this case!”

WHAT’S THE SCARIEST DECISION YOU HAVE MADE SO FAR?

“Making the recent decision to develop the properties that our family acquired in the 1980s was a bit hair raising. We are pearlars, not property developers, but we inherited properties that we either needed to develop or sell. We decided to develop. One of them is The Wall Street Hotel in New York City, which opened last year. We applied the same quest for excellence in that development as we do for pearling and retail, and as a family we’re exceptionally proud of the outcome – it has just been nominated by *Condé Nast [Traveller]* for the Reader’s Choice Award and awarded best new hotel of the year, in the city-centre category, by Preferred Hotels and Resorts.”

BEST MOMENT, THAT MAKES YOU PROUD?

“I’m proud of many of Paspaley’s achievements. We hold the world record for the sale price of a cultured pearl strand, which was purchased in New York. I love that the unmatched quality and perfect match of the pearls in this strand was

## PROFILE

recognised internationally. There is also the moment Christie's Hong Kong chose a Paspaley necklace to feature on their catalogue's front cover for their annual Important Jewels auction. For a company with such experience in high jewellery to recognise our product in this way was a huge testament to the quality of our pearls but also our design. And finally, the most important cultured pearl ever found is from Paspaley – upon its discovery, it was displayed in Washington's Smithsonian Institution ...”

WHAT HAS GONE WRONG? IS THERE EVER A WRONG?  
“There are learnings, rather than wrong doings.”

HOW DO YOU REMAIN INSPIRED, AND IN TURN BE ABLE TO INSPIRE YOUR STRONG TEAM?  
“The uniqueness of each pearl, and the way in which they grow in the wild, are a constant inspiration to me and our entire team. Every pearl has had its own adventure, and it starts when our divers hand collect the pearl shell from the waters of the Kimberley.”

THE HIGH JEWELLERY BUSINESS IS SO MUCH ABOUT DESIRE. HOW DO YOU CREATE THIS WITH PASPALEY?  
“Our brand is as much about the lifestyle of pearling as it is about our product. We share this lifestyle with our customers, often flying them aboard our Mallards [amphibious aircraft] to visit our pearl farms so that they can experience it first hand, on the wild Kimberley coast, staying on our ships or pearl farms, introducing them to our pearlers out there who are full of incredible stories. No one else can offer this kind of unique, authentic experience to their customers. When we then share our jewellery creations with our clients, for many it brings them back to this experience of the Kimberley. It reconnects them with that incredible immersion in nature, in one of the most remote places on earth.”

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN YOUR TEAM?  
“Our teams are expected to work as one team, with an entrepreneurial spirit, a can-do attitude, with equal focus on customers and other members within the team.”

YOUR MANTRA?  
“Find a way. Anyone can think of reasons not to do something. It's those who have the courage to do it anyway, if they believe in it, who will break the boundaries. It's important to understand the risks, but generally if I have a strong reason for 'why' then I will always ask myself 'how'. That's the only way to create something unlike anything else on the market.”



Paspaley  
creative director  
Christine Salter.

“FIND A WAY.  
ANYONE CAN THINK  
OF REASONS NOT  
TO DO SOMETHING.”

HOW IMPORTANT IS DOWNTIME FOR YOU IN ALL THIS?  
“Downtime isn't something I think about, probably because it's out of reach. I'm a working mother! Spending quality time with my family, experiencing new things through travelling, especially to our pearl farms, and also spending time with our customers, is more valuable to me than downtime.”

POSSIBLE TO IMPOSSIBLE?  
“I am actually only satisfied when our jewellers tell me our designs are impossible to craft. It's then that I know our designers and I are on track to creating something unique to Paspaley. There's always a way to find a way to achieve it if we think out of the box.”

WHAT GIVES YOU MOST SUSTENANCE FOR YOUR ENERGY LEVELS?  
“A good night's sleep, which starts with 10 minutes of mindful meditation.”

WHAT PART DOES HAMILTON ISLAND PLAY IN THE PASPALEY STORY?  
“The Oatley family has created the most beautiful, unique luxury experience with Hamilton Island, which is why we've enjoyed our partnership for so many years. For me, Hamilton is a place to enjoy the water, the beauty, the luxury, and have so much fun with our customers.”

FAVOURITE THING TO DO ON ISLAND?  
“The island has a way of instantly making us feel relaxed and grounded, and in that state, it's easy to form real and meaningful relationships with others on the island. I love that I can hold and speak about a new piece of high jewellery, while my customer stands with me, barefoot on a yacht.”

PHOTOGRAPHY: RHIANNON TAYLOR.

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Bommie head chef  
Alice James.



PHOTOGRAPHY: LEAN TIMMS.

# Local hero

Alice James came to Hamilton Island to escape Melbourne's bitter winters. But more than a decade on and the Bommie head chef says her island home continues to provide her with world-beating produce and endless inspiration. By Melanie Colwell.



Local mud crab,  
radicchio, finger lime  
and sea purslane.



Grain-fed beef tenderloin,  
carrot purée, forest  
mushroom, red wine  
salt and rosemary jus.



“I was FaceTiming my nephew the other day from the restaurant when I was there and a stingray jumped out of the water. Literally flew. He thought it was the best thing ever,” laughs Alice James of another day at her “office” at Hamilton Island Yacht Club. Alice, head chef at the island’s signature Bommie restaurant, grew up in Yarrambat, on Melbourne’s northern fringe. A career in food, she says, came “naturally calling”. “Whenever it came to family gatherings, I would always be the one in the kitchen cooking,” she explains. At just 15, Alice started her chef’s apprenticeship in the Yarra Valley. After a few years working in kitchens across Victoria, including at the artists’ colony Montsalvat in Eltham, she set her sights north to paradise. “I actually thought I would only spend six months up here to get the warmer weather and be out of Melbourne for winter. And I just never left,” she says. That was 12 years ago and Alice has no plans to go anywhere. Her first nine years on Hamilton were spent working at the Beach Club resort, where the relaxed atmosphere rubbed off on the kitchen team.

## COOKING

"I had a perfect view from the kitchen. We could see the guests all lying around the pool. We were right on Catseye Beach overlooking the Whitsunday islands and that was beautiful. It was probably why I stayed there so long — the view and the constant chatting to the guests when they would come up to the pass," she says. It was in 2020 that Alice swapped the Beach Club's sunrises for the Yacht Club's sunsets, taking on the role of head chef of the fine-dining Bommie. The restaurant is open for dinner service only, offering a three-course menu or a seven-course degustation.

"It's a very different lifestyle compared with what I had at Beach Club. There's a little bit more creativity. And it's where people go to celebrate an occasion," she says, noting that she witnesses "a lot of proposals".

Meeting and creating memorable experiences for guests is incredibly important to Alice.

These interactions can also be fortuitous. For example, a conversation with a diner who owned a lemon farm inspired Alice to create Bommie's house-made limoncello.

"It's the refresher course on our degustation. It's usually the course where we try and have a chef go out to the table so we have a chance to meet everyone who experiences the menu," says Alice of the full-circle moment. The limoncello is also representative of the food philosophy Alice brings to Bommie: that as much as possible should be made from scratch.

"The one thing that I've had on any menu that I've ever written is a house-made pasta. There's nothing that compares. You can taste the difference in the energy and time that goes into laminating the dough. I find it relaxing making the pasta," she says.

"Last night, we had fettuccine with Moreton Bay bug, a really amazing local product, with a lemon caper butter."

By now, that pasta dish has probably changed. Because the other thing driving Alice's approach to her menus is that the ingredients should be the freshest they can possibly be.

"We'll change 50 per cent [of the menu] once a week. It's always fresh, always seasonal," she says. "Ingredients come first. It depends what's in season and how they're going to complement each other."

Strong relationships with her suppliers are key to staying on top of things. "We have a local seafood supplier. He'll give me a call about what seafood has just come in on the boat. We've had a local painted crayfish on the menu this week and the colours on the shells are absolutely amazing. I had the whole kitchen gathering around taking photos," she says.

"In The Whitsundays, we have some of the best seafood in the world."

Australian ingredients, especially local ingredients, is another of Alice's loves. "One of my favourite cheeses that I've used on 90 per cent of my menus recently is a Queensland triple

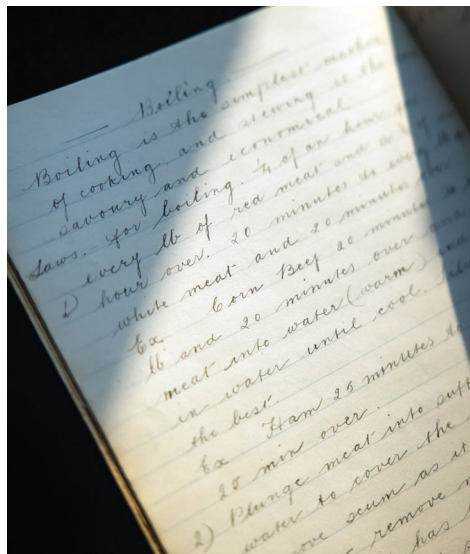
cream brie. It is very unusual for Queensland — they're not known for their soft cheeses compared with the southern states."

Occasionally this desire for local ingredients means sourcing them herself: Alice will forage around the island for paperbark and banana leaves, even "acquiring" coral from the beach to use for presentation on a plate or table.

Native Australian ingredients also feature on the Bommie menu. "I really enjoy using the finger lime, which has just really come back into fashion now. And I'm actually working on a rosella-cello, which will be our Christmas menu refresher, because apparently I'm already



Alice's great grandmother's handwritten cooking book is a prized resource.



Queensland tiger prawn, house-made garganelli, fermented chilli, crispy capers and warrigal greens.





Local Australian cheese plate, house-made lavash and honeycomb.



PHOTOGRAPHY: LEAN TIMMS, JASON LOUCAS.

“INGREDIENTS COME FIRST. IT DEPENDS WHAT’S IN SEASON AND HOW THEY’RE GOING TO COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER.”

thinking about Christmas!” she laughs. The constant rotation of produce affords Alice plenty of room for experimentation in the kitchen. But when the need to go back to basics arises, she has something very special at hand. “One of the most prized possessions that I have up here is my great grandmother’s cooking book. She was trained by a German chef. It’s handwritten and it has newspaper cutouts,” Alice says. “I get my apprentices to look at it because all the fundamentals are still the same.” As head chef, she is responsible for a team of five and says “mentoring and developing the next generation of chefs” is a favourite part of her role. “When a team member comes to me with a menu idea, I will always work with them on that idea. So we can grow that idea and put it on the menu in one way, shape or form,” Alice says. “No chef is the same. Yes, we will all slice a tomato the same way. But background and [understanding] of what flavours go together, there’s always something to learn from someone else.”

## LISTEN UP

*The perfect podcasts to kickstart your health, wellness and mindfulness goals.*



**THE DOCTOR'S FARMACY**  
Physician, author and longevity proponent Dr Mark Hyman sheds light on a “food as medicine” approach to optimising our bodies and brains.



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Health doesn't need to be hard. Dr Ranjan Chatterjee simplifies the overwhelming world of wellness with health hacks and expert advice.



**REDEFINING YOGA**  
Level up with Lara Heimann, founder of LYT Yoga, which focuses on balancing brains and bodies, as she considers the evolution of yoga and the values of own method.



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Brad and Simone Hole.

# Life at the Lighthouse

Being woken by the whoosh of a whale's breath is all in a magical day's work for Brad Hole, Hamilton Island Golf Club superintendent and Dent Island Lighthouse keeper. He shares his unique working life with Frances Hibbard.

“**T**he lighthouse is hidden away on the western side of Dent Island. You go down a steep private driveway and it's like arriving in a little fairyland, with the lighthouse and the cottages and the gardens. It's only visible from the water and even then, only from directly in front and it is not open to guests. I've been at Hamilton Island Golf Club for 14 years, just before the opening. My first nine years here I used to commute from the mainland. This is my fifth year living on Dent Island. My wife Simone works on Hamilton Island, at the tour desk. We jumped at the opportunity to come over here. It is a sought-after address but it's not for everyone, being so isolated. The lighthouse is automated and has been since 1987 after it was converted to solar a few years before. It's nice and romantic, the term 'lighthouse keepers' but we're caretakers, our job is to maintain the cottages and the grounds. We scrub the cottages, keep them looking their best, and maintain the gardens. The lighthouse itself is still maintained and managed by Australian Maritime Services and they take care of all lighthouses and beacons. So they come at least once a year and look over it and service it, check the battery, check the light, clean the windows, give it a lick of paint ... they're wonderful those guys and they keep the actual lighthouse looking beautiful.

The cottages that are there now were built in the early 1950s and before that were the two original ones that would have been built in the 1870s, perhaps early 1880s. The lighthouse was completed in 1879 and it's a western-facing lighthouse. It's not marking a headland or a reef or a dangerous point for the ships; it's more of a navigational beacon. The lighthouse keepers would have recorded what ships were going by and when and been a source of communication for them. Every fortnight they would try to get a boat in to the lighthouse. It was a large ship that dropped off supplies up and down the coast to the different lighthouses and they would load supplies onto a smaller tender which would come against Dent Island. Early in the piece all the supplies would have been carried up the 100 steep stairs from the little pebble beach down the front. There's a winch house down there now but that wasn't built until the 1920s or 1930s. The land down near the lighthouse is on a very steep block but so many areas are terraced and there's these wonderful rock retaining walls that create flat areas where the sheds are built, the cottages, and the lighthouse. I know what it's like to dig a hole on the island and it's solid rock, so how they did this down at the lighthouse way back then, without excavators, without big machinery ... is gobsmacking. They were tough, tough people.

PHOTOGRAPHY: LEAN TIMMS.



Maintaining the grounds is a source of pride for the Holes.



Come sunset, it's residents only on Dent Island.



The lighthouse is solar operated.

“IT WAS QUITE SURREAL THE FIRST TIME WE HEARD THE WHALES, THEIR SLOW BREATH OUT.”

Every six months or so a doctor would come through and check up on the families. It wasn't uncommon for people to have children at the cottages and sadly, there's a small gravesite down at the cottages, where a little girl — Carrie Biss — she was three and a half years old, and she must have passed away around the time the lighthouse was being built. Things like that make you wonder how tough it must have been rearing children on a site like that. The whales are exciting and that's the best time of year. It would be quite rare that we wouldn't see a whale every day during the season with their calves and we certainly hear them during the night. It was surreal the first time we heard them. Their slow breath out, the loud phhhhhhh [of their exhale through their blowhole], and then to hear them slapping their fins on the water. It was a bit of a shock but we quickly worked out what it was. The cottages are close to the water and the whales can come very close to the edge of the island. It's quite a steep drop off and we don't have a reef out the front, so they can be 30 or 40 feet from the shore. You can see them underwater swimming by. It's very, very special. The other favourite time for me is Race Week.

Race Week is brilliant on Hamilton Island and on Dent, to see a couple of hundred yachts sailing around. And a lot of the races go around the lighthouse side of Dent Island, so to see the fleet tacking around and coming in close and hearing the rigging creak and everyone yelling and cheering, it's very exciting. The last staff members on the island, the golf club staff, they leave Dent Island at 5.15pm or so and after that, there's no one else on the island and no one else coming across. It's just so quiet. I feel a strong sense of ownership about the island in totality. I'm very proud of it all. I've never been to a lighthouse where the grounds look untidy; for some reason the lawns and grounds are always well kept. The work down on the lighthouse is hard but when you stop and look at where we're doing, it keeps you going and keeps you motivated to make it look its best. And there's so much history down there, and it's so special and so pretty that you just want to go and add to it and maintain it. It's not a hard thing to do. Friends visit and ask me 'Gosh, how do you mow that or whipper snipper there?' and it's hard work but I almost look forward to getting home to do it." *Dent Island lighthouse is not open to the public.*

BOOK IN HAND

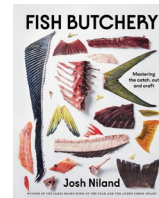
*Nature, travel and food: these are a few of our favourite things. Here are the best new books to inspire.*



**SUSTAIN** by Jo Barrett  
Australian chef Jo Barrett's debut cookbook features recipes and ideas for a more sustainable kitchen. Barrett was part of the team behind Joost Bakker's zero-waste, self-sustaining futurefoodsystem and the 90 nutritious recipes here form an inspiring but achievable manual on cooking with intention.



**WILDERNESS** by Penny Watson  
This stunning exploration of 40 natural wilderness destinations by travel author Penny Watson serves as an antidote to an increasingly digital world. *Wilderness* reminds us of the importance and health-giving effects of being amongst nature but also of the crucial need to protect this planet.



**FISH BUTCHERY** by Josh Niland  
The third release from award-winning chef Josh Niland is a guide to what the seafood king knows and does best: fish butchery. The 40 recipes within the three sections of Catch, Cut and Craft offer challenging new possibilities for preparing fish. Sure to inspire a new generation of seafood fans.



**CYANOTYPES** by Anna Atkins  
Anna Atkins, botanist and photographer, was the first person to use photographic images to illustrate a book. This new edition of her pioneering 1943 release features her delicate and detailed images of natural forms of algae and ferns using the cyanotype photographic process. Fascinating.

PHOTOGRAPHY: LEAN TIMMS.



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# MAN as MACHINE





Courtney Atkinson has spent the better part of three decades pushing his body to extremes, all in the name of competition. Fresh from placing second in Hamilton Island's Hilly Half Marathon — the first of four events that make up the Hamilton Island Endurance Series — the athlete speaks to Melanie Colwell about his passion for endurance sport and why he has no plans of slowing down.

**T**wo-time Olympic Games athlete. Multiple ITU World Cup wins. Ironmans. Ultramarathons. Courtney Atkinson's list of professional sporting achievements is, to put it mildly, extensive. It is 27 years since he first topped the podium at Australian Junior Triathlon Championships (something he would repeat for three consecutive years), Atkinson's competitive spirit is still strong. "When I get into an event, I believe I can still try and win it. Some days, it happens. Other days, it's a disaster," Atkinson says. "There are times in endurance racing where you're saying 'Never again, never doing this again'. Without fail, though, you give it half an hour, or you give it a day, and you're looking at 'What am I going to do next?'"

Case in point: a mere two weeks after placing second in Hamilton Island's Hilly Half Marathon, Atkinson raced in Ultra-Trail Australia in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales, placing sixth. He's also gearing up for the next Red Bull Defiance in August, an epic two-day grunt comprised of trail running, mountain biking, kayaking, rafting, ropes courses and more.

This is not to say the recent Hamilton Island event was a walk in the park for him. He may have been somewhat familiar with the terrain — he won the inaugural Hamilton Island Triathlon in 2009 — but Atkinson admits the Hilly Half Marathon was harder than he expected. "When they call it the 'hilly half', right, you know you're in for a day out. I've run different sections of the course but had never put it together like that. So it was fun but a tough day," he tells *REEF*.

The Hilly Half has its perks — namely, the way the course is designed as three loops, beginning and ending at Beach Pavilion, allowing plenty of opportunity for crowd interaction.

"They can be quite lonely events, trail runs," Atkinson says. "I really like the way [the



Courtney Atkinson finishing the Hilly Half Marathon.

"I JUST LOVE RUNNING ON TRAILS. I TRY TO DO AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ON SOFT GROUND."

Hilly Half] was designed ... the locals getting involved and cheering everyone on ... instead of just being out all day on your own."

Despite the intensity of the events, Atkinson's prep is pretty simple. "I just love running on trails. I try to do as much of my running as possible on soft ground. It's a little easier on the body."

What about right before an event? "A Red Bull. That's about as ritual as I get."

Pushing his body to the limit on a regular basis means forced downtime — be it from injury or exhaustion — is inevitable. It's something, Atkinson admits, he doesn't cope with well. "But over time, you learn to manage yourself

better so it happens less and less. The worst thing you can do is rush back into things," he says. "It nearly hurts more now not to be able to get out and run than it did when I was, say, a year out from an Olympic Games."

The thing that keeps the athlete coming back for more is not necessarily what you would expect: winning is no longer his sole priority.

In fact, the thoughts about giving up were more prevalent when he was "100 per cent focused" and racing was his "whole life", he says.

"These days, with family and different types of work, I look forward to runs. The best bit of the day is getting out of bed and going running," he says. "Running is just as much about enjoyment and exercising as it is competition."

"I spent so long racing as my livelihood, whereas these days it's a lot more relaxed. I can come to events and enjoy them a little bit more but still always have aspirations to try and win." The mental shift means Atkinson can now appreciate the fringe benefits of recreational running. "It makes you feel good, there's a mental aspect to it," he says. "To be able to remove yourself from computer screens and cars and everything else. It doesn't matter where you are, especially in Australia, you can escape to a park or beach trail or forest and give yourself that dose of nature."

Perhaps, then, Atkinson's longevity is better attributed to a plain and simple love of the outdoors. His rest periods are best spent travelling with his family. "I used to feel like I always needed to be out training or doing something. Whereas now it's the complete opposite. I appreciate the time just to sit down and chill and have a swim with the kids," he says. That's why an event such as Hamilton Island's Hilly Half is so appealing. "I'd argue there are not too many finish lines like that around the world where you can just roll in, sit on a sun chair and just relax or go for a swim in the ocean," he tells us. "It's probably one of the nicest places to finish a race."

# Play for the view

American author Mark Twain famously described golf as “a good walk spoiled”. He clearly never had the chance to visit these Australian locations where the game and Mother Nature’s handiwork combine beautifully. Here Brendan James names the top 10 courses where you go for the golf but stay for the scenery.



Cape Wickham Links on King Island, Tasmania.



Views for days at Hamilton Island Golf Club on neighbouring Dent Island.

## 1. HAMILTON ISLAND GOLF CLUB

Former Open Champion turned television commentator Ian Baker-Finch has played golf all around the world and, according to him, there are few more beautiful places for a round than Hamilton Island Golf Club. “The golf course is spectacular. It can be a tough course because there is always some kind of wind. But if you go there with the idea it’s going to be a beautiful day, and a great opportunity for some spectacular photography, take in the views and enjoy the course,” he says. “It is one of the most beautiful golfing venues in the world.” One visit and you will agree wholeheartedly.

## 2. CAPE WICKHAM LINKS

Tasmania’s Cape Wickham became the talk of the golfing world when it opened for play in 2015 and, not surprisingly, this King Island wonder is today routinely ranked in the world’s top 100 courses. The traditional links course is laid out beside the rocky shoreline on the north-eastern tip of the Bass Strait island. It is this remote, exposed and windswept position that makes it as unforgettable as it is stunningly beautiful.



Ocean Dunes on King Island, in Tasmania’s Bass Strait.



Traditional links at Barnbougle Dunes and Lost Farm courses, Tasmania.

## 3. OCEAN DUNES

Cape Wickham’s nearest neighbour is Ocean Dunes, which covers a dramatic dunescape on King Island’s west coast; a place where fisherman and kelp harvesters reigned long before the course opened in 2016. While the inland holes are memorable for the rollercoaster-like terrain they cover, it is the holes right on the ocean – such as the par-3 4th where the surf rolls in between tee and green – that really excite.

## 4. BARNBOGLE DUNES AND LOST FARM

Barnbougle’s Lost Farm and Dunes courses sprawl across three kilometres of northern Tasmania beachfront and are routinely ranked among the Top 100 golf courses on the planet. And it’s not hard to see why as you trek across the dramatic sandy terrain, testing your game against the strategically brilliant designs created by some of golf’s best course architects in Tom Doak and Mike Clayton (Dunes) as well as Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw (Lost Farm).



## 5. KALGOORLIE GOLF COURSE

Many of the courses showcased here share one thing in common ... the ocean.

Obviously, this is not the case with Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, where the nearest beach is some 600 kilometres away.

Nevertheless, Kalgoorlie is a spectacular layout that embraces its desert surrounds, with the ochre-coloured sandy landscape never far from the beautifully manicured playing surfaces. It's this incredible contrast that offers a striking display of colours, especially late in the day.



5

Otherworldly beauty at Kalgoorlie Golf Course.

## 6. NAROOMA GOLF CLUB

Narooma is one of the most visually stunning courses in Australia, combining magnificent ocean views with dramatically undulating holes that weave their way through dense tall timbers. The opening six holes are links style and are played on the cliff tops above the Pacific Ocean before the layout turns inland for the following 10 holes, which are navigated on fairways lined with enormous ancient gums. The final two holes are back above the ocean and are susceptible to the prevailing southerly winds.

6



High drama at Narooma Golf Club.

# GOLF

## 7. NEW SOUTH WALES GOLF CLUB

Almost a century has passed since famed golf course architect Dr Alister MacKenzie stood on the northern shoreline of Botany Bay and declared himself to be breathlessly impressed with what he saw.

“This presents, I think, more spectacular views than any place I know, with the possible exception of the new Cypress Point golf course in California,” MacKenzie would later recount. New South Wales’s holes ebb and flow across the dramatic terrain out to the edge of the Pacific Ocean at La Perouse and back several times during a round. The tee shot played from an oceanside rock platform across a bay to the green of the par-3 6th hole is one of the world’s most memorable.

## 8. THE NATIONAL GOLF CLUB

The National Golf Club offers an exceptional blend of natural beauty and impeccable course design across three championship layouts at Cape Schanck on Victoria’s golf course-dense Mornington Peninsula.

While the Gunnamatta and Moonah Courses are highly ranked for their presentation and design, it is the Robert Trent Jones Jnr-designed Old Course that impresses with its dramatic terrain, challenging green complexes, and captivating vistas of Bass Strait.

The view doesn’t get any better than what you will find on the short par-3 7th hole, where you must carry your tee shot across a deep gully of impenetrable scrub to find the massive green perched on a ridge.



Mesmerising coastal views at New South Wales Golf Club.



The National Golf Club, Mornington Peninsula.



Subtropical splendour at Bonville Golf Resort.

## 9. BONVILLE GOLF RESORT

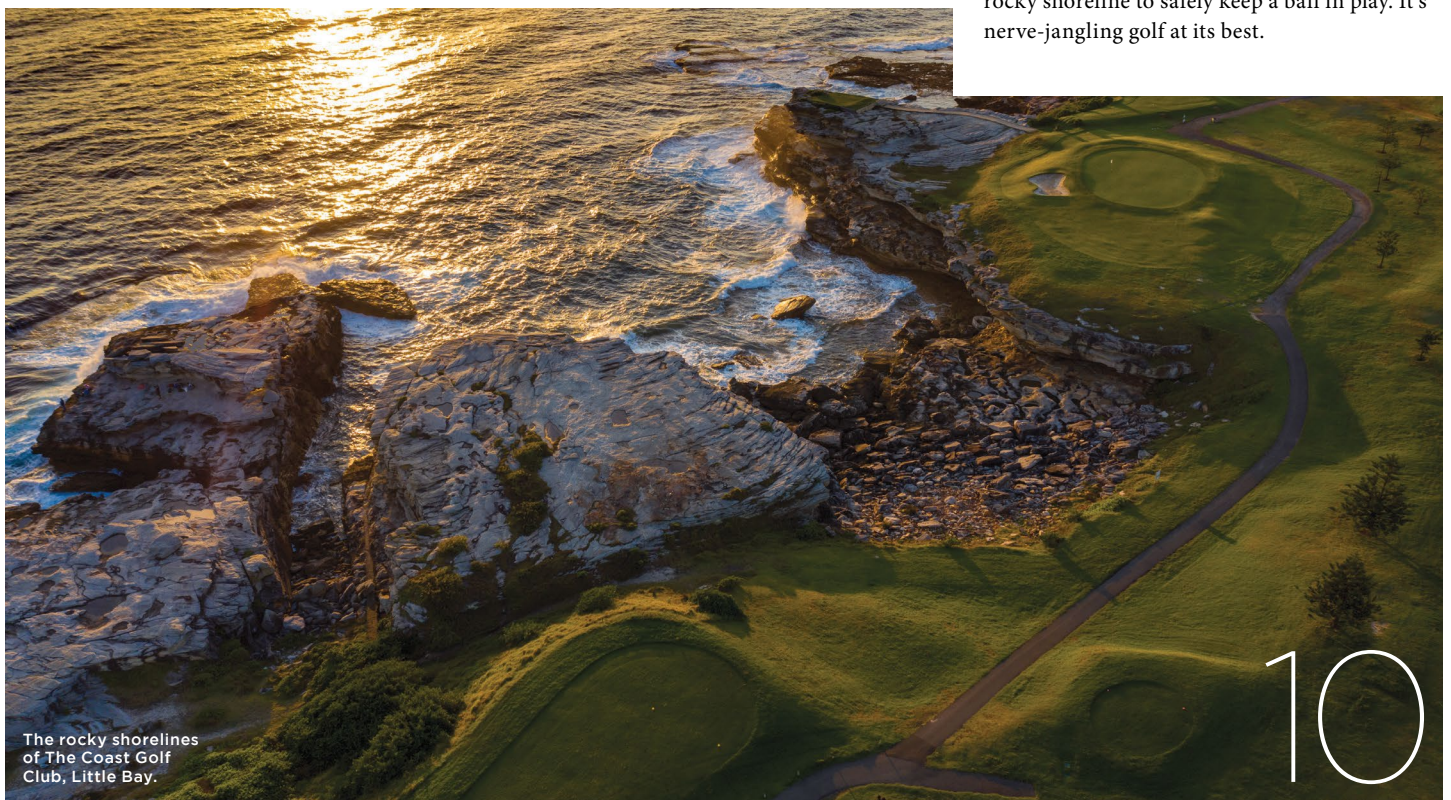
Bonville Golf Resort is Australia’s most beautiful inland course, carved from 250 hectares of flooded gums, blackbutt forest and small pockets of subtropical rainforest. It has often been described as this country’s version of Augusta National, featuring great elevation change between tee and green, natural watercourses, large undulating greens and demanding bunkers.

Visit Bonville in the spring and you will witness the course bursting into colour with azaleas and a host of native flowering plants in full bloom.

## 10. THE COAST GOLF CLUB

The Coast Golf Club occupies some of the most picturesque land in Sydney, perched high above the Pacific Ocean and laid out across the rugged clifftops of Little Bay in the city’s south-east.

Its biggest drawcard is that seven holes are directly adjacent to the ocean, with several – such as the par-3 4th and short par-4 14th – requiring a shot to be played across a stretch of rocky shoreline to safely keep a ball in play. It’s nerve-jangling golf at its best.



The rocky shorelines of The Coast Golf Club, Little Bay.

PHOTOGRAPHY: BRENDAN JAMES.



**YACHT CLUB VILLA 18**

FRONT STREET

**\$4,200,000**

4 4 2

This contemporary masterpiece, with its seamless ocean outlook, is the ultimate island paradise. Yacht Club Villa 18 is split across four generous levels, with space and functionality at the forefront of this incredible home. The living and dining level opens to a large sun-drenched balcony, positioned perfectly to capture the sun as it sinks and sets behind Dent Island. On the upper level, the luxurious and expansive master suite with its own ensuite provides supreme privacy, with floor to ceiling glass that allows you to take in the views. This property offers an exclusive private plunge pool as well as the use of the island's most desirable complex pools.



**KEY PROPERTY FEATURES:**

- 4-bedroom, 4-bathroom contemporary villa
- Designed by the renowned Walter Borda
- Absolute waterfront with sandy shore below
- Located in a secure and private gated complex
- Strong investment returns
- Buggy included in the sale
- Sold fully furnished
- Private plunge pool

**PROPERTY SALES: CONTACT LIAM KEARNEY 0458 178 601 OR SCOTT BOWSHIRE 0428 306 031**

The properties featured in the REEF Magazine Real Estate section are available at time of print. For a full listing of properties for sale or to review recently sold properties, visit the Hamilton Island Real Estate office on Front Street, or go to [www.hamiltonislandrealestate.com.au](http://www.hamiltonislandrealestate.com.au)

**PROPERTY SALES:** 07 4948 9101 **PERMANENT RENTALS:** 07 4946 8028 **HOLIDAY HOMES PROPERTY MANAGEMENT:** 07 4946 8746

### EDGE 11

5A ACACIA DRIVE  
OFFERS OVER \$2,400,000

3  2  1 

Edge 11 offers a rare opportunity to purchase into one of Hamilton Island's premiere apartment complexes, a showcase of what island life is all about. This lower-level apartment offers privacy and undisturbed view lines over the crystal blue waters of The Whitsundays. The floor-to-ceiling glass windows and doors of the expansive open-plan living area lead to the generous full-width balcony for stunning Whitsunday sunsets. This beautifully furnished apartment boasts a large private master bedroom, a generous walk-in robe as well as breathtaking views from the ensuite spa. The lower level also includes two balconies and an additional living room that can be utilised as a fourth bedroom.



### OASIS 2

2 FLAMETREE GROVE  
\$795,000

2  1  1 

This perfect single level apartment is the investment for which you have been waiting. This development is just a short stroll to the marina and with its sea views is a holiday hot spot for guests. Oasis 2 is a perfect entry-level investment for anyone looking for a mixture of great returns and their own island escape. The apartment is tastefully furnished and repainted throughout, and the kitchen and bathroom have been recently renovated with new kitchen appliances.

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**POINCIANA 004**

2 MARINA DRIVE

**\$1,325,000**

3 2 1

This unique floorplan combines the area of two units. The easy ground-floor access and stunning views ensure it stands out from the rest. Poinciana Lodge is a popular complex, a favourite with holidaymakers for its close proximity to both the marina and resort precincts. The apartment has a one-of-a-kind 216-square-metre floorplan, making it exceptional value. It offers a spacious kitchen and an expansive living area that flows out onto the extensive undercover patio. Enjoy the magnificent view overlooking Catseye Beach to Whitsunday Island. Three generous bedrooms, including a master with walk-in robe, and two bathrooms make this property ideal for the whole family.

**POINCIANA 105**

2 MARINA DRIVE

**\$850,000**

2 1 1

This stylish two-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment is located in one of Hamilton Island's most popular developments and offers exceptional value. The north-facing aspect captures the warmth of the winter sun and the cool ocean breezes of summer. The spectacular eastern view lines that overlook beautiful Catseye Bay can also be enjoyed from here. Poinciana Lodge is centrally located on the island and is a short walk to the Resort Centre, Catseye Beach and the world-class marina. This is a popular complex on Hamilton Island, a favourite with holidaymakers and offers excellent returns for its owners.



### PAVILLIONS 13

1 AIRPORT DRIVE

**\$4,200,000**

3  3  1 

Pavillions is one of Hamilton Island's most exclusive developments, the only waterfront luxury apartments on the island that offers an exclusive marina berth right at the front door. This newly renovated 350-square-metre first-floor property is spaciouly set on a single level, with spectacular northern views across the Hamilton Island Marina. The flexible layout offers an expansive kitchen, an open-plan living and dining area, and a luxurious media room and study. The apartment is also complemented by a spacious wraparound balcony and private spa. Other features include a secure garage, 18-metre marina berth and luxury furnishings, all this within walking distance to the marina precinct.



### ANCHORAGE 6

6 BANKSIA COURT

**OFFERS OVER \$950,000**

2  2 

This stunning two-level townhouse offers the best of both worlds. Move in and live the island life or let the property work for you. Anchorage 6 is set amongst lush tropical gardens and offers a great outlook across the sparkling pool and gardens to the beautiful crystal-clear blue waters of the Whitsunday islands. The living area is centred around the well-appointed kitchen that boasts stone benchtops, a glass splash back, gas cooking and generous storage. The spacious, relaxing living area also offers unparalleled views from a generously sized balcony. The lower level features two well-sized bedrooms. The master suite comes with an elegant ensuite and spa bath and the finishing touch, its own private balcony.

**PROPERTY SALES: CONTACT LIAM KEARNEY 0458 178 601 OR SCOTT BOWSHIRE 0428 306 031**

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**PROPERTY SALES: 07 4948 9101 PERMANENT RENTALS: 07 4946 8028 HOLIDAY HOMES PROPERTY MANAGEMENT: 07 4946 8746**





**INFINITY**

11 WHITSUNDAY BOULEVARD  
**OFFERS OVER \$3,999,000**

5 5 2

This luxury residence is an impressive 521 square metres with an open-plan, three-level design. The kitchen, dining, living and balcony are all on the upper level, perfectly placed for entertaining while enjoying the views. An easy staircase leads to the middle level and the impressive master bedroom, a generous second bedroom — both with open-plan ensuite bathrooms — plus a third bedroom and laundry. The lower level is another house in itself with a second master bedroom and an additional large bedroom with ensuite bathroom, lounge and neat kitchenette that all open up on to a large deck, capturing all the sun. The centrepiece is the breathtaking namesake infinity pool and spa. The home is set on a 2035-square-metre parcel of land, and sleeps up to 14 people. It was thoughtfully designed for holiday rentals and has strong forward bookings.

**CASUARINA COVE 17**

1 ACACIA DRIVE  
**\$1,500,000 +**

3 2 1

Offering all the comforts of home in a spectacular location. This spaciously designed 230-square-metre property is split across two levels, each featuring a large balcony with panoramic views across Dent Passage. It is situated in the heart of the Hamilton Island Marina precinct and is an easy walk to access all the marina has to offer, making this a highly sought-after property for both investors and holiday guests. This property has undergone renovations to both bathrooms and deck and has new furniture and appliances throughout. It is sold fully furnished.



**BLUE SANDS**

5-NIGHT MINIMUM STAY  
**FROM: \$3600 PER NIGHT**  
**MAXIMUM CAPACITY: 12 PEOPLE**

6 5 2

Admire the turquoise waters of The Whitsundays from a large covered outdoor balcony, which overlooks the private pool on the lower level. Downstairs, find a 12-seat dining table and barbecue, conveniently located for outdoor entertaining and dining beside the pool. With water views from every room and an ideal location near One Tree Hill, this newly renovated home is an ideal choice for groups or larger families.



**YACHT HARBOUR TOWER 7**

4-NIGHT MINIMUM STAY  
**FROM: \$2000 PER NIGHT**  
**MAXIMUM CAPACITY: 8 PEOPLE**

4 4 1

This light-filled apartment offers beautiful views over the Hamilton Island Marina, along with all the space and conveniences needed to make the most of island life. Admire the glistening waters of the Whitsunday islands from the apartment's covered outdoor balcony, which also includes seating for eight people, a barbecue and sun lounges.



**BELLA VISTA EAST 6**

4-NIGHT MINIMUM STAY  
**FROM: \$820 PER NIGHT**  
**MAXIMUM CAPACITY: 4 PEOPLE**

2 2 1

The tranquil northern end of the island is home to this bright open-plan apartment, which boasts ocean views and a practical single-level layout. Families with young children will love being able to cool off after a day exploring the island in the complex's shared pool, before taking in the views across tropical gardens towards Fitzalan Passage from the generous balcony.



**YACHT HARBOUR TOWER 10**

4-NIGHT MINIMUM STAY  
**FROM: \$2000 PER NIGHT**  
**MAXIMUM CAPACITY: 8 PEOPLE**

4 4 1

This newly renovated apartment offers modern interiors and spectacular views over the Whitsunday waterways. Watch the sunset from the covered balcony which has an outdoor dining setting for eight people, sun lounges and a barbecue, or relax by the shared complex pool. The apartment is conveniently located close to Hamilton Island Marina.

**HOLIDAY RENTALS: CONTACT HAMILTON ISLAND HOLIDAYS 137 333 (02 9433 0444)**

To view the full Hamilton Island Holiday Homes rental listings go to [hamiltonislandholidayhomes.com.au](http://hamiltonislandholidayhomes.com.au)

\*RATES AND MINIMUM STAYS QUOTED ARE BASED ON LOW SEASON. OTHER RATES AND DURATIONS OF STAY APPLY, PLEASE ENQUIRE AT TIME OF BOOKING.

**PROPERTY MANAGEMENT: CONTACT HAMILTON ISLAND HOLIDAY HOMES 07 4946 8746**

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