

BEST OF AUSTRALIA ♦ 2018

There's so much to do in our own back yard, from photography tours in Kakadu (main picture), exploring Murrumbateman wineries near Canberra, trekking in Tasmania and chilling out in Mornington Peninsula's hot springs.

PICTURES: ISTOCK, SUPPLIED

HOT AND COLD

The Peninsula Hot Springs, on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, will launch seven new pools and an amphitheatre for concerts, talks, demonstrations and wellness activities in early 2018. A highlight of the redevelopment is the "fire and ice" experience where guests can try hot/cold therapy in two large saunas, an ice cave, and plunge pool.

PENINSULAHOTSPRINGS.COM

STEPPING OUT

Tasmania's first indigenous tourism attraction will launch in January with the Wukalina Walk. This four-day experience, in Mt William National Park, is described as a "museum of the Palawa people" and visitors will be treated to the stories of Tasmania's traditional Aboriginal people, while sleeping in timber tents and a lighthouse keeper's cottage.

[FACEBOOK.COM/WUKALINAWALK/](https://www.facebook.com/wukalinawalk/)

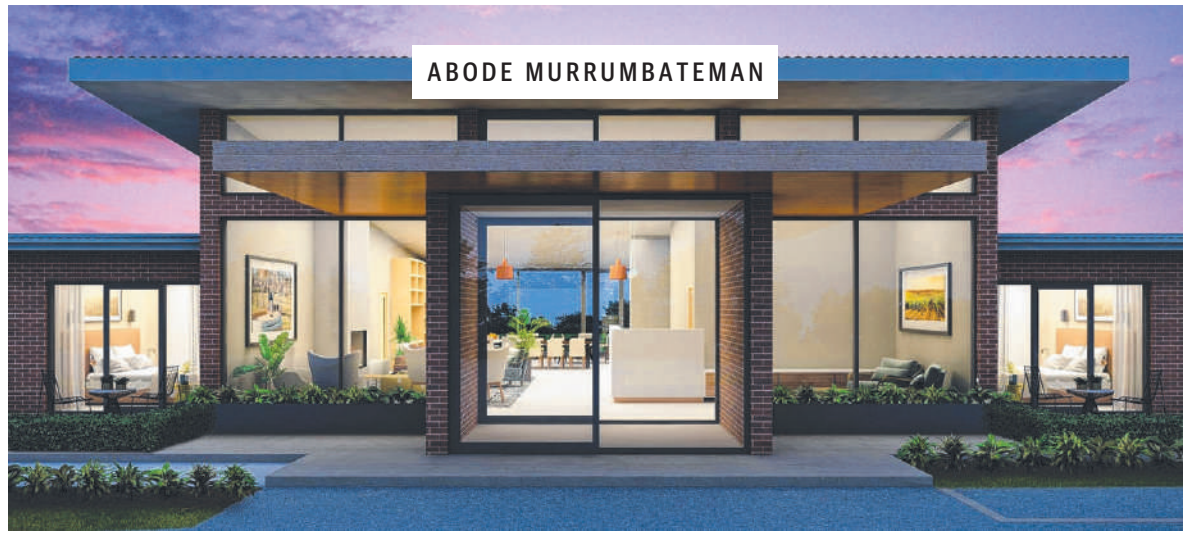
ANCHOR AT PORT STEPHENS

The Anchorage at Port Stephens, 2.5 hours north of Sydney, has undergone a massive renovation due for completion at the end of 2017. All rooms in this luxury Hamptons-style accommodation have been revamped and refurbished; an infinity pool has been built and the original pool has been updated; Spa Lucca is brand new as is Hemingway's Bar.

ANCHORAGEPORTSTEPHENS.COM.AU

GOOD SPIRITS

Local distilling is set to make a comeback to Victoria's Bellarine area after a 30-year hiatus with the opening of The Whiskery in early



ABODE MURRUMBATEMAN

2018. You'll find this distillery on a 2.8ha historic site, which was a former Cobb & Co watering hole.

Serving its own whisky and gin, sip locally-produced wine, cider and beer, and dine on grazing plates of gourmet fodder.

[FACEBOOK.COM/THEWHISKERY](https://www.facebook.com/thewhiskery)

SPORT REPORT

Perth's new 60,000 seat sporting stadium, due to open in January, is being hailed as a major sporting and entertainment venue.

Check out its calendar of events for a chance to christen this new cultural cauldron complete with "fans first" technology such as full 4G Wi-Fi coverage, more than 1000 TV screens, 50 food and drink outlets and a kids' activity zone.

PERTHSTADIUM.COM.AU

NEW ZOO

A highlight of the Sydney Zoo, due to open next year, is the animals won't be caged, allowing a safari-style experience for visitors.

The \$36 million zoo, in the Bungarribee Precinct, will hold 30 exhibits and a variety of species including exotic and Australian animals.

DESTINATIONNSW.COM.AU

THE MANE EVENT

South Australia's Monarto Zoo is set to roar into life in late 2017 when it launches its Lions 360 Experience.

Courageous visitors will walk through a tunnel and come within a whisker of one of Australia's largest lion prides in the heart of their den.

MONARTOZOO.COM.AU/LIONS360/

COME A WALTZING MATILDA

Paying tribute to Australian poet Banjo Paterson, and reopening after it was destroyed by fire in 2015, Winton's Waltzing Matilda Centre will relaunch in time for its 20th anniversary in April. Visit this Outback Queensland museum, dedicated to the song *Waltzing Matilda*, and experience its revival.

MATILDACENTRE.COM.AU

DRINK AND SINK

Much-coveted accommodation near the popular Murrumbateman wineries in the Canberra District will open in late 2017/early 2018 with a new hotel from the Abode Group. The 52-room Abode Murrumbateman hotel has received a big cheers from surrounding wineries.

ABODEHOTELS.COM.AU

SHOT ON IRISH EXPERIENCE • DAY 7

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The GOOD Life



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