

REEF

HAMILTON ISLAND &
THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

MAGAZINE

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Captured By The Moment
Audi Hamilton Island
Race Week

Main Course
Executive Chefs'
Culinary Classics

Sweet Success
Adriano Zumbo's
High Tea Revival

Island Living
The Great Escape



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Welcome

I'm pleased to say these are exciting times for my family and me, as well as for Hamilton Island. We have not long returned from London, where we took great delight in watching my grand-daughters, Lyndal and Kristy, represent Australia in the Olympic dressage competition. It was Lyndal's first Olympics and Kristy's third, and they did us proud.

Interestingly, while our family is recognised for our involvement with Hamilton Island, our love of sailing and the making of award-winning wine, our long involvement with the equine world is not as widely known. Like so many of the wonderful experiences that have come our way over the years, this too, came by chance.

It started back in the late 1960s, with what was then a hobby vineyard I was establishing in the Hunter Valley, north of Sydney. To entice my children - Sandy, Ros and Ian - away from Sydney for weekends and school holidays at the property, I promised to buy a horse for them to ride while there. This 'bribe' brought about the desired result - but what we didn't know when I bought that horse, named Treasure, was that she was in foal at the time.

Treasure ended up representing the start of many wonderful times for us in the world of horses. Apart from leading, in the long term, to Lyndal's and Kristy's Olympic achievements, the family has owned a very successful thoroughbred stud in the Hunter Valley for some years.

While in London, my wife, Val, and I were also able to watch the Australian Sailing Team in action. It was a rewarding time for us, as my family has supported the Australian Olympic yachting team during its preparation for London 2012 and, in previous years, we have provided training facilities at Hamilton Island for Olympic-level sailors.

And so, from London back to Hamilton



Island... Audi Hamilton Island Race Week is Australia's premier open-water regatta, so we made the decision to acknowledge the achievements of our Olympic sailors with a ticker-tape parade through the island village during the event. It was an honour for us that so many of the team flew straight from London to be with us for Race Week.

In celebration of this year's 29th annual gathering of sailors from around the world *REEF Magazine* includes a special Race Week photo feature (pages 20-29). Two Australian photographers, both Race Week fans, submitted their favourite images capturing the colour and excitement of the regatta.

Just prior to the Olympics and Race Week, Hamilton Island also received its own accolades when *Australian Gourmet Traveller* named qualia Best Australian Island Resort and, for the third consecutive year, Spa qualia as Best Spa. This recognition rewards our ongoing effort to ensure Hamilton Island retains its position as Australia's leading tropical island holiday destination.

In finishing, I'm pleased to say that as part of our commitment to expanding the Hamilton Island experience for all our guests, our new Asian-inspired restaurant, coca chu, is now open at Catseye Bay. The Executive Chef, Adam Woodfield, is among the best – a man whose culinary skills have been honed from seven successful years in New York and Sydney.

There is always something new happening here, and I hope you have the chance during your stay to enjoy everything we offer on Hamilton Island.

Bob Oatley
Owner - Hamilton Island



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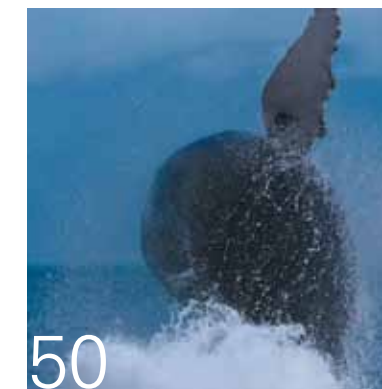


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Popular Australian patissier Adriano Zumbo brings his creative culinary talents to the Great Barrier Reef for a very special High Tea

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The Great Barrier Feast series welcomes celebrated Longrain Executive Chef Martin Boetz to qualia

October 2012

20

Vogue Living Champagne Dinner at qualia

Enjoy the world's finest champagnes, perfectly matched with a sumptuous degustation dinner created by qualia's Executive Chef Alastair Waddell, served in the inviting Long Pavilion

November 2012

6

Melbourne Cup

Enjoy the action and excitement of the 2012 Melbourne Cup with a special Lunch and Calcutta at the Hamilton Island Golf Club

10

Fujifilm Hamilton Island Triathlon

Triathletes from across Australia and overseas push their bodies to the limits on the beaches and in the waters of the Whitsundays

Whether it be enjoying fine food and wine with great Australian chefs at a Great Barrier Feast; being entertained during a unique outdoor performance by The Australian Ballet; watching or playing some tournament-style golf; or, pushing your body to its limit in a fun sporting event - you'll find it all at Hamilton Island with this exciting line-up of 2012 events.

November 2012 Cont'd

11

Fujifilm Whitehaven Beach Ocean Swim

Pace yourself as you take to the water for what is one of the most beautiful ocean swim courses in the world

12 - 16

Hamilton Island PGA Professionals Championship

For the first time in history, Hamilton Island Golf Club plays host to the country's best teaching professionals as they compete in this prestigious golf tournament

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Pas de Deux in Paradise

An extraordinary cultural event as The Australian Ballet performs outdoors, in the evening, at qualia

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Summer Festival

Summer Festival launches with fun for the whole family - featuring exciting activities from face painting to beach sports for kids of all ages

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Sailing Action

Spectacular sailing action as the UON SB20 World Championships is contested on the tropical Whitsunday waters surrounding Hamilton Island

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Enjoy the local community magic and festive spirit of Carols by Candlelight on Hamilton Island

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See in the New Year

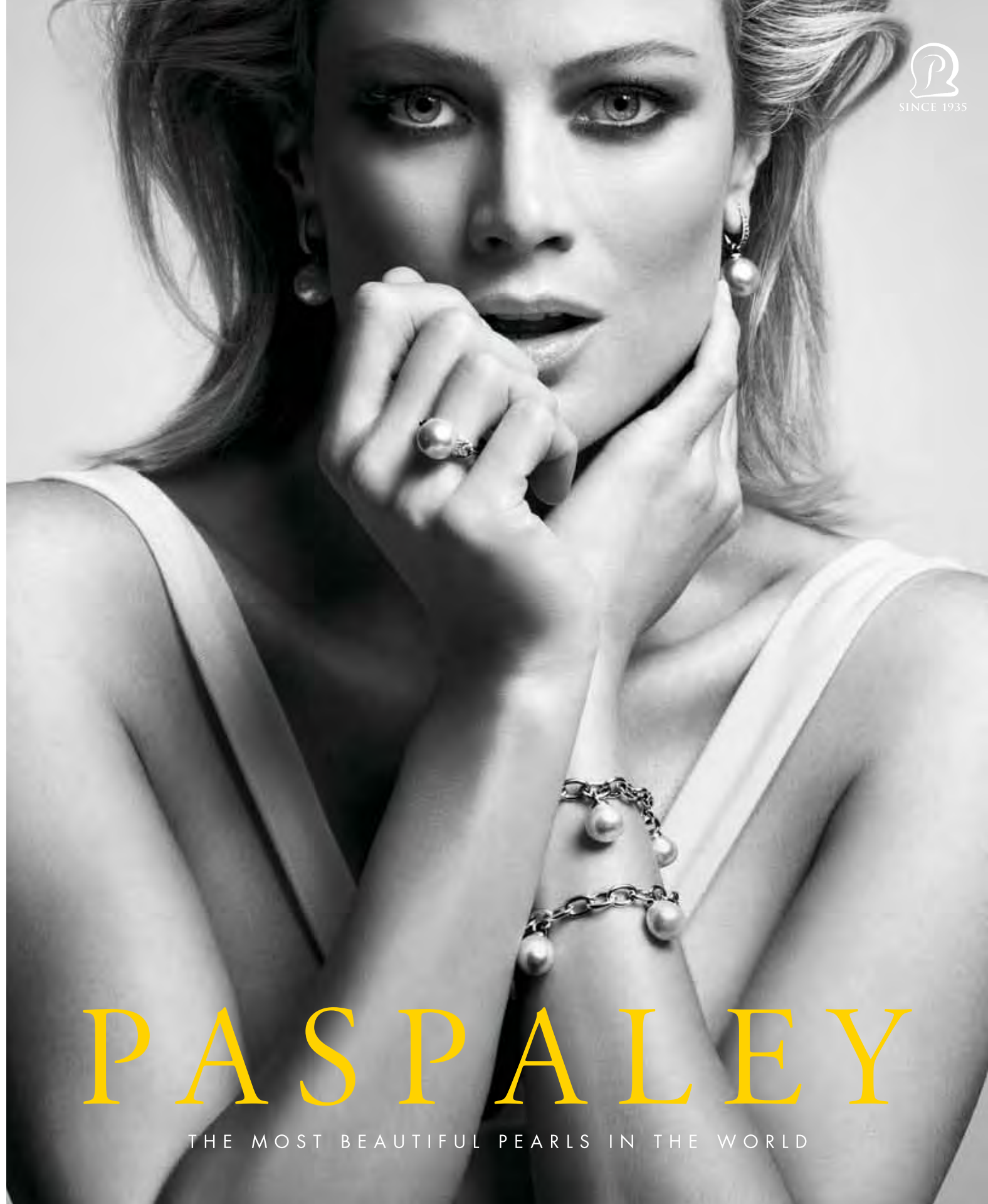
The perfect place to welcome in 2013!



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The Island

Latest News and Updates

File

Guillaume's Feast

Top Australian chef and restaurateur Guillaume Brahimi was "blown away" by the people, the environs and world-class service when he hosted the recent Great Barrier Feast at qualia in July. He especially enjoyed engaging with the guests during his Great Barrier Feast Masterclass.

"I really enjoyed connecting with people who were really interested in the food and the creative process. Just marvellous!" he said. "The whole experience was just fantastic; the food, the wine, qualia is just so splendid - the views; the service.

And I know I was the chef, but if I had paid to be there, I could honestly say the whole weekend was absolutely superb value. I loved it!"

Guillaume's menu included: Marron Duck Consommé with Foie Gras, Horseradish and Shiso; Crispy Skin Barramundi with Carrot and Ginger Puree, Coriander and Pomme Allumettes; and, Deboned Rib Eye of Tajima Wagyu Beef (grain fed, F1 marble grade 9+) with a Tombé of Shimeji Mushroom, Baby Spinach, Confit of Shallot, Merlot Sauce and Paris Mash.



Right: Guillaume Brahimi leads his Great Barrier Feast Masterclass. Above: Spencer Gulf King Prawn Ravioli, Tomato and Cucumber, Finger Lime and Lemongrass Vinaigrette from Guillaume's Masterclass menu.



Next Great Barrier Feast: Martin Boetz, Executive Chef, Longrain at qualia, 14-16 September, 2012

qualia's Awards

Hamilton Island's world-class luxury resort qualia took out two prestigious awards at this year's *Australian Gourmet Traveller* Travel Awards - Best Australian Island Resort and Best Spa (Spa qualia, for the third year running), adding to the resort's national and international accolades. qualia's General Manager, Michael Shah, attributed the win to qualia's understated elegance. "These awards demonstrate that our philosophy at qualia - where exceptional guest experiences cannot be artificially formulated - is clearly resonating with our guests," he said. qualia has also been selected by and accepted into Relais et Chateaux, the discerning worldwide association of just 500 of the world's finest hoteliers, chefs and restaurateurs in 60 countries.



Download the HI iPhone App

Looking to find out what's on, navigate the island, take a guided audio tour, check out the restaurant and bar scene, or see our activities and shuttle bus timetables? You can do all this and more from your iPhone with the new Hamilton Island iPhone App. It's free and available September 1, 2012.





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The Magnificent Seven

This magic shot of Wild Life Hamilton Island's seven koalas lined up eating is from our world-famous private koala tour. The once-a-day tour is an intimate way to get 'up close and personal' with our koala family: three males and four females - Elvis, Waldo, Willy, Gretchen, Fibi, Willow, and Baby O. Guests can hold, cuddle and handfeed the koalas their favourite Eucalyptus in their private enclosure. And our magnificent seven will soon be nine. Two females gave birth a while back and their joeys - yes, the same name as kangaroos and wallabies - are due to emerge from mum's pouch soon. Imagine experiencing their first 'big day out'!



Double Golds for Signature Wines

Robert Oatley Vineyards launched its latest range of wines, the Robert Oatley Signature Series, at popular chef Matt Moran's respected Aria restaurant in Sydney in March. The series has already received major critical acclaim and an ice bucket full of top awards in the US. Made by Robert Oatley Vineyards' award-winning Director of Wine-making, Larry Cherubino (described by *The Sydney Morning Herald's* wine critic Huon Hooke as a "bright star"), the Signature Series has a strong regional focus, with fruits sourced from Australian regions that embody grape varietal and display outstanding local characteristics.

The wines did exceptionally well at the Wines and Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) Wine Show in the US: Great Southern Riesling 2011 - Double Gold Medal - Best White Wine of the Show - Best Riesling of the Show Margaret River Sauvignon Blanc 2011 - Double Gold Medal - Best Sauvignon Blanc of the Show. The range also took home a further two WSWA show Silver Medals.

Stars of the Paddle

Popular Australian TV vet Dr Chris Brown and Hawaii's Jenni Kalmbach (pictured) were among the 350 celebrities, Olympians, professional and amateur athletes who hit the island's waters for the 2012 Gatorade Battle of the Paddles in June. Jenni paddled away with two big wins - in the 5km SUP and the 250m SUP Sprint - while former Australian TV travel reporter Tom Williams also won gold in the 25km Open Water Ski, with teammate Bill Burton. Others competing for over \$90,000 in cash and prizes included Australian swimwear designer Jodhi Meares and athletes Clint Robinson and Jeremy Cotter. A huge line up of paddling stars is expected for next year's 30th anniversary event.



Essential Experiences

No matter where we travel to, friends and family are guaranteed to ask us one thing when we get home: "What did you do on your holiday?" With Hamilton Island as its gateway, the World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef is blessed with an enviable variety of unique experiences for singles, couples and families to enjoy, all year round. Here's ten essential must-dos - from adrenaline-inducing action to pure, indulgent relaxation.

Wondrous Whitehaven

Your trip to the heart of the Great Barrier Reef wouldn't be complete without a day at the world-renowned Whitehaven Beach. Why not take a full picnic lunch with you? Whitehaven is one of the most beautiful beaches on the planet with its brilliant white sand and crystal clear water. And the great news is, it's right on Hamilton Island's doorstep, just a short trip by boat, yacht or helicopter. Head to Whitehaven today and swim, snorkel and explore for a truly unique and unforgettable reef memory.



Fine Flavours

With our executive chefs continually creating something wonderful to tempt your taste buds, you'll be spoilt for choice. *coca chu*, our new Asian-inspired restaurant offers something to suit the local climate. *Bommie*, in the Hamilton Island Yacht Club, offers elegant waterfront fine dining. Or make a reservation and sample Executive Chef Alastair Waddell's beautiful creations at *qualia's* Long Pavilion. For lunch with a view over the southern Whitsunday Islands try the Hamilton Island Golf Club. There are also many family-friendly choices at *Romanos*, *Mariners*, *Sails* and *Manta Ray Café*. Remember, it's always best to make a reservation.

Rejuvenate Revive

Nestled amid the lush tropical greenery near the main Resort Centre is one of Hamilton Island's most indulgent sanctuaries - *Spa wumurdaylin*, an oasis of peace and tranquillity. Indulge your body, mind and spirit with a variety of spa treatments, massages and skin therapies using the soothing signature *LI'TYA* and *Waterlily* natural products.



Golfing Green

The 18-hole Hamilton Island Golf Club hosts the inaugural Hamilton Island PGA Professionals Championship later this year (pages 44-47). This spectacular course is open year-round for all guests to use - just a quick ferry ride from the Hamilton Island Marina across to nearby Dent Island. Head to our Pro Shop to get your gear or hire a set of Callaway golf clubs from the Clubhouse. Then, after your round, enjoy lunch with some of the best views in the world at the Clubhouse restaurant.

Quad Quest

Ride to some of the more inaccessible parts of the island with incredible Whitsundays views when you hit Hamilton Island's fire trails and tackle the natural terrain on a Quad Bike Adventure Tour for those 16 years of age and over. Younger thrill-seekers, aged six to 14, can enjoy the 'Quads for Kids' adventure course.

Honestly Hooked

Feeling the lure of the line? *Renegade Fishing Charters* offers private and share charters. The crew will even help you to clean and prepare your catch - ready for your evening meal. Or hire a dinghy and explore the local waterways. Hamilton Island dinghy hire will also supply your bait and tackle.

Sailing Sensations

Your options are endless when it comes to sailing the Whitsundays from Hamilton Island. From instruction for beginners to offshore skipper and international qualifications, stay and sail packages or skippered charters. Ride the gentle breeze on a motor yacht. Or 'hang out' on the trapeze aboard *Adrenalin Rush*, a 36-foot *Nacra catamaran*.

Feeling Free

Get back to nature and enjoy the local flora and fauna on any of our 20 kilometres of peaceful walking trails. Or take a free audio tour of our *Passage Peak Walk* or *Village Trail* in a variety of languages. Hamilton Island also provides all guests with complimentary use of catamarans, windsurfers, kayaks and stand-up paddle boards from the activities hub on *Catseye Beach*.



Family Fun

For that extra surge of excitement and a good fun family day, Hamilton Island has much to offer. Enjoy the rare and memorable experience as you and the kids get up close and personal with one of our cuddly koalas at *Wild Life Hamilton Island*, when you join one of our exclusive, private koala tours. Tee-off at our mini-golf course or strike a pin or nine at our seven-lane *Kegel 9-pin Island Bowling*. For those a bit bigger (and braver), the island's go-kart track is designed to challenge the best and nothing beats getting out on the Whitsunday waters on a *Kawasaki jetski*.

For further information on all tours and activities, contact the Hamilton Island Tour Desk on **07 4946 8305**, or **58305** (in-house) or visit the Tour Desk in the main Resort Centre at *Catseye Bay*.

www.hamiltonisland.com.au/activities

Sweet Success

A far cry from his early years in the NSW country town of Coonamble, the Australian patissier Adriano Zumbo brings his Great Barrier Reef inspired High Tea to qualia during Audi Hamilton Island Race Week.

STORY STEPHEN COOK PHOTOGRAPHY MARK BEAN, JESSICA IRISH, ADRIANO ZUMBO



Some of Adriano's mouth-watering delicacies, including far left, gold dusted malted-milkshake Zumbarons. Above: Adriano at work.



Adriano Zumbo, the patissier known Australia-wide for his 'mile-high' croquembouche and colourful, flavoursome macarons (now known as 'Zumbarons'), believes the relatively recent revival of the traditional High Tea is due to a rare combination of various societal/cultural ingredients.

"Firstly, I think that the historic, 18th Century fascination with afternoon tea and delicate cakes (see *A History of High Tea*, at right) gained momentum because that era has been so romantically portrayed in films like *Marie Antoinette*. You also had the art of fine chocolate making and beautiful petit fours in the movie *Chocolat*, a few years earlier. So these two movies, especially, had a big impact on creating the trend," explains the 30-year-old, who became a 'dessert hero' following his appearances on the top-rating Australian TV cooking series, *Masterchef*.

"Then, there's the whole New York brunch scene. Every Sunday, it seems the whole of New York goes out and the people literally eat beautiful food all day, while sitting around in sidewalk cafes and restaurants; laughing, catching up...often enjoying all sorts of delicate - and decadent - things like cupcakes and tiny, baked tarts. All of which are beautifully created and artistically iced or detailed.

"The upmarket afternoon club scene also took this on and added indulgent cocktails and specially-created sweet and colourful alcoholic concoctions, which added another element to the mix.

"And finally, on top of this, you had the huge increase in ordinary people's interest - I call it a surge - in food knowledge, food preparation, cooking techniques and creative home cooking that has come through both TV and, of course, the internet, and which has

opened everyone's eyes to what is happening in food all over the world."

"All this has resulted in specialty cakes and cupcake shops and High Teas popping up all over the world."

Adriano will put on his celebrity chef whites and bring his highly-creative version of the High Tea to Audi Hamilton Island Race Week this year, when he hosts the inaugural Adriano Zumbo Champagne High Tea at qualia on Friday 24 August.

Online tickets sold out in June. It's no wonder: Adriano is single-handedly creating, experimenting with (even taking into account the effect the tropical humidity may have on certain key ingredients!) and preparing four unique and inspiring High Tea menu items in his giant kitchen in Rozelle in Sydney. Once everything is refined, oven (and humidity) tested and tasted, Adriano will personally name each dessert item.

He and his two head chefs will spend three days at qualia preparing and plating his creations for the exclusive event. One hundred lucky guests, seated in qualia's spectacular Long Pavilion, will experience the world premiere of an Adriano Zumbo signature original dessert inspired by the sensory experiences of both qualia and the Great Barrier Reef. He is also creating three specially-designed cakes which will mirror individual elements of Audi Hamilton Island Race Week.

"I can't give too much away, as I want it to be a surprise. But my dessert will pick up on the spectacular colours and hues of the reef... the blues, greens and aquamarines, and it will encapsulate the many sensory experiences that qualia offers," he reveals.

"Each of the cakes on the stand in the middle of the table will be my take on exciting elements from Race Week.

A History of High Tea

Anna, the Duchess of Bedford (1788-1861) is credited as the creator of 'teatime'.

After realising that her midday meal had become smaller over summer - and that, by 'high' (or mid-) afternoon, she experienced 'a sinking feeling' - the Duchess started having her maids bring her a pot of tea and a few breadstuffs each afternoon.

She soon adopted the European tea service format: inviting friends to join her at Belvoir Castle for an additional afternoon meal, at around five o'clock, which included small cakes, bread and butter sandwiches, assorted sweets and, of course, tea.

This summer practice proved so popular, that the Duchess continued it when she returned to London, sending cards to friends asking them to join her for 'tea and a walk in the fields'.

The practice of inviting friends to come for tea in the afternoon was quickly picked up by other social hostesses.

And, because it was eaten at a high dining table - rather than the low tea or what we now call coffee tables - it was called 'high' tea.

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"The main inspiration is sailing; but also the elegance of Audi and the lure of the pearls that Australia's Paspaley is internationally renowned for. All I will say, is that my spherical, pearl-inspired cake will involve the use of special edible titanium and metallic icing.

"My High Tea is very much about the local colours, textures, environment and the qualia experience - and I'm determined that each will have a real 'wow' factor."

Adriano last visited qualia to attend the Great Barrier Feast featuring Victorian chef Dan Hunter in June this year. He is looking forward to being back at qualia, with its own 'wow' factor - even though he may find himself in the kitchen for much of this trip.

"I didn't want to head back outside the gates the whole time I was at qualia last time - nor when I had to leave!" he recalls.

"Being in that lush tropical rainforest environment with all those beautiful plants and rejuvenating vegetation and the organic architecture and delicious food - I loved it."

It's a far cry from his Italian-born parents' home in the small country town of Coonamble in mid-western New South Wales, some 550kms north west of Sydney. As a teenager with an admitted sweet tooth, Adriano began experimenting with cake mixes in the family kitchen.

He went on to work in several of Australia's top patisseries and award-winning restaurants before heading to France and learning the finer details of being a true patissier. He even competed in the Coup Du Monde de la Patisserie (World Pastry Cup) in 2003 and returned to competition in a two-chef team with his former 'boss', Dean

Gibson from Neil Perry's Rockpool and Wokpool restaurants at the 2010 Asian Cup.

Just prior to that, in 2007, he had gone out on his own. But it was the call he got from *Masterchef* in 2009 that changed his life and made him a household name in Australia. Initially, he was asked to come in and fix a croquembouche that had gone askew. But the producers liked what he did. They invited him back as part of a contestant croquembouche challenge - and the rest is history.

"It was phenomenal. It all happened so suddenly," he recalls. "I couldn't believe it! By 10am the day after I appeared on *Masterchef*, all my cakes in all the stores I was supplying at the time had sold out. I couldn't keep up demand!"

This notoriety led to his first cookbook - and his own TV series on SBS Television, both called *Zumbo*. His Zumbarons are now nationally famous. He manages four outlets in Sydney, offering savoury and sweet delights. He has queues that form for blocks outside each on a regular basis every day. He has a second book coming out in October and he now has over 40 staff. This ensures Adriano has time to keep creating...

"The creative process is what I enjoy the most. It's what I love and what I do best," he admits. "My sister, Rosalba, helps with the business side, as do the other office staff. But for me, I like nothing more than getting into the kitchen with an idea or a concept and a whole lot of ingredients and going crazy - dreaming up new ways of doing things: combining all sorts of flavours and then making it into something really beautiful and special." ■



Adriano Zumbo Champagne High Tea at qualia - Friday 24 August, 2012

Left: Mandarin and yoghurt Zumbarons.

Top right: Adriano's famous croquembouche.

Middle right: Titanium-infused white chocolate lotus flowers.

Bottom right: Adriano's patisserie delights.

Adriano's website:
www.adrianozumbo.com





Captured by the

Moment

Over the past 29 years, thousands have taken part in Audi Hamilton Island Race Week. Each spectator and participant has taken a different set of memories away with them. Here, *REEF Magazine* looks at the celebrated regatta through the eyes of two Race Week veteran photographers.

Photo: Andrea Francolini, 2011

"During a spinnaker drop, the bowman on Beau Geste searches for his boat, hidden beneath the sailcloth. I like this shot because you really have to stop and try to understand what is going on. What went wrong and where's the boat?"



Photo: Ciaran Handy, 2008

“Despite the large number of boats on the start line, one boat in the middle gets caught and knocked down by a gust of wind. To me this captures the excitement of the event. This image went on to achieve a bronze score in the Australian Professional Photography awards.”



Photo: Andrea Francolini, 2010

“This image perfectly illustrates the fact that size does matter! Even though you have two very big elements – a whale and a superyacht – they still seem very small compared to the ocean.”



Photo: Andrea Francolini, 2011

“Here you see perfectly the elements that the boat and crew have to deal with at times. The relative size of the bowman, the size of the boat and the energy of the wave hitting the hull – a winning trifecta for me.”



Photo: Ciaran Handy, 2008

“I like this image because despite the swell in Whitsunday Passage and the sailors wrapped up in their wet weather gear, there is still a soft light on the cruising yacht and a distinct silhouette of the head and mainsail on the water.”



Photo: Andrea Francolini, 2010

“High above the clouds – a sailing image without water. Just as importantly, without wind, even the most sophisticated yacht is going nowhere, so a crew member scales the heights to spot wind patches.”



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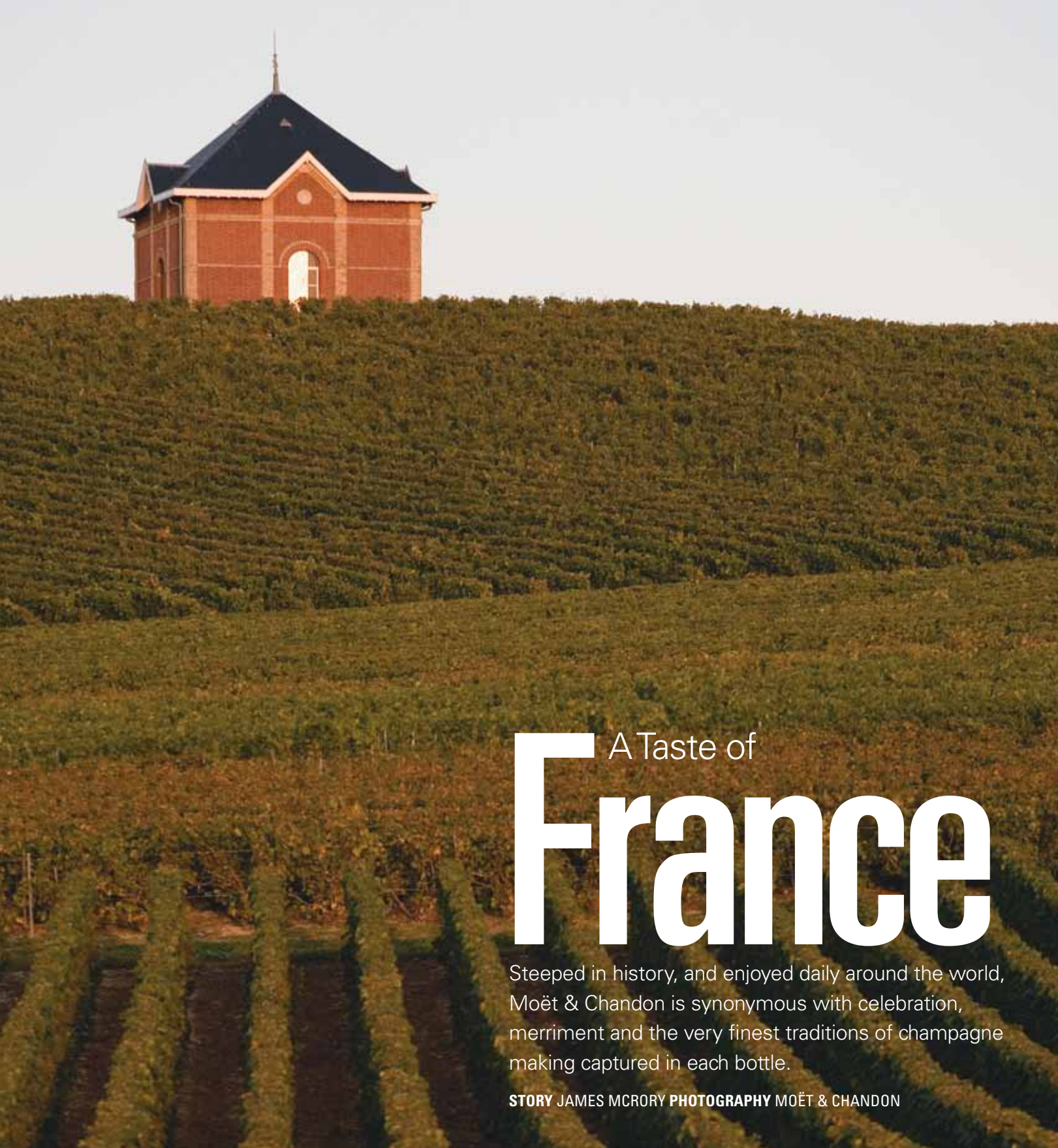
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A Taste of France

Steeped in history, and enjoyed daily around the world, Moët & Chandon is synonymous with celebration, merriment and the very finest traditions of champagne making captured in each bottle.

STORY JAMES MCRORY PHOTOGRAPHY MOËT & CHANDON

Every two minutes, a bottle of Moët champagne is 'popped' somewhere in the world! That equates to an extraordinary quantity of what is considered one of the world's finest and most loved champagnes, and yet, despite the obvious demand, time-honoured methods are still employed by Moët & Chandon to produce the prized drop, in keeping with the

centuries-old tradition of the region and the strict viticulture and viniculture regulations that govern production of champagne – the méthode champenoise.

Though many others have tried to emulate the success and special qualities of the region's wines, sparkling wines produced outside the French province of Champagne are ... just sparkling wines. Only Champagne, the region

that gave its name to the enchanted drop, produces true champagne, and amongst the traditional producers in the region, Moët & Chandon has built an international name for excellence.

Just two hours east of Paris, the Champagne region is steeped in history. Since the 17th Century, this 25,000 square kilometre area has produced sparkling wines like no



The Moët & Chandon property is steeped in a rich history, from the miles of cellars (top left) to the ancient vines. Troy and Nicky Tindill (above) enjoy a glass with the famous Moët & Chandon balloon in the background.

other. Moët & Chandon has become the world's most loved champagne, synonymous with celebration.

It is the unique 'terroir' – a combination of geographic, climatic and soil conditions – that gives the wine its distinctive qualities. The locals also believe that there is a certain soul that exists in the region that likewise can be tasted in the produce, and there is no denying the passion and the pride that exists.

Only three grape varieties are grown in the Champagne region – Chardonnay, Pinot Meunier and Pinot Noir – the distinctive taste and qualities of each Champagne House, a result of the way the three are blended.

The time-honoured method of production strictly governed in the modern day, is crucial to the production of champagne and maintaining excellence. The 'méthode champenoise', referred to today as the 'méthode traditionnelle', is a complex method where the famous effervescence is produced by secondary fermentation in the bottle – the final result, speaks for itself.

Moët & Chandon's traditional home lies in



the historical city of Epernay, one of two cities in the heart of the Champagne region. Despite the tremendous popularity of Moët globally, the modern world seems far removed from this inspiring place, which has built its reputation over centuries and still fiercely guards the past.

"It's an absolutely amazing place," says Nicky Tindill (Oatley), Hamilton Island's Senior Brand Manager, who visited the hallowed halls in May as a guest of Moët & Chandon Australia. Nicky and husband Troy were already in Paris for a family reunion, and the invitation to join a small group of fellow Australian suppliers to visit and experience the home of Moët firsthand was impossible to resist.

The sense of history is palpable, says Nicky, whose family also owns Robert Oatley Vineyards.

"When we arrived, we had a picnic under the Three Emperors' Tree, which has an incredible history and has provided shade for some famous people through the ages."

Situated in the Maison's English Garden,

the Three Emperors' Tree has stood silent witness to many an historical event.

Emperor François II of Austria, the Tsar of all the Russias, Alexander 1st, Grand Duke Nicholas, Tsar Apparent, The King of Prussia, the Prince of Orange, future King of Holland, Prince Metternich and the Duke of Wellington, all enjoyed a glass of champagne together under the tree on 21st March, 1814 – some four days after Napoleon's last journey and defeat, and the 'Allies' were hosted at the Maison by Jean-Remy Moët.

"Just being amongst the vines, which are still picked by hand each year, is an extraordinary experience," she says, "and the cellars are unlike anything I've seen."

Twenty-eight kilometres of catacomb-like tunnels, dug by hand in the 17th century descend three levels underground, and house countless bottles.

And while the history is inspiring so, too, is the present. Chef de Cave, Benoît Gouez has the weight of history riding on his shoulders, but as the Australian guests found with a tasting of the 2002 Grand Vintage, the future is in safe hands.

But what would the sparkling wonder of champagne be without the appropriate accompaniment? Nicky's visit to Moët & Chandon included a cooking class with Chef du Cuisine, Pascal Tingaud, a celebrated international chef who develops wondrous culinary creations for visitors to the famous Champagne House.

"When Pascal learned that we were a group from Australia, he said that he had only visited the country once," says Nicky of meeting the chef.

His one and only visit, it turned out, had been in 1983, to the official opening of an island resort off the coast of Queensland. He seemed to recall that it was called Hamilton Island, not realising that one of the present day owners of that very island was standing in his kitchen in Epernay!

The experience of visiting Moët & Chandon, was a rewarding one for Nicky and Troy.

"Staying overnight was more like staying in someone's grand country estate than a hotel," Nicky says of Chateau de Saran, situated within the Moët & Chandon estate, an elegant manor with no locks on the doors.

But, then, this is all part of the Moët & Chandon experience.

A visit to this magical place is a must, but like the champagne, it's not something that should be rushed: Good things – are born of time. ■

Main Course

With access to some of the world's highest quality ingredients and fresh produce and the creative inspiration of the Great Barrier Reef, its environs and climate, Hamilton Island offers an elegant variety of dining experiences. Three of the island's talented Executive Chefs - qualia's Alastair Waddell, Bommie's Nicholas Gomez Duran and Adam Woodfield, of the island's new Asian-influenced coca chu - share their current favourite creations.

PHOTOGRAPHY JULIAN KINGMA STYLING NICKY TINDILL

COMPILED BY STEPHEN COOK AND DARREN JAHN



Tea Smoked Quail, Pork Jowl, Seeds, Sweet Corn and Jamon Iberico

qualia – Executive Chef, Alastair Waddell

"As strange as this may sound, my inspiration for this dish came from the diet of a quail. I was looking for an interesting game bird dish and the image of a small bird pecking on its seeds and corn came to mind. It evolved, artistically, from there, as did the presentation on the plate.

I first trialled the dish on qualia's tasting menu at the end of last year. Back then, it came without the pork jowl. It has since enjoyed several popular interpretations as I have continued to change little things to improve the overall look and taste.

I have always loved the marriage of sweet corn and smoked ham - it was my favourite soup as a child - and so I added the sweet corn puree and Jamon Iberico.

I love that this dish is so textural and offers many pleasant sensations on the palate: including the softness of the sweet corn puree contrasting with the crunchiness of the seeds and crispy jamon. More recently, I added the jamon gel ribbon and I feel it brings the dish together really nicely".

Wine Match Robert Oatley Signature Series Mornington Peninsula Pinot Noir 2010



This new release Pinot Noir from Bob Oatley is an ideal partner for the smoky, slightly savoury yet delicate notes of this dish. Wine advisors will tell you game foods are an ideal match for a Pinot but the reality is that pairing the two is more complex; this is an excellent case in point. It's a dish with subtle, light flavours so it needs a softer, gentler style of Pinot like this one, awarded 92 points by James Halliday, and winning fans around the nation.



qualia - Executive Chef, Alastair Waddell
Tea Smoked Quail, Pork Jowl, Seeds,
Sweet Corn and Jamon Iberico.

Bommie - Executive Chef, Nicholas Gomez Duran
Pork Rib with Sauteed Chestnuts, Caramelised
Baby Onions, Apple Puree and Green Beans.



coca chu - Executive Chef, Adam Woodfield
Chicken and Crab Salad with Chilli Peanuts,
Lime Leaf and Caramelised Green Nahm Jim.





With over forty years of winemaking experience I've learnt there are two important elements when it comes to creating great wine. Firstly, the best wines show a true sense of the land – that ideal combination of grape variety and region. Secondly, they taste even better when shared with friends. I hope you enjoy drinking these wines as much as we enjoyed making them.

ROBERT OATLEY, FOUNDER



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ROBERT OATLEY
Signature Series



Pork Rib with Sauteed Chestnuts, Caramelised Baby Onions, Apple Puree and Green Beans

Bommie - Executive Chef, Nicholas Gomez Duran

"I love pork cooked on the bone and use Byron Bay pork as it has great marbling, which ensures it is juicy and succulent. Green apples give the dish a sweet and sour touch to complement the robustness of the meat. I wanted some earthiness and so opted for the perfect combination: chestnuts and pancetta. I first came across chestnuts cooked with pancetta while working under Raymond Blanc in Oxford, England. The smell got me hooked and now I often use chestnuts in my cooking. This salty, nutty mix is finished off beautifully with the caramelised onions and works just as well in summer with a salad or in winter with a selection of vegetables."

Wine Match Montrose Black Shiraz 2009

Pork calls for a red wine that's big on flavour but not on weight. This modern-edged Shiraz from Mudgee offers plenty of dense dark fruits while the tannins have a deft lightness, making for a deliciously smooth, more-ish wine, that sits perfectly with the flavours of this dish.



Chicken and Crab Salad with Chilli Peanuts, Lime Leaf and Caramelised Green Nahm Jim

coca chu - Executive Chef, Adam Woodfield

"The first time I had this dish was in Bangkok. It wasn't too spicy or hot and the different contrasts and textures really grabbed me. It's based on the classic Thai-style poached chicken salad, but I love it with the sweet blue swimmer crab meat tossed through. I also added my own caramelisation to the sauce for another flavour element. It has proved really popular in both my New York and Sydney restaurants for seven years. Diners love that it has everything they're looking for in a salad: it's full of fresh, robust flavours; sweetness from the coconut meat; and a hint of sourness from the lime juice and cherry tomatoes. And, with freshly cooked jasmine or brown rice, the texture contrast is amazing".

Wine Match Robert Oatley Signature Series Great Southern Riesling 2012

The bright Asian herb-spice flavours and lighter white meat and seafood of this dish call for a lively unwooded white and Australia's best value and highest quality example is without doubt our Rieslings. The Signature Series, from Western Australia's far south-west, is soft and fruity, with lime cordial and floral notes, gentle acidity and a pleasing finish.



Try these at home

You can experience these taste temptations while here on Hamilton Island - don't forget to book ahead - then head home to your own kitchen and impress your friends and family. REEF Magazine readers can download full versions of each chef's favourite recipe at: <http://blog.hamiltonisland.com.au>

Fashionable Ambassador

Every once in a while, you meet a rare Australian like Yasmin Sewell: talented, successful, innately stylish and warm as a summer's breeze. Together, these characteristics have seen her become one of our most sought-after fashion entrepreneurs in London, and the latest expatriate to join forces with Tourism Australia.

STORY KRIS FRANKEN PHOTOGRAPHY TOURISM AUSTRALIA, YASMIN SEWELL

Yasmin Sewell has the whole world at her feet, yet she never sounds more enthusiastic than when she's talking about her time in Australia. So it seems fitting that she would receive an invitation from Tourism Australia to be a Friend of Australia, a role that allows her to show off her home country to the rest of the world.

As a fashion forecaster, Yasmin combines her love of good clothes and enviable instinct to create a burgeoning career; her ability to predict what will be on-trend in the future of fashion is extraordinary. She is also a guest writer and blogger for British *Vogue*.

"Through her social media channels, Yasmin is considered a global opinion leader and uses her positive influence to promote the best of Australian fashion, and the country as a holiday destination," says Leo Seaton from Tourism Australia.

But how did someone so modest become such a remarkable success and an ambassador for Australia? Apparently, it's all due to passion, instinct and a little luck.

"To do well you have to find what it is that you love," says Sydney-born Yasmin.

Leaving school at the age of 15, Yasmin spent the next three years working in the dynamic Sydney real estate office of McGrath partners as a Personal Assistant to John McGrath. She has said this was "the best higher education I could have had."

She left to follow her fashion dreams, but was knocked back repeatedly. When a move to London – for love – eventuated, Yasmin didn't hesitate. Here, her career in fashion began as a window dresser at legendary department store Browns.

At 21, she was given a chance to try fashion buying. Connecting with it immediately, she

considered herself lucky to have found her calling so young. After working at various jobs in London, including opening her own niche designer store at just 22 years of age, Yasmin briefly returned to Sydney before heading back to the UK in 2008.

Back at Browns as a formidable buyer, Yasmin's unique understanding of fashion – whether global luxury brands or new, young designers – saw her garner major success for the company. Eventually she started her own consultancy as a fashion retail consultant, creative advisor and trend forecaster, which she continues today.

"It's really about assessing a business and taking them to the next stage," she explains. Her team deals with various clients, including fashion, retail and lifestyle.

Yasmin's biggest career triumph was the overhaul of women's wear at iconic store Liberty of London.

"It was really fun and rewarding because I got to see that within a year of the re-launch that I directed, Liberty went to profit for the first time in 10 years," she says. "During a recession!"

Fast forward to her current client and she sounds as excited as ever. "Right now we're working on one of our biggest projects in Korea, doing a complete overhaul of department stores all over Seoul."

Despite the global commitments, Yasmin admits to loving London life. "It's where my career has taken off and where my bags are. But I'm still an Aussie. It's just a really long commute!"

Judging by Yasmin's success, it seems London loves her, too.

"I think being an Aussie has really benefited me because I don't take things too



Above: Yasmin filming for Tourism Australia at qualia.

Below: At the beach with son Knox.



seriously," she explains.

Earlier this year, she won the Young Australian of the Year UK 2012 award, a celebration of Australian role models who make great achievements and contributions abroad.

"I was a bit flabbergasted so I didn't know what to say when I won," she says of the memorable evening.

"I've always felt like I've had great support from my home country, so I was really blown away."

As for her role as a Friend of Australia, Yasmin says: "I love coming home and having holidays in Australia so I think I've really connected with Tourism Australia."

In need of some well-earned downtime, Yasmin returned to Australia in April, visiting Hamilton Island before flying to Sydney for work. It was on the sun-drenched shores of the island that she took time to promote one of her favourite holiday destinations.

"On Yasmin's most recent trip she filmed a series of short vignettes to promote Australia which are currently on Tourism Australia's YouTube channel," says Seaton.

Spending five days with husband Kyle and son Knox, then six-months-old, at Hamilton Island Yacht Club Villas was clearly a much-

needed break for Yasmin. She also got to spend time at her favourite place in Australia, qualia, where she filmed for Tourism Australia.

"qualia is absolutely idyllic. It's paradise on Earth," she says. "I've been here a few times. The resort itself is complete luxury in every sense, but also very Aussie in the fact that it is unpretentious and relaxed. There's infinity pools everywhere; surrounded by ocean and whales and I really couldn't ask for anything more."

"And Hamilton Island ticks all the boxes – a luxury environment with top notch food as well as being good for kids. It's really rare."

"The service is amazing, plus the weather is always pretty much perfect. You leave the plane and you're at your villa in about seven minutes, you jump into the beach in another four minutes ... it means you get to unwind very quickly." ■

To view some of Tourism Australia's 'Friends of Australia' videos, go to: www.youtube.com/user/australia - and make sure to look out for Yasmin's ambassadorial debut which will be online soon.

Yasmin's Photos



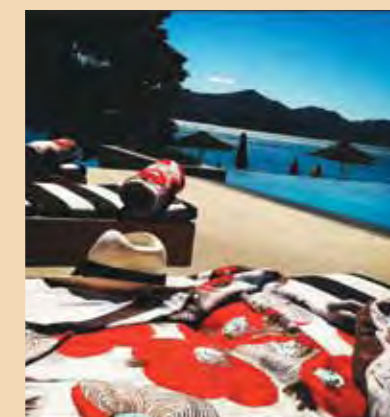
Cocktails by the pool



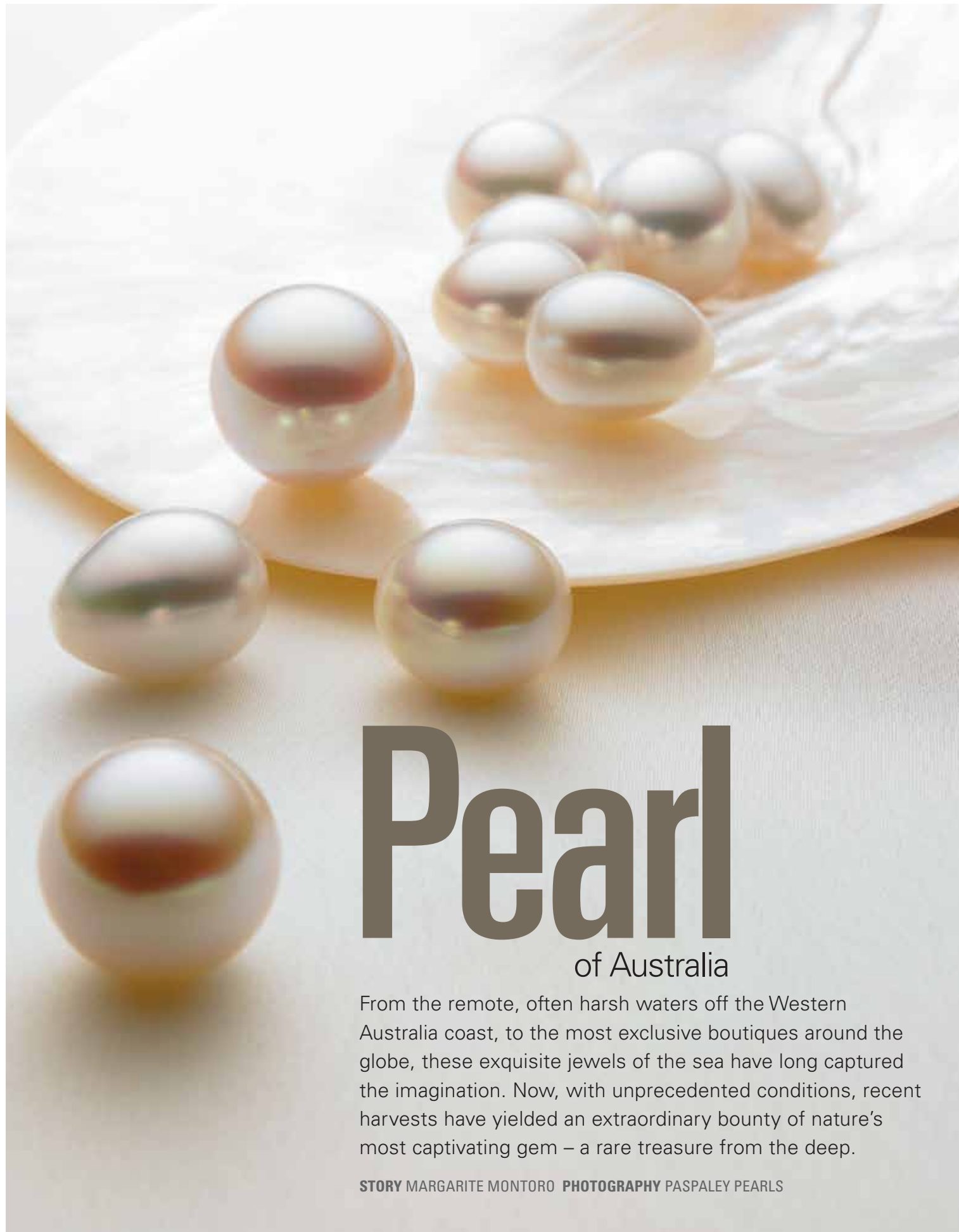
Filming for Tourism Australia



First official family photo



Poolside at Pebble Beach, qualia



Pearl

of Australia

From the remote, often harsh waters off the Western Australia coast, to the most exclusive boutiques around the globe, these exquisite jewels of the sea have long captured the imagination. Now, with unprecedented conditions, recent harvests have yielded an extraordinary bounty of nature's most captivating gem – a rare treasure from the deep.

STORY MARGARITE MONTORO PHOTOGRAPHY PASPALEY PEARLS



Exquisite in every respect, these jewels of the deep are prized around the world.



The journey begins a long, long way from the Great Barrier Reef, on a pearling ship in pristine turquoise waters off the coast of Broome, in a region in the far north west of Australia known simply as The Kimberley. It is week two of the pearl harvest and the atmosphere on board the Paspaley ship *MV Christine* is electric. Seasoned pearl divers, some of whom have clocked up more than 15 harvests at sea in this remote, rugged part of the country, are excited ... very excited. Through some strange alignment of the sea, the stars, the season, the moon - who knows really - the harvest this year is unprecedented. The word amongst the crew is that it is better than last year's – and last year's was the best most can remember.

After being nurtured in pristine waters for a two-year period, the pearls are extracted from the *Pinctada Maxima* shell; a delicate operation performed by experts to ensure not only that the oyster lives but that it goes on to produce another gem. Carefully laid on trays, they are then taken through to the holding room at the rear of the ship. Heads shake in wonder. Some of these men have been pearling all their lives and they are astounded by the size and the lustre quality of the specimens on the bench in front of them.

The excitement flows through to the sorting room back at Paspaley's headquarters in Darwin. Sorting is part art, part science, and these artist-technicians are in awe of what The Kimberley seas have produced this year. It's a bumper crop and the size, the nacre

(the transparent crystalline substance of which pearls are composed) and the orient of these pearls, is great cause for celebration. Hunched over long ridged trays, the sorters roll the pearls between their fingers, hold them against the light and move the pearls between rows, a process they repeat over and over and over again, looking for the relationships of colour, lustre and grading of size that create a beautiful strand.

By the time the company's Executive Director, James Paspaley, has joined the group huddled over the long sorting bench, there is a growing consensus. "They're super strands" says James, "and I think between last year's harvest and this one, if the harvest keeps going at this rate, I will have the makings of ten of them – not enough to reach the corners of the globe, but more than we've ever had before."

This is extraordinary. Until now, a super strand has typically taken three to five harvests to create. There have been exceptional seasons which have produced one or two super strands from the annual crop, but 10 is unheard of.

James Paspaley sits across from his dad at head office, two cups of steaming black coffee on the table between them. "Nice problem to have," jokes James. They represent two generations of a family that spans over 75 years and three generations in the pearling game, and they are impressed by what this season has produced. Father, Nick has clocked up 40 pearl harvests and

even he is amazed by this year's crop.

For the uninitiated, a super strand is the pinnacle of all strands in terms of quality and natural beauty. These strands are 'best in breed'; exceptional, beautiful, rare. Their unique quality lies not just in the sheer quality and beauty of the pearls but also in their match, the balance and the graduation. Paspaley Super Strands are the ultimate expression of the art of the pearl, the outcome of over 75 years in the relentless pursuit of perfection, breathtaking even to the pearling experts.

The Paspaley family are so proud of this year's Super Strand collection, they have decided to curate a showcase that will be exhibited across Australia. Having completed a tour of the Paspaley boutiques throughout June, the month of the pearl, a selection of these rare pieces is also featured in the Paspaley pop-up boutique, located in the Hamilton Island Yacht Club for the duration of Audi Hamilton Island Race Week – complete with pearl experts to talk through the 'Five Virtues' of the pearl with visitors, and discuss how best to match a strand with one's colouring and personal style.

For generations, the Paspaley family has pursued its dreams of creating the finest South Sea pearls, a journey of persistence, innovation and discovery that has positioned the Paspaley name at the forefront of the global pearling industry. This year's Super Strand showcase is the latest step in that journey, the goal of which is, as always, to bring to the customer the most beautiful pearls in the world. ■

Retail

TIME



Island Chic



Nautical Style



Resort Wear



Hamilton Island features a wide selection of retail outlets, including designer clothing and fashion stores. Create your own favourite look - whether it be Resort Wear, Nautical Style or Island Chic - during your visit by taking time to browse what's currently in stock.

You'll find all the men's and women's outfits and accessories featured here at the island's following retail outlets:
 Breeze Resort Wear - 07 4946 9277 | Hamilton Island Designs - 07 4946 8565
 Hamilton Island Jewellery - 07 4948 9857 | Lord Nelson Menswear - 0459 233 148
 Marina Tavern Retail - 07 4946 8180 | qualia Boutique - 07 4948 9473
 Spa wumurdaylin - 07 4946 8669 | Swimwear Store - 07 4946 9281
 The Hut - 07 4946 8273





Course of Champions

The Hamilton Island Golf Club course design and terrain will present plenty of challenges to the competitors during the inaugural Hamilton Island PGA Professionals Championship come November.

STORY ROHAN CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY JASON LOUCAS, ANDREA FRANCOLINI, GARY LISBON

It has already claimed a place in the hearts of thousands of golfers and created lasting memories for many who've played there to date, but the cream of Australia's teaching professionals will be looking to block out the view and concentrate on the task at hand when they converge on Hamilton Island later this year.

For the first time, the annual PGA Professionals Championship will be contested at Hamilton Island Golf Club from 12-16 November. Club and teaching professionals from around Australia have the opportunity to pre-qualify and the Top-50 will fly to the island to compete against their peers for a national title over 54 holes.

The coveted championship has prize

money of \$50,000. The first two rounds will be played as a Pro-Am format alongside 50 amateurs, while the third round will be exclusively for club pros. Graeme Stockley from Belmont Golf Club near Newcastle, NSW, has confirmed he will defend the title. The winner receives an invitation to compete in the PGA Professionals Championship at Cooloom in December.

It will be fascinating to see how the professionals handle Hamilton Island, which debuted at No.39 in *Australian Golf Digest's* ranking of Australia's Top 100 Golf Courses. The course, designed by five-time British Open champion Peter Thomson and his business partner Ross Perrett, places a premium on accuracy. While the fairways

are generous with landing areas of up to 60 metres, the wayward shot is punished by tropical jungle that flanks the fairways.

But unlike resort guests, the pros won't have the luxury of Hamilton Island's local rule, which allows players to drop and play a second ball near where their ball disappeared under a one-stroke penalty. They'll have to go back to the tee to play their third shot. In all likelihood, that will be from one of the Hoop Pine tees that stretch the par-71 layout to 6,140 metres.

"It's all about positioning, especially off the tee. That's the main challenge that the guys are going to face – picking the right club off the tee and setting themselves up for the hole," says Hamilton Island's resident

professional, Mark Snooks.

Generally speaking, 3-woods, 4-irons and hybrids will be used on most holes by the pros and it's possible to get away with hitting a driver just once (on the 18th hole) for the entire round. Snooks says amateurs would benefit from a similar conservative approach of keeping the driver in the bag around Hamilton Island.

The three par-5s – which Australian international golfer, Karrie Webb described as the most unforgiving she's ever seen – should have a large influence on determining the eventual champion. In particular, the 507m sixth hole will be treated as a three-shotter even by the pros because of danger posed by a cluster of fairway traps and a putting

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Left: Mark Snooks, the Hamilton Island Golf Club pro expects some thrilling golf from the tournament.



surface surrounded by bunkers and native bushland. (Karrie also described the short holes at Hamilton as “four of the most beautiful par-3s I’ve ever played”. Hence, it’s a challenge for the pros not to become distracted by the enchanted setting.)

Birdies are more likely on the relatively sheltered front nine on the lower part of Dent Island, where the Hamilton Island course is situated. However, the key to victory will be holding a score together over the more elevated back nine, which is exposed to wind gusts.

According to Mark Snooks, the difficult stretch from holes 13 through 15 will pose plenty of problems with the prevailing wind from the southeast. In that sense, the pros will have the same challenges that resort golfers face on a daily basis.

The 13th is an uphill par 4 of 378m that features a blind tee shot. Playing straight into the prevailing wind, players are generally left with a long approach. Fortunately for the pros, the presence of volunteer ‘spotters’ on holes such as the 13th will be invaluable for finding errant balls.

The par-3, 14th is Hamilton Island’s

signature hole that plays downwind and is tougher than its distance of 150m. It’s all carry across a ravine with bunkers surrounding the front and right-hand side of a green that tiers off over the back. A bale-out area is to the left of the putting surface, but essentially trouble awaits when missing the green long, right or short.

Hole 15 is rated as the hardest hole at Hamilton Island Golf Club, measuring 387m from the elevated back tee. It usually plays straight back into the teeth of the south-easterly and two demanding shots are required to hit a green located on the southern-most tip of Dent Island. The dilemma is to take a driver, which brings into play a strategically placed bunker in the landing zone, or opt for a lay-up short of the hazard, which makes for a more brutal approach.

Negotiating the final six holes (13-18) will be pivotal. Exposed to the elements, a big swing could occur late in the championship. “Whoever has the most amount of patience and whoever is the smartest will clean up for sure,” says Mark. “I know it’s a cliché, but play each shot and each hole as it comes.” ■

Nickelodeon Family Travel

Reporters

This has to be everyone's idea of the perfect 'working holiday'. As the winners of Nickelodeon's Family Travel Reporters competition, the Greens from Adelaide embarked on an exciting family holiday, 'covering' Hamilton Island for Australia's popular Nickelodeon TV channel.

STORY DAVID FORD PHOTOGRAPHY NICKELODEON

A family holiday with a real difference. That was the prize for the Green family from Adelaide, when they entered a short video in the Nickelodeon Family Travel Reporters competition.

The brief was simple. Produce a two-minute travel video and send it in for the chance to win five nights on Hamilton Island, flying Jetstar and staying at the superb Hamilton Island Yacht Club Villas.

In addition, the family would adopt the role of travel reporters, taking on the exciting job of experiencing all the amazing activities Hamilton Island has to offer and sharing it with the kids and families of Nickelodeon.

When word came through that they were the winners, they could hardly contain their surprise and excitement.

A tropical island holiday with time to take in the 60-plus activities on offer and a chance for each member of the family to give it their best shot as travel reporters. It was sure to be a family holiday they would never forget.

"It was totally awesome!" says 11-year-old

Taylor, who was the family's star reporter. From the second Taylor, her dad Richard, mum April, brothers Jack and Callum and little sister Ashleigh climbed aboard the Jetstar flight, it was an action-packed week away. Unlike most family trips, the Greens were accompanied by a few 'extras' – namely the Nickelodeon camera crew who captured the whole trip, which aired in five parts on the Nickelodeon channel.

"The most outstanding part of my trip was the mini golf," says Callum, Taylor's nine-year-old brother. "I was the winner and it felt like I was playing in the jungle."

Seems a love of golf might run in the family. Dad Richard enjoyed the golf on offer at the 18-hole championship Hamilton Island Golf Club.

For sister Ashleigh, aged six, deciding, between Reefworld, the wildlife park, riding in the buggies and the ice-cream shop, was a tough call.

"It's really hard to decide on just one favourite thing," says Taylor. And small

wonder, with so many things to choose from.

"But my favourite activity on Hamilton Island was quad biking," she says. "I loved getting all muddy and jumping on a quad bike for the first time."

With so much to do in five days, it was action-packed from the second the Greens landed on the island and were whisked from the airport to their luxury Hamilton Island Yacht Club Villa. But just as dad Richard found time to escape to the greens of Hamilton Island Golf Club, mum April managed to slip away for a little pampering and a massage at Spa wumurdalyn.

In fact, there was even the chance for Richard and April to go out and enjoy a romantic dinner, while the kids stayed at their villa, with a babysitter – a win-win situation!

Using their Yacht Club Villa as a base, there was no shortage of things to explore on the island.

From quad biking, to glow-in-the-dark bowling, mini-golf to the Kids Fun Zone, the excitement was non-stop. This was followed



Taylor's family holiday



My brother Callum at Catseye



Quad biking was the best



Me and a friendly local



Me as a budding reporter



My sister Ashleigh

by the Green family 'tradition' of a day on the beach – only this time, Catseye Bay was the scene for beach cricket, snorkelling, paddle-boarding and getting in a little sailing practice on the catamarans.

A visit to Reefworld, out on the Great Barrier Reef, was an 'awesome experience' and certainly rated as a highlight. Snorkelling around the permanent pontoon that is Reefworld, was a memorable experience for all. With its underwater viewing room and submarine, it was a unique chance to see the reef and some of its amazing fish and coral up close.

There was also the chance to explore other islands. Setting sail on a Sunsail catamaran to visit a deserted beach was one of those rare opportunities – it was just the Greens and the Nickelodeon crew. The perfect place for snorkelling, fishing and even climbing the palm trees!

"I have to say that it was all a 'real' experience," says Taylor.

"With the camera crew, sound man and

directors all around us it was pretty full-on but they were really nice and we had a really good time with them. At some stages, we had to learn lines and do a couple of different takes but we usually managed to get the shot the first time. There is so much to do at Hamilton Island that we were never short of things to report on. I would love to go back soon."

It was an action-packed visit for the Greens. A holiday that may well have launched the careers of a couple of intrepid travel reporters of the future. And the family put in a great effort of getting through the 60 plus activities on offer at Hamilton Island. As for the ones they missed, there's always next time. ■

To check out the Green's family travel reports or to plan your own Hamilton Island family adventure, visit www.hamiltonisland.com.au/family

Whale Playtime

Every year, between May and September, one of nature's most spectacular events takes place along Australia's east coast as thousands of humpback whales make their annual migration north.

STORY KRIS MADDEN PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREA FRANCOLINI



Last year, Georgina Whatsford of Seaforth, New South Wales, and her partner Frank, were lucky enough to witness a baby humpback whale take its first breath while sailing on their yacht Rainbow in the Whitsundays.

"It was mid-August and we were sailing near Hamilton Island when we noticed a mother whale swimming very slowly with a baby balanced diagonally across her nose," recalls Georgina.

"At first we thought the baby was sick, but later after talking to a local we realised what we had seen was a mother coaxing her baby to the surface to breathe for the first time. She had just given birth.

"It was the most amazing experience and a very emotional one, and we were excited to think that we were one of the few people in the world who have ever seen anything like this."

During their six-month sailing adventure, which included a long stint moored near Hamilton Island, Georgina and Frank had many more memorable encounters including whales following them along in their yacht, just metres away.

Travelling along the 'humpback superhighway' on their epic journey from Antarctica to tropical waters where they breed and give birth, whales are often sighted around Hamilton Island and the Whitsundays. The calm, protected waters provide an ideal nursery to raise their young.

There is a certain mystery surrounding whales that inspires our curiosity. First of all, the annual humpback migration is the longest of any mammal on the planet. It's a return journey of more than 10,000 kilometres which they make every year from birth for the rest of their lives.

Then there's their playful and incredible acrobatics. Watching images of whales on television or in a magazine can never prepare you for the experience of encountering one of the largest creatures on earth in the wild. Witnessing a 40-tonne animal completely lifting itself out of the water then crashing back into the sea or staring you in the eye while 'spy-hopping' next to your boat, is a powerful and humbling experience.

It's no wonder that whale-watching has become one of the fastest growing tourism industries today, with more than 60,000 people in Australia taking a whale watching tour each year. Even more watch in from private boats or land-based lookouts.

It was only just decades ago that it would have been rare to see a humpback whale off the Queensland coast. By the time the International Whaling Commission

banned humpback whaling in the Southern Hemisphere in 1963, they had been almost hunted to extinction. The original east coast population of around 40,000 animals had been reduced to less than 500.

Fortunately, the worldwide moratorium on whaling has seen the population of these vulnerable animals stage a miraculous comeback. According to the Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management, up to 17,000 animals are expected to make the journey this season (2012) and many new baby humpbacks will be born.

Another, once-rare whale sighting, that of a white whale, has now become a favourite part of the annual migration. Straight from the pages of Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*; the first white whale sighting in Australia in recent times was in the waters near Byron Bay in 1991. Named Migaloo (which means

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- **Blowing:** When a whale exhales there is a spout, which can be visible for quite a distance and is most likely the first sign that you will see. Binoculars definitely come in handy.
- **Breaching:** When a whale explodes through the surface of the water in spectacular fashion, twisting in midair and landing on its back, side or in a belly flop, sometimes many times in a row.
- **Tail and flipper slapping:** Humpback whales will sometimes raise their tails or long pectoral fins above the water's surface, then smack them down making a sound that can often be heard kilometers away.
- **Spy-hopping:** Inquisitive whales will often approach a boat and pop their head above the surface to take a good look around creating the rare and unforgettable opportunity to look a whale in the eye.
- **Diving or 'sounding':** Whales will often take deep dives, known as sounding. Humpbacks can stay underwater for up to 30 minutes, so whale-watching often requires a great deal of patience.
- **Singing:** Male humpback whales have the longest and most complex songs in the animal kingdom which can often be heard through the hull of a boat or underwater while out snorkelling or diving.



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'white fella' in the Aboriginal language) by his adoring public, who every year since have been watching for the return of the white whale with a zeal to rival Captain Ahab.

The Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management currently know of three white whales that have been seen in Queensland waters.

In the last few years, Migaloo has been seen in the Whitsundays and as far north as Cape Tribulation on his annual migration. He can be identified by a scar across the left side of his back, halfway between his blowhole and dorsal fin, the result of an earlier accident when he was hit by a sail-boat off Townsville.

In July 2008, another white whale, named Bahloo, after an Aboriginal moon spirit, was first seen swimming off the Gold Coast. Little is known about Bahloo other than that it has a few black spots on its head and tail.

Last September, yet another white whale was seen frolicking in the warm waters off Cid Harbour. Tourism Whitsundays ran a public competition and he was named Chalkie because of his chalky-white appearance and after the white sands of Chalkie's Beach near where he was first spotted. Everyone is anxiously waiting in anticipation for little Chalkie to return this year.

While there are currently no formal whale

watching tours in the Whitsundays, whale sightings are often a 'free bonus' on most boat tours operating from Shute Harbour, Airlie Beach and Hamilton Island during the peak months of June to September. You might even be lucky enough to catch sight of one of the natural world's greatest performances from one of the island's beach resorts. ■

Whale Watching Guidelines

There are laws relating to approaching whales in the wild and violations can carry heavy penalties. Vessels are not permitted closer than 100 metres to whales; or 300 metres if on a jetski or swimming or diving, or if there is a calf present. As the Whitsunday Management Area of the Townsville/Whitsunday Marine Park is a known mating and calving area for humpback whales, it has been designated an 'Area of Special Interest' by the Queensland Government and vessels can be no closer than 300 metres to a whale. For the full guidelines on whale-watching in Queensland visit www.derm.qld.gov.au or www.gbrmpa.gov.au



Stephen Jackson (kneeling) with Andy Trigg and 2011 Rookie of the Year, Mel Blank.



Described as the most perfect place for an ocean swim, Whitehaven never disappoints.

Ocean

Action

Each year, athletes of all ages and abilities converge on Hamilton Island to take on the world's most stunning triathlon course and an ocean swim in what's been described as one of the best swim locations in the world, Whitehaven Beach.

STORY JESS BRADY PHOTOGRAPHY CIARAN HANDY

Dive in, push yourself, challenge your personal best or just have the time of your life. While Hamilton Island is a magnet for those seeking a relaxing holiday, it also attracts serious athletes and enthusiastic amateurs alike to take part in what's been described as one of the most spectacular triathlon courses in the world. Add in the famous Whitehaven Beach Ocean Swim – the only sporting event permitted to be held on this iconic beach – and it's understandable even to the less energetic among us, why so many take part.

"What is now a nationally-recognised event, was born out of a dedicated group of Hamilton Island locals who formed a running club some six years ago," says founding member Stephen Jackson, a former AIS basketball coach, who has called Hamilton Island home for seven years.

"From the running club, the idea of staging a triathlon was an obvious step and with Whitehaven right on our doorstep, we

thought it would be the perfect place for an ocean swim and to turn it into a weekend event.

"We really wanted to make it a 'wow' event for the athletes and make them the focus."

And while the triathlon and the Whitehaven Beach Ocean Swim attract the highest calibre of athletes, there is no shortage of those in it for the fun, including the strong rookie program run by Hamilton Island.

"We have juniors as young as 10-years-old through to more senior competitors in their 60s," says Stephen.

"We have a mentoring 'zero to hero' program on the island where we train people up to take on their first triathlon and ocean swim. And, in general, we promote a very welcoming and inviting attitude to the event," he says.

Now in its fourth year, the popular annual Hamilton Island Triathlon is much more than just a multi-sport race – it's a two-day festival

of swimming, cycling and running with a variety of events that cater for all levels of fitness, endurance and commitment.

Last year, the triathlon and swim attracted athletes of all ages and abilities. This included former world junior triathlon champion Ashleigh Gentle, (who took out the women's division of the event in a blistering time of 1hr 12min ahead of her nearest rival, Athens Olympian Maxine Seear; as well as, Ironman and ocean swimming champion Ky Hurst, who led his team to victory in the team division of the event, alongside plenty of less world-famous champions.

The event includes: a 750m sprint swim across Catseye Bay; a 20km cycle around the southern part of Hamilton Island, including the airport runway; and, a 5km run around the marina and resort side of the island.

The next morning, those 15-years and under compete in the Junior Fujifilm Hamilton Island Triathlon – a fun swim, bike and run around the Hamilton Island village

with three options, ranging from a 350m swim, 6km cycle and 2500m run down to a 50m swim, 1km cycle and 500m run. Unlike most traditional kids' triathlons, children don't compete in age-groups but choose which race they want to enter, based on their ability and experience.

And, for those looking for a very different style of competition, there's the Dent Dash on Sunday morning – a non-competitive social event where participants can either run or walk 18 holes of the spectacular Hamilton Island Golf Club on Dent Island – some 10.6km. If that's too energetic (and there are plenty of hills to challenge the legs), you can choose between the front nine holes (4.2km) or the back nine (4.6km). Whichever course you opt for, the finish is the same: a scrumptious breakfast at the Clubhouse.

But the highlight of the weekend of sport for many is without a doubt the Whitehaven Beach Ocean Swim on neighbouring Whitsunday Island. Consistently named one



UON SB20
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Perfectly situated at the edge of the Great Barrier Reef, Hamilton Island is renowned as a world-class sailing destination. The surrounding waterways and the island's wide range of facilities make it the perfect location to host the UON 2012 SB20 World Championships. SB20's are a one-design Sports Yacht which are fast and technical by nature and attract some of the best sailors in the world. Each boat is sailed by three or four people with a maximum crew weight of 270kg and due to its unique design allows competitive crews of all shapes, sizes and ages, making for very exciting racing. Western Australian company UON Pty Ltd is the proud main sponsor for this year's World Championships and from a family of keen sailors Mark Keogh, UON Managing Director, is delighted to be a part of this exciting sailing event. "Through our involvement with the Role Models and Leaders Australia project, UON has sponsored four young Aboriginal girls to learn to sail and race in this year's Championships being held off Hamilton Island in December." The UON sponsored girls have been training hard, and are looking forward to giving their all for the action on the Whitsunday waterways in December.

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To find out more about the UON 2012 SB20 World Championships on Hamilton Island, visit www.hamiltonisland.com.au/sb20-worlds-2012/



Views like these make the effort worthwhile.



of the world's best beaches, thanks to its seven, deserted kilometres of pristine white sand and crystal-clear water, the race is part of the Great Australian Swim Series founded by Ky Hurst. The series comprises of four ocean swims along the east-coast of Australia. The first kicks off in Coolangatta on the Gold Coast, on 14 October; followed by the Whitehaven swim in November; Redcliffe Beach in Brisbane; and, the final at Farm Cove alongside the Opera House in Sydney on Australia Day, 26 January, 2013.

The main swim at each event is the 2.2km, incorporating categories for all age groups (youth to masters) male and female. There is also an elite level race showcasing Australia's and the world's best open water swimmers. Stars who took to the water off Whitehaven last year included Ky Hurst (who dominated the men's division of the race and finished the 2km swim in just 22 min 28 sec); New Zealand women's open water champion Cara Baker (who won the women's division in a sprint to the finish lines with hundredths of a second separating her from 18-year old Eliza Smith from Newcastle); and, Australia's original Madam Butterfly, Susie O'Neill, who had a convincing win in her age-group category. But you don't have to be a superfish to take part: you can swim the shorter 750m course or join in one of the fun events – like the 'anything goes' category, where you can swim with family and friends or use swimming aids, such as flippers and hand paddles.

With the ocean temperature expected to be a balmy 23 degrees, it has all the ingredients for a fantastic day in the water. As Ky Hurst told News Limited's *Escape* travel section last year, "The best thing is that as soon as you've finished the race you get to hang out and relax and enjoy the rest of the afternoon on Whitehaven Beach. The water is crystal clear, the marine life is amazing and the colour of the sand is pure white. It's probably one of the best locations in the world to swim."

Five races in two days. Almost four kilometres swum, 20km cycled and more than 30km run – all in the name of fun. ■

Life is Beautiful

For qualia's General Manager Michael Shah and his family, a special bond was formed with Hamilton Island from the moment they arrived.

STORY STEPHEN COOK

PHOTOGRAPHY JULIAN KINGMA (MAIN IMAGE), THE SHAH FAMILY

When the Shah family woke in their then-new home on Hamilton Island for the first time just over a year ago, they walked out on to their balcony to take in their inaugural sunrise over Catseye Bay. As they admired the brilliant colours in the sky and on the sea, they realised their new neighbours had come out to welcome them...

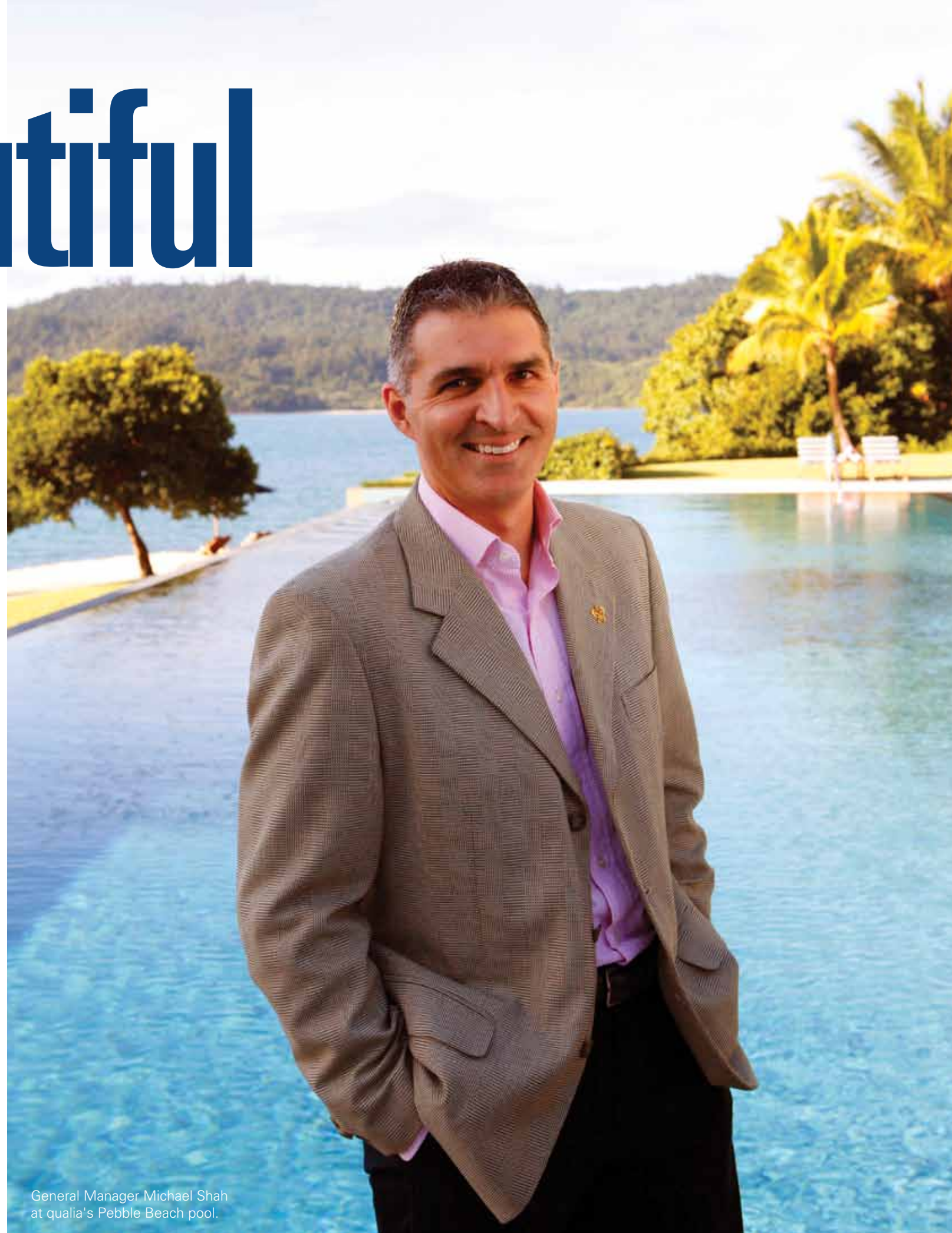
"The first one we saw was a kookaburra sitting on the balcony railing," recalls Michael Shah, General Manager of Hamilton Island's award-winning luxury resort, qualia (pictured right).

"Then we were drawn towards a movement in the garden below," adds wife, Jenni, "The kids and I saw this gorgeous wallaby, sunning itself near some bushes under the balcony just a few feet away. We now know she's a female; because she's given birth twice in the past year! So we've named her 'Mama', and both her joeys have been born under our watchful eyes.

"Yes, Mama is part of our extended island family now," adds Michael.

For Michael and Jenni, and their children - Bailey, ten; Jamie, eight; and Sienna, six - Hamilton Island has been full of neighbourhood surprises since they first arrived, and Michael began leading the efficient and friendly team at qualia.

Australian-born Michael, a published travel writer who has also penned a book of poetry, began his 25-year career in hospitality in his hometown Melbourne while still at university.



General Manager Michael Shah at qualia's Pebble Beach pool.



Above: Jamie, Bailey, Jenni and Sienna on their way to Hamilton Island State School.

"I was doing my Arts degree, with majors in politics and English, and I began working as a waiter at the newly-opened Grand Hyatt on Collins Street. I found I loved working with people and, before I knew it, my manager was telling me I should make it my career. He offered me a full-time job and I quit uni. I haven't looked back since."

Five years later, on his first major overseas sojourn, Michael landed in London where, miraculously, he bumped in to his former manager from Melbourne, who asked Michael to come and join his team at the Hyatt in London. Michael was soon managing both room service and the hotel's health club, dealing with everyone from the Ak Maktoum family, who own Emirates airlines, to the Queen's Envoy, who came to the hotel regularly to officially greet any new Arab ambassadors on the Queen's behalf.

"It was a very big deal with horse-drawn carriages and police escorts," Michael recalls, adding that while the Envoy and the ambassadors were inside having their meeting, the tradition was that those accompanying the Envoy would receive a shot of whiskey.

"It was British pomp and ceremony - all very formal. I would be dressed in my black tails, white gloves and stand outside, upright as can be, as the Envoy arrived. I'd have a gilded silver tray full of nips of whiskey balanced on my hand and, as soon as the

Envoy went in to the hotel, all the coachmen, Grenadier Guards and police motorcycle riders would rush over to me, grab their shot glass, skull it down, and then run back to their posts. It was hilarious!"

Michael went on to spend a total of 10 years with the Hyatt group. He next worked in Sydney for the new ANA hotel before moving to New Zealand, where he experienced two eventful moments. He met Jenni on the first night in his new job as Food and Beverage Manager at the Auckland Convention Centre; and, not long after, was personally serving Queen Elizabeth II, former British PM Tony Blair and then-US President Bill Clinton at the annual CHOGM and APEC meetings.

Thirteen years later - after marrying Jenni; the birth of their three children; and six years managing Kourawhero Lodge, a boutique resort north of Auckland - Michael was asked to fill-in as GM at Pacific Resort in Aitutaki, Cook Islands. The family loved tropical life so much they stayed two years, during which Michael was announced as South Pacific GM of the Year in the 2010 HM Awards.

"In Aitutaki, it was all about the local community and we were lucky, we got to be very involved and connected with people from all walks of life. The kids had a great time growing up there," says Jenni. "Yet the island is very small and it was rather isolating; it's a long way from everywhere right out there in the middle of the Pacific!"

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- Sunset cocktails at One Tree Hill
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- Quad bike tours
- Trips to Whitehaven Beach
- 10 and 20min joy flights

So, when the opportunity to return to Australia arose, the Shahs were happy to be heading to Michael's homeland.

"I couldn't believe it when I got the job," he says. "Who wouldn't want to work at qualia. This island is amazingly beautiful. The environment at qualia has been so well considered and I am personally in a really privileged position; having the chance to work so closely with the Oatley family. They really are charming and I am full of admiration for their vision and tenacity in delivering on that dream."

That vision has seen qualia win multiple awards, including the 2012 *Australian Gourmet Traveller Awards* for Best Australian Island Resort and Best Spa as well as the 2011 *HM Magazine Award* for Best Luxury Resort.

"Here we are, just two and a bit hours from my hometown of Melbourne, and even closer to connections via Sydney and Brisbane. It's a well-connected oasis - with no passports needed," says Michael.

It's an 'oasis' the Shah family has readily adapted to. "We are all so happy here - the kids especially. They love to go swimming in the Bougainvillea pool - 'cause it's deep. They play tennis, basketball, soccer, mini-golf, Little Athletics. I think they feel like they're on holiday all year and it's such a safe and friendly place for kids," Michael says.

"Everything's just five minutes down the road - wherever you need to go!" adds Jenni, who now writes the official Hamilton Island Blog and assists in the school's library as she completes her Masters in Information Management.

"Everyone's connected here, via the school, sports or the company, and there's a real sense of pride throughout the community. Don't tell the Oatleys, but the kids think it's *their* island... and the school is amazing: the smaller class sizes mean each child gets that much-needed, one-on-one time that you don't get in a big city school."

And what about Mum and Dad? "Well, Michael and I are the ultimate foodies and so we love a special night out at qualia or Bommie, trying the latest menu - but we equally enjoy great Italian with the kids at Romanos," Jenni says.

"It really is wonderful," adds Michael. "I spend my days greeting everyone from VIPs and visiting celebrities, to guests from all over the world and working amidst the



Main picture: The Shah children hit the pool.

sublime serenity of qualia.

"Then I come home to my equally beautiful family, who are my healthy dose of reality at the end of my day. And we live in this magical place where wallabies have babies in our backyard, too!" ■

www.qualia.com
Hamilton Island Blog:
<http://blog.hamiltonisland.com.au>



Far right: Sienna cuddles a koala at Wild Life Hamilton Island.

Right: Mama, the family wallaby.





The Great Escape

Breathtaking views, complete privacy and 'room to move' make Whitehaven the perfect place to escape the outside world and relax in your own piece of heaven.

There are views. And then there is the spectacular panorama from the majestic house called Whitehaven on Hamilton Island. Perched high on the hill overlooking Catseye Bay and the glorious Coral Sea beyond, you could sit and take in that view forever.

This is the stuff of dreams – the perfect sanctuary from the outside world. Providing complete privacy in a very exclusive part of the island, and making full use of its considerable grounds. It's a property that has been built to celebrate its surrounds and a certain lifestyle.

Whitehaven occupies a huge, elevated site on Melaleuca Drive, one of the most exclusive and sought-after residential streets on the

island. This part of Hamilton Island was one of the first areas released for residential development in the very early days, which means the sites are all large and separated from one another. Properties here seldom come up for sale, and even a short drive around the area makes it obvious why. Indeed, Whitehaven has belonged to its present owner for the past 20 years, and he in turn, bought it from the original owner, Ross Lowe.

Lowe put a great deal of thought into the construction of Whitehaven, building a large, timeless house with generous living areas and bedrooms in an open, flowing configuration across a single level. Given its commanding position, he went to great lengths to take

full advantage of the large, flat site to capture the stunning 180 degree views right out over the Coral Sea to Whitsunday Island from each of the rooms, while providing for an enormous verandah and outdoor entertaining area, making full use of the glorious position. A swimming pool, surrounded by tropical gardens and large lawn area, is the perfect complement to the entertaining area, with Passage Peak and the Coral Sea providing the backdrop, it is the perfect private oasis.

The geography of the land serves to provide natural protection from even a stiff Sou' Easter, although a cooling ocean breeze is welcome on a hot day. As the wind strength builds, the position of the saddle is such that stronger winds run up the hill and right over the top of

the property, so that the outdoor areas can be enjoyed year round.

It was a combination of all these elements that attracted Whitehaven's present owner to buy the property 20 years ago.

Originally, he and his wife came to Hamilton Island to visit a friend who was purchasing a property and instantly fell in love with the place. While he admits to not knowing a great deal about the island at the time, the location and the close-knit sailing fraternity made a compelling case that led to his initial purchase on the island.

From those early days though, Whitehaven held a special attraction. So when the property finally came on to the market, he was fortunate to be in the right place at the right time.



The appeal of Whitehaven is obvious. Five large bedrooms, all with built-ins, three bathrooms and large living areas laid out in a horseshoe configuration on a block of 3,055m². This equates to some 500m² of living area, including the aforementioned entertaining areas, for a property that allows the occupants to immerse themselves in the lifestyle and the stunning location.

The layout of the house is such that the open style can be sectioned off to provide guests with their own private quarters, complete with facilities. And with so much space on offer, room to move is simply not an issue.

The kitchen and living areas flow naturally to the outside verandah and entertaining areas, with beautifully kept tropical gardens and lawns surrounding the swimming pool. There is that view, which can never be built out, and there is absolute privacy from the other residences in the area.

Despite the very private location, Front Street and the Hamilton Island Marina are only minutes away by electric buggy – in fact nothing is very far away on the island – and with Catseye Bay below, the temptation to get out and hit the beach, or the restaurants of Front Street, is ever present.

Whitehaven is a rare find and the decision to sell was not made lightly by the present owners. But, due to their family commitments elsewhere, this ‘house on the hill’ is on the market for only the second time in history.

The property has always been maintained as a private residence and has never been let as a holiday property, although the potential for doing just that is obvious.

Without doubt one of the best locations on the island, Whitehaven has an easy charm and is the ‘complete Hamilton Island package’. ■

“It’s not often that one of these original properties comes on the market. This location must be inspected to be fully appreciated.”

Wayne Singleton – Hamilton Island Real Estate

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Body Corporate: \$6,320 pa

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OFFERS FROM: \$740,000 2 2 1

Property size: 134sqm

Rates: \$5,624 pa

Body Corporate: \$9,500 pa

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Oasis on Hamilton Apartment 14

OFFERS FROM: \$550,000 2 1.5 1

Property size: 110sqm

Rates: \$5,591 pa

Body Corporate: \$7,500 pa

Oasis apartments are renowned as the perfect two-bedroom entry level apartment for lifestyle and investment, with a consistent holiday rental history. Perfect for owner/occupier or for holiday letting. With access to the Oasis pool and tropical gardens, it's just a short stroll to Front Street's shopping and dining.

Contact. Wayne Singleton 0416 024 168

The properties featured in the REEF Magazine Real Estate section are available at time of print, but for a full listing of properties for sale or to review recently sold properties, visit the Hamilton Island Real Estate office on Front Street or go to www.hamiltonislandrealestate.com.au
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Average land size 1,540sqm

Priced from AUD \$1.4M

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