

# REEF

HAMILTON ISLAND &  
THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

MAGAZINE

**Natural Wonder**  
Preserving the splendour  
of the Great Barrier Reef

**Explosion of Colour**  
Audi Hamilton Island  
Race Week

**Grand Design**  
The iconic new Hamilton  
Island Yacht Club

**Fashion in Paradise**  
Collette Dinnigan's  
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# REEF

HAMILTON ISLAND & THE GREAT BARRIER REEF  
MAGAZINE

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REEF Magazine is proudly printed in Australia.



# Time Out

**W**e are very proud to bring you this first issue of *REEF Magazine*. Inside you'll find inspiring stories about the amazing new Hamilton Island Yacht Club and, for keen golfers, the great news that a new golf course, designed by the legendary Peter Thomson, is now open on Dent Island.

But some of you plan to relax and re-charge your batteries and we've got some fascinating stories for you too, including a sneak peek at Collette Dinnigan's latest collection – she is a huge fan of our exclusive qualia resort and has staged her new collection showings here during Audi Hamilton Island Race Week for the past few years. I was also privileged enough to have an interview with one of Australia's true master chefs Tetsuya Wakuda, where he revealed his love of the Great Barrier Reef region. For Tetsuya, a perfect day up here is catching a big fish, cooking it and sharing it with friends.

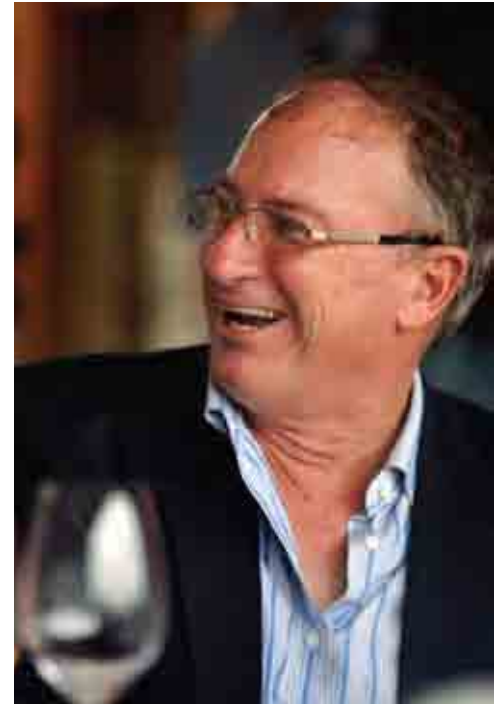
In fact, that's what *REEF Magazine* is all about: a celebration of this extraordinary area within the Great Barrier Reef Marine

Park and what it can offer you, the traveller. *REEF Magazine* works with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) to ensure that visitors to this precious area are informed about the special highlights of the region, and the important initiatives being taken to preserve the natural wonder of this unique reef. It almost goes without saying how important it is to take care of it and preserve it for future generations. I defy anyone to spend a day snorkelling at the reef and not be moved by its fragile beauty.

There is so much to discover here, whether you are a first-timer eager for a trip out to the reef, or a regular visitor itching to head out to the new golf course or to have a lazy day by the pool. We hope the pages of *REEF Magazine* inspire you to make the most of this wonderful and special region.

Margaret Merten  
Editorial Director

# A New Beginning



W elcome to an exciting new era for Hamilton Island. The first time I visited the island, I recall being overwhelmed by its extraordinary potential to be a truly world-class destination. I'm proud to say that the realisation of this vision is well underway. We are creating a place that we believe expresses the best that Australia has to offer and we are excited to be able to share all of this with you through our new *REEF Magazine* – Hamilton Island and the Great Barrier Reef.

Situated in one of the most breathtaking areas in the world, Hamilton Island is located at the edge of the Great Barrier Reef – one of the most fascinating, celebrated and iconic ecosystems on the planet. We are pleased to be able to provide a stepping off point from which you are able to enjoy and explore this amazing natural wonder.

Our aim has always been to offer the very best to each visitor, regardless of the length of their stay, the reasons for visiting or the way in which they choose to spend their time on and around Hamilton Island. The diversity of available activities as well as the high standard of accommodation, food and beverage and entertainment across the island is better than ever before.

We have been delighted by the success

of Tourism Queensland's 'Best Job In The World' campaign, which has gained the attention of people all over the globe. Another exciting recent development is the start of direct flights to Hamilton Island from Sydney with Virgin Blue.

And the new world-class facilities opening in the second half of '09 provide even further reasons for people to come and visit. Renowned as a sailing paradise, the impressive new Hamilton Island Yacht Club, designed by Walter Barda, builds on a proud sailing tradition and will become an icon in the region, while the spectacular Peter Thomson-designed, 18-hole Hamilton Island Golf Club on nearby Dent Island adds another premium offering.

Hamilton Island is an experience, not just a destination. I encourage you to explore all that this fascinating region has to offer, whether it be experiencing it first hand when you visit us here, or through *REEF Magazine*.

I hope you enjoy our first issue.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandy".

Andrew (Sandy) Oatley  
Chairman

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49

67

72

85



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## DEPARTMENTS

08

### Highlights

What's happening on Hamilton Island and in The Great Barrier Reef region

10

### Precious Things

Hamilton Island gift guide



12

### Essential Elements

No trip would be complete without...

65

### A Piece of Paradise

The ultimate holiday home experience

## UP CLOSE

22

### On the Catwalk

Celebrated designer Collette Dinnigan brings Paris to Paradise with her exclusive on-island showings



46

### The Perfectionist

Celebrated international chef, Tetsuya Wakuda is happiest on a boat, with fishing rod in hand

60

### Top of the Game

The pressure after football – John Eales tackles corporate life with customary zeal and professionalism

## ON THE WATER

14

### Race Week

Celebrating the yachting event of the year – Audi Hamilton Island Race Week

18

### Design Icon

The Hamilton Island Yacht Club, a masterpiece of design



58

### Paddle Power

The colour and the competition of the Hamilton Island Outrigger Cup brings a different kind of watersport to the area

# Contents

REEF Magazine

Issue 01

## ON THE REEF

26

### Protecting the Wonder

As climate pressures conspire to unbalance a natural wonder, work is underway to preserve the reef



## AT THE TABLE

50

### More than Mud

The Mudgee region makes its mark as an emerging wine area with a rich history and a tremendous future

## THE ART OF EXCELLENCE

42

### Celebrating Excellence

Cultural centre, qualia hosts *Vogue Entertaining & Travel* and The Australian Ballet



## ON THE GREEN

32

### Dream Drives

Tee time awaits for a golfing experience like no other with the new Peter Thomson-designed Hamilton Island Golf Club

## DO NOT DISTURB

54

### Spa qualia

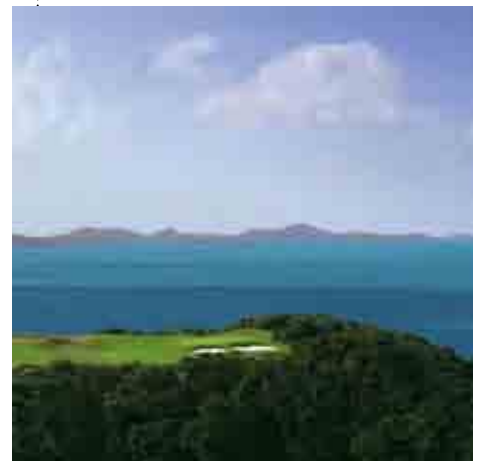
The ultimate luxury indulgence at the ultimate resort

## ISLAND LIFE

38

### You Wish

The Best Job In The World – an international sensation with just one winner. Call this work?



# Hamilton Island - 2009 Highlights



## August

- 09 – 14** Caught on film – David Oliver and Peter Eastway 'Away' photography course
- 21 – 29** Warm Nights, Cool Jazz – a simmering program of free jazz concerts around the island
- 21 – 29** Audi Hamilton Island Race Week – Australia's largest and most exciting offshore yachting regatta



## December

**18 Dec – 17 Jan**

Summer Festival – a great time to be on the island, with extra activities and events including comedy shows, cinema by the sea, cooking classes and magic shows

- 24** Carols by Candlelight
- 25** Christmas Day
- 31** New Year's Eve – celebrate with live entertainment and fireworks

For more event information visit [www.hamiltonisland.com.au/events](http://www.hamiltonisland.com.au/events)

### EVENTS ON THE ISLAND

## October

- 06 – 08** Warm Nights, Cool Jazz – the most stunning backdrop to any jazz concert in a program of free concerts around the island
- 06 - 08** Spring Festival – an exciting array of activities and events to see in the warmer months
- 23 – 25** Pas de Deux in Paradise – perfection meets perfection as the Australian Ballet performs at qualia

## November

- 03** And they're off and racing – Melbourne Cup Day Lunch & Calcutta
- 11** Remembrance Day
- 22 – 29** Tri Hamilton Island – get active with a five day workshop followed by the inaugural Whitehaven Beach two kilometre ocean swim and triathlon

### EVENTS IN THE REGION

## August

**29 – 30** '09 Airlie Beach Festival of Sport

For more information visit [www.whitsunday.qld.gov.au](http://www.whitsunday.qld.gov.au)





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### All That Glitters

A veritable treasure trove of stunning pieces, The Art Gallery on Front Street promises unique pieces to remind you of that special visit to the island. Turquoise and silver earrings from Riley Burnett are just such a find, but only a taste of what is in store.

**The Art Gallery, Front Street, 07 4948 9657 (59657)**

### Sleek by the Pool

Amongst a comprehensive range of designer swimwear, Lidea By Maryan Mehlhorn stands out as the perfect complement to any poolside excursion. Timeless, elegant and essential.

**Hamilton Island Designs, Front Street, 07 4946 8565 (58565)**



### qualia Style

Not surprisingly, Hamilton Island's luxury resort, *qualia*, also offers its guests a suitably inspiring boutique, with items like Collette Dinnigan swimwear (pictured) designed specifically for Hamilton Island.

Other labels sharing space in this exclusive boutique include John Galiano, Marc Cain, Just Cavalli, Kenzo, Camilla flowing kaftans (pictured) and Axel Mano. Simply the best.

**qualia Boutique, 07 4948 9473 (59473)**



### Modern Treasure

The perfect jewellery for this perfect location. Featuring individual pieces, pearls and precious stones, at Hamilton Island Jewellery you'll find stunning pieces for any occasion. Time to spoil yourself.

**Hamilton Island Jewellery, Resort Centre 07 4948 9857 (59857)**



### Timeless Elegance

From beautifully milled Merino T-shirts to casual wear from the finest brands, look no further than Marina Retail. Boasting the latest from the superb Henri Lloyd range of clothing for men and women, this is the perfect place to find the very best for on the water or relaxing on dry land.

**Marina Retail, Front Street, 07 4946 8180 (58180)**

# Precious Things

From cutting edge fashion and designer labels to the little things that mean so much, Hamilton Island plays host to a wealth of premier outlets for the very best in retail therapy.

### The Little Things

Perfect accompaniments for any stay on Hamilton Island as well as special items such as real Indian Nag Champa incense – sure to stir special memories long after your trip is over.

**Floral Collections, Front Street, 07 4946 8946 (58946)**





## Celebrating 100 Years of progressive performance.

This year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Audi.

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To experience progressive performance across the range, and special offers on the 100 years of Audi Limited Edition models\*, visit [audi.com.au](http://audi.com.au) today.

# The Bare Essentials

It would be almost impossible to do everything on even an extended visit to Hamilton Island and the Great Barrier Reef, but for those wanting to get a good 'feel' for the area, there are at least 10 essential elements to any visit.



## 2 What Lies Beneath?

The only way to truly appreciate the wonder of the region is to go below the surface and see what lies beneath. There are any number of ways to take the plunge, but a snorkelling trip exposes you first-hand to this world heritage listed environment. Or perhaps you'd prefer a trip to Reefworld on Hardy Reef, where the wonders below are on show through the special underwater viewing areas. No matter how you choose, it is sure to be an experience of a lifetime.

[www.fantasea.com.au](http://www.fantasea.com.au)

[www.h2osportz.com.au](http://www.h2osportz.com.au)

07 4946 8305 (58305)

## 3 Under Sail

Renowned as one of the best sailing areas on the planet, a visit to Hamilton Island is the perfect time to fine-tune your sailing skills, improve your qualifications or take those first steps and learn the ancient art from some of the very best in the world. From amateurs to the seasoned sailor, this is the place for you. Be it offshore skipper and international qualifications, skippered charters or stay and sail packages – all are catered to in the heart of the Whitsundays.

[www.sunsailwhitsundays.com.au](http://www.sunsailwhitsundays.com.au)

07 4948 9509 (59509)



## 4 A Bracing Walk

Not everything in the Whitsundays revolves around the pristine waters. A superb way to take in the views and experience the flora of the island is a bushwalk to Passage Peak. The scenery is stunning and walks can be taken at a pace that suits you. Take a picnic lunch, take your time and sit on top of the world drinking in the best views in the region.

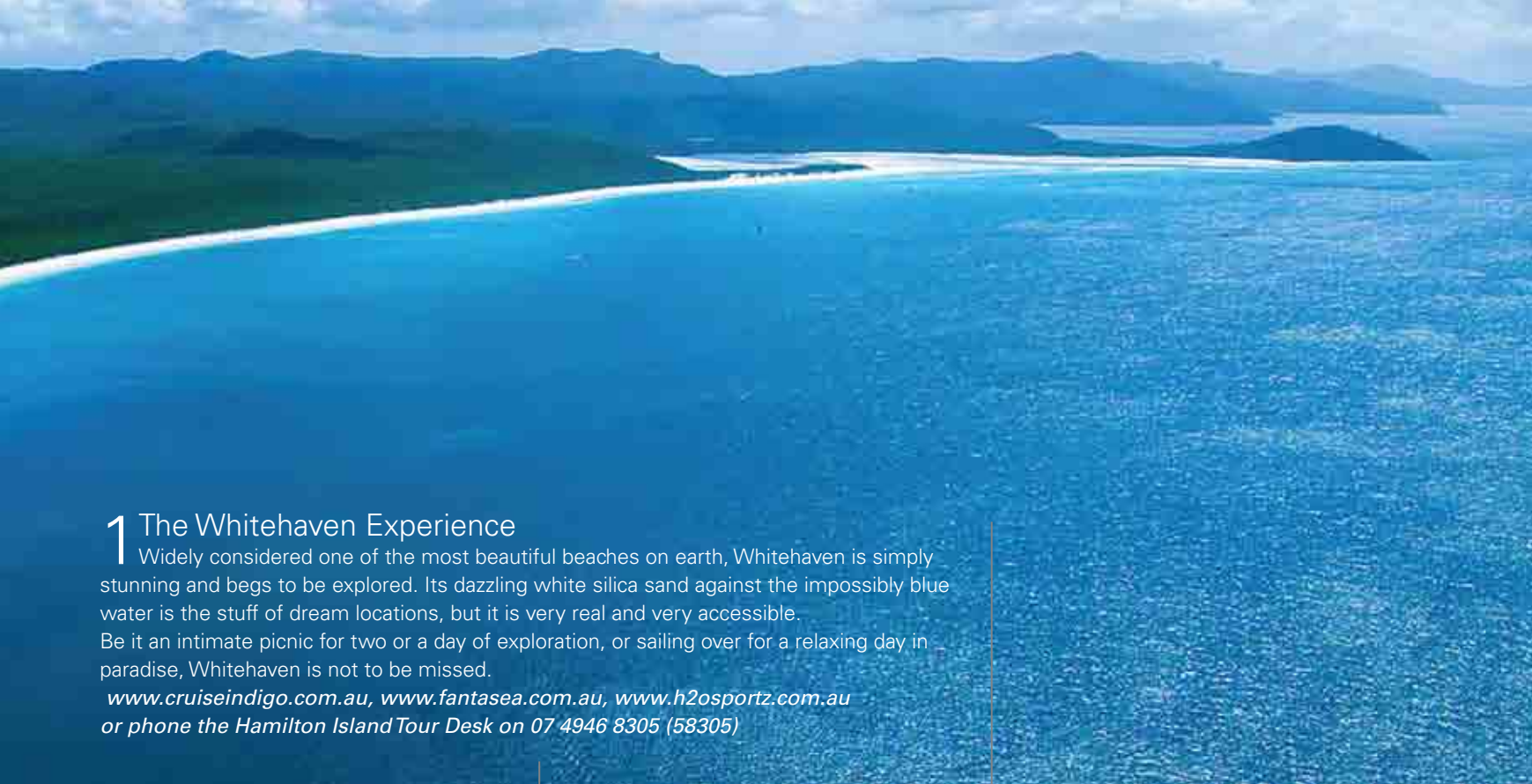
For walking trail maps, visit the Tour Desk or call 07 4946 8305 (58305)

## 5 Sunset Special

Although always stunning, experiencing sunset from a vantage point aboard a luxurious yacht gives yet another perspective that must be experienced. A chilled glass of something, a gentle sail on the classic yacht *Banjo Paterson* and a Whitsunday sunset, and you have the ingredients for an enduring memory.

[www.cruiseindigo.com.au](http://www.cruiseindigo.com.au)

07 4946 8305 (58305)



## 1 The Whitehaven Experience

Widely considered one of the most beautiful beaches on earth, Whitehaven is simply stunning and begs to be explored. Its dazzling white silica sand against the impossibly blue water is the stuff of dream locations, but it is very real and very accessible.

Be it an intimate picnic for two or a day of exploration, or sailing over for a relaxing day in paradise, Whitehaven is not to be missed.

[www.cruiseindigo.com.au](http://www.cruiseindigo.com.au), [www.fantasea.com.au](http://www.fantasea.com.au), [www.h2osportz.com.au](http://www.h2osportz.com.au)  
or phone the Hamilton Island Tour Desk on 07 4946 8305 (58305)

## 6 On The Water

Although sailing has long been a favourite way of experiencing the region, sea kayaking adds another dimension, allowing you an intimate way of exploring 74 islands within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Enjoy a water-level view of this inspiring area in safety with experienced guides to help enhance your visit.

07 4946 8305 (58305)



## 7 From On High

Of course underwater gives one perspective, but the only way to fully appreciate the largest living structure on earth and the most photographed piece of reef in the world (Heart Reef) is with a flightseeing tour. Climb aboard a helicopter for the flight of your life.

[www.avta.com.au](http://www.avta.com.au)  
07 4946 8305 (58305)

## 9 The Long Lunch

Far from the pressures of the everyday, this is your chance to sit back, relax and enjoy a long lunch. On Hamilton Island you'll find a raft of outstanding eating spots to suit any time of day or occasion, but lunch is one that should never be rushed. Along the marina you will be spoilt for choice when it comes to fine food and wine, but after all – this is what living is all about.

07 4946 8305 (58305)



## 8 Going Deeper

For those not satisfied with snorkelling and wanting a deeper experience on the reef, the only solution is to take the plunge and explore on scuba. Whether you are an experienced diver or wanting to learn from scratch, there is no better place than the Great Barrier Reef, and no greater underwater experience.

[www.h2osportz.com.au](http://www.h2osportz.com.au)  
07 4946 8305 (58305)

## 10 The One That Got Away

The waters of this region are teeming with some of the best sports fish in the world and make for the perfect place to wet a line and chance your hand. Whether you are an experienced fisherman or trying this exhilarating sport for the first time, you are in the right place, with the professionals at Renegade Charters and Hamilton Island Watersports on hand to impart a wealth of experience and even clean your catch of the day, ready for the table. From private to group charters, everything is taken care of.

[www.renegadecharters.com.au](http://www.renegadecharters.com.au) 07 4946 8305 (58305)



# And They're ■ Racing

Hailed as one of the most prestigious sailing events in the world and certainly in one of the most stunning locations, Audi Hamilton Island Race Week never fails to inspire, from the hardcore yachties to those more interested in taking things at a much slower pace. This is one of the most exciting events on water.

STORY LISA RATCLIFFE  
PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREA FRANCOLINI AND JACK ATLEY



There aren't many sporting challenges where an international backpacker innocuously enjoying the sights of Airlie Beach suddenly finds themselves cajoled onto a local charter boat and racing in company with Australia's social and business elite.

But that's exactly what happens at Audi Hamilton Island Race Week where cruising families, expats, tradespeople, multi-millionaires, backpackers, media moguls and even Knights of the British Empire come together in a seven day colour explosion atop the turquoise waters of the stunning

Whitsunday islands, at the edge of the Great Barrier Reef.

For the sailing enthusiast, whether they are competing or spectating, this is absolute heaven, but even for those who are not nautically inclined, this is a party atmosphere like no other, with a wealth of celebrations and activities going on throughout the week.

Live music, the finest food from the region, wine tastings or just kicking back with a cool drink and enjoying the island, there is a special level of energy on Hamilton Island during the competition, and it is impossible not to be swept up in it.

The '08 Silver Jubilee Audi Hamilton Island Race Week attracted a record 225 entries and indeed record numbers of spectators enjoying the action. The victorious Australian Sailing Team, just back from their competition at the Olympics, made an appearance and were honoured with a parade along Front Street before signing autographs for the assembled fans.

Fireworks, fun and a party atmosphere were the name of the game and the whole island and everyone in attendance got behind the event, but of course, while it was all a big party for most, the reason for



the event centred around some very stiff competition on the water.

In the IRC Grand Prix division 1 line honours contest, near sisterships *Wild Oats X* and the development of the Sydney based *Reichel/Pugh 63, Black Jack*, staged a thrilling match-up with the latter breaking *Wild Oats'* two year stranglehold on the fastest course times in their first head to head.

The backbone of last year's anniversary fleet came from the non-grand prix and the cruising boats as former winners, including Peter Briggs' original 1984 winner *Hitchhiker*, which was trucked from Perth for the anniversary edition, joined household names from a golden era of Australian maxi boat racing, and those celebrating their Race Week debut.

For the 26th edition of Audi Hamilton Island Race Week the best part of the fleet once again hails from the cruising sector and from the lesser known Humpybong Yacht Club, Noosa Heads Rowing and Sailing Club and Port Dalrymple Yacht Clubs. They and a raft of colourful charter boats join the IRC heavyweights from the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron and the Royal Yacht Clubs

of Victoria and Tasmania, amongst others, for a week of unparalleled competition.

To appeal to the broadest spectrum of sailboats, there is a special division for Sports Boats. Beyond that, if any particular class that fits within this category is present in numbers, they compete in their own division.

Hamilton Island CEO Glenn Bourke looks forward to hosting the fleet each year and using Audi Hamilton Island Race Week to showcase the island's newest developments.

"This year we've made further improvements including reconfiguring a number of marina berths to better accommodate larger yachts.

"The new yacht club hosts the traditional Skipper's Welcome Party while a 30 metre-plus, ex-America's Cup mast is erected in pride of place on the yacht club's sculptured deck and western keel that protrudes into Dent Passage, acting as the 'boat end' of the start line for those races starting in the passage," adds Bourke.

The biggest single change to the racing program is the replacement of Whitehaven Beach this year with the Dent Island Day party, marking a return to the camaraderie

of the event's early years.

Regatta Director Denis Thompson plans a short sprint race for all divisions on the morning of the Dent Island party, for all but the IRC classes these races involve what is historically known as a 'Mark Foy' start – a handicap or pursuit start. The IRC yachts have their own sprint race with a conventional scratch start.

For the third year the Prix d'Elegance is open to all yachts, the judging for 'Best Presented Yacht and Crew' and 'Best Fun Themed Yacht and Crew' taking place as the boats depart the harbour for their respective starts. With the judges located on the end of the northern breakwater, yachts and crews should be at their presentable best as they motor past that point.

Audi Hamilton Island Race Week is the culmination of the four part Audi IRC Australian Championship. Peter Sorensen's Sydney 36CR *The Philosopher's Club* beat Steel's *Quest* in '08 by less than a point, the Sydney owner/skipper and his amateur crew of ex-skiff sailors collecting the keys to a brand new Audi Q7 for their commitment and consistency during the series that spans three states.





# WILD OATS XI

In '08 Bob Oatley's high tech maxi *Wild Oats XI* stamped its name yet again in the Rolex Sydney Hobart annals when it swept to its fourth consecutive line honours victory in the world-renowned 628 nautical mile blue water classic.

The current record holder, with a time of 1 day 18 hours 40 minutes 10 seconds set in '05, overcame a number of setbacks including a torn spinnaker soon after the race start, a close encounter with a shark and a valiant fight back by Melbourne warhorse *Skandia* to supersede *Morna's* three consecutive line honours victories in the 1940s.

The '09 Rolex Sydney Hobart line honours contest is shaping up as a battle royal with Mike Slade's *Leopard* and Neville Crichton's *Alfa Romeo* rumoured to be joining *Wild Oats XI*, the newly configured *Skandia* and the former New Zealand, now Australian owned maxi, *Zana* on the Sydney Harbour start line come Boxing Day.

With the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia increasing the maximum length overall to 30.38 metres, or 100 feet, the largest length allowance in the race's 65 year history, *Wild Oats XI* will be extended to the upper limit and will undergo other top secret modifications to better its chances of five successive line honours wins.

*Wild Oats XI* skipper Mark Richards predicts "with five fully revamped 100 footers it's going to be the toughest fought battle for line honours in the race's history. Exciting times are ahead," he suggests. ■ [www.rolexsydneyhobart.com](http://www.rolexsydneyhobart.com)

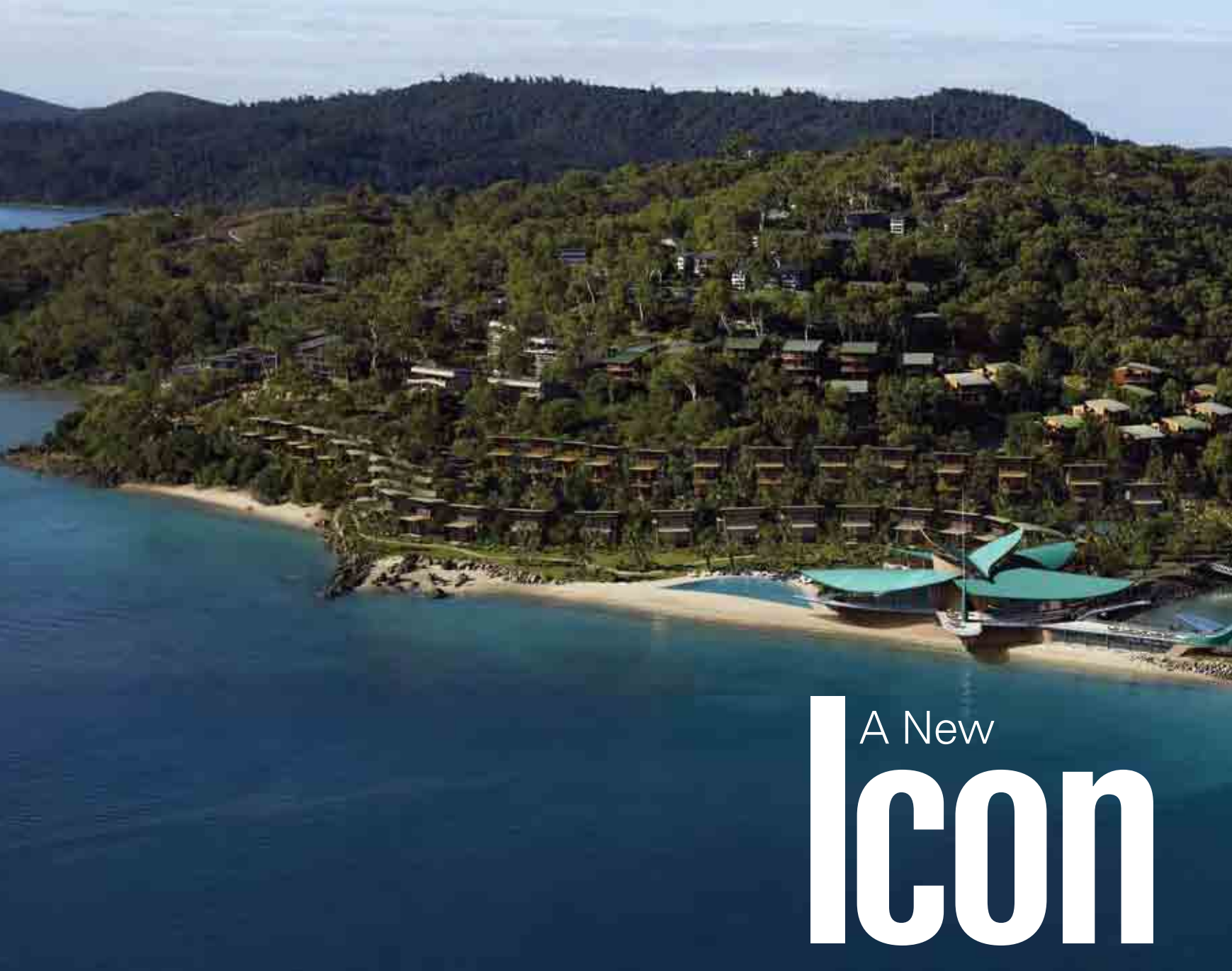
It was a bitter pill for the *Quest* crew to swallow after they hit the bricks at the aptly named Surprise Rock during a passage race around some of the magnificent islands in the Whitsunday Group, the incident costing Steel precious seconds and possibly the Audi IRC crown.

*Quest* went on to win the '08 Rolex Sydney Hobart outright in December and was one of the early confirmed starters for Audi Hamilton Island Race Week '09 after taking the laurels in the Sail Port Stephens Regatta, a win with the added bonus of free entry for Audi Hamilton Island Race Week '09. Already a three-time Race Week winner, Steel's latest formidable results surely pencil him into a podium finish without a start gun being fired.

Onshore the Audi Hamilton Island Race Week program is vibrant with celebrity chef dinners, tennis coaching clinics with Todd Woodbridge, Collette Dinnigan fashion show and many more favourites, plus a few new ones, to keep the shore crew happy. It is an extraordinary event that marries war on water with a festival atmosphere simply not to be missed. ■

[www.hamiltonislandraceweek.com.au](http://www.hamiltonislandraceweek.com.au)





# A New Icon

Like all iconic buildings around the world, the new Hamilton Island Yacht Club defies easy description. Although still not quite complete at time of writing, the structure has been turning heads for some time as the project has taken shape – and a stunning shape it is too.

From the very outset, the idea was always to produce something in keeping with the region and the nautical theme that would serve all the practical needs of a world-class sailing facility, but also make a bold statement, and already, the yacht club is a huge talking point.

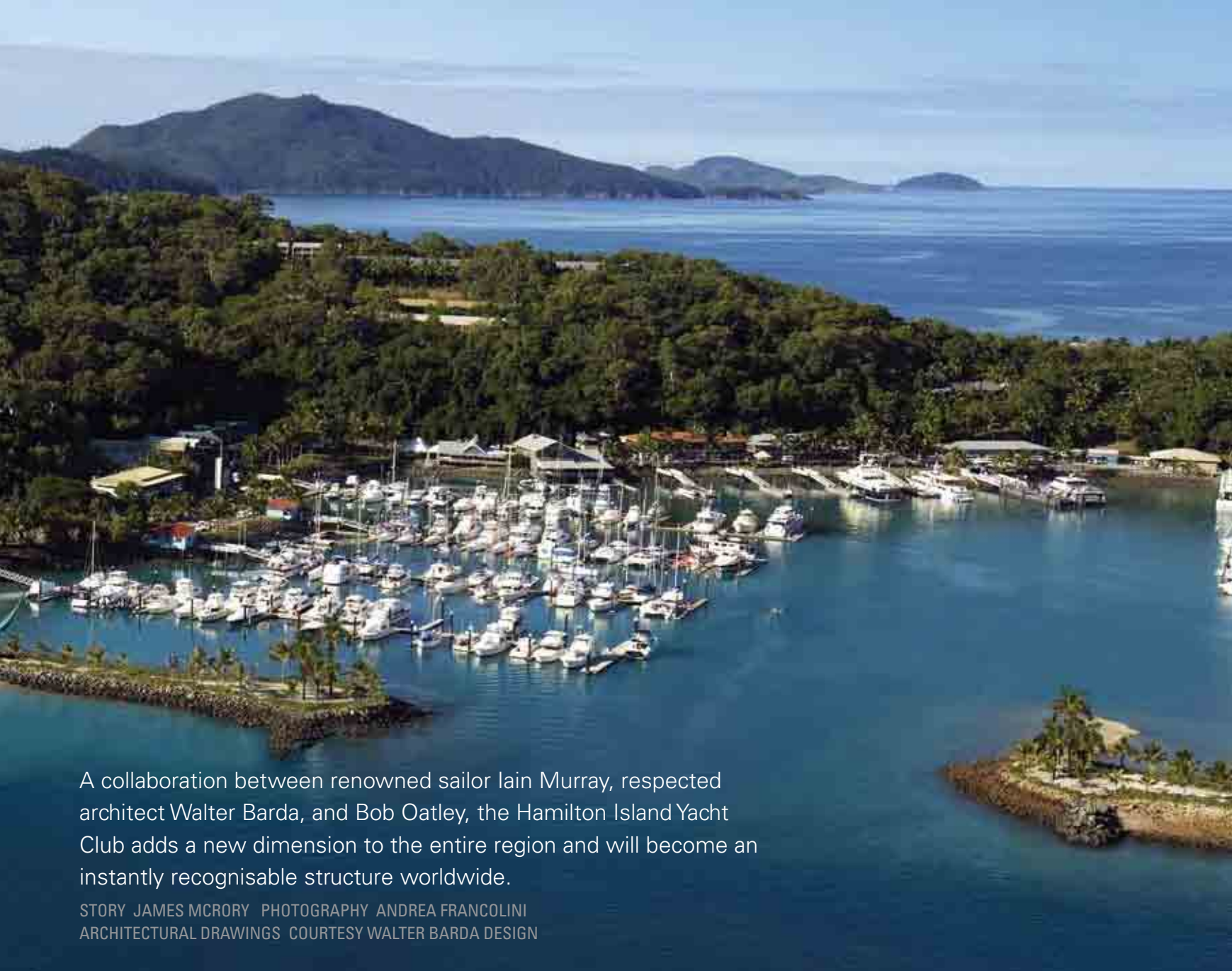
The Hamilton Island Yacht Club is a core part of the Oatley family's ongoing plan to take Hamilton Island to all new heights.

"Since we purchased Hamilton Island in '03, it has been a goal of ours to evolve it into a world-class destination," says Bob

Oatley. "We underpinned this plan with the refurbishment of many of our existing resorts and also restaurants and public spaces and in '07 we opened qualia – our luxury resort on the northernmost point of the island."

Certainly, qualia has become an acclaimed benchmark resort internationally and the addition of the new golf course (on neighbouring Dent Island) and the yacht club only adds to the island's appeal and range of world-class facilities.

"I think you have to be practical first and foremost," says Oatley, "the yacht club is an outstanding addition to the island and one which our guests will be able to utilise on a daily basis. It has conference rooms, VIP meeting rooms, restaurants, wedding facilities as well as a gym and a pool. We are also building 35 villas which will be privately owned but also potentially



A collaboration between renowned sailor Iain Murray, respected architect Walter Barda, and Bob Oatley, the Hamilton Island Yacht Club adds a new dimension to the entire region and will become an instantly recognisable structure worldwide.

STORY JAMES MCRORY PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREA FRANCOLINI  
ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS COURTESY WALTER BARDA DESIGN

available as accommodation.”

“Having said all that,” he concedes, “we obviously wanted the building to be eye catching, and Walter Barda (the project’s architect), has done an amazing job and I think this will become a true icon for the Great Barrier Reef and one of Australia’s most important architectural contributions in the years to come.”

“The dream was to create a club that would rival the best in the world,” says Iain Murray, long time friend of the Oatley family and co-developer of the yacht club project.

“To have the opportunity to create a brand new club in such a beautiful region, with a unique structure and design, means we can continue to offer a premier yachting destination,” he says.

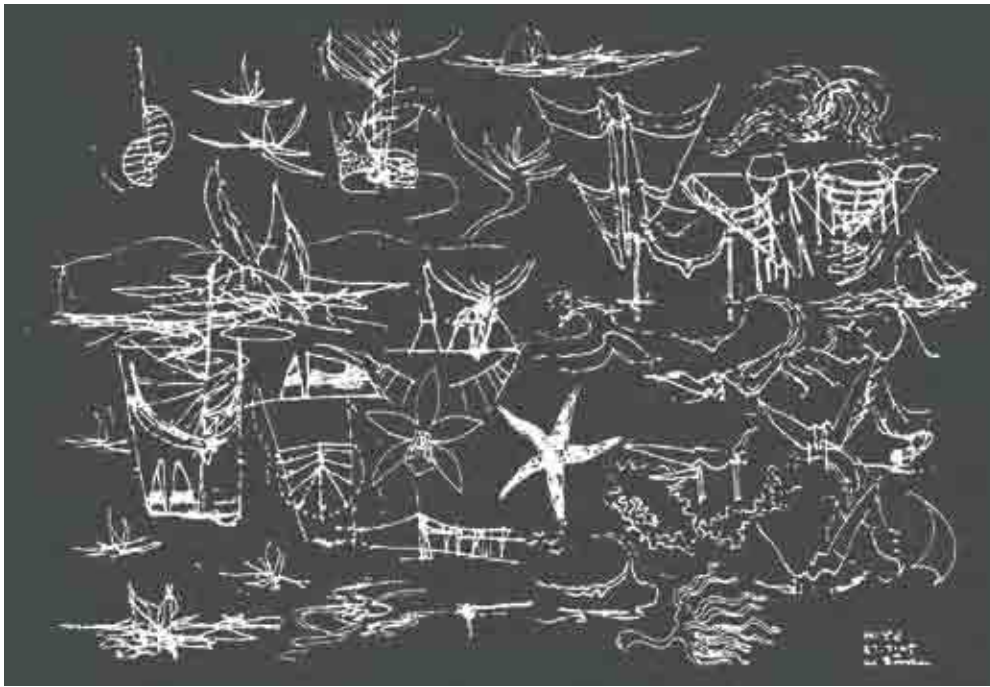
Certainly the desire that this building be iconic underpinned the project from the start,

yet architect Walter Barda’s first visit to the proposed site found him looking at a site that was both stunning in its location on the very edge of the Dent Passage, but also scarred from previous quarrying.

“From my first site visit,” says Walter Barda “I sensed an opportunity that the yacht club project should celebrate and enhance its site and I remember Bob Oatley’s enthusiasm for ‘sails and water’ as a starting point for the imagination,” he recalls.

“I saw an opportunity to go for the ‘big picture’ as a celebration of tropical, marine life and boat form and the drama of yachts taking on the natural forces of wind and water,” says Barda.

The result combines these elements to arrive at a striking building which no doubt stirs different emotions and means different things to each individual. There is



*"The design is everything we hoped for and more. I think people will really catch their breath when they see how beautiful it is." (Bob Oatley)*



no denying its dynamic form and the 'ripple effect' of the 35 freestanding villas which fan out from the central club.

"We are committed to hiring experts and letting them do their job," says Oatley. "This worked very well for us with qualia as another architectural example. Chris Beckingham is an excellent designer and he built us a resort that sits beautifully within the Australian landscape," he recalls.

"The yacht club design is all Walter's and it responds beautifully to the setting as it

*"The passion of Bob and Iain's connections with sailing and exemplary, cutting edge boat design pushed the imaginative possibilities of the project for me..." (Walter Barda)*

seems to float gracefully along the curve of the waters edge," says Oatley.

"The passion of Bob and Iain's connections with sailing and exemplary, cutting edge boat design pushed the imaginative possibilities of the project for me," says Barda. "With the enormous promise and spectacular outcome of qualia, I was certain we needed to build on the precedent of that development, but with a kind of complementary sense of visuals and mood. The yacht club had to represent a dynamic kind of energy, as opposed to qualia's calm."

Dynamic is certainly the result, as was the construction process. Of course, an

undertaking of this size and scope brings with it its own special set of problems and the very location of the project, meant any number of challenges to overcome to realise the desired outcome.

Iain Murray recalls:

"Building on the island – any island really – presents issues, such as needing to source and accommodate additional staff for the building period, getting materials and equipment onto the island can be more difficult as well as working around seasonal weather constraints" says Iain Murray. "Of course any construction job can be affected by these things – careful planning and flexibility are required to construct such a complex building."

The five-metre daily tides, geologically unstable ground conditions and the very complex process of translating the challenging structural design into reality all presented their own special set of challenges to the teams involved. But as the yacht club nears completion, the results are, as Walter Barda so eloquently puts it, 'emerging like a chrysalis from the sea'.

Certainly, Bob Oatley is well pleased with the outcome:

"The design is everything we hoped for and more. I think people will really catch their breath when they see how beautiful it is."

Iain Murray echoes the sentiment, calling the yacht club 'innovative and visually very impressive'.

Indeed it is impressive and becoming

an instantly recognisable part of the entire region. Barda is excited by the reactions of people to the finished building and surrounds:

"The imagery of the building provokes many analogies, yet the ambiguous perspectives of the building will keep us guessing as to what it all means, but hopefully strike a chord of emotion about this beautiful place."

Certainly the Hamilton Island Yacht Club will not fail to stir emotion in all who come into contact with it, and is destined to become inexorably linked with the stunning Great Barrier Reef. ■



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## Designing Mind

She's had the honour of being on an Australian stamp, has been chosen alongside Hollywood greats such as Robert De Niro and Kate Winslet to promote American Express and is our most famous Australian fashion designer. Collette Dinnigan may be a household name and an international darling of the fashion world but what many people might not know is that this marks the third year she has shown her much-anticipated Cruise collection exclusively at qualia on Hamilton Island during the annual Audi Hamilton Island Race Week events. In fact, it's one of her favourite places, especially qualia, which she feels is a truly world-class resort, and with her amount of travelling, this is something she is very fit to judge.

"We don't show the Cruise collection anywhere else and we show it before it goes

A devoted fan of the Great Barrier Reef, this year is the third year, Collette Dinnigan has chosen qualia on Hamilton Island as the exclusive venue to show her Cruise collection. She spoke with Margaret Merten about her love affair with the island and the secrets to her international success.

STORY MARGARET MERTEN  
PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREA FRANCOLINI  
AND TROYT COBURN

into store." For those lucky enough to be invited, the collection "includes bikinis, suits, towels, beach and party dresses and lots of colour," she explains.

"It's perfect for that kind of environment," she adds, meaning the luxurious surrounds of Hamilton's premier accommodation. She's keen to emphasise the fact that it is a true exclusive. "It really is an exclusive showing, not just something we do to make the chicks feel good on the island while the boys are racing," she laughs.

"Every time I do something it's got to be done properly and so doing a show for the first time with that collection is always what's exciting. This year I'm hoping to do it by the swimming pool." This is simply genius, of course, as the infinity-edge swimming pool at qualia not only provides a natural catwalk around the pool but is also the perfect backdrop for the latest collection, which is strong on colour and print,

does. "There's a lot of soul in what I do and I really invest 100 percent in what I do. I don't ever re-hash and doing this collection for Hamilton Island and showing it there for the first time, I put as much effort into it as I would do showing in Paris. In one way, it's meant to be my Cruise-y collection that I can sell through and be minimal stress but it's become just as important as the other because I have an environment in which to showcase it and nothing is ever second best."

She also loves qualia resort, enthusiastically saying "Thank God we've got something like that in Australia! It's about time," explaining that she sends overseas friends there to unwind and discover the Whitsundays. "I think qualia is fantastic, it's a world-class resort."

*"We don't show the Cruise collection anywhere else and we show it before it goes into store."*

Dinnigan explains, giving us a sneak peek at what to expect.

"The collection is very bright. Last season we had a tropical island feel, and for me this season is much more Mediterranean, with very, very strong Mediterranean blues and cobalts with crisp whites and aqua. And then it moves to pinks and coral colours which to me is much more about the sunsets. I wanted a sunset on the water feeling. There's also a lot of graphic prints mixing the tones of those very iridescent colours, and blooming floral shades and prints. I've played around with the prints to make lots of really great summer dresses that are short and easy to wear. Nothing is really fitted and sexy – the long gowns are – but the daywear is much more about volume in the sleeve and straighter lines and shorter so you can throw them on with a pair of flat shoes. It's not glam. It's much more relaxed, but it's strong and confident."

It's clear, listening to Dinnigan describe her designs that she is still extremely passionate about what she does. That after more than 27 shows in Paris (she remains one of only two Australian designers to show on the prestigious Chambre Syndicale du Pret-a-Porter des Couturiers et Createurs de Mode schedule, and last year was invited onto the executive board of the organisation) she hasn't lost any excitement about what she



A perfect wrap to the showing of her Cruise collection at qualia during Audi Hamilton Island Race Week's 25th anniversary celebrations.



Sneak peek... the new collection stays true to Dinnigan's feminine creations, but with bold new patterns (above). Collette Dinnigan at qualia (top).

it is that you're off the airplane and into your room in almost 10 minutes. There's no waiting for bags and then having to drive another hour to get to the hotel." She admits to really enjoying Audi Hamilton Island Race Week, even though she is there to work and mount the catwalk show.

"When Race Week is on it's really quite exciting. You've got the whole village down there and all the boats are in town and it feels very cosmopolitan. There's a zest for life because there's so much activity happening. I think it's a real attraction to the island. It is the gateway to the Whitsundays and the Great Barrier Reef." All this talk of being on holiday however comes back to earth with a thump when Dinnigan admits she is still working on the Cruise collection, and they are shooting it next week. "I'm not finished," she says, although she doesn't sound too stressed about it.

But then, in a life this busy, this is just one more thing to hurdle. Like all successes, it's been a long time in the making and Dinnigan is famously not scared of hard work. After all, her career began with making beautiful, dry-clean only underwear which was snapped up by David Jones and then department stores all over the world. No-one survives the fickle fashion industry without a lot of dedication, constant work and courage. Dinnigan puts her success down to these qualities.

"I think it's being hard working and passionate about what I do and never compromising on quality that has probably been the greatest success of the business. I think in essence it's a very good value brand for the quality you actually get, and over time I think our customers appreciate that."

Her favourite part of the island is "the Beach House at qualia. It's beautiful. It's got its own swimming pool and there's another little house right down on the beach and it's just gorgeous."

She also nominates the general pool area (where she's planning the aforementioned show) and Pebble Beach restaurant by the pool. "I think I prefer it to the formal dining up in the main restaurant. I love anything that's relaxed. To me, that's life," she adds. Hamilton Island is also a great place for kids, she's eager to point out. Her daughter

*"When Race Week is on it's really quite exciting. You've got the whole village down there and all the boats are in town and it feels very cosmopolitan."*

Estella loves visiting the Koala Gallery and Dinnigan also rates the other restaurants on the island as serving excellent food in relaxed surroundings.

"I do change the menu for them when I'm there," she says, imitating her requests at the table, "Can I have it without the sauce and can you cook in olive oil and can you give me a slice of lemon..." she bursts into laughter at herself. "What I love most about

And speaking of hard work, it's time for Dinnigan to go as she has the small matter of finishing the Cruise collection and creating more gorgeously beautiful garments that will have the Audi Hamilton Island Race Week guests swooning this year. ■



Dreaming of a white wedding?



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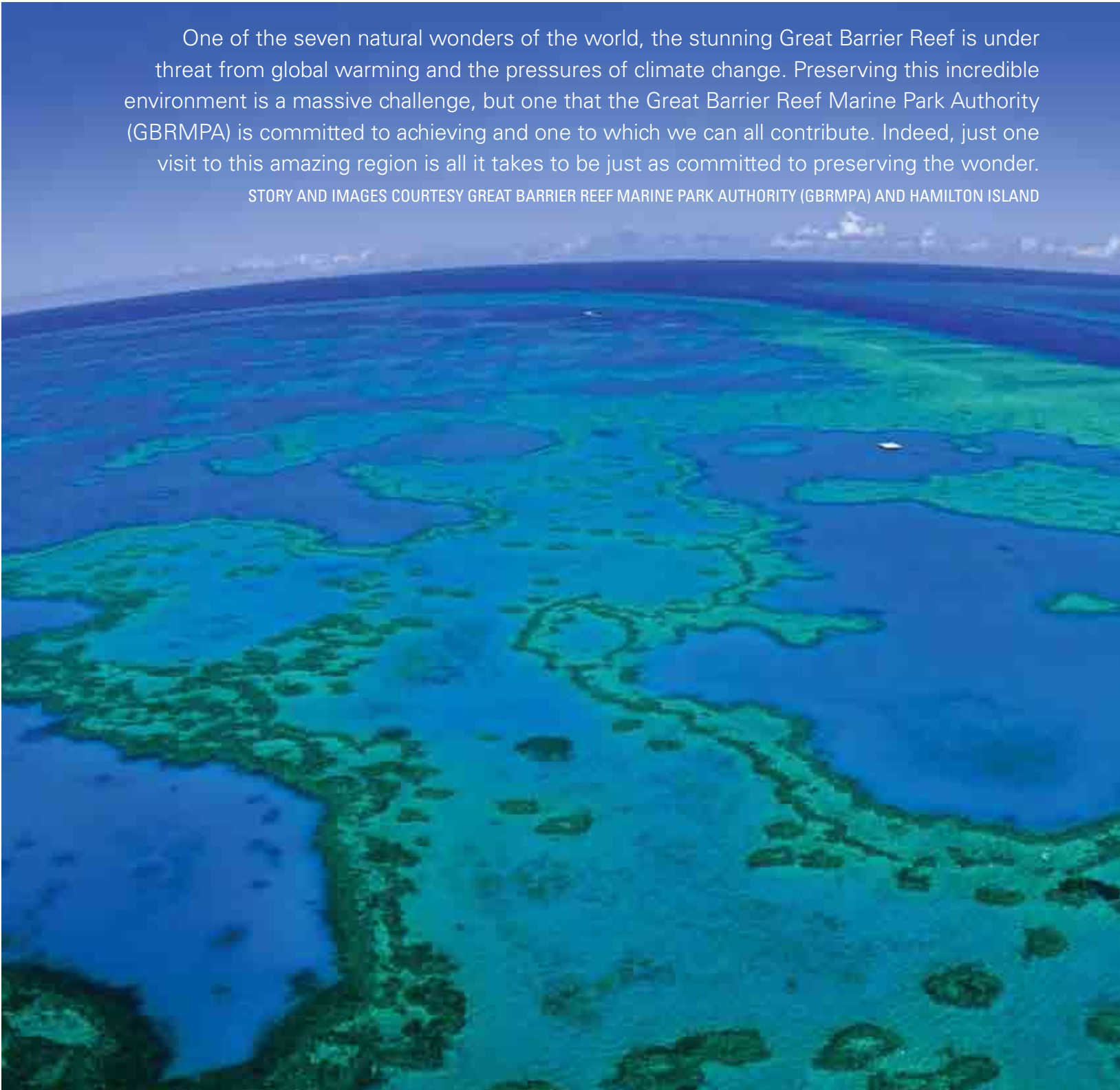


HAMILTON ISLAND  
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Great Barrier Reef Australia

# Seventh Wonder

One of the seven natural wonders of the world, the stunning Great Barrier Reef is under threat from global warming and the pressures of climate change. Preserving this incredible environment is a massive challenge, but one that the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) is committed to achieving and one to which we can all contribute. Indeed, just one visit to this amazing region is all it takes to be just as committed to preserving the wonder.

STORY AND IMAGES COURTESY GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY (GBRMPA) AND HAMILTON ISLAND





The Great Barrier Reef supports a vast and diverse range of life, from the microscopic to larger marine creatures, birds and animals. The balance is more delicate than most realise and even a reef as healthy as this will suffer irreversible damage without positive action now.



It is visible from outer space, a massive living thing of incredible beauty that astronauts say defies description. Up close, it is likewise difficult to accurately describe the Great Barrier Reef – the much used ‘kaleidoscope of colour’ does little to conjure accurate images of this living coral formation, teeming with incredibly diverse life forms, fish and mammals, many unique to the area.

Certainly, the Great Barrier Reef is a famous location, which draws visitors from all over the globe to marvel at its delicate beauty and to experience first hand one of the seven wonders of the natural world.

It is a vast living thing that is both beautiful to behold and absolutely fascinating in its complexity. Whether it is your first visit to this spectacular location or you are a regular to the area, the effect is no less powerful, which is why the preservation of the Great Barrier Reef has struck such a chord with so many people.

From government to marine park operators including Hamilton Island, the message is very clear, that everything possible must be done to ensure the continued health of the reef. These active parties are working together with communities and visitors to the area to best serve the reef and protect against some very real threats.



*With increasing water temperatures, corals become stressed, and as a result, the algae move away and the corals lose their vibrant colours and quite literally begin to starve.*

The fact is though, that this incredible natural wonder is very much in danger of irreversible damage as a result of climate forces and global warming. If left unchecked, scientists say that in the foreseeable future (and, in a worst case scenario), the reef could literally vanish forever if more people are not made aware and are prepared to act on its behalf.

### What is the Problem?

One of the most serious and immediately recognisable threats to the Great Barrier Reef is coral bleaching, a condition caused by even a small, but prolonged increase in water temperature that causes the corals to become stressed and bleach – extended exposure to higher than usual water temperatures can cause corals to die, with devastating effects on the entire ecosystem of the area.

Corals are living things, which form the foundation of reefs. They maintain a special working relationship with microscopic algae called zooxanthellae that live within their

tissue and rely on them for life.

This symbiotic relationship means that the coral obtains most of its food through the algae and the algae in turn enjoys a safe place to live. The existence of the zooxanthellae also comes with an added bonus – at least for human admirers – in that it provides the coral with its rich colours.

### How will climate change affect our oceans?

The detrimental effects of climate change occur when higher than usual levels of carbon dioxide enter the earth's atmosphere, wreaking havoc on the earth's climate and being absorbed into the oceans in increasing amounts, making seawater more acidic. The flow on effect too, is significant not just for the reef but the associated ecosystems of the area – islands, wetlands, tidal streams and waterways linked to the sea – and all of the creatures relying on them for their very survival.



## All is not Lost

Happily, there is no shortage of individuals, businesses and community groups willing to play their part in conserving the reef.

Fantasea Adventure Cruising, one of the largest marine operators in the area is very much involved in the reef's preservation, not least through the Fantasea Foundation which allocates over \$100,000 each year for monitoring and management of its own activities on the reef.

In addition to this, Fantasea manages research vessels and monitors the marine park for the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) and is an active member of the Eye on the Reef program.

Marine research co-ordinator for the Fantasea Foundation, marine biologist Emily Smart literally throws herself into her work, from monitoring species diversity and the lurking Crown-of-Thorns Starfish, to taking snorkel tours through the reef and sharing her vast knowledge of the coral formations and species of the Great Barrier Reef.

Hume Campbell, CEO of Fantasea Adventure Cruising says the research is an integral part of the company's business and vital to the reef's long term future.

"The operations of Fantasea Adventure Cruising enable us to visit this wonderful structure everyday. With this ability goes

the responsibility of understanding what we may be doing with or to the reef and then through a scientific approach, we can modify ours and others behaviour through education," he says.

Hamilton Island, also involved with the Eye on the Reef program contributes in myriad ways, from initiatives as simple as phasing out petrol buggies in favour of electric, to major schemes such as the island's waste water plant, which takes over 90 percent of the treated waste water to be used irrigating gardens and parklands.

Indeed, even architecture plays its part, not only in incorporating green solutions to new projects, but also in ensuring they are sympathetic to the surrounding environment visually.

While strict licensing ensures that there are never too many people inside the Marine Park at any given time or keeping potentially damaging activities away from 'green' zones, it is ultimately those who enjoy and work on the reef who are able to bring the message to the millions of visitors

each year. It's all about education says Hume Campbell:

"The knowledge that has been accumulated by many different activities needs to be related, understood and then communicated to the general populace, so that they through enlightenment have a different view on how to manage their behaviour within the reef area," he says.

And education does form a significant part of the process, not only through the operators and islands of the region. The Reef Guardian Schools program, started in '03 with 25 schools Australia-wide and is flourishing, including the Hamilton Island State School, where students become actively involved in promoting best practice and devise initiatives to help spread the message of conserving the reef, regardless of where people live.

Other businesses in the area, from farmers to industry on the mainland are making a concerted effort to improve the quality of water run-off to the reef while Reef Guardian Councils are likewise working with the

*Working amongst the Great Barrier Reef is a daily pleasure for many tourism operators and comes with considerable responsibility.*

Even while relaxing on holiday, the smallest efforts can have a considerable, positive effect on the environment.

- Turn off the airconditioner when you leave your room
- Keep airconditioners set at 25 degrees
- Switch off lights and televisions while you are away
- Reuse bath towels and sheets to reduce water and chemical use
- Dispose of rubbish appropriately
- If you are visiting islands be sure not to transport weeds or plant seeds
- Enjoy a sailing trip powered by the wind
- Don't touch corals or animals on the reef
- Collect memories and photos rather than shells or other marine life
- Visit the reef with a High Standard Operator (for more information visit [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au))

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) to foster environmental stewardship in communities.

The reef is a priceless treasure for all to enjoy and for all to help preserve. Regardless of your proximity to the Great Barrier Reef, the smallest efforts in reducing your carbon footprint will have a flow-on effect that will in the end reap considerable rewards. Looking to use alternative sources of power or simply planting more native plants.

Just one visit to this incredible part of the world will leave you in no doubt as to its importance now and for the future and you will want to play your part in preserving this natural wonder. ■



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A logistical nightmare and a particularly difficult project to realise, Hamilton Island's golf course is complete. Golfing legend and course designer, Peter Thomson is justifiably proud of the fledgling course, calling it a 'wonder' that will rate amongst the very best in the world.

STORY ROHAN CLARKE

PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREA FRANCOLINI AND GETTY IMAGES

# Mission Accomplished

As the elder statesman of Australian golf, Peter Thomson can be a little dismissive about his own feats on the world stage half a century ago. But his attention is focussed when he talks about his latest accomplishment, a golf course that he purposely designed for resort guests of Hamilton Island.

Situated on nearby Dent Island in the heart of the Whitsundays, the offering bears little resemblance to the great courses of Great Britain where Thomson established his reputation as the master of links golf with five British Open titles.

Dent Island is approximately 1.5 kilometres from Hamilton Island by boat. Golfers are ferried across to the Dent Island Jetty where they are met by golf operations staff and transported to the Clubhouse (which also houses a restaurant, bar and golf pro shop), or they can also access via helicopter to the helipad on the island. The terrain for the golf course is described as very rugged. Thick vegetation and rocky outcrops cover most of the island that stretches about three kilometres.

Thomson (who is 80 this year) describes Dent as one of his most difficult projects, making a comparison with courses he designed throughout Japan in the 1970s and 1980s, mostly on unfavourable tracts of land in the hillside outside the major cities. His design firm, Thomson Perrett, has not tackled such a tricky landscape in Australia.

"It's not a linksland," he chuckles. "It's more like a rockland. We've accomplished what would seem to have been impossible: to put a high-class course on such a challenging piece of land."

*"The end result is a wonder," Thomson exclaims. "It's got a wow factor that I think is unmatched."*



The first nine is relatively compact but the second nine is strung out along a main ridge, about 200 metres above sea level at the highest point. Every hole has ocean views with the highest point on the course being 140 metres above sea level, showcasing neighbouring islands across the horizon.

All of the tees have wild outlooks and from an aesthetic point of view, Thomson says, the Hamilton Island Golf Club would exceed the internationally acclaimed New Zealand layouts of Kauri Cliffs and Cape Kidnappers, which have both been ranked in the world's top 100 courses.

"The end result is a wonder," Thomson exclaims. "It's got a wow factor that I think is unmatched. As you play, you look out onto the other islands in the Whitsundays and the blue, blue sea. So it's really got a lot of picturesque charm to it."

The Hamilton Island Golf Club golf course forms part of a grand expansion for the island. Since taking ownership of the leading Whitsunday destination, Sydney entrepreneur Bob Oatley has instigated three major projects. The first was the recently completed qualia, a luxury resort on the remote northern-most tip of Hamilton Island. The second is the addition of a modern yacht club in the existing marina where luxurious pleasure cruisers are on display during racing season in August.

The third project is the exclusive golf course designed by Thomson Perrett in a Dent Island masterplan that includes a hotel with about 200 lots. Although the course was first mooted more than a decade ago, it's been Oatley's dogged persistence that has seen it come to fruition. (Original developer Keith Williams tried to build a golf course without a permit, while another previous owner had plans to build a course, but struggled to get approval from both the state of Queensland and the Commonwealth.)

Part of Dent Island is a world heritage marine park, so it's a real coup to be able to proceed after painstaking groundwork to ensure it would be preserved.

"So we haven't done any damage to the environment. We were very careful about that," Thomson says. "In fact, we think we've enhanced the environment."

It was a significant task to adapt the wild nature of Dent Island into what Thomson calls "a sensible golf course". They cleared whatever vegetation was needed to make the fairway



Peter Thomson receives the prized Open Golf Championship cup from S.T.L. Greer, Captain of the Royal Birkdale Golf Club in 1954.

Photo: Getty Images

corridors, the greens and tees, while retaining as much of the mature tropical foliage as possible.

An overriding aim of the brief was to make the course enjoyable because Hamilton Island is first and foremost a resort. It has to be fun so guests want to come back and play again and again. As a result it's not overly long, playing to just over 6,100 metres with a par of 71 and featuring only three par 5s due to geographical constraints.

There are no designated men's, ladies' or championship tees. Instead, the Hamilton Island Golf Club will have three sets of tees per hole to cater for a variety of ability levels. Most golfers will quickly learn the appropriate tees – since their ball is probably lost if it's not on the golf course.

The back tee is called the 'Hoop Pine', representing the largest type of tree that grows on site. The intermediate tee is the 'Pandanus', a multi-stemmed palm-like tree. The front markers are the 'Grass Trees', which is the common name for Xanthorrhoea plants (which used to be known as the politically incorrect 'black boy').

To soften the layout, the fairways (Greenlees Park couch) are rather wide and generous and so too are the green complexes, which have slightly undulating putting surfaces (Tif Eagle). Thomson's signature 'pot bunkers' are featured, although the total number of sand traps just exceeds 60. They're relatively small, mainly because it's very windy as well as the fact that sand had to be imported from the mainland.

Construction began about two years ago, but was slow going because of the heavy machinery that needed to be barged onto the island at high tide. It's been a major logistical challenge from the beginning says Ross Perrett, the principal architect, in reference to finding 25-30 hectares of flat ground suitable for a golf course.

With so much rock and clay on site, the course shaper required a 30-tonne excavator instead of a standard 12-tonne machine. When building the very first bunker, Perrett asked the shaper to dig down a little further so as to make the sand trap a foot deeper . . . they eventually dug up a boulder almost the size of a car.

"We've reclaimed courses from the sea. We've done work in mountains before," Perrett says. "But this would be the most difficult one, mainly because of the logistics of getting materials and equipment onto the island and getting personnel onto the island. There was a camp on the island that houses and feeds up to about 75 people a day. Most



of the job there has been 60 blokes living on the island with no other services there at all."

Directly or indirectly, everyone was assisting the construction of the golf course, even though the workforce was engaged to enlarge an existing lake as well as creating roads and other services that needed to be built.

In terms of typical construction costs, a new golf course built on an ideal sandy site with little earth movement may cost around \$4 million. Most golf courses range between \$8-12 million. But due to the degree of difficulty, a conservative estimate for the Hamilton Island Golf Club would be \$20 million.

But that figure can be justified with the completion of a world-class project, of which Perrett is understandably proud: "We actually did the original design probably more than a decade ago so it's very exciting to actually see it come to be after such a long, patient wait." ■

*The Hamilton Island Golf Club can be accessed by quick boat transfer from the Hamilton Island Marina, which operates regularly each day. The Green Fee is \$150 (opening rate – subject to change) and includes ferry transfers and electric golf buggy hire. For bookings or further enquiries, contact the Hamilton Island Golf Club on 07 4948 9760, email [golf@hamiltonisland.com.au](mailto:golf@hamiltonisland.com.au) or visit [www.hamiltonisland.com.au/golf](http://www.hamiltonisland.com.au/golf)*



*"We've reclaimed courses from the sea and worked in the mountains, but this would be the most difficult one." (Ross Perrett)*



Thomson hits a drive from the 17th tee in the Ballantine Tournament, Wentworth Surrey, 1960.

Photo: Getty Images



## The Sophisticated SUV

It's called an SUV or Sports Utility Vehicle, which really doesn't properly describe Audi's latest vehicle release, the Q5.

Certainly the Sports moniker fits perfectly, but the utility part gives an impression of old-fashioned work vehicle – something the Q5 is not. Like its larger sibling the Q7, which made its Australian debut in '07 to great critical and popular acclaim, the Q5 marries the driving dynamics of a sports sedan, with the room and all-terrain capabilities of an off-roader, to create a vehicle with outstanding versatility. Although not a 4WD in the sense that it does not have high- and low-range gearing, the Q5 handles the rough stuff with aplomb, the occupants comfortably ensconced in a trademark Audi interior, impervious to the conditions outside. Quiet, responsive and capable in any conditions, the Q5 represents the new face of motoring, a practical solution to the problem of having an active lifestyle, but not wanting to forgo the luxury appointments or performance of a sporty sedan in the search for space and practicality. Certainly Audi's Q5 may be a smaller proposition than its larger stable mate, but with up to 1,560 litres of cargo space in an interior designed with comfort in mind, the Q5 solves the problem effortlessly. The design includes any number of clever storage ideas to maximise the interior capacity

Although the official mode of automotive transport on Hamilton Island is the golf buggy, thanks to a partnership with luxury German carmaker, Audi, some of the brand's most desirable new models are no strangers to the island. The company's latest offering, the dual-purpose Q5 SUV is bound to make an appearance at this year's Audi Hamilton Island Race Week.

but without compromising the comfort or luxury appointment of the cabin. A front passenger seat which can fold completely forward to allow extra storage, a rear seat assembly which also lies flat when required, slides forward or back up to 10cm, or a special wet storage compartment. There is also enough gadgetry to keep James Bond's quartermaster Q happy for years, with a new MMI system (Multi Media Interface) with a 40MB hard drive and a seven-inch colour screen, new navigation system that sports three-dimensional map displays, TV tuner, DVD drive and Bluetooth phone preparation. Of course, luxury appointment and clever ideas are only part of the equation, the Q5 not surprisingly boasts state-of-the-art equipment, engines and transmissions. Audi has built a reputation based on advancement through technology (the company's motto *Vorsprung durch Technik* means just that) and true to form the Q5

offers a raft of technological advancements that place it very much at the top of its market segment. Offered in Australia with four engine variants, the choices are both powerful but with an eye to economy, with two petrol and two diesel options, all mated to the company's sports gearbox S tronic, now sporting seven forward gears. This transmission mates beautifully with Audi's famous quattro permanent all-wheel drive system on each model and with all of the engine variants, from the 2.0 TDI (diesel) and 2.0 TFSI (turbo direct-injection model) through a 3.2-litre injected petrol up to the all-powerful 3.0-litre TDI diesel, the most powerful diesel in class, the Q5 wants for nothing in terms of performance on or off the road. A driver's car, but with the attributes of an off-roader and the most up-to-date technology make Q5 a standout vehicle in the increasingly popular SUV class. The perfect urban escape vehicle. ■



### Reefsleep Experience

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Who wouldn't relish the opportunity of becoming caretaker for the Great Barrier Reef, in a lucrative arrangement that involved enjoying the very best of the region, a 'home' on Hamilton Island for the duration and being paid handsomely for the effort? Englishman Ben Southall has taken on such a job and not surprisingly, he can't stop smiling.

STORY LEE ATKINSON PHOTOGRAPHY TOURISM QUEENSLAND AND HAMILTON ISLAND

**B**en Southall, a 34-year-old charity fundraiser from Hampshire in the UK, has a job that most people can only dream of. By now, the entire world is well aware of Tourism Queensland's Best Job In The World, Island Caretaker of the Great Barrier Reef. A clever campaign that exceeded all expectations, sent websites into meltdown and ultimately landed Ben with a six month stint 'looking after' the Great Barrier Reef, living in luxury accommodation on Hamilton Island and being paid a cool \$150,000 for his troubles!

Of course he's already working hard in his new role which, according to Tourism Queensland CEO Anthony Hayes, brings



## Ben Southall's Tough Day at the **Office**

with it a fair share of responsibilities as well as the dream aspects.

"With this job there are a number of key responsibilities. For starters, you have to explore a variety of idyllic, tropical islands situated along the Great Barrier Reef. You'll be invited to participate in a host of activities usually reserved for tourists, like diving, snorkelling, jet skiing, sailing or even flying – over the Great Barrier Reef. You will also have to visit and stay in a series of award-winning, luxury island resorts and sample firsthand the hospitality on offer. While you're there you'll also need to taste all of the local delicacies while dining in a variety of stunning locations. And these activities

are just to name a few," says Mr Hayes.

"You will be required to report back on your adventures to Tourism Queensland and the rest of the world, via weekly blogs, photo diaries, video updates and ongoing media interviews."

Nice work if you can get it. Certainly, the 34,684 applicants that applied for the job thought so. But just as the job is a little out of the ordinary, so too was the job selection process. To be in the running you had to create a 60-second video, explaining why you were the best person for the job, and upload it to a website.

What happened next took even Tourism Queensland by surprise. During the first

weekend of the campaign more than 200,000 people from around the world logged on to the website, including 25,000 in one hour alone.

And these were no ordinary job applications, with some applicants going to amazing lengths in their quest for the Best Job In The World, from organising stunts like scuba-diving in a tank in Amsterdam, riding the London tube in full scuba gear, dressing up as a mermaid in downtown Singapore and spruiking at a London pub to conducting hundreds of media interviews.

"No one had ever done anything like this before and we were simultaneously amazed, delighted and challenged by the response,"



Visiting the spectacular Great Barrier Reef was an obvious highlight for the finalists (top and centre).  
 Mirjam Novak, Ben Southall, Juweon Kim and Cali Lewis meet Australian master chef, Matt Moran and sample some of the area's famous fresh produce (below).



Mr Hayes said.

It certainly was a massive success in terms of publicity, generating some \$110 million worth of global publicity for Queensland long before the winner was announced in early May.

The lucky winner, Ben Southall thinks timing may have played a part, given that the search was launched in the midst of his English winter.

“It was such a novel, entertaining way to sell the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef to the world centred on the offering of the dream job. As the campaign hit the newspapers back in January the world was starting to suffer from the credit crunch, a long hard winter and a general downturn – the perfect time to offer sunshine, a desert

island and loads of money.”

But in hindsight, it really isn't such a surprise, after all, who wouldn't want to work in the glorious Whitsundays in the first place?

Even without the gorgeous three-bedroom Blue Pearl villa overlooking the Coral Sea that Ben is calling home at the moment, the lure of working in this breathtaking environment speaks for itself and there are many who have travelled to the region to work for a season and found it impossible to leave.

For Ben though, his time as caretaker is just six months, and time flies when you're having fun. Of course he prefers to call it work, and the task at hand is selling Queensland and its beautiful Great Barrier





Reef islands to the rest of the world.

“I think my job has been made pretty easy by the things which are on offer here already; having such a great backyard full of activities which I love to do means conveying my message to the world shouldn’t be that difficult! Appealing to all markets will be the key to selling tourism to the world out there, from the backpackers market up to the five-star resorts and I intend to visit, report on and sell them to the world.

“The biggest challenge will be finding enough time in six short months to experience everything and report on it,” says Ben.

And that six months is already flying by as Ben throws himself into his dream position.

There certainly is a lot to do and enjoying yourself in paradise each day certainly takes it out of you.

If there is a down side for Ben it’s the spectre of what to do once he’s finished.

“I’ve said from the outset that if I was lucky enough to get the position on Hamilton Island then I’d love to see the rest of Australia and would ship my own Land Rover over to Australia and travel around the rest of the country. Having the opportunity to complete a number of personal challenges to raise money for charity is certainly in the pipeline too,” says Ben. Time enough to think about that, but for now Ben is a very busy man – we should all be so lucky. ■

[www.islandreefjob.com](http://www.islandreefjob.com) or [www.hamiltonisland.com.au](http://www.hamiltonisland.com.au)



And the winner is! Minister for Tourism, Peter Lawlor and Queensland Premier Anna Bligh congratulate an elated Ben Southall (top).

A moment of joy for all concerned at the end of an incredible journey (above).

## THE TOP 16

Ajaan RJ	28, a radio DJ from Bangalore in India
Ben Henry	23, a marketing student from Lyon in France
Ben Southall	34, a charity fundraiser from Hampshire in the UK
Cali Lewis	28, host and producer of web show GeekBrief.TV from Dallas, Texas
Clare Wang	30, the wild card interpreter from Taipei in Taiwan
Clarke Gayford	32, a TV presenter from Auckland, NZ
Erik Rolfsen	39, online news editor from Vancouver, Canada
George Karellas	31, a studio production manager from Bettystown in Ireland
Greg Reynen	31, an American ex-pat and PE teacher currently living in Singapore
Hailey Turner	20, a student from Brisbane
James Hill	26, photographer, also from Australia
Juweon Kim	25, a radio host from Seoul, Korea
Magali Heuberger	25, a communications specialist from Amsterdam
Mieko Kobayashi	31, a receptionist from Tokyo, Japan
Mirjam Novak	28, an actress from Bavaria in Germany
Yi Yao	30, a manager from Guangzhou in China



# Celebrating Excellence

*Vogue Entertaining + Travel Produce Awards*

Whether it be celebrating the finest produce, food and wine the country has to offer or thrilling to the magnificence of The Australian Ballet, qualia is the perfect venue and takes these gala events very much in stride. From a *Vogue Entertaining + Travel Produce Awards* dinner, to the *Pas de Deux in Paradise*, qualia comes alive.

STORY WINSOR DOBBIN PHOTOGRAPHY JACK ATLEY

Around 60 guests enjoyed dishes from leading chefs including Matt Moran, Justin North and Alla Wolf Tasker, who combined to create a special six-course dinner menu that was enjoyed by both in-house guests and invited celebrities.

Chefs Moran from ARIA in Sydney, Wolf Tasker from the Lake House at Daylesford, Kym Machin from Urbane in Sydney, North from Sydney's Becasse and Etch, Matt Wilkinson from Circa in Melbourne and David Rayner from the River House in Noosa worked together to create the degustation menu – all six are among the judges for the fourth annual Produce Awards. qualia is not only a partner of the awards but also sponsor of the Producer

of the Year award.

The entire menu was accompanied by four pre-launch wines from the new Robert Oatley Vineyards range released earlier this year – several leading wine critics were also on hand to enjoy the synergy between the Hamilton Island ambience and fine food and wine.

qualia guests began their evening around the pool at Pebble Beach enjoying canapés created by Executive Chef Jane-Therese Mulry featuring Kumamoto oysters and Spring Bay mussels, sipping on exotic cocktails like the qualia elderflower and ginger martini and sampling an exclusive sneak peek of the Robert Oatley '08 Rosé. This wine is made from sangiovese grapes grown on the Oatley



family vineyards in Mudgee and currently available only in the US market.

All the dishes at dinner, served overlooking the Whitsundays in the Long Pavilion, were constructed to showcase the high-quality foodstuffs from the *Vogue Entertaining + Travel* Produce Awards finalists. Sweet and sour Noosa spanner crab was served with a coconut and pomelo salad, followed by roasted breast of Redgate quail with a salad of confit quail leg and raspberry vinegar gel.



They were followed by White Rocks veal with roasted apple, celeriac and apple remoulade and cider sauce, and a warm salad of Daylesford Organics heirloom vegetables.

The main course of slow-cooked Blackmore Wagyu with heirloom pumpkin, confit eschalots and golden fried eggs was followed by La Luna goat's cheese, caramelised Danish pastry and seasonal fruits with cumquat purée.



The *Vogue Entertaining + Travel* Produce Awards celebrate people committed to continuing excellence - from tiny farms and regional markets to restaurant kitchens. Readers of the magazine are able each year to support Australia's artisan producers by nominating an outstanding producer, farmers' market or chef.



"Every year we discover great new produce from around Australia and it is great to be able to bring that produce to the attention of the wider public," *Vogue Entertaining + Travel's* Trudi Jenkins said praising the "world-class food" the team of chefs assembled at qualia had produced.

"This is a spectacular location – world class – with a beautiful region with great food and service to match," she said.

Chief Executive Officer Glenn Bourke said the produce and cooking had "all exemplified the Hamilton Island ethos of quality" while qualia GM Jason Friedman said the dinner was part of the deep sensory experience that guests at the resort enjoy.



The dishes provided a perfect synergy with the four new Robert Oatley Vineyard releases; the '08 Margaret River and



A stunning night to remember. (Clockwise from top left) Matt Moran and guests – Nicky, Sandy, Carol and Lyndal Oatley enjoy the evening – The perfect accompaniment by String Selection – best of the best (bottom from left) Jane-Therese Mulry - *qualia*, Kym Machin - *Urbane*, Matt Wilkinson - *Circa*, Matt Moran - *ARIA*, Alla Wolf-Tasker - *Lake House* at Daylesford, Justin North - *Becasse* and David Rayner, *River House*. *VE+T's* Trudi Jenkins – Mark Ferguson – Sigourney Cantello and Victoria Finch.

Pemberton Sauvignon Blanc, '08 Mudgee Chardonnay, '07 Margaret River and Mudgee Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot and '07 Frankland River and Mudgee Shiraz, which proved a hit with guests including leading wine writers Ray Jordan, Lester Jesberg and Greg Duncan-Powell.

Three of the new wines are a blend of two regions and two combine fruit from Western Australia with grapes from Mudgee – a unique combination but one that underlines Robert Oatley's determination to source the best possible fruit – no matter where it comes from in Australia.

It was a testimony to the comfort of the qualia pavilions that nearly all the guests arrived at breakfast looking bright and cheerful, despite having enjoyed so much fine wine and food the previous evening. >>

# Celebrating Excellence

*Pas de Deux in Paradise*



Performers from The Australian Ballet with Sarah Murdoch at qualia.

Following the tremendous success of last year's Australian Ballet performance at qualia, Hamilton Island's outstanding luxury resort once again provides the venue for an exclusive new performance of Pas de Deux from great classic ballets.

In '08, six dancers from the celebrated Company delighted guests with a performance from the Bodytorque series. Entitled *Wa*, the piece came alive under the stars in an outdoor setting no stage designer could ever hope to match. Indeed it was the first time the piece had ever been performed in the open, and the combination of elements and the supreme talents of the dancers made for an extraordinary experience.

Certainly, performing at such a venue is no hardship for the incredibly talented members of the Company who are extremely excited about returning for the coming event and exploring new material in '09.

Artistic Director of The Australian Ballet, David McAllister said the Company was thrilled to be returning to qualia this year.

"We can't wait to perform a glittering show featuring some of the ballet's most loved Pas de Deux under a star-studded sky."

Indeed, the unique venue offers rare opportunities for both the performers and

guests, performing outside of a traditional theatre space adding another dimension to the experience for all concerned.

This year, the two day event provides numerous opportunities for guests to gain an insight into The Australian Ballet, including the chance to meet and speak with performers on the first night as well as being able to watch a dance class.

Guests are also able to mingle with the dancers following the performance and for those willing to pit their fitness against the cream of The Australian Ballet, even work out with them at a pilates / yoga session on the final morning.

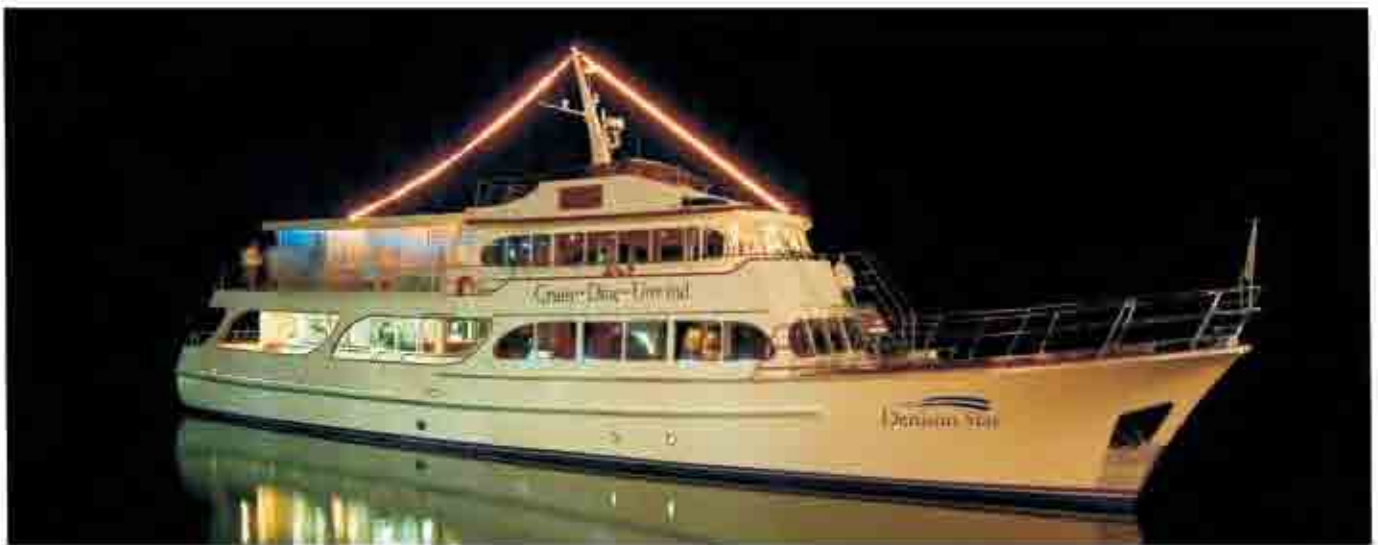
For those less inclined to physical activities, there is no better place than qualia to simply relax and enjoy the cultural treat in such a special setting, complete with the finest wines and cuisine prepared by qualia's Executive Chef, Jane-Therese Mulry. Indeed, along with the much anticipated performances, another highlight of this event will be a special dinner under the stars at Pebble Beach.

Certainly a weekend not to be missed in a location that simply must be experienced. ■

*This premier event will be held from Friday 23 October through to Sunday 25 October, '09. For more information visit [www.qualia.com.au](http://www.qualia.com.au)*



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# The Art of Simplicity

A regular visitor to Hamilton Island and the Great Barrier Reef for the great fishing the region provides, world-renowned chef Tetsuya Wakuda has built a reputation and indeed a life based on a philosophy of keeping things simple and always striving for perfection. That philosophy has seen him reach and cement his position at the very pinnacle of the international food scene, but as Margaret Merten discovered, he is happiest on the water – attempting to catch dinner.

STORY MARGARET MERTEN  
PHOTOGRAPHY MARK BEAN

It was always a childhood dream for Tetsuya Wakuda to come to Australia. In fact, it was a documentary about the Great Barrier Reef that really captured the young future chef's imagination.

"I remember, it was so beautiful," he tells me as we sit inside his impossibly chic Sydney restaurant. "I'd never seen such a beautiful place, with the water and the sky."

He came here 27 years ago as a 22-year-old and now calls Australia home.

"I only wanted to come for a year and then I had plans to go the States." Life intervened, of course, and, in telling the story of how he became one of our best chefs, critically acclaimed both here and internationally, his trademark humility is on show. But how does a 22-year-old, who "had no idea what I wanted to do with my life," rise to the heights he has? For Tetsuya is no flash in the pan, to excuse a bad pun. His restaurant has won all the major Australian food awards, including garnering three hats in the Sydney Morning Herald's influential Good Food Guide every year since 1992 – the highest score possible.

His restaurant, tucked away behind a tall fence in the middle of Sydney's CBD is

a surprising haven of Zen calm, with the dining rooms looking out onto a private, restful Japanese garden, dotted with camellia trees and slender bamboo and even a small waterfall. It's an impressive temple to the simple, seasonally driven dishes that are his signature and a long way from his early years of working with Tony Bilson at the legendary Kinselas restaurant and nightclub. It was here that he began his cooking career and the rest, as they say, is history.

"One day the kitchen was very short-staffed and I was shown how to fillet fish and it progressed from there," he explains. His first eponymously-named restaurant was in Ultimo, in 1987, and then he bought a building in Rozelle where he set about building his amazing reputation. His food philosophy is as simple as his food is sublime. Known for his four hour degustation menu of exquisite dishes, while the experience is fine dining, the thinking behind the food is deeply grounded in the chef's signature commonsense and respect for produce.

"I don't care what people call my food – Japanese/French, Japanese/Mediterranean," he says with a laugh, "the basis to my



cooking is that we find and use the highest quality, freshest ingredients and through the cooking techniques we aim to enhance the flavour and integrity of the ingredient. We don't change the nature of the ingredient. I cook what I want to eat, not because of fashion. For me first, it's always about taste." But he's also very committed to discovering how to push his cuisine and ingredients, explaining "we try to find out the best way to cook certain ingredients."

This interest, he admits, "has always been there." It was the experience at Kinsela's with Bilson's food that really opened his eyes to new ways of cooking food. "I loved his food. He gave me so many ideas." Are they still good friends today? "Oh yes, I saw him just last week," he answers enthusiastically and goes on to tell me how fantastic - "they have the best paella in town" - he thinks Bilson's new-ish restaurant One Alfred is in Circular Quay. It's clearly an enduring friendship.

Another enduring passion of Tetsuya's is fishing and boating. His eyes light up as he talks about how much he loves to escape from the kitchen and spend time at the Great Barrier Reef, spending lazy days on



On the water – Tetsuya enjoys some time away from the kitchen and on Sydney’s famous harbour with famed fellow chef, Ferran Adria of elBulli.

*“I love fishing. I’m not good at it... I go out on Sydney Harbour, Queensland and deep sea fishing around the Great Barrier Reef.”  
(Tetsuya Wakuda)*

fishing charters off Hamilton Island. It’s his favourite holiday.

“I love fishing. I’m not good at it,” he laughs. “I go out on Sydney Harbour, Queensland and deep sea fishing, around the Great Barrier Reef.” But it’s not just about the fishing. “To start with, I love boats,” he confides, telling me about how when he was a young boy he would hang out with his uncle who had a marina in his home town, near the town of Nagoya.

“I love sitting on the water and being on the water. If you catch a fish, that’s a bonus. For me, it’s the idea of it – to go fishing, that’s what I love about it.” He’s sanguine about whether he catches anything, it’s not about the competitive spirit for him, but more the relaxation. “It’s about the time and having time to be on the water and the beautiful scenery.” He has a boat of his own, which

is moored in Sydney Harbour, but he loves going out on a charter boat with experts in Queensland, “because I can learn from them.” He goes as often as he can, “about 10 times a year.” He’s planning to go up there in his own boat and island-hop around the area this year. “That’s my dream.”

When he does catch a fish, of course it’s a chance to create the perfect dish. Around Hamilton Island he’s caught coral trout. “It’s my favourite fish to eat. Simply steam it with ginger and shallots, it’s beautiful. You can’t beat it. Or if I really want to keep it plain, you just steam it with a bit of thyme, wrap it in aluminium foil and put it in the oven, cook it, take it out and add a bit of salt and it’s perfect. Perhaps a bit of olive tapenade – get anchovies, olive oil and sun-dried tomatoes and make it into a paste and serve it with some fresh bread. Beautiful.” ■





East meets West in four ground-breaking new Mudgee-made wines from Bob Oatley.

The full range of Robert Oatley wines are available at the fabulous Hamilton Island restaurants and from other fine wine specialists.

Robert Oatley Vineyards, Craigmoor Road, Mudgee New South Wales. Tel 02 6372 2208

[www.robertoatley.com.au](http://www.robertoatley.com.au)

**ROBERT OATLEY**  
VINEYARDS



Over the years, the central western NSW town of Mudgee has been many things to many people. For an historian of early 19th century Australia, Mudgee meant pioneering families who later became the local squattocracy; men and women who made sheep and their wool the mainstay of a burgeoning local economy. He'd also be able to tell you that Mudgee was the second city proclaimed west of the Great Divide – 12 years earlier than Melbourne! An informed wine buff would know that by the 1860s, commercial wine grape production was in full swing, largely propelled by German immigrants. To a WWII infantryman serving in the Pacific, Mudgee had the brewery that gave him his occasional ration of what was not affectionately known as 'Mudgee Mud' – not the big red wines that characterised the region for many years, as

many people mistakenly think – but beer. Mudgee had been brewing beer since 1858, when Crossing's Brewery was established, followed by Broombee Brewery some 25 years later. The producer of 'Mudgee Mud' was the Federal Brewery, which earned the nasty sobriquet for its products after it switched from using water from a local farmer's well to town water, dredged from the Cudgegong River. The Federal, or as it was known from 1953 – Dressler's Brewery – closed its doors in 1956.

Surrounded on three sides by sheltering rises and ridges of the Great Dividing Range, Mudgee derives its name from the Wiradjuri Aboriginal word 'moothi', meaning 'nest in the hills'. Always a service town, Mudgee was never a flash in the gold pan like neighbouring Gulgong, and many of its buildings have a magnificent

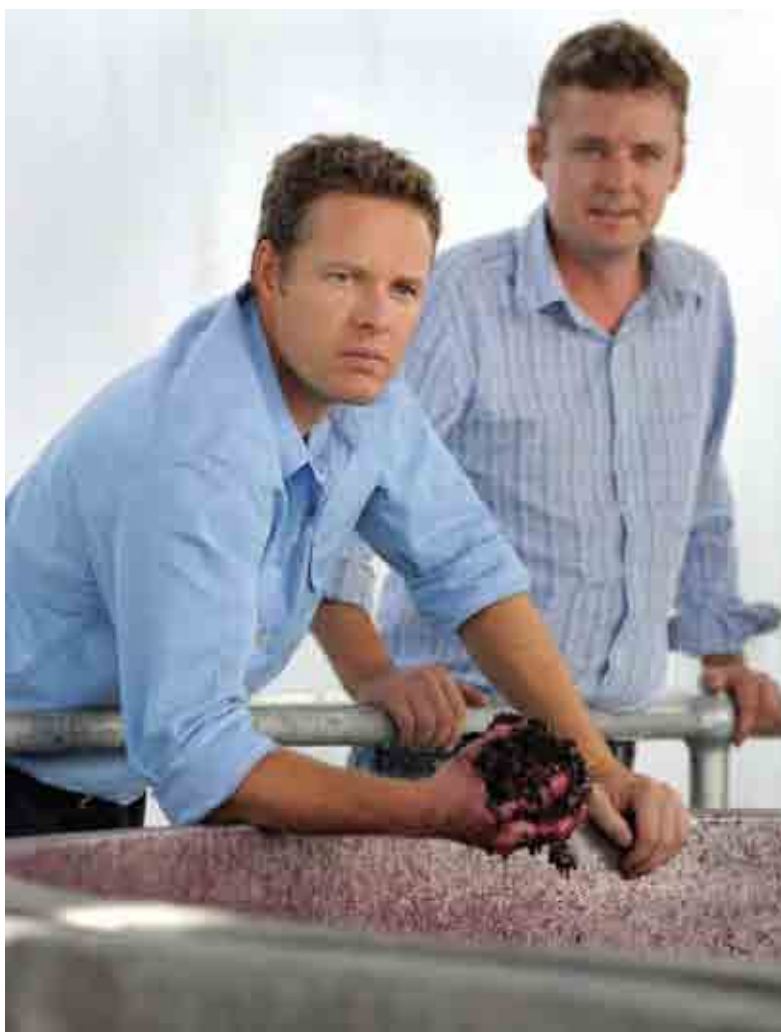


# The Perfect Drop

If Hamilton Island is a showcase of the Oatley family's passion and commitment to celebrating the best Australia can offer – another example is their proven success in winemaking. Mudgee is the home of their other great passion and is a perfect destination for food and wine experiences.

STORY IAN GLOVER PHOTOGRAPHY JACK ATLEY AND MUDGEE TOURISM

*Mudgee / Gulgong lays claim to Australia's 'poet laureate', Henry Lawson who spent his early years in the goldfields.*



Victorian era aura of permanence about them. Of particular note is the old Railway Station, fully restored and now a 'hot rock' restaurant. Its two major churches – St John's Anglican and St Mary's Catholic – are almost imposing enough to be regarded as Gothic cathedrals. But there's more than architectural cues to the area's rich history. Despite the fact that he was born in Grenfell, Mudgee/Gulgong lays claim to Australia's 'poet laureate', Henry Lawson, who spent his very early years on the Gulgong goldfields and received his first formal education at the school in Eurunderee, just out of Mudgee on the Home Rule road. The ruins of the family home are on view at the Henry Lawson Memorial, five kilometres out of town on the same road. Each year, Gulgong celebrates the Henry Lawson Festival, and by special arrangement, visitors can inspect the Eurunderee Provisional School, with its historical display relating to Lawson's attendance there.

However, certainly in the latter years of the 20th century and the early years of the 21st, say 'Mudgee' and most people would think of wine. For many of those years though, the reputation of Mudgee wines suffered in comparison with those from the other side of the Great Divide, in the Hunter Valley. Critics gave grudging approval to the reds, but largely denigrated the whites. In recent times, that's definitely changed, with Mudgee wines of all sorts establishing international reputations and subsequently, international markets. It began back in the 1980s when winemakers like Carlo Corino at Montrose, Bob Roberts at Huntington Estate and former journalist Gil Wahlquist at organic Botobolar searched for different flavours and textures to heavy Mudgee styles. More recently, a further turnaround has been in no small part due to Bob Oatley. While his name may be familiar to most from his exploits with his super maxi-yacht *Wild Oats XI*, Bob is no stranger to the wine industry, having established the legendary Rosemount Estate in the Hunter back in the 1960s. He sold up his interests in Rosemount in '05, but retained seven vineyards in the Mudgee area, returning to the industry in '06. In '07, wines labelled as 'Wild Oats', 'Robert Oatley' and subsequently, 'Montrose' (a very old Mudgee winery) were released, initially in Australia and later with different packaging in the US, to universal public and critical acclaim. Robert Oatley Vineyard's senior winemaker James Manners doesn't just have traditional grape types like Shiraz, Chardonnay, Merlot and



*"Mudgee is fast becoming NSW's answer to WA's Margaret River or SA's Barossa, with interesting and elegant accommodation alternatives, and a cornucopia of gourmet foods."*



Robert Oatley Vineyards winemakers James Manners and Trent Nankivell with the '09 vintage (facing page), the Robert Oatley Vineyards winery in picturesque Mudgee (above), the entire area abounds with historic buildings and monuments. This statue of the area's most famous son, Henry Lawson (opposite) is in nearby Gulgong, a small town basking in the reflected glory of its larger sibling, Mudgee.



Cabernet Sauvignon to work with, but exciting 'newer' varieties like Sangiovese, Tempranillo, Barbera and Pinot Grigio, which allow him to create wines that are more refined and elegant, more closely related to European styles than time-honoured Australian ones. The varying terroir on the family vineyards (Chardonnay Park, where the Oatley homestead is; Craigmoor, the first Mudgee winery, established by Adam Roth in 1858, now the Robert Oatley Vineyards cellar door; Montrose, Stony Creek, Wattlebrook, Woodbrook and Woolloomooloo, just out of Gulgong) also means that identical grape types will be endowed with subtly different flavours, depending on where they're sourced. The Mudgee district now has 2,700 hectares of what was predominantly sheep grazing land given over to grape, with Robert Oatley Vineyards comprising some 20 per cent of that.

With its fine wine reputation well and truly established, Mudgee's marketers looked for new tourist drawcards to the district... and didn't have to look hard or far. It would appear that without intentionally trying, Mudgee is fast becoming NSW's answer to WA's Margaret River or SA's Barossa, with interesting and elegant accommodation alternatives and a cornucopia of gourmet foods.

Even a quick examination of the display in the Tourist Information building gives just a hint of what's happening in Mudgee gastronomically – the Grape Alternative's Nuts in Cinnamon Honey, Mudgee Harvest's Blood Orange Marmalade, Basil and Macadamia Nut Pesto, Angela's Edibles' Hot & Spicy Tomato Chutney, Michael's Mustards, like Garlic and Rosemary and Chilli and Pepper. Two recent additions to possible tourist itineraries are the Taste Trail and Gourmet Trail, which allow visitors to sample local produce like honey, olives, hazelnuts, and venison prosciutto. The Oakfield Country Store and Cellars is a typical showcase of the sheer diversity of what's available, with products on sale ranging from local olive oil to homemade chocolates.

While Mudgee has a host of motel and hotel accommodation, there are many more memorable alternatives - B&Bs like Bleak House, an 1861 Heritage listed building, Evanslea, and Forgandenny House, built in the early 1900s, or farmstays, guesthouses and self-contained cottages.

And it's good to know that the only 'Mudgee Mud' you'll find there these days is on dirt roads when it rains! ■



# Dream Time

This could, quite possibly be the closest thing to heaven on earth. The ultimate in personal pampering, Spa qualia provides qualia guests the perfect way to recharge and revitalise using the finest products in the hands of the superbly trained professionals for an experience that is unlike any other.

STORY KATRI HILDEN PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREA FRANCOLINI



There are times in our lives when we all need a little luxury. Deserve a little luxury. A dose of something very special to counterbalance the ceaseless toils and mundane realities of this ever-demanding world.

That's why God, in her wisdom, invented the day spa: a modern incarnation of those age-old sanctuaries of healing, dedicated to helping us reconnect with something deeper than ourselves and where some gentle, magical alchemy occurs: we slowly peel off our care-worn layers, reboot our frazzled minds and jangled nerves, and re-enter the modern world serene, unburdened and replete.

But don't think that for the ultimate spa experience you need to head for the likes of

Thailand or Bali. These days Australia has something unique and very special on its own doorstep... at qualia on beautiful Hamilton Island, in the glittering Whitsundays... far enough away to get away from it all – and close enough to make it soon. Set among lush gardens, overlooking the calm, turquoise waters of the Coral Sea, Spa qualia is the inner sanctum of Hamilton Island's acclaimed qualia resort, whose paradisaical sub-tropical setting and inspired yet understated architecture has been drawing accolades since first opening its doors in October '07. 'qualia' (pronounced kwah-lee-ah) derives from Latin and means 'a collection of deep sensory experiences', has been pampering guests ever since the resort opened, and its soft revamp early this year has seen the introduction of an

extensive new range of treatments, offering jaded city souls a 'dream time' experience that is unique.

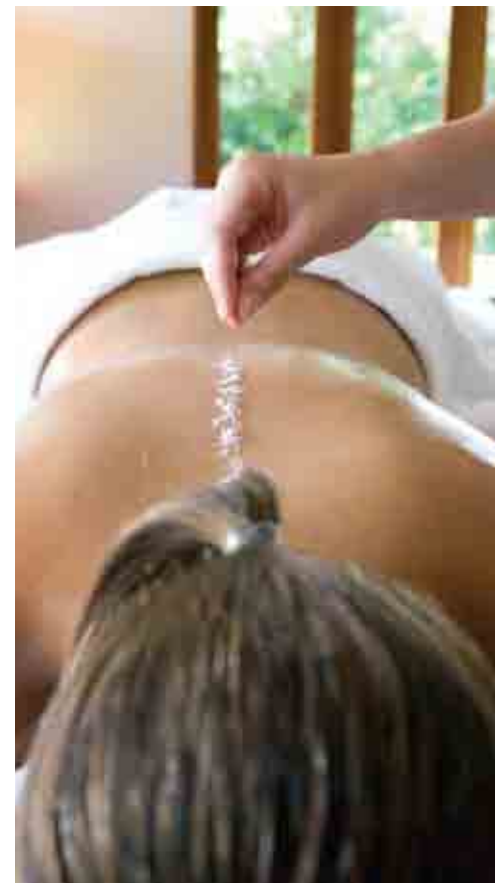
"qualia is a unique expression of Australian luxury, and to embody that we have launched an entirely new spa concept that is inspired by Australia – its people, lifestyle, landscapes, indigenous traditions, and the surrounding Great Barrier Reef," explain the management team. "We've tried to capture the essence of Australia to create a spa menu with a difference."

And what a difference. Contemporary in many respects, the spa menu also draws from ancient Aboriginal cultures – so alongside all the more conventional indulgences you'll find 90-minute massages with smooth, warmed Bularri Yarrul stones from northern NSW, or a steaming Kumali poultice ball made exclusively for qualia from Australian herbs and spices. Also on offer are regenerating rituals, ranging from exfoliating mud wraps to 180 minutes of 'The Dreaming' (massage, exfoliation, mud wrap, facial and special treatments for hands, scalp and feet), as well as five unique Signature Ceremonies, each involving, among many other rituals, 'body silking' – using the sensuousness of silk to clear sluggish energies. Yoga and personal training are also on the menu.

But if all this sounds too 'pure' for you, perhaps a scrub and being lathered in a pinot noir mask before sozzling any remaining



'qualia' (pronounced kwah-lee-ah) derives from Latin and means 'a collection of deep sensory experiences',..



Spa qualia uses a premium range of chemical-free products from Sodashi (created using natural ingredients) and the native Australian botanicals company, LI'TYA.



senses with a chardonnay massage is more to your liking.

The boys are not abandoned either: the select 'It's a Man's World' menu offers experiences ranging from 'Mankind' (performance facial) to 'Golf Pro' (hands, feet, neck, head and shoulder massage) to the popular 'Wild Oats', named after the iconic yacht and wines owned by Bob Oatley.

On arriving at the elegant yet relaxed reception area and boutique, guests pass through an inner courtyard lined with ponds and plants. Spa qualia has six spacious deluxe treatment rooms – two being private spa suites for couples, and all featuring water or garden views. Guests are also free to use the extensive facilities in the relaxation area, including the steam room and outdoor tropical vichy shower. Adjoining the spa is a meditation pavilion, where guests are invited to linger to soak it all in, soothed by soft sea breezes as they dreamily gaze down upon pure-white yachts gliding idly past.

All the body treatments use a premium range of chemical-free, environmentally soft products from Sodashi (formulated from natural ingredients and highest-quality plant essences), and the native Australian botanicals company LI'TYA. And if you really love the products you can indulge in a spot of retail therapy and buy some to take home with you. If you're simply overwhelmed by the many treatments on offer, the friendly, expert staff – hand-picked from around the world – will happily create an unforgettable spa experience just for you.

Although guest privacy is paramount at Spa qualia, no doubt a celebrity or two has passed through its hallowed doors. You never who in this big wide galaxy you might just happen to bump into! ■

*For qualia guests, bookings can be made directly with the spa on 07 4948 9484, or by emailing [spa@qualia.com.au](mailto:spa@qualia.com.au). The full spa menu and prices are available at [www.qualia.com.au](http://www.qualia.com.au)*



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Lisa Curry-Kenny, a regular at the Pure Blonde Hamilton Island Outrigger Cup.

## Paddle to the **Mettle**

A far cry from the first humble event back in the mid 1980s, the Pure Blonde Hamilton Island Outrigger Cup is now the most celebrated outrigger race in Australia, drawing competitors from all over the world. Now 25 years later, a record field takes to the pristine waters of the Whitsundays to fight it out for the coveted title of champion.

STORY DAMION SMY  
PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREA FRANCOLINI

**B**uilding in stature and reputation for a quarter of a century, the Pure Blonde Hamilton Island Outrigger Cup is now the most prestigious outrigger race in Australia and sees teams from around the country and the globe converge on the island paradise to fight it out for pride, the title and considerable prize money.

A colourful spectacle that draws big crowds and record numbers of competitors each year, the Pure Blonde Hamilton Island Outrigger Cup includes a number of races, culminating in a 42 kilometre outrigger race, no less punishing for the competing teams because of the spectacular waters in which it is held.

First held back in 1984, last year's event saw some 53 outrigger clubs come together to compete for more than \$60,000 in prize money, a far cry from the first event's entry fee, which was simply a case of beer.

While the world's first club was established in Hawaii after races were held there in 1917, it wasn't until the late 1970s that the sport made its way to Australia. The first club, the Outrigger Canoe Club, was formed by local developer, Max Christmas on the Gold Coast in 1978, and five years later Hamilton Island entrepreneur, Keith Williams, decided that the sport could provide good publicity to help



## WHAT MAKES AN OUTRIGGER

An outrigger canoe is defined by having a rig (known as a spar, or iako) rigged from the side of the canoe which acts as a counter balance. An outrigger can be a single-person vessel, with a single spar on just one side, or may have as many as 10 spars across both bows, depending on the boat's size. The origins of outrigger racing stem from Tahitian culture, however contemporary racing began in the Hawaiian islands early last century, as well as Samoa and French Polynesia.

promote his then-new resort internationally. Christmas and Williams were mates, and in a keen battle, pitched outriggers against each other in a forerunner to what is now the world famous Pure Blonde Hamilton Island Outrigger Cup.

Inspired by the success of Australia's victorious America's Cup team, the 1983 'Queensland Outrigger Titles' were held at Hamilton Island, with Williams entering a team to beat his main rival, Christmas who'd also entered a crew. William's Sea World team led from start to finish, winning the event by 100 metres.

The regatta's initial success saw it renamed the 'Hamilton Island Cup' for 1984, the beginnings of 25 years of an event which saw the sport grow in popularity and stature in Australia. As the sport grew locally, so too did the Cup, becoming the most prestigious event on the Australian regatta calendar, ultimately growing to be seen in the same light as the long-established Molokai to Oahu race in Hawaii.

Indeed the ties between these two major outrigger titles and the two countries have been strong since the outset, the 1984 event benefiting from the expertise and advice of Walter Guild, a Hawaiian who Williams had

*While the world's first club was established in Hawaii in 1917, it wasn't until the late 1970s that the sport made its way to Australia.*

invited to the Queensland titles in order to develop and nurture the sport. After the titles, Guild stayed on to host numerous workshops at William's Sea World, laying a foundation of knowledge and helping establish the sport and the Hamilton Island Cup. Guild is also credited with the design of the Hawaiian Classic canoe, which was produced in vast numbers as the sport developed in Australia.

In 1988 the AOCRA (Australian Outrigger Canoe Racing Association) was formed, while the Cup attracted competitors from across the globe. Last year, the event boasted a total of 2000 competitors from 53 clubs, with entries from Hawaii, Hong Kong, Singapore, Tahiti, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand. Australia alone now boasts 43 clubs. At the Cup's inauguration in 1983, there was just one!

This year, the Pure Blonde Hamilton Island Outrigger Cup has become part of the AOCRA's calendar for – amazingly – the first time. "It didn't make sense to have all the races in Australia, apart from the biggest and the best, run by AOCRA," chuckles

Ciaran Handy, one of the event's organisers. The event includes a number of races, with the course stretching through pristine sea from Catseye Bay around to the harbour. "We get teams from Hawaii who battle the Mooloolaba team, and then the Mooloolaba team head over to Hawaii." In fact, the Mooloolaba team have returned the favour by taking out the Hawaiian Molokai event. "It's a whole carnival event," Ciaran explains. "We kick off with the huge racing festival. We shut down a large part of the Marina Village and erect a giant stage... there are marquees and all sorts of food, live music. It's a great event."

There really is a tremendous party atmosphere surrounding the whole competition, enjoyed by spectators and competitors alike. From such humble beginnings it has truly grown to become an event of international standing, but despite the colour, the food and the accompanying entertainment, the underlying spirit of competition – albeit friendly competition – is stronger than ever. ■

Visit [www.hamiltoncup.com](http://www.hamiltoncup.com)



On the rugby field, John Eales built a world-class reputation as one of the best. It was not only his skill and determination playing for school, state and obviously captaining his country that set him apart, but the fact that he did it with such a good grace. In a world where sporting stars and controversy so often go together, Eales embodied the core values of the game they play in heaven. Through one of the most illustrious careers in international rugby, there was nary a hint of scandal, no histrionics on or off the field – just a well-deserved reputation for the highest standards of sportsmanship and ultimately one of the most impressive records in the game.

After captaining the Wallabies to so many memorable victories, and still very much at the top of his game, Eales announced he would retire from rugby in '01 and pursue a life in the corporate world. He has, from the outside at least, made that transition look almost easy, but just as he did on the field,

# Achiever ■ The Quiet

Remarkably it's been eight years since John Eales retired from rugby and shifted his attention to the corporate world. A regular visitor to Hamilton Island, we caught up with the characteristically modest Eales to discuss his successes in this completely different arena.

STORY JAMES MCRORY PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREA FRANCOLINI AND GETTY IMAGES

Eales has worked extremely hard to establish himself in the cut and thrust of corporate life, down-playing his successes and deriving some of his greatest professional satisfactions from less obvious victories in the corporate world.

"Life is what you're doing now," says Eales. "It's not necessarily what you have done. That life (rugby) will always be a part of me, and I love watching it and I love feeling a part of the rugby family, but that's now past."

"I'm not someone who tends to look back and rue what I did or didn't do, I more try to live for the present."

That's been the philosophy since hanging up the famous No.5 jumper, closing one chapter and opening another after considerable planning for the next phase.

"I put a lot of thought into it (the move to business)," says Eales. "For me it was important that I had something to go to, that I wasn't going to just stop and then wonder for a while what I was going to do."

Eales joined BT Financial Group and spent the next couple of years learning the ropes.

"It taught me a lot about a big business... and how the wheels of business turn. Also, it showed me that one of the most important qualities you need when transitioning from one career to another career, is a big dose of both hope and humility. You must aspire to achieve but also be aware that there's a lot of work to be done. You've also got to be prepared to be pretty average at something for a while too. You've got to be prepared to make mistakes."

Just as Eales credits his good fortune of having been a part of many successful teams during his playing career, he likewise cites the generosity and counsel of some key people with his transition to business.

"I was really lucky to have been a part of some great teams, over a long period of time, and some teams that weren't so good too and you learn a lot from both," he reflects.

"When I first came along I was learning



Victory in the World Cup 1999 – the perfect end to a hard fought campaign (opening page). On Hamilton Island to emcee a special chef's table dinner at the Beach House with friend and master chef, Matt Moran of ARIA Sydney.

from guys like Nick Farr-Jones and Rod McCall, Simon Poidevin and Jeff Miller and then I was at their end of the spectrum by the time I was at the end of my career. The cycle continues and at the end of it you're learning from the young guys."

"People were very generous in the time and the opportunities they gave me (in business), and probably their patience in many respects. That helped enormously," he says.

But Eales was clearly a keen student who not only learned quickly but brought his own

*"I was really lucky to have been a part of some great teams, over a long period of time, and some teams that weren't so good too and you learn a lot from both."*

way of doing things to new ventures. The success of his company John Eales 5 and its subsequent amalgamation with International Quarterback is well documented, and yet when pressed to nominate a peak to date in his 'new life', it is an incident that doesn't even recognise his involvement.

"Sometimes there's a moment that would pass by everyone else, but it's a moment that gives you great pride," he says.

"Myself and my partner Ian Bassar started a business called the Mettle Group, which after five years we sold to a group

called Chandler McLeod. Both of us are still involved in that business, and Ian is the CEO. One of our goals was that our business grew beyond our own initiatives so we didn't use our names in the title. After a couple of years, I was in a meeting and someone said to me, 'Mettle Group's a good business, when did they get you involved?' and to me that was a sign of great success, because it said to me that Mettle has a life of its own and it was not reliant on me or Ian alone. To me, that was really what we set out to establish."

But, by his own admission, there is a lot more to do. Author, Olympic mentor, Order of Australia recipient, Eales has hardly been sitting around resting on his laurels in his down time.

"Success to me is being content and happy with your life, but still being agitated that there's more you want to achieve. As long as you have that agitation, it means that you're (it might sound harsh) but that you're perennially dissatisfied with where you are at. So I'm probably contradicting myself," he laughs.

"I've never really looked at myself as being particularly successful...I enjoy the space I'm in at the moment, but also acknowledge that there's a lot more I have to learn and a lot more I have to do."

"I've been really lucky in life and I think you make your own happiness to a large extent. I have a lovely family, I was brought up in a loving family, we have great friends, and really, if you get that part of your life right, everything else just falls into place."

Forever the diplomat, Eales does make it look easy, but as Thomas Jefferson so succinctly put it:

"I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the luckier I get."

On and off the field, John Eales is living proof of that. ■



HAMILTON ISLAND  
GREAT BARRIER REEF AUSTRALIA



Hamilton Island is perfectly located in the heart of the Whitsundays and at the edge of the Great Barrier Reef. With over 40 different activities available, you can choose to do as much or as little as you please. Choose from a number of ways in which to explore the unique surrounding environment from sea kayaking, sailing, jetski tours or a snorkel adventure. Or, get active with a round of golf at the new Hamilton

Island Golf Club, go-kart racing, quad bike adventures or target shooting. Slow down the pace with an art lesson at The Gallery on Front Street, indulge in a massage at The Relaxation Centre, or simply choose to lay by stunning Caliseya Beach or one of the many pools. **For help building your to-do list, contact the Hamilton Island Tour Desk on 07 4946 8305.**



The ultimate in Hamilton Island luxury living is offered to you with this stand-alone, one-of-a-kind penthouse waterfront apartment. Featuring four master bedrooms with four bathrooms plus a study, C-bus system throughout and furnished to perfection with superior fixtures, fittings and artwork, there is very little more a prestige residence could offer.

Extensive indoor and outdoor living, dining and lounge areas will have you pondering where to spend your time, whilst your balcony spa presents a private way to cool off and enjoy a drink whilst soaking in the stunning atmosphere.

As well as extensive views over the Whitsunday islands, the penthouse overlooks the complex facilities, including a 25-metre wet-edge pool - regarded as the best development pool on the island - two spas and a barbeque area, whilst being located within easy walking distance of the marina and restaurants.

The property price has been slashed by \$900,000 and the vendor has instructed to sell. Your breathtaking new home awaits.

Endless views...the open plan living space brings the breathtaking views into your home.



# Open Home

**The Edge on Hamilton Island  
Penthouse 9**  
Asking \$5,000,000  
4 bedrooms + study,  
4 bathrooms, 2 buggy parks

## The Edge on Hamilton Island

### Apartment 6

Asking \$2,600,000

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 1 buggy park



Cutting edge...the latest style and design features make this the perfect modern Whitsundays abode.

Situated beside the stunning complex facilities consisting of a 25-metre wet-edge pool, spa and barbeque area at both ends, The Edge Apartment 6 is a modern, two-level waterfront apartment featuring three bedrooms and two bathrooms. The main ensuite includes a spa, double basin and walk in robe. Gourmet chef's kitchen leads to an expansive entertaining balcony, lock up garage and separate private storage room. C-Bus system is fitted throughout and the property includes a modern furniture package encompassing a bar and wine fridge.

Located within easy walking distance to the marina and restaurants, this property also provides a private tranquil setting that captures the amazing sunsets that the Whitsundays are renowned for. The motivated vendor has instructed us to obtain offers, and with sales in this development historically reaching as high as \$3,100,000, this is your chance to secure a magnificent property well below previous sales prices. This truly is your opportunity to prosper.

Please contact Andy Camm 0417 796 914 or Wayne Singleton 0416 024 168 for further details.  
Front Street, Hamilton Island [www.hamiltonislandpropertysales.com.au](http://www.hamiltonislandpropertysales.com.au)

HAMILTON ISLAND  
PROPERTY SALES





## Island Life



There are many ways to enjoy Hamilton Island, but what better way than in your own house? If buying a piece of paradise is not a practical consideration, perhaps 'taking a home' on the island for a week or so is more to your taste.

Over the years, who hasn't dreamed of living on the Great Barrier Reef? Trading the madding crowds for a relaxed lifestyle in one of the world's most picturesque locations requires little time to consider, but in many cases, a lifetime to achieve.

That need not be the case though, and there is no reason why calling Hamilton Island home for a week, or longer, need be any more difficult than consulting the new Holiday Homes website and perusing the magnificent apartments and houses at your disposal.

Every taste and individual need is catered for simply by going to the website (below) and looking at the vast array of properties on offer. From three to five star options, one to four bedrooms, marina-side to the more sedate and peaceful northern end of the island and all other locations in between, the website allows you to view each property online before making an informed decision as to what will best suit your stay.

Location, appointment, availability and pricing tailored to the time of your intended stay are all available online, making the process of securing your own property on Hamilton Island easy. And, as a guest (albeit with your own home), you'll also receive a four-seater golf buggy, the preferred mode of transport on the island, for the duration of your stay.

Where better to call home? ■





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