

**THE TOUR**  
Magnum photographer Martin Parr leads a 12-day India tour with Cox & Kings on 16 February. It features famous sites with a chance to photograph them under expert guidance (coxandkings.co.uk).



**THE KIT**  
Eastpak's Transverz XS bag meets easyJet's new luggage restrictions. Measuring 45cm x 32cm x 30cm, the two-wheeled case comes in a dozen colours and weighs just over 2kgs; £85 (eastpak.com).

**THE COURSE**  
Raymond Blanc's Manoir aux Quat'Saisons hotel launches a "How to Cook and Eat Well" course in November. Inspired by the BBC series, it will feature recipes such as lobster ravioli; £360 (manoir.com).

# Globejotter



STAY THE NIGHT BONDI 100, AUSTRALIA

## An upmarket take on Sydney's beach retreat

Forget the backpacker bunkhouses of Bondi - now you can live the coastal dream in style, says **James Litston**



### INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

## Family hotel and dinner deals

From £55 per adult

Children stay free



Escape from it all with the family and treat yourself to one of our two-night hotel stays, with an evening meal included on your first night and children stay free.

Hotel and price per adult for 2 nights from	Perfect for
Holiday Inn Birmingham M6, Jct 7	£62.50 Cadbury World
Holiday Inn Swindon	£62.50 Longleat Safari Park
Holiday Inn Chester South	£104 Chester Zoo
Holiday Inn Guildford	£77.50 Chessington World of Adventures
Holiday Inn Leamington Spa	£80 Warwick Castle
Holiday Inn Maidstone	£80 Leeds Castle
Holiday Inn Shepperton	£84.50 World Rugby Museum
Holiday Inn Leeds Wakefield M1 Jct40	£87.50 National Coal Mining Museum
Holiday Inn York	£99 Jorvik Viking Centre
Holiday Inn Hemel Hemstead M1, Jct 8	£109 The Snow Centre
Holiday Inn Plymouth	£121.50 National Marine Aquarium
Holiday Inn London Kings Cross/Bloomsbury	£137.50 London Breaks
Holiday Inn Aylesbury	£150 Roald Dahl Children's Gallery

To book or to browse hundreds of other travel offers visit: [superbreak.com/independent](http://superbreak.com/independent)  
Call: 0844 472 5563 quoting The Independent

\*Kids up to the age of 18 stay free when sharing a family room with two adults. Dinner, bed & breakfast is included for children under 15. For children aged 12-18, breakfast and evening meal needs to be paid for at the hotel. Transport to/from the hotel and entry fees to suggested attractions are not included. Prices are per adult based on two adults and two children sharing a room. Subject to availability. Superbreak booking conditions apply, please ask reservations for full details. Holidays are operated and organised by Superbreak, your contract is with them and their terms and conditions will apply. When you respond to offers we may use your information to contact you with offers/services we believe will be of interest. Please give your mobile or email details if you wish to receive offers by text or email. We will not give your data to other companies without your permission; please let us know if you are happy for us to do so. 0844 calls charged at 50p/min from BT landlines.

A ny trip to Sydney calls for time spent at the beach, and there's none more quintessential than Bondi's sweeping, golden curve. This is Australia's most famous strip of sand, as emblematic of Sydney as the Harbour Bridge and Opera House. The only catch is that unless you're in the market for a backpackers' bunkhouse, Bondi has always had a dearth of more stylish places to stay.

That all changed last year with the opening of Bondi 100. This upmarket holiday rental, set two blocks from the beach, combines the signature style of a design hotel with the comforts and convenience of living like a local. Bright and spacious throughout, it has three bedrooms decked out in simple, beach-house chic and a large living/entertaining space leading on to a wood-decked garden.

The residential location ensures a relaxed and laid-back air, but Bondi's bustling bars and restaurants are just around the corner. And since Bondi is the closest ocean beach to central Sydney, it's easy to get to all the city's other attractions, too.

**THE ROOMS**  
You can tell this is a designer gem without even crossing the threshold. From the street, a flagstone path leads through the landscaped front

yard to a solid metal gate into which the words "Bondi 100" have been punched in a stylish font.

Style statements abound inside, too, such as custom-made contemporary furnishings (from local interior design firm Robert Plumb) and neon accents. The linear, single-storey property features three bedrooms (including one en suite) and a second bathroom at the front of the house, while the back half is entirely devoted to an open-plan kitchen, living and dining space flowing into the suntrap garden. The light-filled, multifunctional main room has wooden floors and a two-tone colour scheme of charcoal grey and white with splashes of bold, bright colour.

Other nice touches include complimentary Wi-Fi and a barbecue for those essential Aussie cook-outs. There's also a fully equipped, galley-style kitchen, separate laundry and off-street parking, while baby

**INSIDE OUT**  
The living area, above, opens out into the suntrap garden, top right; Bondi beach, bottom right  
MARK KOLBE

furniture is available (at extra cost) for those travelling with infants.

**OUT AND ABOUT**

If Sydney is synonymous with sun-and-surf beach culture, then Bondi is its undisputed hub. The kilometre-long stretch of beach gets packed on sunny days, but take an early jog or dip and you'll have it almost to yourself. The swell here is perfect for body boarding, or notch things up and soak up the view with the locals. Let's Go Surfing (00 61 2 9365 1800; letsgosurfing.com.au) offers two-hour beginners' classes for A\$99/£66pp.

If it's too rough to swim, head to Bondi Icebergs saltwater pool at the southern end of the beach (00 61 2 9130 4804; icebergs.com.au; A\$5.50/£3.70pp). To the south of Bondi lies a scenic mix of rocky headlands and sandy coves linked by the Coast Walk footpath (walkingcoastalsydney.com.au), which starts behind Icebergs and continues for 6km or so to Coogee

Beach. The most popular section, Bondi to Bronte, offers cliff-top look-outs and an ice-cream pit stop at Tamarama. Bronte rewards with a great strip of cafés, plus there's a bus back to Bondi.

Heading in the other direction, it's a 15-minute bus ride from Bondi to Watson's Bay. Here, grab an outside table at Doyles (00 61 2 9337 2007; doyles.com.au), a renowned seafood restaurant right on the waterfront, and soak up the sight of the high-rise city skyline reflecting in the waters of Sydney Harbour. Then catch a ferry (131500.com.au) from the adjacent dock to Circular Quay in central Sydney for the Harbour Bridge, Opera House and Botanical Gardens.

**THE FOOD AND DRINK**

Bondi 100 comes with basic supplies of coffee, tea and fresh milk, plus a selection of takeaway menus from recommended nearby eateries. For further supplies, pop around the

corner to Gould Street for healthy snacks and groceries at Earth Food Store (earthfoodstore.com.au) and opposite for fresh-baked sourdough bread at Sonoma Artisan Sourdough Bakers (sonoma.com.au). Fresh at Bondi at 144 Curlew Street has vegetables, fruit and fresh juices, and there's standard supermarket fare at IGA next door.

One thing the Aussies do particularly well is brunch. Try The Shop (78 Curlew Street; theshopbondi.com), a diminutive café/bakery for excellent coffee and breakfast treats. For a similar scene with sensational views, hillside Chapter One (34 Campbell Parade; chapter-one.com.au) looks out over the whole of Bondi.

**THE ESSENTIALS**

Bondi 100, 100 Roscoe Street, Bondi, New South Wales, Australia (00 61 2 9316 9066; staybondi.com.au). A three-night midweek stay costs from A\$1,350 (£900); sleeps six.

GREAT GETAWAYS

**WILD AT HEART**

On 16 October, Bales Worldwide has a 10-day "Natural Wonders of Costa Rica" tour for £2,095pp. The trip includes United Airlines flights from Heathrow via Newark, with hotels, meals and sight-seeing in Tortuguero National Park, Arenal Volcano, Monteverde cloud forest and San José (balesworldwide.com).

**FALL FOR NYC**

Depart on 7 October for a three-night city break to New York, when the trees of Central Park should be signalling the shifting seasons. The deal with Hayes and Jarvis includes Virgin Atlantic flights from Heathrow and three nights' room-only accommodation at the Edison Hotel in Times Square for £649pp (hayesandjarvis.co.uk).

**SALE AWAY**

Brittany Ferries is offering three nights for the price of two on cruise-and-stay breaks to France. The offer is available on services from Portsmouth, Poole and Plymouth and is valid for travel between 15 October and 31 December. Examples include three nights' B&B at the Hotel des 13 Assiettes, at Le Val St Père in Normandy, for £118pp, based on two sharing, with return ferry crossings from either Portsmouth-Caen or Poole-Cherbourg and car (brittanyferries.com).

**THE CULTURE SHOW**

Citalia is currently offering deals on Italian city breaks. Book by 20 August and three nights' B&B in Venice, staying at the Bonvecchiati hotel costs £478pp, including BA flights from Gatwick on 26 August (the film festival starts two days later). Or opt for a Roman holiday; a three-night stay with breakfast at the Hotel San Remo is £345pp, departing from Gatwick with easyJet flights on 28 September (citalia.com).

SOMETHING TO DECLARE



**6 SENSE**  
The American motel chain sparked a love affair with hotels for the writer

## The infinite possibilities of the humble hotel

Jennifer M Volland



Motel 6, the ubiquitous American roadside chain, may not register on many people's Top-10 lists for places to stay. Its stripped-down, functional aesthetic caters to travellers looking for great value. But to my eight-year-old self - who typically roughed it in campsites up and down the west coast of California with my mother and siblings - the sight of the vast parking lot and low-slung building was like an oasis in the middle of the desert.

At that time, in the mid-1970s, I had no qualms about the nondescript architecture, or the polyester bedspread, or the uncomfortable vinyl furnishings situated in front of the sliding aluminium window. I was more concerned with what was possible in the 12 hours before we had to hit the road again: swimming in the pool, running up and down the outside staircase, getting sweets and soda out of the vending machines, and staying up late to watch cable television.

Motel 6 transported me to a world very different from my own. From my earliest experience, I was hooked. As a teenager and young adult, my travels took me further abroad, and the hotel - from an \$8-a-night backpacker hostel in Thailand to a thatched beachfront hut in Fiji - served as a platform for me to experience the world, a virtual crossroads of culture, design and social interaction.

Memories of hotels, of spaces filled with opportunity and potential, are not limited to impression-

able youth. Rather the idea of the hotel resonates within a collective public consciousness. It seems that everyone has a hotel story - of a place visited, of a place dreamt about, of a place that served as the setting for a significant life moment. It's no wonder that the hotel has been the muse of writers, artists, musicians and filmmakers; it is a character in and of itself, a generative entity for creative production. It is also a zone of transition that offers detachment from the spatial and psychological constraints of everyday existence and opens the door to a new reality.

Grand Hotel: Redesigning Modern Life, a large-scale exhibition currently on view at the Vancouver Art Gallery in Canada, is the culmination of my lifelong inquiry. Charting the evolution of the hotel from its humble origins as an isolated and utilitarian structure, to a cultural phenomenon that figures prominently within the global landscape, it examines how the hotel has both reflected and shaped ideas about modern life.

But far from being the last word on the subject, Grand Hotel acknowledges the complex, ever-changing and elusive nature of hotels, and in turn, our shifting attitudes toward them. The author Joan Didion once wrote: "Of course great hotels have always been social ideas, flawless mirrors to the particular societies they service." Looking back, I see how Motel 6 symbolises a distinct tradition, of individuals finding freedom in humble accommodations that dot the vast landscape. And, for me, the hotel continues to do just that - stir the imagination, whatever its form.

Jennifer M Volland is the co-curator of "Grand Hotel: Redesigning Modern Life" at the Vancouver Art Gallery in British Columbia, Canada, until 15 Sept (grandhotalexhibition.com).

BACKSTAGE TRAVEL NO 6 - THE CAMPSITE MANAGER

## 'Camping's a happy business. If not, you're doing it wrong'

"The campers that come here are looking for an experience for their children that is either how they had it as a child, or how they would have liked to have had it as a child," says Christine Jenkins who, with her husband Jed, runs Netherlogg campsite in Kent.

It's an antidote to modern life that increasing numbers of us are seeking. According to a 2011 Mintel report, one in three Brits had taken a camping

holiday in the previous three years, up from one in five in 2009. Since setting up their campsite four years ago as an additional income stream to their vegetable nursery, the Jenkinss have already doubled the number of tent pitches (they don't take caravans) from 15 to 30, over a 20-acre area. "Everyone can be spread out. I think that's an attraction. We have the space and we don't over-cram it," she says.



Back to nature: Eurocamp and others offer the simple life

She attributes their success to the cleanliness of facilities plus the site's rural location and easy-going atmosphere. "One rule is 'don't tear our trees down', the other is 'respect the wildlife'. That's it. We don't have lots of rules and we don't have problems."

Above all, Christine feels, it's Netherlogg's simplicity that attracts customers - there's no swimming pool or bar, just a frog pond and small shop. "You have to manage expectations. We don't get people coming who are looking for a different experience, they are looking for this. We under-promise, over-deliver."

It's a world apart from camping

behemoth Eurocamp, which has been operating for 40 years and now sends 500,000 customers to 170 campsites in 10 countries every year. While Eurocamp aims for frills over simplicity, the fundamental reason for booking remains the same: "People's jobs become so stressful in the daily grind, they really appreciate being out in nature," says Laura Riley, who, as a contracting manager, is responsible for finding locations for Eurocamp's tents and mobile homes within campsites across Europe.

Great facilities and an accessible location are key, says Riley, as is the quality of accommodation. "The

French call it 'hôtellerie de plein air'. It's hotel-level facilities but you are out in the open air, so you can sit on your terrace and have a barbecue."

Providing this back-to-nature experience isn't an easy job. Christine Jenkins can work 16-hour days in peak season, while her husband spends three days a week simply mowing their extensive acreage. And it's hardly a stable income - last year's rain led to 15 per cent cancellations. But it's worth it, she says: "You are making people happy and that rubs off on you. It's a happy business - if it's not, you're not doing it right."

Caroline Bishop