

Travel Log

Our roundup of the best Down Under news, views and gossip



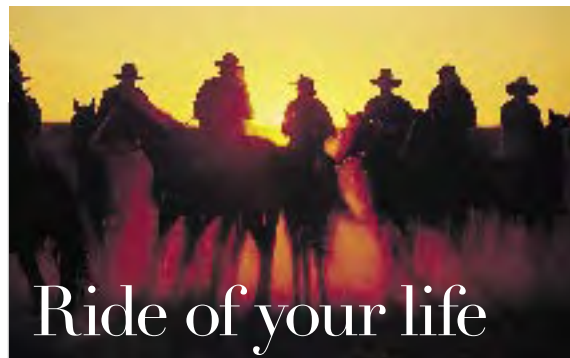
Safari-style tents in the stunning Kimberley region allow you to truly get away from it all!

Eco friendly

The all-new Eco Beach Wilderness retreat in Western Australia is a testimony to how luxury and ecologically sustainable tourism can be successfully married. The fully sustainable resort offers breathtaking views, stunning villas, an infinity pool, fine dining and spa facilities in a remote part of the stunning Kimberley region.

The retreat consists of a combination of 25 luxurious self-sustaining Eco Villas and 30 safari style Eco Tents. The Eco Beach experience includes sampling the adventure of a "fishermen's paradise", expeditions with traditional landowners, bush walks, horse riding, watching flat back turtles lay eggs in the moonlight, and all kinds of pampering treatments.

The resort is the realisation of a dream for owner Karl Plunkett, who moved to Australia from the Isle of Man 22 years ago. Prices start from A\$150 (£73) for an en-suite Eco Tent. www.ecobeach.com.au



Words: Liane Voisey

Ride of your life

Thousands of cattle used to be herded in the legendary cattle drives of old, and now you can get a taste for the Great Australian Outback Cattle Drive yourself. Bridge & Wickers is offering the opportunity to join drovers on a cattle drive through the heart of the South Australian Outback. By day, would-be drovers help move the herd across the vast landscapes, while by night they unwind beside a campfire. The five-day package costs from £1,523 per person. www.bridgeandwickers.co.uk

Learning the ropes

With the pristine waters of the Great Barrier Reef as your classroom, how about experiencing the exhilaration of trimming the sails and furiously winding the winches as you navigate the waters around Magnetic Island and the Palm Islands.

The two day 'Start Yachting Course' starting from Townsville in Queensland takes participants to a variety of destinations and anchorages to enable you to become competent at meeting the challenges from tying knots to understanding winds and boat safety.

On completion of the course at a satisfactory level participants will receive Sail 4 Life Club Membership, a Yachting Australia certificate and log book. www.tropicsail.com.au



...roundup...

THE 'LOST CITY' FOUND IN SYDNEY

Sydney's most top-secret art grotto has been reborn. The Paddington Reservoir had been built 142 years ago but was decommissioned in 1914 and became a garage. In 1993, the roof caved-in, leaving the site derelict and filled with graffiti. Now, following millions of

dollars of restoration work, the new Paddington Reservoir Gardens – which features a stunning Romanesque sunken garden with a lake of contemplation and a hanging garden canopy – has been turned into a 'cultural precinct' and will be used to host markets, art and film festivals.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA IS TOPS

Melbourne's National Gallery of Victoria is the most visited art gallery in Australia according to a survey by the international *Art Newspaper*. With 1.48 million visitors last year, it ranks among the publication's top 25 most popular art museums in the world. The National Gallery

of Victoria is the oldest and largest public art gallery in Australia, holding 63,000 works of art. In particular, its annual Winter Masterpieces exhibitions attract record visitors, while last year it emerged that it may be in possession of the only portrait of the infamous Lucrezia Borgia in the world. www.ngv.vic.gov.au

FINALLY SOLD: KYLIE'S MELBOURNE GETAWAY

After nearly a year on the market, Kylie Minogue's getaway home on French Island, southeast of Melbourne, has been sold, with plans for it to be turned into a high-profile health retreat, with rates starting from A\$250 (£125) per night. Named Beauciel (French