

For Six Month Period Ending Feb. 28, 1994
(Insert date)

Name of Registrant

AVISO, INC.

Registration No.

04220

Business Address of Registrant

1150 Marina Village Parkway, Ste. 104
Alameda, CA 94501

I—REGISTRANT

1. Has there been a change in the information previously furnished in connection with the following:

(a) If an individual:

(1) Residence address	Yes ☐	No ☐
(2) Citizenship	Yes ☐	No ☐
(3) Occupation	Yes ☐	No ☐

(b) If an organization:

(1) Name	Yes ☐	No ☒
(2) Ownership or control	Yes ☐	No ☒
(3) Branch offices	Yes ☐	No ☒

2. Explain fully all changes, if any, indicated in item 1.

N/A

IF THE REGISTRANT IS AN INDIVIDUAL, OMIT RESPONSE TO ITEMS 3, 4, and 5.

3. Have any persons ceased acting as partners, officers, directors or similar officials of the registrant during this 6 month reporting period? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, furnish the following information:

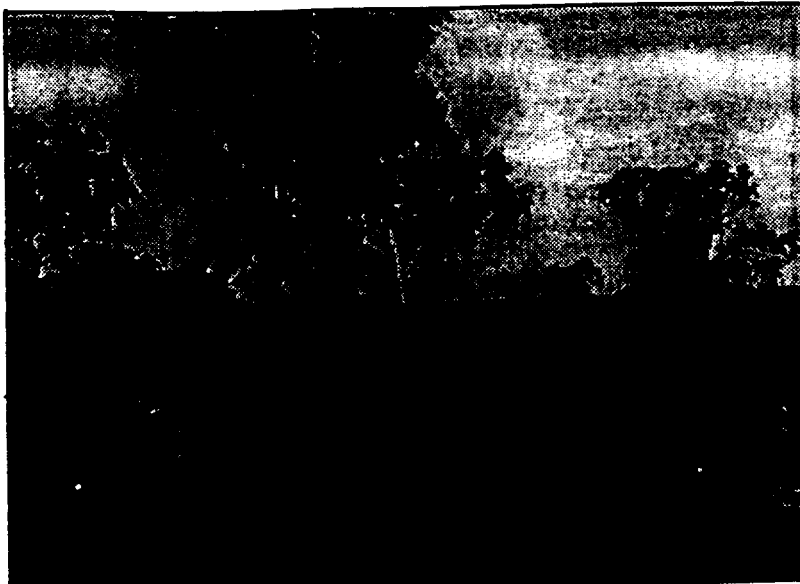
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Position

Date Connection
Ended

N/A

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SECTION
REGISTRATION UNIT



WAYS & MEANS

GETTING THERE: While Australia's Bungle Bungle National Park is one of the world's most intriguing wilderness areas, getting there is rather complex, requiring flights from Sydney to Darwin and then on to Kununurra. Tours into the Bungle Bungle and other areas of the Kimberley Plateau are available in Kununurra and in Halls Creek, 220 miles south of Kununurra (see below). Or you can rent a four-wheel-drive vehicle for the 165-mile drive from Kununurra to the park (see below).

Through February, Qantas and United are offering a round-trip fare from Washington to Sydney of \$1,578, with restrictions. A four-coupon pass for in-country flights on either Ansett or Qantas Airlines is available for \$444 and includes the Sydney to Darwin run. Flights between Darwin and Kununurra, offered by Ansett, are not included and are \$182 round-trip.

TOURS: If you decide to venture into the Bungle Bungle alone with camping equipment and supplies, a four-wheel-drive vehicle from Avis in Kununurra will cost about \$70 a day and 25 cents a kilometer. It is advisable and cheaper to join a tour group that carries all essential equipment. Among the tour operators:

- *East Kimberley Tours* (P.O. Box 537, Kununurra, West Australia 6743, Australia, phone 011-61-91-68-2213) offers two- and four-day tours of the area starting at \$160 per person, with children under 12 at half-price, and can also arrange day trips that include a flight over the Bungle Bungle

- *The Bungle Bungle Experience* (P.O. Box 833, Kununurra, West Australia 6743, Australia, phone 011-61-91-614-322) has four- to nine-day safaris starting at \$400 per person plus flight-only trips starting at \$100 per person

- *Halls Creek and Bungle Bungle Tours* (P.O. Box 58, Halls Creek, West Australia 6770, Australia, phone 011-61-91-686-217) offers a one-day fly-drive tour of Bungle Bungle starting at \$190 and two- and three-day excursions from \$260 per person.

Some tours include helicopter flights, but they also are available in the Bungle Bungle area starting at about \$70 per person.

WHEN TO GO: The Bungle Bungle National Park is open from April 1 to Dec. 1. Our winter months—Australia's summer—are too hot.

VISAS: U.S. visitors to Australia must have a valid passport and a free entry visa from the Australian Embassy, 1601 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, 202-797-3000. If you mail your request, allow three weeks for processing; or you can apply in person at the embassy Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

WHERE TO STAY: Kununurra has a wide range of hotels and motels from backpackers' accommodations (\$10 at the Desert Inn) to the Country Club Hotel (from \$30 double) and the Quality Inn (from \$70 double). The best of Halls Creek's limited accommodations is the Kimberley Hotel, with rooms from \$60 double, pool, air conditioning, restaurant and bars.

INFORMATION: For more information, contact the Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067, 310-557-1987, or Bungle Bungle, Department of Conservation and Land Management, P.O. Box 242, Kununurra, Western Australia 6743, Australia, phone 011-61-91-68-0200

—David Yeadon

MODERN BRIDE

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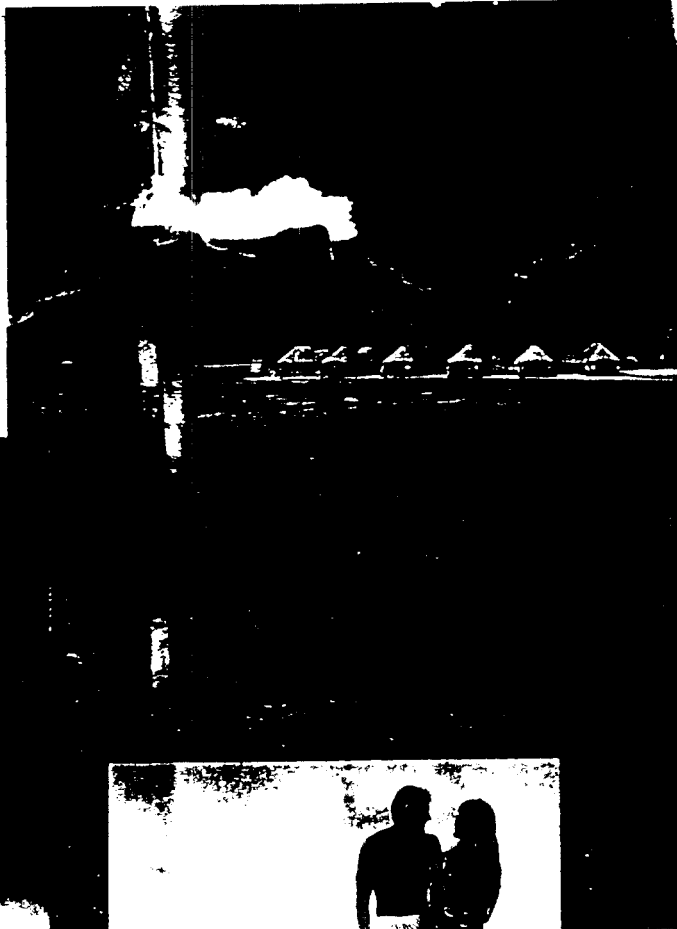
143. For your honeymoon, we invite you to come to Australia where you have a whole continent of romantic possibilities to choose from. Send for our 130-page travel guide to help plan your trip. Free.

6675
144. **Tahiti Tourism Board.** From the West Coast you're just seven and a half hours away from the most beautiful place on earth. For a vacation of a different color, visit the **Islands of Tahiti**. Free brochure.

145. **Good Natured New Zealand.** So easy to be here. Just an overnight flight away from the West Coast and where your dollar goes twice as far. Call **#310-395-7480** for a free brochure.

6675

The South Pacific's Sexiest Strands



● The South Pacific countries of Australia, Tahiti, Fiji and the Cook Islands beckon with enchanting strands that fulfill every beach lover's honeymoon fantasy. On these dreamy, palm-tree-lined crescents, you'll spend your days caressing each other with suntan oil, building a sand-castle version of your future dream home, enjoying all kinds of water sports and sipping champagne as a magnificent sunset paints the sky. But these pristine beaches boast an extra-special ingredient: an exotic flavor that will infuse your honeymoon with unique memories.

(continued on page 398)

Clockwise, from top right: Savor the sea at your doorstep; stroll along beaches where the only footprints are your own; relish the South Pacific's idyllic beauty, day or night.

Photos: Douglas Peebles, © M. Kump, The Stock Market
• © Ball The Stock Market

December 93/ January
94
New York, N.Y.
Modern Bride

SOUTH PACIFIC

(continued from page 428)

Best of all, transpacific flights have brought these distant shores much closer to our own. Sound tempting? Read on.

Going troppo in Queensland. Going troppo, mate. That's what Aussies sigh when they need a break and long to bask in the sun. They head for the beautiful relaxing state of Queensland and its hundreds of dazzling beaches—one, locals claim, for every day and every mood.

Australia's Great Barrier Reef blazes a trail of liquid fire for nearly 1,500 miles off the North Queensland coast. For many, diving and snorkeling this amazing site is a dream come true. For non-divers, "reef walks" are a wonderful introduction to the mysterious world of the deep. You may spot giant clams rimmed with electric-blue, darting parrot fish or neon-hued chromis—all as inquisitive as you are!

Sociable Palm Cove and quieter Four-Mile Beach are both located just north of Cairns, the major international gateway to the reef. These resort areas lure honeymooners with sandy beaches and day trips to the reef by plane or boat. Or go all out and stay on one of Queensland's peaceful, pampering resort islands, many of which have been declared national parks to preserve their fragile ecosystems.

Just south of the reef await the Whitsunday Islands—Hayman, Lindeman and Hamilton islands, and others—all with deluxe resorts. Further south lies Fraser Island, where you can rent four-wheel-drive vehicles to zoom up and down the undulating sand dunes of aptly-named 75-Mile Beach.

For a different kind of wildlife, head south of Queensland's capital, Brisbane, to the Gold Coast, where the bright lights and flashing neon of discos and casinos rival the reef in brilliance. An hour's drive north of Brisbane brings you to the charming resort towns of the quieter Sunshine Coast.

Queensland's weather is beach-beautiful year-round, but from November through March, you'll want to avoid swimming in open water near coastal estuaries. At these times, the major coastal resorts

spread out nets or create rock pools to protect guests from stinging box jellyfish. (Waters around the off-shore resort islands are not affected.)

For more information, see the "Booklets for the Two of You" section in this issue, or contact the Australian Tourist Commission, 489 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017 (212)687-6300 or (800)333-0262; 2121 Ave. of the Stars, Suite 1200, Los Angeles, CA 90067 (310)552-1988.

—Jordan Simon

Escape to Tahiti. Beneath a curving palm on an uninhabited *motu* (islet), you dine together on freshly caught grilled fish and coconut milk. Fragrant white tiaras, flowers that symbolize love, sweeten the air. This is just one of the many deliciously romantic scenes that you'll replay in your minds for years after a honeymoon in Tahiti.

Tahiti is the largest of a group of 115 islands known as French Polynesia. Encircled by barrier reefs, these volcanic- and coral-formed isles will tempt you with endless opportunities for exceptional snorkeling, scuba diving and deep-sea fishing. Would you rather go horseback riding, or swimming in a mountain pool at the base of a waterfall? Want to shop for jewelry made from prized black pearls? In the mood for a spirited *tamaara'a*, an authentic Tahitian feast and dance show? In Tahiti, you can do it all!

An overseas territory of France, Tahiti is a captivating blend of South Pacific charm and European flair. Wrapped in bright *pareus* (sarongs), women ride bicycles while balancing long loaves of French bread on their laps. Speaking Tahitian, local couples engage in intimate conversations as they sip French wine at outdoor cafés. (While French and Tahitian are Tahiti's official languages, English is widely spoken.)

From modern beach resorts to family-run pensions, accommodations here seem to have been designed just for newlyweds. Conical thatched roofs top bamboo bungalows perched on stilts above clear aquamarine lagoons. In some bungalows, the floor beneath the glass coffee table has been cut out, to reveal the sea. When you're ready for a show, simply slide the top of your table aside, sprinkle some bread crumbs, and you'll be treated to a

(continued on page 512)

SOUTH PACIFIC

(continued from page 499)

rainbow of darting fish!

For more information, see the "Booklets for the Two of You" section in this issue, or contact the Tahiti Tourism Board, 300 N. Continental Blvd., Suite 180, El Segundo, CA 90245 (310)414-8484.

—Rachel Jackson Christmas

Seductive Fiji. With over 300 islands in the Fiji archipelago, only 100 of which are inhabited, you're sure to find the beach of your dreams. If you're looking for a classic crescent of sparkling sand, framing a blue lagoon and fringed by swaying coconut palms, head for the Yasawa or Mamanuca chains. Or choose a volcanic island such as Beqa, Vatulele or Namena, where sheer limestone cliffs crest like waves over champagne-colored coves.

For every beach there seems to be a different kind of resort. For a deluxe hotel with every conceivable amenity, head for the main island of Viti Levu and the endless gleaming beaches of Denarau Island (connected by a causeway) and the Coral Coast. Prefer to share a private island with as few as four or five other fortunate couples? There are so many to choose from: Turtle, Vatulele, Wakaya, Qamea, Matagi, Naitasi...each is ringed with beaches that resemble powdered ivory. And you'll love going native in the traditional Fijian *bures*, bamboo dwellings whose thatched roofs peak at 40 feet.

Wherever you stay, you're sure to enjoy the legendary Fijian warmth and hospitality. Proud of their beautiful country, Fijians are genuinely eager to share their favorite secret places, fascinating customs and culture with you.

For more information, see the "Booklets for the Two of You" section in this issue, or contact the Fiji Visitors Bureau, 5777 West Century Blvd., Suite 220, Los Angeles, CA 90045 (310)568-1616 or (800)YEA-FIJI.

—Jordan Simon

Cook Islands Idyll. Scanning the globe for paradise? Run your finger south from Hawaii, pass the equator and stop just short of the Tropic of Capricorn. There, you've found the Cook Islands—a seductive mix of

modern convenience and Polynesian ambience.

Time really does seem to stop along these islands' beautiful casuarina-lined beaches, but there's always something to do, from windsurfing, snorkeling and scuba diving to cross-island hikes, golf, tennis, sailing and deep-sea fishing. In the late afternoon, at low tide, you can wade out and walk the reef for an up-close view of marine life, then find a deserted strip of sand for a private view of a spectacular sunset.

Largest of the 15 Cook Islands, Rarotonga is a verdant mountainous volcanic island, cut by waterfalls and ringed by coconut and papaya plantations, 20 miles of white-sand beaches and a serene lagoon. Probably the best way to see Rarotonga is aboard motor scooters, drifting from spot to spot along the coast road, with an occasional foray inland to see the ruins of *marae* (open-air temples).

In the evening, attend a hotel-sponsored "island night," where you may participate in the wildly passionate *tamure*, a fast-paced, sensual dance accompanied by singing and drums. On Saturdays, join the "Raro by Night" pub crawl, which includes one of the last of the South Pacific's legendary saloons, the Banana Court Bar.

Despite their exotic flavor, the Cook Islands make Americans feel right at home, since English is spoken everywhere. You'll find a wide range of accommodations, from native-style, thatched-roof bungalows to a grand resort.

The Cook Islands are romantic year-round. The wind rustles through the coconut palms and the sultry air is scented by plumeria. The weather is damper and more humid from December through March, when rains come in bursts followed by sunshine. Nights are cool and sometimes downright nippy, so bring a sweater. By day, wrap yourselves in *pareus*, and surrender to a slower, gentler Polynesian way of life. Long after you leave, the spirit will stay with you.

For more information, see the "Booklets for the Two of You" section in this issue, or contact the Cook Islands Tourist Authority, 6033 West Century Blvd., Suite 690, Los Angeles, CA 90045 (800)624-6250.

—Laurel Delp

JAN 2 1994

1440 BURRELLE'S TO
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Legendary trains worth the ride

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Mystical, magical, eerie. Those are the words that come to mind to describe the passing scene from two of the world's most fabled train rides, one new and the other an old-timer.

Australia

First the veteran: The Indian Pacific between Sydney and Perth, Australia, leaves every Monday and Thursday and takes three days to cross the continent. Much of the trip is through the outback, so you'll have ample opportunity to observe native flora and fauna, including, naturally, lots of kangaroos. The scenery is perhaps most striking in the early dawn and at dusk when the animals are most active and the light plays on the outback's rust-red soil.

Most of your fellow passengers will be retired Australian couples taking advantage of generous senior discounts. And don't expect anything too luxurious: until a multi-million dollar renovation is completed in a couple of years. Most people travel shorter segments rather than the entire journey, getting off in Broken Hill or Adelaide, for example, and prices are based on length. Call your travel agent for particulars.

East & Oriental Express

Luxurious is exactly the term to describe the new East & Oriental Express operating the 1,200 miles between Bangkok and Singapore. Like its European sister — the Venice Simplon Orient Express — the E&O is the creation of tycoon James B. Sherwood and brings back the golden age of rail travel.

Each air-conditioned compartment is a work of art, with dazzling inlaid paneling, plush embroidered silk upholstery, shiny brass fittings, a private bath and picture windows for viewing the passing landscape. And what a landscape it is!

After leaving the Bangkok suburbs, the train moves south through electric-green rice paddies punctuated by bizarre, verdant limestone mounds. As night falls, the train proceeds through shrimp farms, eerily illuminated by fluorescent lights. The following day, the E&O penetrates the rainforest, with its pungent, damp scents and unusual sounds, particularly enjoyable from the open observation car at the rear. Each evening, as guests mingle in the comfortable lounge and bar cars, many wear formal attire.

Meanwhile, the friendly Thai stewards convert compartments from sitting to sleeping configurations. Dining is exemplary. There are two seatings (7 and 9 p.m.) and the set four-course menu, created by executive chef Kevin Cape, combines the best of East and West.

Rates begin at \$1,130 per person for the entire two-day journey (larger "state" compartments cost \$400 more), including all meals, but not alcoholic beverages. Get a brochure or reserve through your travel agent.

Compiled by Carlson Travel Network/Travel Right

January 02, 1994

Denver, CO

Denver Post

By Mary Ellen Botter,
The Denver Post

MAYBE it's the snow outside, or that I grew up a desert rat in West Texas. But when I dream, I dream of Australia's "Top End," that sunny, still-wild territory stretching from Cairns on the east coast to Broome on the west.

I'd start near Cairns at Silky Oaks Lodge on the edge of the Daintree rain forest. The food is fine; the serenity, a balm for the jet-lagged.

I'd wend my way to Kakadu National Park and torrid-but-friendly Darwin, after a dogleg to Ross River Homestead 50 miles east of Alice Springs. At the easygoing guest ranch, I'd sample both the outback and station life.

Other wild west echoes the tread of tough pioneers

My deepest pleasure would be drawn from the glorious open spaces of the Kimberly in far western Australia: land not unlike the American West before it was fenced and tamed. The Yank and Aussie regions share a common history of cattle drives and pioneer treks, but the mantle of civilization rests more lightly on the vastness down under.

I'd end my dreamtime in Broome, walking the wide and water-scrubbed sands of 13-mile-long Cable Beach to the soothing cadence of the Indian Ocean.

No big cities, bright lights or crowded tourist attractions for me. Let me hear only Nature's voice — or the hearty laughter of those scant few Aussies who inhabit these reaches.



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BURRELLE'S
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Tales of Down Under bubbling over

After 15 days in Australia, No. 1 daughter was bursting with stories to tell.

Hours after her return Monday, I debriefed the weary traveler while New Boyfriend listened in amused silence. The next morning, still wearing her Pacific sun-tan, first-child searched for her boots, chipped the ice off her car's windows, and regretfully headed back to reality.

Q Let's get right to the point. Did you see any kangaroos or koalas? A I stopped to take pictures at "kangaroo crossings," but the only kangaroo I saw was a dead one by the side of the road, like the deer in this country. My friends and I saw koalas in an animal sanctuary, but all of them were asleep. But everyone seemed to be talking about the man who was eaten by a crocodile in northern Queensland. Some people wanted the animal caught and killed; others said it wasn't the crocodile's fault, it was mating season.

Q Did people talk funny?

A The ones I met shortened a lot of their words and then added a Y. "It's time for break-y" [mean-

had to go someplace where I had a friend. My friend Murray kept urging me to come to "Oz" — that's what the Australians call their country.

Q How was the food?

A Every sandwich had a red beet in it. When I began asking in advance what was coming on a sandwich, people thought I was being picky — they're kind of laid-back down there. They also were shocked that I ate my pizza with no more than two toppings, since they put tons of stuff on theirs.

Q What was it like to have Christmas in the summer?

A We spent the day sunning and celebrating beside a pool at an island resort. Almost all the Christmas trees I saw were artificial, and there weren't many Christmas lights. It was daylight till 8 o'clock anyway. But the shops were crowded.

Q Did Santa Claus dress the same as he does here?

A Yes, but he came into the pool area on a motorcycle, not a sleigh. He was probably wearing cotton, not wool.

Q You like television. How was

theirs? A Usually there were just five channels. But they had "Murphy Brown," "Law and Order" and "Seinfeld," — and I found I could get "The Today Show" at 12:30 in the morning.

Q How about "Waltzing Matilda"? That's almost like a national song. Did you hear it often?

A Not once.

Q What else was different Down Under?

A A few of the beaches had topless women. No, no, I didn't try it. And the main supermarket chain seemed to be Woolworth's. And the speed limit was 110... that's kilometers, not miles, but it's still faster than here. Since Australians drive on the left, I kept getting into the wrong side of the car. A couple of times, I almost got killed by looking the wrong way for traffic when I crossed the street.

Q I'll bet you really missed your mother and father, right?

A Well, uh... well, on Christmas Day, maybe a little.

Roland Wright is a News Journal editor.

POSTSCRIPT



ROLAND WRIGHT

ing the morning meal] or "Did you have a nice Chrissy?" [for Christmas]. And of course, everyone called me "mate."

Q Did people know you were an American?

A As soon as I spoke, they asked where I was from. Some guessed Canada. When I said I was an American, they would tell me about their plans to visit the States.

Q Why did you choose Australia?

A I wanted to go to San Francisco but none of my friends could go along at Christmas. Then, in the paper, I saw that plane fares for Australia were really low. I

DREAM TRIPS

Where would your wanderlust take you if money is no object and time is no concern? Travel editors let their imaginations run wild in directions that could help feed your own travel fantasies for '94.

A walkabout in Australia's 'Top End' proves tempting

Maybe it's the snow outside ... when I dream, I dream of Australia's "Top End," that sunny, still-wild territory stretching from Cairns on

X Please see **DREAMS** Page 8

January 09, 1994
Santa Ana, CA

Orange County Register

DREAMS

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the east coast to Broome on the west.

My walkabout would begin in the rain-forest area near Cairns, tracking onward to Kakadu National Park and torrid-but-friendly Darwin, with a dogleg to Alice Springs in the continent's Red Center.

My deepest pleasure would be drawn from the glorious open spaces of the Kimberly in far western Australia; land not unlike the American West before it was fenced and tamed. The Yank and Aussie regions share a common history of cattle drives and pioneer treks, but the mantle of civilization rests more lightly on the vastness down under.

I'd end my dreamtime in Broome, walking the wide and water-scrubbed sands of 13-mile-long Cable Beach to the soothing cadence of the Indian Ocean.

— Mary Ellen Botter, Denver
Post



January 09, 1994
Los Angeles, CA

Los Angeles Times

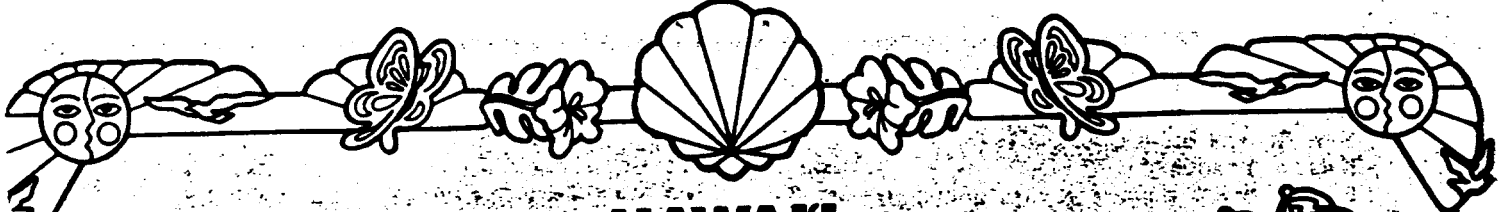
10 TOP MUSEUM TOURS

Ann H. Waigand, publisher of The Educated Traveler newsletter, compiles an annual directory of museum-sponsored tours for her subscribers. Here, she has selected 10 favorites from the nearly 300 trips in her 1994 directory, available to subscribers later this month. (Subscriptions to The Educated Traveler, available at P.O. Box 220822, Chantilly, Va. 22022; telephone 800-648-5168, cost \$39 for six issues per year.)

Tours are arranged in chronological order. Travelers should note that prices are per person, presuming double occupancy, and are subject to change. Some prices include most meals and side trips; others don't.

Indian Summer in the South Pacific
March 3-23; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State St., Santa Barbara 93101; tel. (805) 963-4364, Ext. 336

Itinerary includes Nadi, Fiji; Auckland, Rotorua, Queenstown, Milford Sound and Christchurch, New Zealand, with visits to homes of collectors and artists' studios; Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Cairns, Australia. Meetings with private collectors along the way. An optional extension to the Australian Outback, visiting Ayers Rock and Alice Springs. Co-sponsored by Friends of Photographic Art; curator-led "photo shoots" during free time. Tour leader: Karen Sinsheimer, the Santa Barbara museum's curator of photography. Cost: \$5,685, including air fare from Los Angeles.



HAWAII: THE BIG ISLAND UPDATE



Vol. 5, No. 1 - Winter 1994
Editor: John Peniston

Hilo Stars Big Hits

In Hawai'i Winter Baseball League

Big Island resident and visiting baseball fans enjoyed the first season of professional baseball in the new Hawai'i Winter Baseball League in Hilo. The new league was established under the auspices of major league baseball and included top players from United States A and AA minor leagues plus young players from the major leagues of Japan and Korea. The league operated with four teams: the Honolulu Sharks, Kauai Emeralds, Maui Sting Rays and the Hilo Stars. In Hilo, several hundred loyal fans attended each home game played at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo's Vulcan Field. The league began play in October and went through December with a 54-game schedule. The opening game in Hilo drew an excited crowd of over 1500 fans. Plans are already underway for the league's second season later this year. The caliber of play was exciting and competitive and baseball fans, young and old, enjoyed the games. Hawai'i Winter League Baseball, 1210 Auahi St. Suite 231, Honolulu, HI 96814. 808/592-2255.

Hilo's Merrie Monarch Festival Office Relocates

Hilo's most famous festival, the Merrie Monarch, considered by some to be the "Super Bowl of Hula," has set its 1994 edition for April 3-9. The festival headquarters has relocated this year to the Hawai'i Naniloa Hotel on Hilo's Banyan Drive from the Waiakea Villas Resort due to its conversion into residential apartment units last year. The move to the Hawai'i Naniloa Hotel is something of a homecoming for the festival as it was headquartered there until just a few years ago. Ticket prices range from \$3 general admission to \$12 reserved seating for the three night festival. For tickets, contact Merrie Monarch Festival, c/o Hawai'i Naniloa Hotel, 93 Banyan Drive, Hilo, HI 96720, 808/935-9168. Tickets may still be available for the festival events, but most Hilo area hotel rooms and rental cars have been sold out for months.

Movie to be Filmed at Kawaihae

Kawaihae Harbor will be the site for a Kevin Costner film called "Water World" to be shot on the Big Island between April and October of this year. The state Board of Land and Natural Resources recently approved a request by the film's producers to use parts of Kawaihae Harbor for

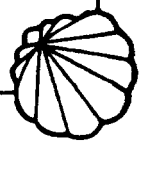
underwater scenes and other areas and facilities of Kawaihae for the film. The theme is a world 500 years in the future with cities built over water.

Mainland to Mahukona Yacht Race Set

A new trans-Pacific yacht race is being planned for next August. The Mo'ikeha Cup Yacht Race will be a sailboat race from Oakland, California to Mahukona, North Kohala. The race will cover 2,077 nautical miles and will be the first trans-Pacific yacht race to finish on the Big Island. The race, named after the great 11th. century Hawaiian voyager, Mo'ikeha, will kick off the annual Aloha Festivals on the Big Island and will also be the first yacht race closely tied in with Hawaiian culture. In conjunction with the race start, there will be a number of Aloha Festivals events in the Oakland Bay area on August 14. Following the race finish, from August 22-31 off Mahukona, the Aloha Festivals will continue on the Big Island. Race sponsors include Aloha Festivals, Metropolitan Yacht Club-Oakland, Kona Sailing Club, Hawai'i Visitors Bureau, County of Hawai'i, Hawaiian Airlines and others. For information, call Metropolitan Yacht Club, Oakland, 510/530-4162 or Mo'ikeha Cup Inc., Kailua-Kona, 808/326-3777.

Kealakehe-Kona Golf Course Agreement Reached

The stalled Kealakehe municipal golf course project is back on track. The County of Hawai'i and a Japanese developer recently reached agreement in a dispute involving the unbuilt golf course and the county's new sewage treatment plant. The county had threatened to sue Kealakehe Associates for failing to live up to its earlier agreement to buy treated sewage effluent to irrigate the course. Under the new agreement, Yoshinoru Susuki, a member of the Japanese Diet and principal investor, will begin work on the first nine holes and with secured financing and his own assets to complete the course. The developer will pay the county \$500 a day to use one million gallons of effluent to irrigate the course. The County of Hawai'i built the new \$42 million sewage plant in 1990 and approved the golf course to be used as a leaching field. The \$20 million, 18-hole course will be located three miles north of Kailua-Kona on the makai side of Queen Kaahumanu Highway near the Kona Police Station. It was to have been completed in 1992.



BEYOND HAWAII – Winter 1994

By John Peniston

The past few months have seen a decrease in air service between Hawai'i and New Zealand/Australia as Northwest, United and Continental Airlines have all ended or drastically reduced flights. To fill the void, Air New Zealand has announced that it will increase flights between Hawai'i and Auckland and cities in Australia. Air New Zealand and Qantas are the main carriers on the Los Angeles-Honolulu-New Zealand-Australia route.

Down Under in Australia and New Zealand

(This edition of *Beyond Hawai'i* takes a look at three leading destinations Down Under in Australia and New Zealand. We visit Australia's two largest cities of Melbourne and Sydney and also Auckland, New Zealand's major gateway city.)

Marvelous is an apt description of Melbourne, the graceful capital city of Victoria State. The city exudes history, culture and a cosmopolitan population of over 2 million and the air of elegance of an earlier age.

Melbourne has a number of must see places. Foremost might be the Victorian Arts Centre and its famed landmark spire, symbol of Melbourne. This is Australia's finest performing arts centre and is home to the Australian Ballet, Australian Opera, Victoria State Opera and the Melbourne Concert Hall. Next door is the National Gallery with a comprehensive collection of early and modern Australian art. Nearby is the Royal Botanic Garden and King's Domain with expansive lawns and gardens and the revered Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne's war memorial. Cruises up and down the mid-city Yarra River provide good vantage points for many Melbourne landmarks and historic sites and the city skyline.

Melbourne is also a shopper's haven with numerous shopping centers, arcades, boutiques and shops carrying fashions and goods from everywhere. Collins Street has some of the most exclusive shops in town including Georges, a swank department store. Bourke Street is a pedestrian mall flanked on both sides with arcades and shops. Melbourne Central on Lonsdale Street is a fantastic center of some 200 shops in a two-block complex. Nearby are such centers as Australia on Collins, the Block Arcade and the Royal Arcade plus many others. Well worth a visit is Queen Victoria Market with a variety of butcher and seafood shops, cheese and bake shops plus fresh produce and flea-market booths in a sprawling warehouse complex.

Melbourne's aged old rail trams accent the city's Victorian air as they rattle through the city streets out to the suburbs. This nostalgia on rails

is comparable to San Francisco's famed cable cars. With a city map and list of attractions, the trams are an inexpensive way to sightsee on your own.

Melbourne has a wide range of lodging available from budget to luxury. On my recent Melbourne visit, I stayed at The Windsor, one of Australia's last remaining "grand-luxe" hotels. The Windsor is directly across from the Victoria State Parliament House. Both are handsome relics of late-19th. century Victorian architecture. The hotel's location on Spring Street at the top of the town gives it easy access to Melbourne's many attractions. First opened in 1883, the hotel exemplifies the best in traditional personalized service combined with distinctive Victorian charm. A recent renovation has restored the hotel to its original Victorian look. The Grand Dining Room is probably one of the most elegant restaurants in all Australia with its plush furnishings, stained glass decor, silver and crystal and superb cuisine to match. Rates at the Windsor start at about US-\$175 nightly. For reservations, contact your travel agent or Oberoi Hotels International at 212/682-7655 or the hotel direct at The Windsor, 103 Spring St., Melbourne, Victoria 3000, Australia.

Sydney (pop. over 3 million) is no doubt Australia's best known city and site of some of Australia's best known landmarks like the Sydney Opera House, Harbor Bridge, and Sydney Tower. Sydney is about to get better known too as the city gears up to host the 2000 Olympics.

After spending a few days in Sydney, it's easy to see why Sydneysiders are so high on their fair city. It's varied attractions are easily accessible amid the hustle and bustle of the thriving urban center. Among the things not to miss are the Sydney Cove waterfront where it all began 200 years ago. Here one can catch ferryboat cruises of Sydney Harbor for magnificent city skyline views or further out to distant suburbs. Spend some time exploring "The Rocks" area where early day Sydney is captured among the backalleys and sidestreets of this historic district. The Australian Museum on College Street has a wonderful display of early Australian art. On William Street, the King's Cross area is the city's nightlife, entertainment and restaurant district.

For those with a penchant for parks, hours can be spent exploring the expansive greenways and gardens of the Royal Botanic Gardens, The Domain and central Hyde Park with stoic statues of Queen Victoria, Captain Cook and other historic notables and panoramic overlooks of Sydney Harbor.

A convenient and inexpensive way to explore this sprawling city is to buy a "Sydney



Explorer" bus pass. The Sydney Explorer makes frequent circuits of the city's main attractions and you can get on and off wherever you want and stay as long as you want at any given site. Another option is to take the monorail to **Darling Harbor**, one of Sydney's newest developments, a huge complex of parks and gardens, museums, sports facilities, shops, cafes and restaurants. Darling Harbor is also the site of the **National Maritime Museum** and **Sydney Aquarium**.

Shoppers won't be disappointed in Sydney. Everywhere one goes in the central city there are shops and boutiques, arcades, malls and shopping centers. Among the best and busiest are the **Queen Victoria Building** and the **Strand Arcade** both on **George Street**.

Finding lodging in central Sydney is not difficult. There are a variety of hotels available in all ranges. I opted for the recently opened **Sydney Marriott** on **College Street** across from **Hyde Park**. I found it to be an ideal location for exploring the city. There is easy access to the bus and rail lines and its an enjoyable walk down to the **Sydney Cove** waterfront area.

The 5-star Marriott provides superb service and amenities with personalized attention to detail. Rooms are luxuriously appointed with all the facilities expected of a world class hotel. There is a heated rooftop swimming pool, terrace and spa-gym as well as full meeting facilities. Windows on the Park is the hotel's main restaurant featuring ala carte international fare and regional Australian specials and the informal **Park Bench Coffee Shop** serves up light meals and snacks day long. One of the hotel's nicest guest facilities is a hospitality lounge with full bathroom for early arrivals to shower and relax when the guestroom is unavailable. Rates begin at about US\$125 nightly. For reservations call Marriott Hotels 1-800-228-9290, or contact Sydney Marriott, 36 College Street, Sydney, NSW 2010, Australia or your travel agent. For information on Australia, contact Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, #1200, Los Angeles, CA 90067; tel. 310/557-1988.



In the city center, you'll want to explore **Auckland Domain** and **Botanical Gardens**, a large city park and site of the famous **War Memorial Museum**. The museum's collection of New Zealand Maori artifacts is the best in the world. The **Victoria Park Markets** will introduce you to a New Zealand-style flea market with a number of vendors and shops selling all manner of goods. Out toward **Mission Bay** east of the city is **Kelly Tarleton's Underwater World**, the first commercial aquarium designed around an underwater acrylic tube allowing visitors a fish-eye view of all the marine life.

Auckland is spread over several extinct volcanic cones which surround **Waitemata Harbor**. The tops of these volcanic cones provide panoramic views of the surrounding city. The best are **One Tree Hill** and **Mt. Eden**. **Coronation Park** surrounds **One Tree Hill** and is home to flocks of wooly sheep which keep the expansive lawns trimmed back. East of the city center is fashionable **Parnell Village** along **Parnell Road**, an older area of town transformed into a chic shopping and restaurant district. If you don't find what you looking for in Parnell, you can also try **Queen Street** downtown which is known as Auckland's "golden mile" of shopping. The best buys are woolen goods like blankets, sweaters, jackets, etc. and sheepskin products.

Auckland's western suburbs of **Henderson**, **Huapai**, **Kemau** and **Helensville** are noted for vineyards and wineries. The area produces fine vintages of many varietal wines such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and several others.

My hotel of choice on a recent Auckland stay was the **Auckland City Travelodge** on **Quay Street** right on the harborfront.

Located directly across from the ferry cruise docks in the heart of the city, its convenient to transportation, attractions, restaurants, shopping and more. The airline bus terminal is just next door. Guest rooms are small but nicely furnished and very comfortable, all with harbor views. **Penny's Restaurant** is the hotel dining room and provides a varied ala carte menu and attentive service. It was

NEWS-REVIEW

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BURRELLE'S

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Attention to detail is hallmark of hotel

By LAURA KAPPEL
Fly Away Travel

Ever since opinion surveys have asked the question, the Oriental Hotel Bangkok, with its 34 suites and 359 rooms, has been near or at the top of the best hotel category. Why?

The Thai people, in general, are among the friendliest on earth - they call Thailand the Land of Smiles and it is most definitely not just a slogan. The Oriental has chosen the friendliest and most helpful Thais to work at this riverside

paragon. Every room has butler service, provided by one of the hotel's more than 1,000 employees (how's that for a staff-to-guest ratio?). So when you step off the elevator, one of these winning young men might rush ahead to open your door (beav- en forbid you should do it yourself; it's also a nice security feature for women traveling alone).

Once you're inside, he'll place a small matchstick against the door; if it falls down he'll know you've left and he can tidy up between major cleanings. And let's say you ask the cashier for an iron; you won't be told, as you would in too many hotels, these days, to call housekeeping. Your request stays with "homever gets it first."

Beyond service, it has a terrific location, with wonderful restaurants (riverfront Lord Jim's is fantastic for Thai seafood) and comprehensive fitness and spa facilities in a delightful setting across the river.

Most of your fellow passengers will be retired Australian couples taking advantage of generous senior discounts. And don't expect anything too luxurious - until a multimillion dollar makeover is completed in a couple of years, this train will continue to look rather tired and dated.

Most people travel shorter segments rather than the entire journey, getting off in Broken Hill or Adelaide, for example, and prices are based on length. Call your travel agent for particulars.

East & Oriental Express - luxurious is exactly the term to describe the new East & Oriental Express operating the 1,200 miles from Bangkok and Singapore. Like its European sister train, the Venice Simplon Orient Express, the E&O is the creation of hotelier and tycoon James B. Sherwood and brings back the golden age of rail travel - indeed, one wonders, was the golden age ever this good? Each air-conditioned compartment is a work of art, with dazzling inlaid paneling, lush embroidered silk upholstery, shiny brass fittings, a private bath and picture windows for viewing the passing landscape.

And what a landscape it is. After leaving the somewhat dreary Bangkok suburbs, the train moves south through electric-green rice paddies punctuated by bizarre, verdant limestone mounds. As night falls, the train proceeds through shrimp farms, eerily illuminated by

fluorescent lights (the shrimp industry is a major source of foreign capital for Thailand).

The following day the E&O penetrates the rain forest with its pungent, damp scents and unusual sounds, particularly enjoyable from the open observation car at the rear. Each evening, as guests mingle in the comfortable lounge and bar cars, many wear formal attire.

Meanwhile, the friendly Thai stewards convert compartments from sitting to sleeping configurations. Dining is exemplary; there are two seatings, 7 and 9 p.m., and the set four-course menu, created by executive chef Kevin Cape, combines the best of East and West. One welcome addition would be a larger choice of entrees, although the train's small kitchen would make that difficult to achieve.

Rates begin at \$1,130 per person for the entire two-day journey (larger "suite" compartments cost \$400 more), including all meals but not alcoholic beverages. Get a brochure or reserve through your travel agent.

Going Places appears each Sunday in The News-Review. Columns are supplied on a rotating basis by Fly Away Travel, UNIGLOBE Red Baron Travel, Gateway Travel and Lewis Travel Service.



Rates begin at a surprisingly low \$250 per night, although some travel agencies, Carlson Travel Network among them, have negotiated even better prices.

■ Legendary trains

Mystical, magical eerie. Those are the words that come to mind to describe the passing scene from two of the world's most fabled train rides, one brand new and the other an old-timer.

First the veteran - the Indian Pacific between Sydney and Perth, Australia, leaves every Monday and Thursday and takes three days to cross the island continent.

Much of the trip is through the outback, so you'll have ample opportunity to observe native flora and fauna including, naturally, lots of kangaroos. The scenery is perhaps most striking in the early dawn and at dusk, when the roos, emus and other animals are most active and the light plays on the outback's rust-red soil.

NEWS-TIMES

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Women make sense of wine

WINE RACK

By William Clifford
NEWS-TIMES WINE WRITER

Q: Have you read about a movement called Women for WineSense? What is it, exactly? And does wine affect women differently from men?

A: To answer the second part first, no. Wine provides the same benefits to both sexes.

But since the optimum quantity relates to body weight, and since women's bodies have less of the enzyme that metabolizes alcohol, most women might drink only two glasses a day (figuring six glasses to a bottle) — as part of a nutritious meal — while most men can drink three.

Women for WineSense is a membership organization with local chapters, started by professional women, many of them winemakers and wine trade leaders. It publishes a newsletter, sponsors speakers, exhibitions and conferences.

A national conference with health and other workshops will take place May 6 and 7 in the Napa Valley. To learn more, write Women for WineSense, PO Box 2098, Yountville, Calif. 94599. Or telephone Margaret Smith, 800-204-1616.

Q: Do wine pros know how new wines will taste, years down the road?

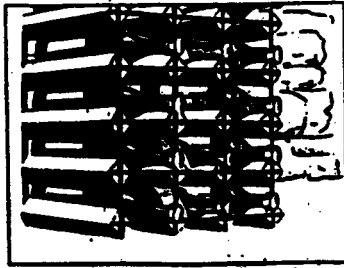
A: No, they're only guessing. As one wine letter recently put it, even "when tasting a barrel sample of some cloudy, fiery, tannic ink-monster (which usually reminds me of fingernails screeching across a blackboard)," you can safely call it a slow developer destined to peak around A.D. 2010.

Puckery, chalky, acidic tannins are always a risk; witness the 1975 Bordeaux, still "unrelenting in their cold and mean refusal to capitulate to time and release their glory."

Better choose wines ready to drink when you buy them. I quote from "St. Supery Chronicles," available free on request from St. Supery Vineyards & Winery, PO Box 38, Rutherford, Calif. 94573.

Q: What's the truth about wines that travel or don't travel well?

A: Shaking wine up by carrying it home from the store and then opening it immediately used to be condemned.



But people used to buy older wines, with sediment. Many wine-makers say their young wines need to rest after shipment. But maybe they're talking about overcoming just-bottled sickness.

Besides the problem of sediment, people used to believe that wines with low alcohol didn't travel. But they neglected to look at the evidence, ranging from fine German wines to Lambruscos.

"For younger wines, travel shock appears to be a myth," concludes a writer for "The Wine Spectator." (To subscribe to this lavish and popular wine news journal, telephone 800-395-3364.)

Q: Why is France, the mother country of wine, letting other countries take over the market for inexpensive imports? Can't she cut the mustard?

A: Clive Coates in his Letter from London in "Wine & Spirits" magazine writes that in the south of France there is plenty of "virgin territory waiting to be abused" and plenty of winemaking talent.

We have already seen such superstars as Templier, Trevaillon and Daumas Gassac, plus many lesser lights.

Coates is a Francophile British Master of Wine who writes and publishes his own wine journal as well as contributing a lively column to this increasingly successful American publication.

For subscription information, address "Wine & Spirits," PO Box 1548, Princeton, N.J. 08542.

Q: At the end of each year we like to discuss our best restaurant meals — and the wines, of course — with our friends. What were some of yours?

A: I enjoy doing the same. But my "best" don't always depend on exotic cuisine and impeccable service. The food and wine have to be very good. But I require authenticity, in a sympathetic setting where I can relax.

In New York, here are four restaurants that have measured up:

■ **Gallagher's Steak House**, authentic as they come, where I always eat what a top critic calls "real food."

This year the wine cellar offers a "Wine & Spirits" magazine top wine from a winning Spanish winery of the year, the profound 1982 vintage, red Rioja, Conde de Valdemar Gran Reserva.

■ **Cafe des Artistes**, whose beauty takes your breath away. Here the culinary imagination is unbridled, while honesty in every respect is the hallmark. Plus Ruinart champagne — who could ask for anything more?

■ **Boom**, with its funky dark bomb-damaged look, could be a culinary bust. But the dozen nationalities of food are amazingly authentic, the wine list unique (e.g. a red Rozendal Farm from South Africa), and the fun contagious.

■ **The Brasserie** has never closed for a day, or even an hour, in almost 35 years. You can go at 3 a.m., for real French brasserie or bistro food, which rises on occasion (such as a French holiday) above its humble station. We toasted the New Year in with a froth of 1938 Moët & Chandon Imperial Rose.

■ **Overseas**, I recall how well I ate and how happy I felt at Sydney's new Park Lane Hotel and the luxury Hayman Island resort, in Australia. The many delicious and fair priced Australian wines had much to do with this.

■ **In Venice**, I heard the siren song of the HOTEL CIPRIANI, its visiting stars of gastronomy (e.g. China Moon genius Barbara Tropp from San Francisco), its subtly balanced list of fine wines, and bounty of the Venetian lagoon.

■ **In Paris**, my memorable "best" was not in a restaurant but at Servair, the catering facility of Air France at Charles de Gaulle Airport. Everyone makes fun of airline food, with good reason. But Air France tries harder.

The lunch we ate came off the assembly line and it was equivalent to first class in flight, except that it was presided over by the head chef instead of a head cabin steward.

It made the point that large-scale catering can be successful, given tons of quality fresh ingredients and French TLC.

StarTribune

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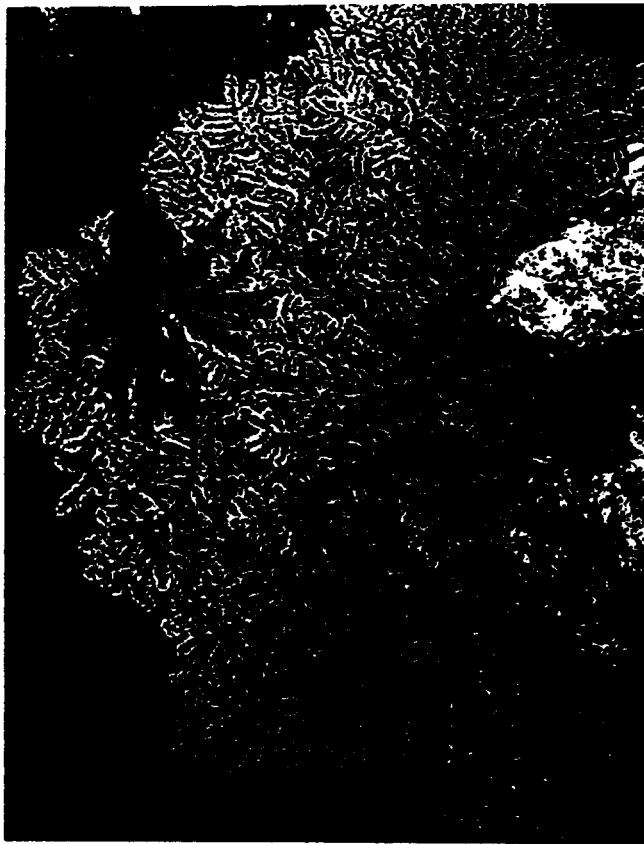
Dreamtime Down Under

By
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Ogilvy & Mather
Post



In the Olgas, near Ayers Rock, in Australia's Red Center.

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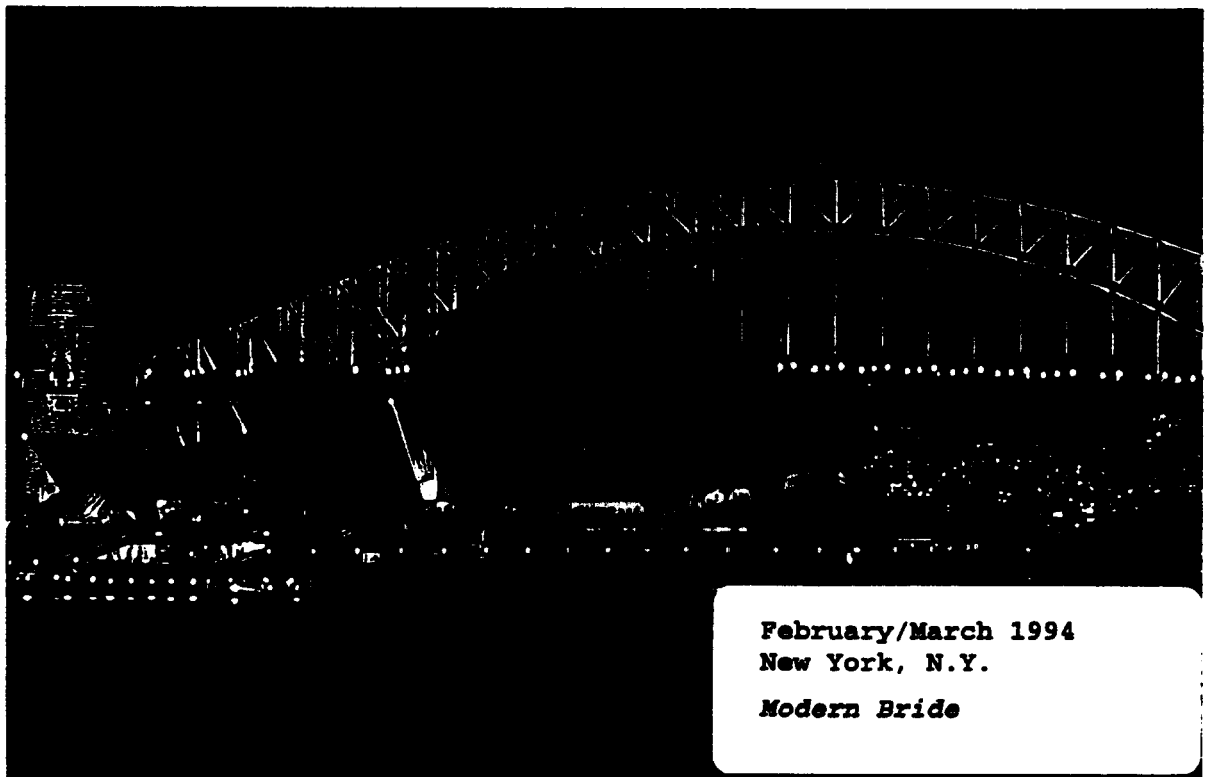
Down under? It's a wonder!

Say 'G'day' to a new world.

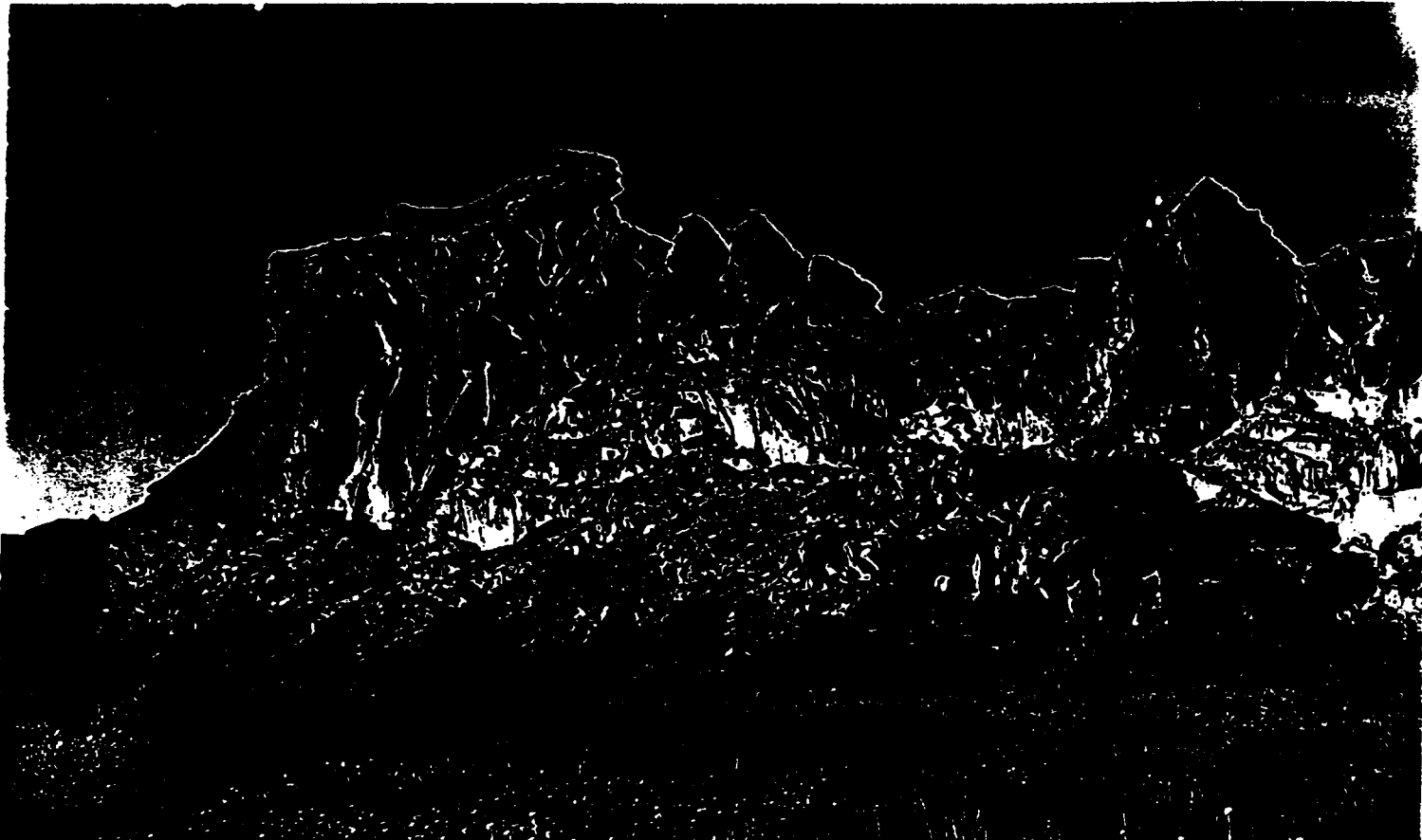
Odd, cuddly creatures bound across ancient landscapes. Gleaming futuristic cities serenely command sapphire bays. Emerald rain forests tumble lavishly down to deserted, champagne-colored coves. Australia, "the land down under" (the equator, that is) is intoxicatingly different yet reassuringly familiar. In this dazzling country, roughly the size of the continental United States and every bit as varied, you easily could spend a lifetime of honeymoons. Fortunately, thanks to a model transportation system and the proximity of many of the more exotic locales to major (continued)

Photos: Colour Australia; Armstrong Roberts • A. Shelly/The Stock Market
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A ROMANTIC'S GUIDE



February/March 1994
New York, N.Y.
Modern Bride



TO AUSTRALIA



Opposite, from top: The treasures of the Great Barrier Reef, Sydney at night. This page, top: The Northern Territory's rugged beauty. Right: Sandy beaches stretch for miles.





Dear Modern Bride reader:

On your upcoming honeymoon, we invite you to feel the wonder of Australia. We offer an entire continent of romantic possibilities.

Come stroll hand-in-hand along secluded tropical beaches. Pamper yourself at a luxurious Great Barrier Reef island resort. Take a balloon adventure into the Outback for an unforgettable view of our unique animals and vast land.

Motor along shady tree-lined roads to a bed and breakfast hide-away in the wine country. Enjoy a Devonshire tea or fine meal in one of our venerable hotels.

Whether you stay in gourmet retreats, charming country cottages or wilderness lodges, you'll find a wide variety of affordable vacation packages to choose from. In fact, Australia's never offered a better value.

Thanks to the strong exchange rate, American dollars buy a lot. Tipping is voluntary and tax is rarely added to any bill. The price you see is the price you pay.

With a flight that takes about the same time to Europe from the West Coast, there's an itinerary to match your dreams, whether you have a week or a month. Won't you join us?

Bill Baker

Bill Baker
Regional Director, The Americas
Australian Tourist Commission

AUSTRALIA
FEEL THE WONDER



AUSTRALIA

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cities, Australia makes it easy to combine several wildly different trips in one.

You'll also find that even the most remote spots offer a range of accommodations, from upscale to down-home. Pick a soaring chrome-and-glass city hotel, or a cozy lodge or inn nestled amid the rolling green hills of the wine country. Or kick back at an intimate island resort along the Great Barrier Reef. In the rugged Outback, you'll find quaint bed-and-breakfast inns brimming with lace and chintz, and rustic dude ranches where horses and camels jockey for position in the stables. The truly adventurous can even stay in a plush underground hotel in an opal-mining desert town!

You're sure to receive a warm welcome everywhere, for Australians are among the world's friendliest people. In fact, you're likely to find yourselves making new "mates" (friends) for life. They'll probably treat you to your first frosty Australian beer, then suggest a few changes in your itinerary. "No worries, mate," they'll reply when you thank them for their hospitality.

CAPTIVATING CITIES

The wonders Down Under start with Australia's glittering cities, each with its own atmosphere and personality, all gateways to a universe of thrilling adventures. There's the dynamic allure of Sydney, one of the world's great cities, percolating with activity 24 hours a day; the capital excitement of Canberra; and the stately Victorian charms and thriving arts scenes of elegant Melbourne and Adelaide. Maybe you'd prefer a steamy tropical port like Darwin at the "Top End"—or friendly Brisbane, drenched in sunshine year-round, where some contented residents stroll the city streets barefoot! And don't forget affluent, forward-looking Perth, the fastest-growing city in Australia and the world's most isolated major urban center. Wherever you go, you're sure to find the perfect combination of big-city excitement and outdoor pleasures.

Sophisticated Sydney. You'll probably start in Sydney—and you may never want to leave! Australia

was originally settled by 18th-century convicts, but, gazing out at the shimmering azure harbor commanded by the world-famous Opera House, built to resemble billowing sails, you'll wonder how living here could ever have been considered a punishment. Cruise around the harbor on a yacht or hop a ferry back and forth from Circular Quay, admiring the sun-dappled waters and constantly shifting perspectives of its sensational skyline. The harbor is Sydney's heartbeat; most top sights are within easy walking distance.

Start at the Rocks, once the disembarking point for convicts, now a lovingly restored harborside section of Victorian buildings that house galleries, boutiques and teahouses. Stroll through the lush botanical gardens, then promenade down magnificent George and Macquarie streets, pausing to admire the State Parliament and town hall.

Superb shopping awaits in the converted turn-of-the-century Strand Arcade and Queen Victoria Building. Pause for an alfresco lunch amid the landscaped gardens of the Darling Harbour complex, then whiz on the monorail among its attractions such as the Sydney Aquarium, Maritime Museum and Powerhouse Museum. You also can sail over to the astonishing Taronga Zoo, where thousands of unusual animals clamor for your attention. Ready for a day at the beach? Check out bustling Manly, with its honky-tonk carnival air, or sip espresso at stylish Bondi and enjoy Sydney at its people-watching best.

Sporty, stately Melbourne. While Sydney is boisterous, the charms of stately Melbourne unfold gradually. Laced with greenery and stitched with a color wheel of flowers, fully one quarter of the city is gardens and parks. Honeymooners love the perfectly preserved Victorian architecture gracing its broad tree-lined boulevards. And in the funky seaside suburb of St. Kilda, artists sketch the view from the graceful esplanade. The ubiquitous city trams, many decorated by leading artists, further bathe the city in a nostalgic glow.

Cosmopolitan Melbourne is also as hip and happening as anywhere on the globe. Even Sydney-siders will tell you Melbourne boasts the most exciting arts, dining and sport-

ing scenes in the country. Cross the Yarra River to the space-age Victorian Arts Centre for groundbreaking arts exhibits and world-class concerts and theater. Then wander along tony Toorak Road and Chapel Street for fine restaurants and chic boutiques that rival the world's best for creativity.

Canberra: capital cycling. Just about three and one-half hours by car from Sydney is Canberra, the nation's capital. While bustling with government business, Canberra has no office towers, no neon signs, no billboards and no traffic jams. Thoughtfully planned and laid out in a hill-ringed valley, it boasts the most extensive biking trails in Australia. Rent a bike at your hotel, pick up a cycling map and you're set to explore!



S FRINK/THE WATERHOUSE

Explore the Great Barrier Reef.

Visit the sculpture garden of the National Gallery, with its impressive collection of Aboriginal art. Stop by the new Parliament House on Capitol Hill at Question Time, which starts at 2 P.M. and catch some of the high-spirited exchanges. View the world-class collection of uniforms, weaponry and memorabilia at the Australian War Memorial Museum or enjoy the hands-on National Science Centre. Then head for the hills—the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, home to kangaroos, koalas and emus; or the recreation-filled Snowy Mountains.

Prim Adelaide's wine and whimsy. At first, Adelaide, the capital of South Australia, seems even more proper than Melbourne. Its homesick original residents did their best to replicate England, blanketing the city with trim gardens and handsome churches. Yet the stately 19th-

century government buildings along North Terrace stand in contrast to the abstract "tents" of the futuristic Festival Centre, which offers superlative theater, dance and concerts, year-round. Meanwhile, in North Adelaide, every building seems to sport some whimsical architectural detail, such as gaudy mullioned windows or baroque turrets.

Adelaide is also the gateway to South Australia's wine region, which produces two thirds of the country's

wines. Adelaide's restaurants and wine bars are the ideal places to taste them while sampling "New Australian Cuisine," a new style of cooking in which local produce and meats are prepared using European and Asian techniques.

Perth and Fremantle. Perth is a virtual shrine to the great outdoors. Downtown, vaulting space-age glass skyscrapers reflect handsome red-brick and limestone Victorian build-
(continued)

That Will Last A Lifetime

LIZARD ISLAND

on the Great Barrier Reef

A very special place to honeymoon in a setting of natural unspoiled beauty. Experience the luxurious hospitality of Lizard Island. This resort is "The Rare Jewel In The Reef" with 24 charming beaches, crystal clear waters, exquisite cuisine and friendly, attentive staff.

Explore this rugged, beautiful island. With only 32 private villas, you will escape civilization and savor seclusion and solitude as well as spectacular diving, snorkeling, game fishing and countless tropical delights.

A honeymoon on Lizard Island will create fond memories that you will cherish for the rest of your life.

Special 10 Day Honeymoon Package from \$2469 per person*

Includes: Roundtrip economy airfare on Qantas Airways from Los Angeles • 5 night accommodations on Lizard Island including all Meals • 2 Nights accommodations at Cairns International Hotel

*Based on 2 persons per room. Based on double occupancy. Valid for travel from January 1994, (for travel in January and February an additional \$200 per person) restrictions apply. Prices subject to change.




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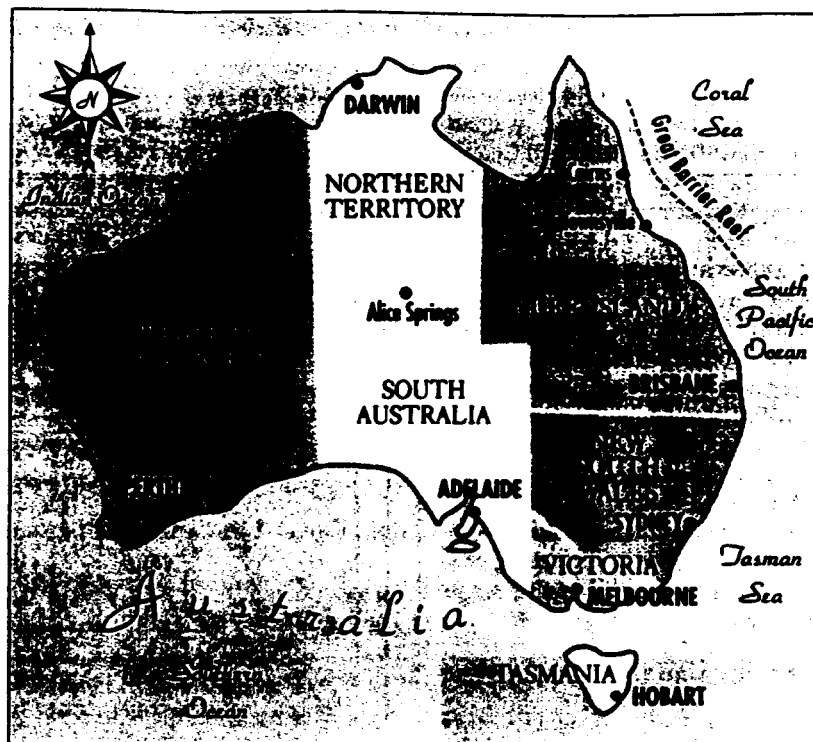


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AUSTRALIA

ings, and spacious parks are full of joggers and picnickers. The shining Swan River is splashed with a rainbow of Sunfish and windsurfers, and nearby King's Park, lined by impressive ghost gum trees and sewn with pockets of typical bushland, offers sweeping panoramas of the skyline and river.

Those in the know head to the aptly named Sunset Coast to salute the sun's pyrotechnics, then to dynamic Northbridge for the hottest restaurants and nightclubs. Nature lovers won't want to miss Rottnest Island, scalloped with private coves and teeming with quokkas, tiny marsupials found nowhere else.

Perth is synonymous with yachting and the America's Cup, but the races were actually held off Fremantle, just to the south. Its exquisite but sadly dilapidated Victorian edifices were doomed to demolition; fortunately, the historic 1983 Australian victory sparked a feverish restoration campaign for the 1987 competition. Now you can enjoy the salt air as you lose yourselves in the glorious maze of brightly painted sandstone buildings that house galleries, pubs and specialty shops. Revel in the area's maritime heritage by lunching at Fisherman's Wharf and

touring a re-creation of Captain James Cook's *Endeavour*.

Tropical Darwin. The gateway to Asia, Darwin retains a 1940's movie air of intrigue, thanks to the energizing melting pot of influences. The highlight of a Darwin day is the twilight ritual of watching the sun fireball across the sky at Mindil Beach, then repairing to its international food stalls for tempting tidbits before hitting the elegant Diamond Beach Casino, where you half expect to find James Bond at the bacarat table. For Asian imports and bargain-priced sarongs, try the Saturday street vendors at the Smith Street Mall. Darwin's Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences is also a marvelous place to learn about Aboriginal culture. You also can take day trips to nearby Melville or Bathurst islands, where the Tiwi people maintain their traditional lifestyle. Or venture to Kakadu National Park, the capital of Australia's crocodile territory.

BALMY BEACHES

What better place to enjoy Australia's laid-back lifestyle than at her bountiful beaches? In fact, with so many sparkling stretches within city limits, even workaholic Australians will sneak out for a little "solar ener-

(continued)



ROMANCE COLLECTION

AUSTRALIA

- *Honeymoon in Sydney's spectacular Hinterland. Drive to the mysterious Blue Mountains and beautiful Hunter Valley.*
- *Newmans offers a special package that includes: champagne breakfast for 2, 4 days car rental, 2 nights at Peppers Hunter Valley, 1 night at the Fairmont Resort, Blue Mountains, \$415 per person.*
- *Enjoy the Valley's good life; wine tasting, fine dining, a 4 wheel drive tour through the forests or a romantic horse & carriage ride with a private picnic.*



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AUSTRALIA

gy" during their lunch hour! The beaches range in hue from wedding-cake white to lustrous gold; in size, from seemingly infinite sweeps to secluded coves just big enough for two. With over 23,000 miles of coastline, you're sure to find your own private piece of paradise!

"Going Troppo." When Aussies long for a beachy escape they sigh, "Going troppo, mate!" and head for Queensland, "The Sunshine State," and the beaches that garland its coast like a string of pearls caught between a curtain of velvety jade mountains and the turquoise sea. The most famous attraction is the Great Barrier Reef, which blazes a trail of liquid fire for over 1,200 miles off the North Queensland coast. This underwater garden is Australia's Disneyland, with rainbow-hued coral and fascinating marine denizens: giant clams rimmed with electric blue, neon chromis, yellow trumpet fish, needle-nosed gars, beaky unicorns, gargantuan gliding rays and flashy anemones.

It's like a watery Main Street on Saturday night, with everyone parading in their finery!

Queensland's thriving capital, Brisbane, and two smaller international airports, Cairns and Townsville, serve as gateways to the bejeweled Great Barrier Reef and its necklace of islands whose beaches glitter like crushed diamonds. You'll love the lazy air of these surprisingly sophisticated, overgrown beach towns. In Townsville, be sure to visit the state-of-the-art Great Barrier Reef Wonderland, with its Omnimax theater and transparent underwater viewing tunnels.

If you fly into Brisbane, stop by Mt. Coot-tha Lookout and Botanical Gardens for a panoramic view of the city, or cruise up the meandering Brisbane River to Lone Pine Sanctuary, where you can feed kangaroos and pet koalas. Or just luxuriate on one of the golden beaches.

Some couples opt to stay in one of the seaside cities and take day trips to outlying islands for snorkeling. Others set sail with Captain Cook Cruises, which offers luxurious four- and seven-day adventures.

Resort islands. Most honeymooners head directly for one of Queensland's peaceful, pampering resort islands, many of which have been declared national parks to preserve their fragile ecosystems. In addition to offering a myriad of water-sport activities, many of these islands are ideal for bush walks, thanks to their virgin stands of rain forest. You can skirt rocky outcroppings and limpid tidal pools seeking a private cove for a picnic on Fraser, the world's largest sand island, or primeval Hinchinbrook, fringed with monumental boulders and sheer limestone cliffs. Some islands are named for their most prominent residents. The sparkling beaches of Lizard Island are serenely patrolled by prehistoric five-foot-long monitors (don't worry, they only *look* fearsome!). The shores of Heron Island are swept by flocks of sea birds.

There are many other Edens, but wherever you go in Queensland you'll appreciate Nature at her most creative and playful.

The Gold Coast. If you're seeking a different kind of wildlife, head for the Gold Coast, south of Brisbane

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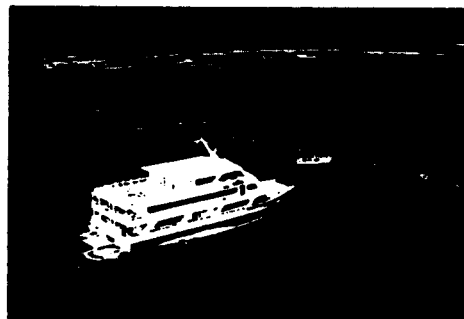
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The cool south. The coast off Victoria, South Australia and the southern part of Western Australia fronts the immense Southern Ocean, with Antarctica being the nearest land mass. As if anticipating the eternal winter to come, the sea is often moody, rippling from slate blue to dark wine, perpetually daubed with foam. Curvaceous sand dunes embroidered with bush alternate with steep, stunning cliffs that hold the tumultuous ocean at bay. Enormous boulders and jutting promontories dot the shore like abstract sculptures. Coves and inlets scissor the littoral like a child's whimsical paper cutouts. The drives here are breathtaking, especially the Great Ocean Road west from Melbourne, dramatically weaving past natural oddities such as the fallen arch of "London Bridge" and the twisted pillars known as the Twelve Apostles.

The offshore islands are pristine, ideal for wildlife-watching. Graceful pods of whales patrol the waters and spout willowy flumes dozens of feet into the air, as if answering the crashing surf. Don't miss Phillip Island, its coastline knitted with rock pools and blowholes, especially at twilight when thousands of fairy penguins waddle up the dunes in a surreal nightly parade.

Closer to Adelaide, South Australia, Kangaroo Island is a gorgeous mosaic of rolling headlands, steep cliffs, granite domes and aquamarine inlets. Fantastic rock tunnels lead improbably to snug, sun-filtered coves. Flotillas of pelicans and brightly colored fishing boats guard the shores, while colonies of seals bask contentedly in the sun.

The West Coast. Charming, isolated fishing villages and 19th-century whaling ports, such as Esperance, Albany and Augusta, adorn the coast. Their whitewashed facades and red-tile roofs cling precipitously to the cliffsides. The cream-colored Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse stands sentinel on a lonely escarpment where the Southern and Indian

oceans meet, as powdery almond-colored coves curl up the coast.

Just south of Perth, the shore opens up with wide beaches that curve for miles. Even the marine life gets into the playful, relaxed spirit—you can frolic with frisky dolphins at several beaches along the western coast, the two favorites being Bunbury and, especially, Monkey Mia, where you can feed the lovable creatures by hand in knee-deep water!

Broome's secluded strands. A two-and-one-half-hour flight north of Perth, exotic Broome, one of the world's major pearl harvesting centers, feels—and is—closer to Asia than the rest of Australia. There's a sizable Chinatown and tranquil Japanese cemetery, replete with rock gardens; and many buildings, painted snow-white or the soft luminous colors of a seashell, are perched on stilts for protection against the awe-inspiring tides—a spectacle in themselves! Ravishing, unbroken stretches, such as Cable Beach and 80-Mile Beach (no exaggeration), recede to the horizon. Broome also serves as a gateway for exploring the gaping

(continued)

AUSTRALIA

gorges and bone-white cliffs of the Hamersley Range to the south, or a safari into the Kimberley Mountains to the east, a scorched alien landscape of yawning chasms and glistening waterfalls.

INTO THE OUTBACK

Ninety percent of the 17 million Australians live within a few miles of the coast. Yet to understand Australia and her people fully, you must visit the austere, barely tamed Outback, one of the world's last true frontiers. Its sheer vastness is humbling, and its colors are stark yet vivid. Nature's arid blast furnace, it nonetheless shimmers with a fierce, otherworldly beauty. You'll quickly understand why the Aborigines believe their ancestral spirits roamed the earth, shaping this savage land of mystical monoliths, monumental boulders and spindly spires.

A true oasis. The gateway to the Outback is plucky Alice Springs, which still possesses an exciting frontier aura. "Alice" is an oasis in more ways than one; its people are as ebullient as their surroundings are forbidding. They've done their utmost to make their home hospitable, adorning the buildings with murals in soft desert pastels, shading the sidewalks with leafy gum trees. Everything in Alice is a testament to its resilient residents. Visit the Royal Flying Doctor Service and the School of the Air and admire their perseverance in the face of vast distances. Shop for distinctive Aboriginal art and crafts, or hop a camel for a day trip to spectacular sights such as the mammoth granite gashes called Simpson's Gap and Standley Chasm, where rock wallabies play hide-and-seek in the clefts. Or taste wines at Chateau Hornsby as flocks of brilliant green and black Port Lincoln parrots and pink-breasted galahs darken the vines.

The allure of Ayers Rock. Some of Australia's most famous sights lie in the "Red Centre," named for its iron-rich earth. You'll thrill to the sight of majestic Ayers Rock—at two miles long, one and one-half miles wide and 1,143 feet high, it's the world's largest monolith. Uluru, as the sacred site is known to the

Aborigines, changes color from dawn to dusk. You'll gaze transfixed as the setting sun transforms the monolith from maroon to jet black against a flaming sky. You can make the strenuous but rewarding hike to the top. Or join Uluru Experience for a guided walk around the base and examine ancient rock paintings as you listen to Aboriginal lore; take the Liru Walk, where you'll learn how tools and weapons are made; or join a "bush tucker" tour, where you'll sample Aboriginal delicacies.

As you explore the Red Centre, you may feel as though you've landed at some lonely Martian outpost: Vast stretches of cinnamon-colored soil are woven with ribbons of green and embossed with the silver peaks of the MacDonnell Range. Mysterious formations loom over the landscape, such as the eerie Devil's Marbles and the 36 imposing domes of the Olgas.

Frontier adventures. The Outback preserves not only the vital heritage of Aboriginal tribes, but also the legacy of hardy ranchers and miners. Australia, with its rich deposits of precious stones and metals, boasts its own "Wild West" legacy, with ghost towns and charming Victorian architecture amid the coppery dunes of the Simpson and Great Western deserts.

Adventure-seekers can follow in the pioneers' footsteps, panning for gold and digging for luminous opals. Visit the Argyle Diamond mines in the sun-baked center of Western Australia, then tour the fantastic lunar landscape of nearby Bungle Bungle. Or knock back a brew at one of the area's still-raucous saloons after panning for gold in the fields of Kalgoorlie (Western Australia) or Ballarat (Victoria). For an utterly unique experience, look for the fabulously rare black opal in the mines at Coober Pedy (South Australia), where searing temperatures compel inhabitants to live underground in a truly futuristic city!

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major cities, from the lush rain forests of the tropical north, to the checkerboard of Australia's superb vineyards in the temperate south, to undulating mountains ideal for picnics and bush walks, and even skiing in winter.

City escapes. When harried Sydney-siders need a break, they often turn west to the Blue Mountains, perpetually shrouded in the smoky blue haze given off by countless eucalyptus trees. You'll love getting lost amid such bizarre rock formations as the Three Sisters, then luxuriating in turn-of-the-century spas and cozy inns.

Melbourne has its own weekend getaway, the lovely Dandenongs Range, where you'll romp through meadows thick with wildflowers before returning on the Puffing Billy, a vintage train.

Feel like schussing through untracked fields? The aptly named Snowy Mountains outside Canberra, the national capital, are both high and cold enough for superb skiing during the Australian winter (our summer).

A taste of Great Britain. The offshore island of Tasmania, whose rolling hills and farmland remind delighted visitors of Ireland or England's lake country, offers the added bonus of shimmering blue-tinged glaciers, limpid alpine lakes and craggy moraines sculpted by eons of erosion. You'll find cozy bed-and-breakfast inns and rollicking pubs even amidst the sublime wilderness; and a capital, Hobart, that seems transplanted from the early 19th century, its exquisite Georgian sandstone buildings fairly glowing in the soft golden light.

Tropical rain forests. In Australia's tropics, bush country becomes rain forest: vast tangles of greenery swept by rainbow-hued birds, filigreed by silvery streams and liquid-diamond waterfalls, and carved with plunging canyons. The most spectacular examples are the Mossman Gorge and Daintree national parks outside Cairns, and Kakadu National Park near Darwin in the Northern Territory. Kakadu's extraordinary terrain spirals from jungle to desert: In one afternoon you can crocodile-watch, then hike past plummeting

Honeymoon Travel Tips



GETTING THERE: AIR NEW ZEALAND, CANADIAN AIR, NORTHWEST, QANTAS AND UNITED ALL FLY TO AUSTRALIA.

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waterfalls to granite walls stippled with 20,000-year-old rock paintings. Further afield, you can float down the Katherine River through 13 magnificent multihued gorges.

From Cairns to Kuranda. Another delightful excursion from Cairns is the Kuranda Scenic Railway, which clatters past striking gorges and fields of yellow sun-bright daisies cascading down the hillsides. Start with "brekkie" (breakfast) in ornate vintage railway cars at the Cairns Station's Freshwater Connection, and wash it down with a champagne chaser on the train. Quaint Kuranda is a gracious reminder of the colonial past, its pastel-hued buildings topped with corrugated tin roofs that wink in the sun. Visit the Butterfly Sanctuary, where over 30 iridescent species flutter on cue; and the Noctarium, where animals of the night peer at

OR A NUMBER OF REGIONAL FLIGHTS AND BUSH PLANES. THERE ARE ALSO TRAINS, TAXIS, AND CARS FOR HIRE.



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you with their luminous eyes. Then bargain at the bustling market for Aboriginal wares. Don't miss the highly regarded Tjapukai Dance Theatre, dedicated to keeping Aboriginal traditions alive while imaginatively incorporating Western methods of storytelling and technical pizzazz. You'll even learn how to play the sonorous didgeridoo and throw a boomerang!

WINE COUNTRY

Just two decades ago, if you asked the typical Australian what he drank with dinner, he'd probably answer "Beer, mate," as if anything else would be a sacrilege. Today, Australian wines are ranked by experts among the world's best. In Australia's wine-growing regions, you'll find everything from hearty caber-

(continued)

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net and shiraz to the more delicate pinot noir in reds, and rich chardonnay to steely riesling in whites. The delightful scenery has attracted top-notch chefs and artists as well, making the wine country a wonderfully romantic excursion.

Sipping and surfing. Each region has its own distinct ambience and appeal. Margaret River, south of Perth, offers dozens of quality "boutique" vineyards where you can actually meet the winemakers and discuss their craft. Among the best are Cape Mentelle and Vasse Felix. The scenery is wonderfully varied—rugged, windswept coastal beaches; limestone caverns brimming with crystal gardens; villages of ocher-earth buildings; stands of karri and jarrah trees that vault like the arches of a Gothic cathedral. Some of the best surfing beaches in Australia are also located along this coast, so the area features an appealing blend of surf, culture and tradition, with delightful galleries and boutiques showcasing locally made pottery, hand-knit sweaters and other crafts.

A taste of Bavaria. By contrast, outside Adelaide, the picturesque Barossa Valley and surrounding Adelaide Hills delight with their old-world atmosphere, courtesy of the German immigrants who first settled the area. You'll swear you're in Bavaria when you hear the oompah bands and view the classic Lutheran churches. Pack a picnic hamper with knockwurst, pumpernickel bread and apple strudel—and wines from superb wineries such as Mount Adam, Grant Burge, Penfolds, St. Halletts or Yalumba—and enjoy a meal in the country for a refreshing afternoon.

Inns and vineyards. The Hunter Valley, north of Sydney, is a lovely green-and-gold patchwork quilt of vineyards and farmland, sprinkled with warm country inns and gourmet restaurants. Among the stellar vineyards are Wyndham Estate (a great stop for lunch), Lindemans, Rothbury Estate and Tyrrells. Your hearts will soar as you explore the gently rolling hills in a hot-air balloon, toasting your adventure together with a fine Australian champagne.

—Jordan Simon

LOCAL LORE

AUSSIESPEAK

Informal, irreverent and quirky, the laid-back Australians often refer to their land as "Oz," because of its unique terrain. After meeting them over "schooners" (pints) of beer at a neighborhood pub, you may indeed feel as if you've stepped into a fairy-tale land—but for a slightly different reason. Although Australians speak English, it's laced with enchanting bits of slang that make it far more colorful and playful than standard British or American. You'll chuckle as you spot restroom entrances labeled



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"sheilas" and "blokes," drive past billabongs (ponds) to spot platypuses, emus and wombats, and order "brekkie" (breakfast) in bed.

The strong spirit of adventure embodied in film character Crocodile Dundee—that leathery, self-reliant Outbacker with a twinkle in his eye—really does play a role in the everyday Aussie's psyche; in fact, "bushwalking" (hiking through the countryside) and "going troppo" (to the Great Barrier Reef and other warm-weather spots) are popular pastimes.

Australians are generally a friendly lot, and in reply to your thanks for their helpfulness, you'll probably hear, "No worries, mate." Their breezy cheerfulness is sure to make you feel at home in the Land of Oz.

—Laurel B. Cardone

**CANADIAN
VISITING JOURNALISTS PROGRAM**

February 06, 1994
North Vancouver, B.C.

Travel "Waltzing on top
of the world Down Under"
North Shore News

SYDNEY — The casual visitor to this golden city cannot fail to notice that there is an extra spring in the step of the locals as they prepare for the Olympics in the year 2000.

And why not? The site on the harbor is spectacular, more than 70% of the facilities are already built or under construction, and it only remains to be seen who will be

head of state on opening day.

It takes more than a glance at the newspapers to find a mention of the republican movement, that is after the concerns of the economy lurch-

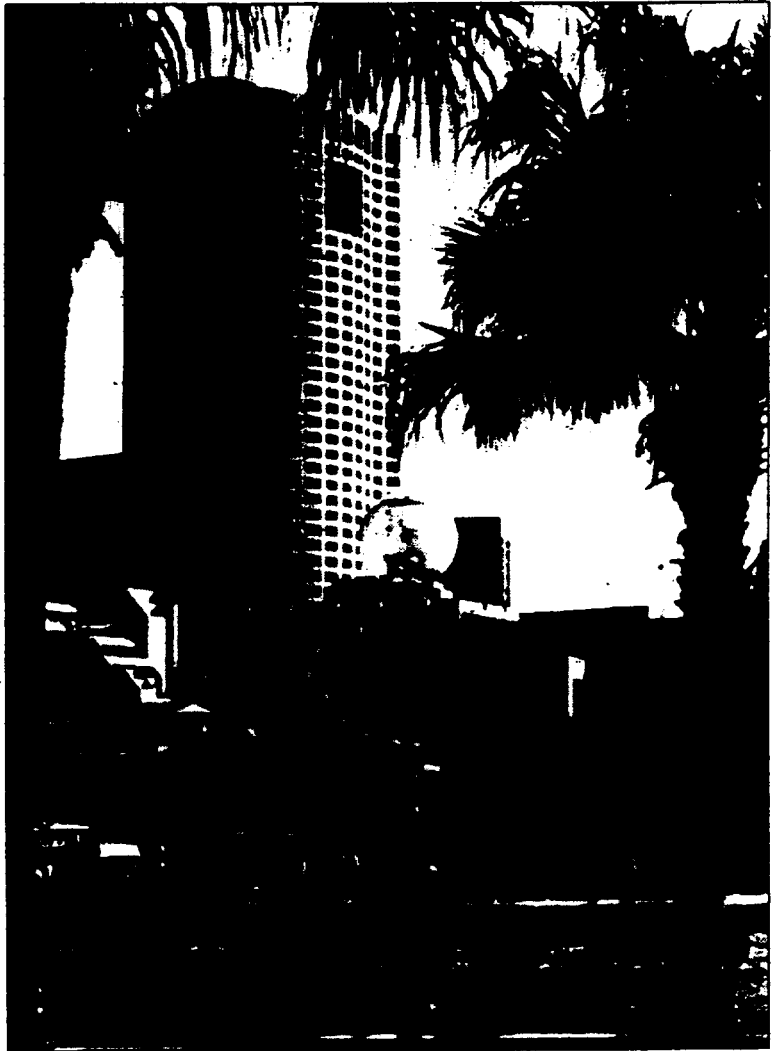


Photo submitted

THE NEW ANA Hotel Sydney is just steps away from the harborfront.

David Wishart



TRAVEL TIPS

ing like that of Canada, tycoons in trouble and a Madonna concert getting the blame for spoiling the wicket for an Australian test series against South Africa.

Then light relief arrives in the form of Fergie, Duchess of York, who sails into town like the Manila galleon, and public houses empty as Sydney newspapers send reporters to get the story.

She is found at Whale Beach, a perfect sandy cove north of Sydney, and if the neighbors' reaction to the press hounds is any guide ("clear off, scum") then a member of the House of Windsor will be doing the ribbon-cutting at Sydney 2000.

One has to admire Fergie's taste. Australia celebrates summer when we are winterbound, the flights are getting easier (Qantas' new 1 p.m. departure from Los Angeles is a non-stop allowing for a 10:30 p.m. arrival so you can fall into bed) and Sydney has it all — superb setting, great food and wine, pubs with friendly people and good beer, beaches galore and all the sunshine you can handle.

New hotels offer the choice of the luxurious ANA Hotel Sydney, where Michael Moran demonstrates that a good concierge is worth his weight in gold, the intimate Observatory, run by Orient-Express, and the Nikko Darling Harbour overlooking the water.

You can pay \$400 for a fabulous corner suite at the Regent, or take the ferry across to Manly where bed and breakfast for two at the Periwinkle is \$70, including sing-alongs with the holly owner on his player piano.

Eating out almost anywhere in Sydney is a bargain, particularly at restaurants where you can take your own wine (BYOBs), and steak for

barbies is half-price.

Manly even has free electric BBQs at waterfront parks, and north of here there is a choice of 23 beaches, many of them perfect coves sheltered by towering bluffs.

A two-hour drive from Sydney on good roads leads to Port Stephens, a natural harbor two to four times as big as Sydney's.

X See Tours page 39

TRAVEL

Get tours, samples from wine-growers

From page 37

depending on which locals you talk to, but undoubtedly a great spot for all kinds of boating.

For a delightful hotel, stop at the new waterfront Anchorage.

Just west of here is the Hunter Valley, one of Australia's best wine-growing areas. Many wineries offer tours and samples, such as Tyrrell's, which has been in business for 125 years.

South of Sydney there are more beaches, not least of which is the celebrated Bondi Beach. The beach's Christmas Day party is a magnet for young travellers from everywhere, including ex-Culpepper's waitress Erin McBeath, 22, of Vancouver.

Bondi is an easy bus ride from downtown on Sydney's excellent transit system.

Downtown is Circular Quay

with its armada of ferries like the *Star in Hong Kong*, next to the Opera House and the equally famous bridge, and a stroll from the Rocks, where Sydney began 200 years ago.

The history, as told in Robert Hughes' book *Fatal Shore*, or in brief in a walking tour of the Rocks, is fascinating, of a handful of convicts and settlers, and a Scots-born governor called Macquarie who had the vision to see a great nation in the making.

Some 160,000 convicts were shipped to Australia over an 80-year period, and the last died just 60 years ago.

Their children were born free and Australians today enjoy an enviable lifestyle.

Now, in tune with the "share the spirit" theme of the Sydney 2000 Olympics bid, they are waltzing on top of the world.

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AUSTRALIAN CHRISTMAS

Christmas falls during their summer season, the Australians have their own way of cele-

brating. It's not unusual to find caroling side by side with surfing championships; it's also the season of Santa and cricket matches.

In Derby, Boxing Day (Dec. 26) celebrations include the Cockroach Crawl, and in Daylesford, there are the Scottish Highland Heavy Games just before Christmas.

If, however, your Australian vacation isn't scheduled until June or July — their winter — you can always catch their second celebration: Yulefest. That's when Aussies take advantage of the brisk weather to serve up their hot roast meals and heavy Christmas puddings.

FYI: Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200, Los Angeles, CA 90067. (310) 552-1988.

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The Australian Tourist Commission
has appointed two new managers in
its New York office: **NIGEL BRAMICH**
has been named marketing manager
for meetings, conventions and incen-
tives; and **ANDREA WILLIAMS** has
been appointed manager for incentive
travel.

January 09, 1994
Walnut Creek, CA

"How to Tread Softly When Visiting Indigenous Peoples"
Contra Costa Times

By LAURA BLY *75*
Universal Press Syndicate

At a recent international conference on the promises and pitfalls of indigenous tourism, Australian Chris Burchett told the story of an Alice Springs tour group that had signed up for an Aboriginal performance after reading a brochure that touted the "haunting strains of the didgeridoo."

The trouble was, the long, hollow musical instrument is carved from trees that don't grow near Alice Springs. It isn't considered part of the local Aboriginal culture, and therefore wasn't included in the program.

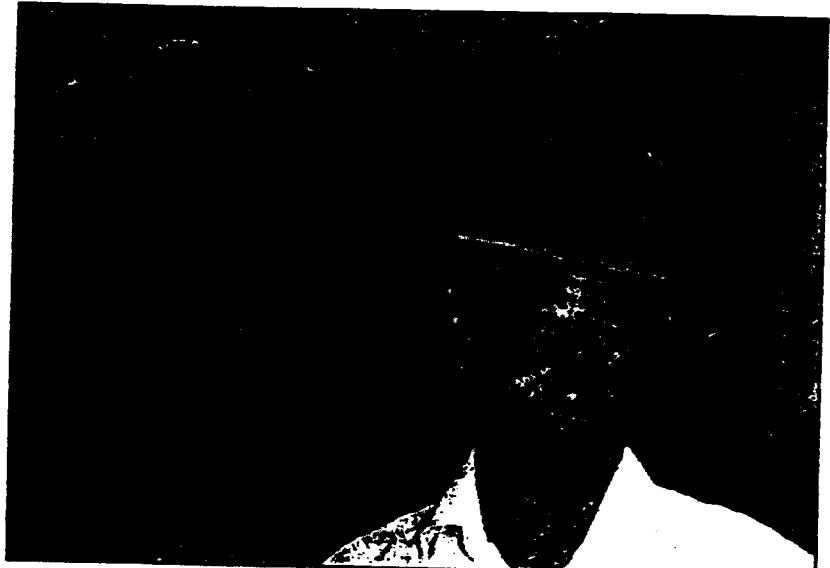
"So, right in the middle of the dance, two busloads of tourists got up and walked out," recalled Burchett, director of cultural affairs for the Northern Territory Tourist Commission in Darwin.

"They came to hear a didgeridoo. And when they didn't, they said (the performance) was a sham."

When the United Nations tagged 1993 as the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, it focused new attention on the economic and cultural plight of more than 300 million indigenous and tribal people living in 70 countries.

At the same time, the U.N. declaration has spotlighted the often-troubled encounters between First World tourists and Third World native cultures.

"By and large, tourism has been devastating to indigenous people," says Robert Leavitt, education director for Cultural Survival, a Cam-



LAURA BLY/Special to the Times

TOUR LEADER Bill Harney stands in front of an aboriginal rock painting in Australia's Northern Territory.

bridge, Mass.-based human rights organization that focuses on native culture.

"More and more people are looking for what they think is an 'authentic' cultural experience, but what we're seeing are facades put up to manufacture that authenticity," Leavitt adds. "It's been going on for decades in Hawaii and the Caribbean, and now it's global as well."

Getting past those facades is a difficult, sometimes treacherous passage both for native cultures and the tourists who come to admire and learn from them. Here are some suggestions for smoothing the journey:

■ Don't let your own curiosity become invasive. Each November thousands of tourists head for the small volcanic island of Janitzio, near the colonial Mexican town of Patzcuaro. There Purepecha Indians celebrate the Days of the Dead with a poignant, all-night vigil that combines Catholicism with the pre-Hispanic beliefs of their ancestors. And there, those same tourists have turned vigil into carnival — trampling graves, swigging beer and sticking camcorders into worshippers' faces.

Not every breach of cultural privacy is as blatant as that at Janitzio. Sometimes, it's as seemingly innocent as asking questions about long

held, carefully guarded beliefs — and expecting answers that might better come from pretrip research.

"Good tourism must create and protect pride and privacy," says Robertson Collins, a Singapore-based consultant with the Pacific Asia Travel Association.

■ Respect restrictions on photography and other visitor access. Many native cultures request visitors not to take photographs or make sketches of sacred sites or celebrations — a request that, in some cases, may be backed up with confiscation of the offending camera.

Even if you're not taking photos, be considerate of a site's spiritual or historical significance by tailoring your own behavior to that of your hosts.

In Australia's Northern Territory, for example, participants on some Aboriginal tours are separated into men's and women's groups because the knowledge presented is sex-specific. On other Aboriginal programs, visitors are taken to areas of special significance but are requested not to photograph or even talk about what they've seen.

■ Find out who benefits from, and decides the nature of, your visit. Among the questions the San Anselmo-based Center for Responsible Tourism recommends asking potential tour operators: What percentage of the trip cost stays in the community you visit? Does the tour's pacing allow time to create or accept opportunities to interact with local people? Is there a pretrip orientation program? Most important, how much input and control does the lo-

cal culture have over the conditions of your visit?

■ Don't impose your own standards of authenticity. "Escaping to a civilization that has never seen raisins dance on TV or a Liz Claiborne label fascinates me," humorist Erma Bombeck once wrote.

"If I wanted to drink the water, speak English and eat Italian, I'd stay home."

Honorable sentiments, to be sure. But in the global village of MTV, CNN and "Terminator" videos, it's hard to imagine many places whose residents haven't seen dancing raisins — or, thanks to visiting tourists, a pair of designer jeans.

As a result, you shouldn't expect your hosts to look as though they stepped out of the pages of a tattered National Geographic — and if they do, recognize what the exchange is meant to achieve.

■ Travel in a low-key manner. By their very nature — small groups, off-the-beaten-track locations — many tours that concentrate on indigenous cultures tend to be expensive. All the more reason for those often wealthy tourists, says director Virginia Hadsell of the Center for Responsible Tourism, to journey as unobtrusively and undemandingly as possible.

TRAVEL WEEKLY

NEW YORK, NY
2-TIMES/WEEK 21.198

THURSDAY
JAN 13 1994

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6675 **Parks Closed in Sydney Region**

SYDNEY, Australia — In the wake of severe bush fires in the suburbs and coastal regions near here, national parks in New South Wales were closed as a precaution, the Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) reported.

Clients scheduled for day tours to affected areas such as the Blue Mountains are eligible for refunds, according to the country's major tour operators.

Meanwhile, the ATC said international and domestic flights to and from Sydney operated normally.

Other services — such as hotels, restaurants, attractions and shops in the city — functioned normally as well, and no hotels or resorts reported damage, the ATC said.

All major roads into Sydney were re-opened and rail service was restored to full operation, the ATC added.

The Blue Mountains, Ku-ring-gai Chase, Barrington Tops, Kanangra Boyd, Royal and Morton national parks were among those temporarily closed.

January 16, 1994

Sacramento, CA

The Sacramento Bee

Travel services not affected by fires in Sydney

66-75
Wireless Wire

SYDNEY, Australia - International travel to Sydney is functioning normally following bush fires that have burned in mostly rural sections of New South Wales and some suburban areas of Sydney.

The fires are now largely contained.

International and domestic flight service to and from Sydney and within all parts of Australia has operated without interruption since the fires began, according to Bill Baker, regional director, the Americas, of the Australian Tourist Commission.

City services such as taxis, buses, hotels, restaurants, museums, shops and attractions also have been functioning normally, Baker said. Most damage from the fires is outside the key tourism areas. No hotels or resorts have reported any damage.

Most train lines and highways in and out of Sydney are open, with all services expected to be fully operational within a few days. Some roads, however, are subject to periodic closure to allow debris to be removed.

Communications services have been restored, although there may be some congestion on the lines due to heavy call volumes.

The fires have largely burned in national park areas close to the state's coastal regions. As of Monday, many national parks in New South Wales were closed as a precaution to visitors. Travelers scheduled on day tours to affected areas such as the Blue Mountains would be eligible for full refunds, according to reports from Australia's major tour operators.

January 16, 1994

San Diego, CA

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Traveler's Checks

Alison DaRosa

Fires don't hamper travel in Australia

6675

Travel within Australia has not been seriously affected by bush fires that began late last month and raged through sections of New South Wales and some suburban areas of Sydney. Although fires continued burning last week, they were largely contained.

International and domestic flights to and from Sydney and within all parts of Australia have operated without interruption since the fires began, according to Bill Baker, the Americas director of the Australian Tourist Commission.

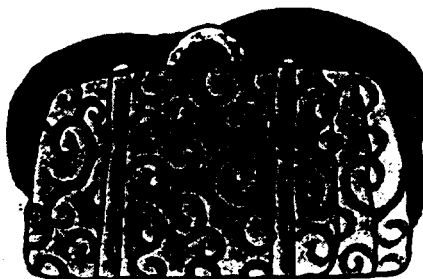
"City services for travelers, such as taxis, buses, hotels, restaurants, museums, shops and attractions, have been functioning normally, as most of the damage from the fires is outside the key tourism areas," Baker said. No hotels or resorts have reported any damage.

Most train lines and highways in and out of Sydney are open, and all related services were expected to be fully operational by today. Some roads, however, are subject to periodic closure to allow debris to be removed.

Communications services have been restored; however, heavy usage continues to jam some circuits.

The fires burned largely in national park areas close to eastern coastal regions. As of Tuesday, many national parks in New South Wales remained closed. Most regular day tours are operating, but travelers scheduled on off-road tours to affected areas will be offered alternative tours or full refunds, according to reports from Australia's major tour operators.

Containment of the fires is subject to weather patterns. For the latest report on travel conditions, phone the Australian Tourist Commission at (310) 552-1988. For a taped update on the fire, phone the Australian consulate in Los Angeles at (213) 469-4300.



TRAVELAGE WEST

SAN FRANCISCO, CA
WEEKLY 36,000

JAN 17 1994

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■ **TOURISM FACILITIES** in key areas of New South Wales were operating normally at press time, as most of the 136 fires that ravaged Sydney suburbs and rural grasslands were brought under control. International and domestic flights to and from Sydney are operating without interruption, according to Bill Baker, regional director-the Americas for the Australian Tourist Commission. No hotels or resorts had reported damage at press time, and communications services, restaurants and attractions are functioning normally, Baker said. Most train lines and highways are open; however, some roads may be closed to allow debris to be removed. 4675

Australia's Aborigines cashing in on tourism

By Steven Morris
Chicago Tribune

In Australia's 600,000-square-mile Northern Territory, where only 175,000 people live, tourism has boomed in the last 20 years. The territory, much of which has been returned to aboriginal ownership, is the site of some of the country's most dramatic scenery.

"But Aborigines were often the objects of the tourism rather than active participants," said Bill Baker, regional director, the Americas, for the Australian Tourist Commission.

Over the last decade, aboriginal operators have slowly entered the tourism market. But they were excluded or confined to lower-level jobs.

Now, however, Australian Aborigines are starting to take a bigger piece of the \$50 million aboriginal tourism industry. A group of them was in Chicago last year to make that point to the U.S. travel industry.

Aborigines, Baker said, "face many problems, not the least of which is a history of negative aboriginal stereotyping by the broader Australian and international communities."

Ownership of Northern Territory land has helped encourage Aborigines to move into the tour market. Of the 50 so-called aboriginal tours operated in the Northern Territory, 10 are run by Aborigines, according to the commission. An estimated 20 tourist-related companies are now operated by Aborigines.

"In the past, a lot of safaris have been owned by non-Aborigines but were calling themselves aboriginal tours," said Brian Rooke, who, with his wife, Rayllis Wilson, owns and operates Umorrduk Safaris, based in Darwin, Australia. For \$220 a day plus airfare, Rooke takes tourists to the bush country of western Arnhem Land, a one-hour flight by light aircraft from Darwin, home of the Gurrumulbun aboriginal clan.

Rooke is among 17 representatives of aboriginal tour companies who are traveling in the United States, hoping to lure business.

Rooke, 42, is descended from Aborigines in Tasmania, and Wilson is a Gurrumulbun. Until four years ago, Rooke operated a gardening business in Darwin.

"I loved going into the bush," he said, "and I was looking for a way to earn a living there."

His business is "the only aboriginal-owned safari in Ar-

January 23, 1994
Tucson, AZ

Arizona Daily Star

Some clans considered mining and tourism.

"Fortunately for everybody, they chose tourism," Rooke said.

That wouldn't have as much impact on the culture, the environment, particularly if the tourism was on a small scale."

Bill Harney, 62, who operates a business building fences for government installations and cattle ranches, started Jankangyina Tours in 1988, taking visitors on camping trips in what's called the Land of the Lightning Brothers, whose clashes, according to legend, established the seasonal cycles of storms and droughts.

Harney, who was raised in a rock shelter and never attended a school, says the business lets him "share my culture with white people" when he guides them on a trip.

Manual Pamkal, 28, is a senior guide for Manyallaluk Tours, operated by the Manyallaluk clan, of which he is president.

The business, he said, "is good for the children's future. We don't want to lose our future. Also, it's good for our people. We can employ our people to work in our land."

hem Land," he said. "We employ members of the community as guides, and the community gets a fee for the rights to operate tours there."

Harold Wilson, 25, town clerk of Peppimenarti, a community of 220 people, became the operator of his clan's tour business in 1991.

Peppimenarti was established in 1973 as a "cattle station," an Australian term for a ranch. "Now it's a community," Wilson said. "We set up the (tour) business three years ago as a means of self-determination. Aboriginal people want to be independent."

The tours have been "pretty busy," Wilson said, but "it's going to have to take a while for it to really get going. It's like any new small business."

One impetus for the sprouting of aboriginal tour businesses came from the cattle industry. Beef importers in the United States and other countries charged that some buffaloes in Australia were infected with bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis, which could spread to cattle.

"In our area, a source of income for the clan was from working in the program for testing cattle in the 1980s. When that finished, they needed to look around for an alternative," Rooke said.

TOUR & TRAVEL NEWS

MANHASSET, NY
WEEKLY 48 000

JAN 24 1994

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Australia Fires Under Control

6475

LOS ANGELES — News footage on CNN may have made it look like travelers to Sydney, Australia, should bring their own fire-proof suits, but the infernos raging outside the city have been brought under control and most tourist areas are open as usual.

"It doesn't affect travel to the city, and the major tourist destinations outside the city, such as the Blue Mountains and Hunter Valley, are not affected," said Amy Shearer, public relations/promotions manager for the Australian Tourist Commission here.

Shearer said the state of emergency has been lifted, all transportation has been reopened, the air quality is normal and day tours are running as usual, although some four-wheel-drive tours to the Blue Mountains, which suffered extensive damage to bush areas, have been diverted to other areas. There

was extensive damage to national parks north and south of Sydney. About 90 percent of the Royal National Park was razed, but Shearer said it's not a park frequented by international visitors.

About 1.5 million of New South Wales' 9 million acres of national parks were destroyed. Several parks remain closed. More than 40 are open throughout the state, but visitors are advised to put off bush-walking, a popular activity in Australia, until all the fires are extinguished.

Four people died in the more than 100 blazes that ravaged New South Wales, and 10 people were hurt. No tourists suffered injuries, and no hotels or resorts reported any damage.

Shearer said there was no reason for Americans to cancel plans to visit Sydney or New South Wales.

— MARK ROBERTI

TRAVEL AGENT

NEW YORK, NY
WEEKLY 52.132

JAN 24 1994

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PACIFIC/ASIA
SOUTHPACIFIC

6615

MARKET WATCH: AUSTRALIA

If the Australian Tourism Commission (ATC) has its way, the 27th Olympics in the year 2000 won't see prices going through the roof. The ATC has secured the cooperation of the Australian Hoteliers Association and the Motor Inn and Motel Association to limit room prices during the games. The Aussies are also promising that tickets to the events will begin as low as \$10. The ATC is predicting that publicity from the games will add 1.32 million foreign visitors between the years 1994 and 2004... The Fourth World Congress on Adventure Travel and Ecotourism is scheduled to be held at the **Wrest Point Hotel** in Hobart, Tasmania, in September... Another Tasmanian tidbit has Utell (800-44-UTELL) handling sales, marketing and reservations for **Launceston's Great**

Northern Hotel and Hobart's **Westside Hotel**. Both properties will subscribe to Paytell, a Utell system that allows agents to take their commissions up front... **Adventure Center** (800-227-8747) is offering motorcycle tours of one to 14 days in Australia. Using 600cc cycles, the itineraries will wander off the road as well as on it... This year's **Adelaide Festival** (Feb. 25 through March 13) will emphasize the arts of Asia with performances by Japan's National Bunraku Theater and Javanese shadow puppets, as well as by the Frankfurt Ballet and New York's Mark Morris Dance Company... The ATC is reporting that travel to Sydney is "functioning normally" despite the recent brushfires in rural New South Wales. The fires occurred in national park areas close to the sea.

PROFILING THE U.S. MARKET DOWN UNDER

American Visitors' Region of Stay
New South Wales 79%
Australian Capital Territory 11%
Victoria 40%
Queensland 51%
South Australia 11%
Western Australia 8%
Tasmania 5%
Northern Territory 15%

American Visitors to Australia
First visit: 64%
Age 30 to 49: 41%
Hotel stay with facilities: 68%
Used travel agent for booking: 70%

Source: Australian Tourist Commission

ATLANTA JOURNAL ATLANTA
CONSTITUTION

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JAN 30 1994

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Destinations deal with disasters

WASHINGTON POST

6675

Two popular winter travel destinations, Puerto Rico and Australia, have been in the news recently in a way they wouldn't choose. Both have suffered ecological problems: an oil spill in Puerto Rico and bush fires near Sydney. Those planning a vacation to either place still can salvage their trip, tourism officials say.

In Miami, meanwhile, efforts are continuing in an attempt to stem violence against tourists that has resulted in a sharp drop in visitors.

Puerto Rico: Fouled beaches east of San Juan — on the 9½ miles serving the big international hotels — are currently being cleaned up, with work expected to be completed by the end of February. All hotels in the Condado area are open and are busing guests to beaches in the Isla Verde area, four miles away. Information: Puerto Rico Tourism Co. 800-815-7391.

► **Australia:** While Sydney and its tourist attractions went unscathed, the Royal National Park, about 20 miles south of the city and popular with hikers, boaters and surfers, was nearly destroyed. Airline schedules and highway and rail routes, however, are all back to normal, tourism officials report.

Northwest of the city, attractions in the Blue Mountains, such as the Three Sisters rock formation and Echo Point lookout, are open.

Information: Australian Tourist Commission (212-687-6300).

► **Miami:** The effort to safeguard tourists in South Florida is ongoing. In Miami, a specialized police unit will begin patrolling Miami International Airport's car rental area around the clock, starting next month.

Members of the new Tourist-Oriented Police Unit, part of the regular Dade County Police Department, will patrol the triangular area east of the airport in specially identified cars and uniforms. Officers are bilingual (in either Spanish, French, Japanese or German) and are trained to assist travelers and give directions.

SUNDAY MONITOR

CONCORD, NH
SUNDAY 23, 304

JAN 30 1994

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**Post-disaster
travel updates**

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In the wake of the oil spill in **PUERTO RICO** and the **SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA** bush fires earlier this month, it's still possible to salvage winter trips to both places.

Fouled beaches east of San Juan — on the 1½ miles serving the big international hotels — are currently being cleaned up, with work expected to be completed by the end of February. All hotels in the Condado area are open and are busing guests to beaches in the Isla Verde area, four miles away. Information: Puerto Rico Tourism Co., (800) 815-7391.

And in Australia's New South Wales, while Sydney and its tourist attractions went unscathed, the Royal National Park, about 20 miles south of the city and popular with hikers, boaters and surfers, was largely destroyed. Airline schedules and highway and rail routes, however, are all back to normal, tourism officials report. Northwest of the city, attractions in the Blue Mountains, such as the Three Sisters rock formation and Echo Point lookout, are open. Information: Australian Tourist Commission, (212) 687-6300.

January 30, 1994

Boston, MA

Boston Sunday Globe

World Calendar / February

6575 Australia
Events of interest to travelers

ASIA, PACIFIC

AUSTRALIA

18th Biennial International Festival, Adelaide, Feb. 25-Mar. 13. Visual and performing arts.

January 30, 1994
Newark, NJ

Sunday Star-Ledger

TRAVEL CALENDAR

Carnival sweeps islands

6675
NOTE: Before setting out for any event or festival, please check with various tourist offices to verify dates and sites. DATES and locations often change without too much advance notice.

THE ISLANDS

ARUBA

Aruba's Tivoli Lighting Parade, Oranjestad, Feb. 5.

The Grand Children's Carnival Parade, Oranjestad, Feb. 6.

Children's Carnival Parade, Santa Cruz, Feb. 9.

Grand Carnival Parade, Oranjestad, Feb. 13.

Grand Evening Parade and Burning of King Momo, Oranjestad, Feb. 15.

BERMUDA

Bermuda Valentine's Mixed Foursome, Devonshire, Southampton and St. George's, Feb. 13-19. At Ocean View, Port Royal and St. George's Golf Courses.

Bermuda Golf Festival, Southampton, Tucker's Town, Warwick and St. George's, Feb. 20-Mar. 5. At the Port Royal, Castle Harbour, Southampton Princess, Belmont Hotel Golf & Country Club and St. George's Golf Courses.

GUENADA

Carnival Celebrations, Carriacou, Feb. 5-15.

20th Annual Independence Day Celebrations, islandwide, Feb. 7.

JAMAICA

Chukka Cove Appleton Cup: Polo, Chukka Cove, Drax Hall, Feb. 10-12. 14-goal international polo tournament finals.

MEXICO AND SOUTH AMERICA

MEXICO

Candlemas Day, nationwide, Feb. 2. Blessing of Candles. Special fiestas in Tlacoalpan and Veracruz.

Constitution Day, nationwide, Feb. 5. Legal holiday.

Carnival, nationwide, Feb. 11-15.

SOUTH AMERICA

BRAZIL

Carnival, Rio de Janeiro, Feb. 15.

URUGUAY

Carnival, Montevideo, Feb. 1-15.

WESTERN EUROPE

AUSTRIA

Haydn Festival, Vienna, Feb. 20-Mar. 3.

BELGIUM

50th Anniversary of The Bulge, nationwide, Feb. 3.

DENMARK

Exhibit: "Kiki Smith," Humlebaek, North Zealand, Feb. 25-May 1. Work of an American artist at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art.

FRANCE

50th Anniversary of D-Day, Normandy,

Feb. 1-Dec. 31.

Carnival, Nice, Feb. 15.

GERMANY

Fasching or Mardi Gras Celebrations, Munich and throughout Bavaria, Feb. 15.

GREECE

Carnival Celebrations, nationwide, Feb. 20-Mar. 13. Follows the old calendar.

ITALY

Carnivale, Venice, Feb. 15.

MALTA

Carnival, nationwide, Feb. 11-15.

NETHERLANDS

Exhibit: "Dawn of the Golden Age," Amsterdam, through Mar. 7. Dutch art from the beginning of the 17th century at the Rijksmuseum.

Tulip 400 Celebrations, Leiden and nationwide, Feb. 1-Dec. 31. Tulip-related events mark the planting of the first tulip at the Botanical Garden in Leiden.

NORWAY

1994 Winter Olympics, Lillehammer, Feb. 12-27.

PORTUGAL

Lisbon '94, Lisbon, Feb. 1-Dec. 31. European capital of culture year. Visual and performing arts salute Lisbon.

Carnival Festivities, Loule, Nazare and Ovar, Feb. 13-15.

SPAIN

Exhibit: "Goya: Whimsy and Fantasy," Madrid, through Feb. 15. At the Prado Museum.

Women's World Ski Championships: Slalom, Downhill, Granada, Feb. 4-6. At the Sierra Nevada Ski Resort.

The Valencia Marathon, Valencia, Feb. 6.

ARCO: International Contemporary Art Fair, Madrid, Feb. 10-15. At the Crystal Palace, Casa de Campo.

Carnival, Cadiz, Feb. 11-20.

The Seville Marathon, Seville, Feb. 27.

UNITED KINGDOM

Exhibit: "Modigliani Drawings," London, through April 4. At the Royal Academy, Piccadilly.

Exhibit: "Picasso," London, Feb. 16-May 8. At the Tate Gallery, Millbank.

MIDDLE EAST

ISRAEL

Photomix: Exhibition of Photography, Video Equipment and Accessories, Tel Aviv, Feb. 7-9. At the Israel Trade Fairs and Convention Center.

Glora/Dead Sea Running Marathon, Ein Gedi, Feb. 12.

Purim of Feast of Lots, nationwide, Feb. 25.

ASIA, PACIFIC AND THE FAR EAST

AUSTRALIA

10th Biennial International Festival, Adelaide, Feb. 25-Mar. 13. A showcase for Australia's Euro-New World roots.

HONG KONG

Lunar New Year Celebration: Year of the Dog, Feb. 10-12.

22nd Hong Kong Arts Festival, Feb. 19-Mar. 13. Visual and performing arts.

JAPAN

National Foundation Day, Feb. 11.

Some of the articles in this section were researched with the promotional aid of airlines, resort, travel and government tourist offices

— Frances Shemanski

ASIA/PACIFIC

Hosting Olympic Games ensures tourism boost for Sydney

Following the announcement of Sydney as host city for the 2000 Olympic Games, officials estimate more than 1.32 million overseas visitors will visit Sydney over the next ten years.

"In our view, this is a conservative estimate considering the enormous publicity awareness the Games will generate for Australia," said Bill Baker, *Americas regional director* of the Australian Tourist Commission (ATC). "We are targeting 6.8 million international visitors by the year 2000, a figure some may have labeled as overly ambitious. By winning the Games, we are now more assured of exceeding that target," he added.

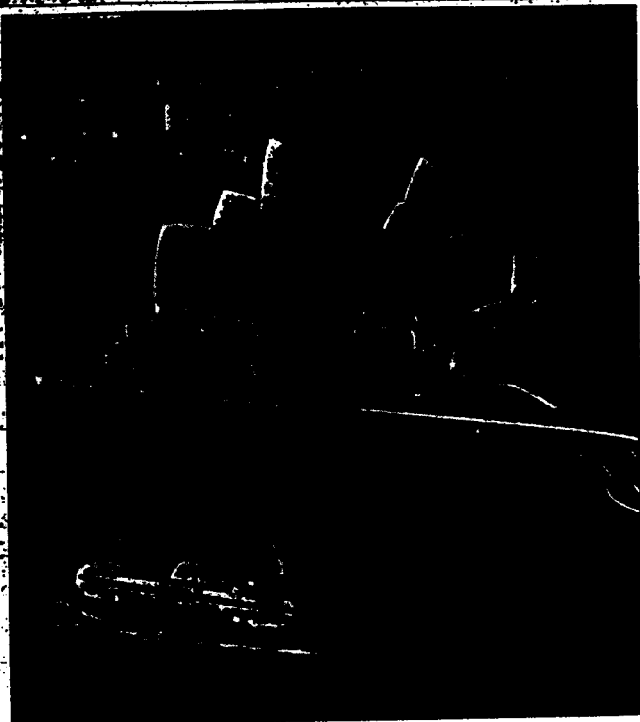
Aside from the obvious benefits to tourism, the Games will create more than 150,000 jobs (over 14 years), inject A\$7.3 billion into the Australian economy, give a A\$3.5 billion boost to export earnings, and generate an increase of almost A\$10 billion in Gross National Product between 1991 and 2004.

"The ATC, which has strongly supported Sydney's Olympic bid since its inception, is obviously elated with the International Olympic Committee's decision," Baker said. "We believe this is a popular win."

The ATC has actively promoted Sydney's bid in all key overseas markets. When the first of the ATC's five-year Special Interest marketing themes—1993 Play in the Australian Year of Sport—was launched last year, part of its intention was to provide strong support for Sydney's bid. The campaign has stimulated a great deal of consumer interest in Australian sporting events and holidays.

"In North America alone, 21,000 consumers with specific sporting interests have inquired about travel to Australia," said Baker.

Australia's quest to secure the Olympics has been pursued for more than a decade. Brisbane bid unsuccessfully for the 1992 Games while Melbourne was short-listed for the 1996 event.



Sydney is a city of superlatives. Certainly one of her best features is the spectacular Opera House, located on one of the most magnificent harbors in the world.

The bid has also underscored Australia's proud sporting heritage—Australia is one of only three nations to have competed in every Game of the modern Olympiad—and provided additional focus for their highly successful athletes.

For further information, contact the Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200, Los Angeles, CA 90067, tel. (310) 552-1988, Ext. 200, Fax (310) 552-1215. □

Raves continue for Thailand's Loy Krathong held recently in San Francisco

More than 200 people attended the lavish Loy Krathong dinner presented by the Tourism Authority of Thailand and Thai Airways International at the *Sheraton Palace Hotel* in San Francisco on Wednesday, November 17, 1993.

Travel writers, tour operators, incentive houses and travel agents milled around in *Sheraton's* Grand Ballroom against backdrops of decors reminiscent of Thailand's original floating market and the rustic serenity of a hill tribe village. A mini trade show kicked off the event. Suppliers included the Mandarin Oriental, Shangri-la, ITT Sheraton, Regent Four Seasons, Grand Hyatt, Ayutthaya Princess, Seabourn Cruise Line, Seven Seas Cruise Line and Pearl Cruises. Rounding out this list of suppliers was Eastern Oriental Express, whose luxurious Singapore-Bangkok rail route debuted in September this year.

Sethapon Chindanon, TAT'S *Director* for Western USA and Latin America, welcomed the guests and informed them of new developments in Thailand.

In an adroit mix of cultural celebration and educational forum, Serm Phenjati, THAI's *District Sales Manager* for Northern California, gave an informative slide show not only on Thailand but on "Smooth as Silk" as well, an apparent allusion to THAI's renowned Royal Orchid Service.

To cap a truly memorable night, Phenjati presented one lucky guest with the grand prize of 12 days cruise for two, courtesy of Pearl Cruises, and roundtrip business class tickets aboard Thai Airways International.

For more information, contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand, 3440 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1100, Los Angeles, CA 90010, tel. (213) 382-2353, Fax (213) 389-7544. □

WINTER 1993-94

Australia works to convert dreamers into visitors

Over the last couple of years, the Australian Tourist Commission has restructured and implemented a new ad campaign, an "Aussie Specialist" program for travel agents, a partnership plan with the states, plus other programs designed to help convert the "once-in-a-lifetime mode to a vacation mode." Bill Baker, Reg. Dir., The Americas, told us.

Noting that it's been exactly 10 years since the America's Cup in Australia and the first "Shrimp on the Barbie" ads, he said there were 120,000 U.S. visitors at that time. The count reached its peak in 1988 with 320,000 visitors. But, in recent years, the numbers have hovered in the 270,000 range.

Consumer interest/desire has been high, but the barriers to conversion have been the perception that Australia is too far and too expensive. It is thought of as a destination to visit "some day."

Baker also said the ATC must move people away from thinking of Australia as a "grand tour" of three-to-four weeks. The average foreign vacation is 10 days.

"The 'Down Under' refer-

(continued on page 4)

Sunset



Travel Review

A MARKETING PUBLICATION FROM SUNSET ■ THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN LIVING



- 1 We report on some segments which may have been missed by some at the recent ASTA World Travel Congress in St. Louis. Pages 1 & 4.
- 2 Mexico's Undersec'y. of Tourism Francisco Javier Alejo discusses new marketing directions. See 4-page insert on Mexico. Sunset's Travel Agent Advisory Board critiques Mexico. Pages 1 & 4.
- 3 Australia launches programs to convert the high interest into bookings, reports Bill Baker, Reg. Dir., The Americas, ATC. Pages 1 & 4
- 4 GM Charles Park and Dir. of Mktg. Lori Ann Lum discuss the just-opened Ihilani Resort. Page 2

Red Lion Hotels continues expansion in the West, works closer with agents, reports Jeff Angus, VP of Sales. Page 2.

Embassy Suites puts more emphasis on leisure market, adds Kauai property. Page 2

Wailea opens third golf course, targets families Page 2

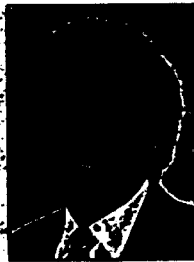
Australia...

(continued from page 1)

ence makes people think it's further than it really is. Californians will readily buy a one-week shopping trip to Hong Kong, and yet we're closer."

A recent study indicated the satisfaction level of over 95% of Americans who visited Australia was "extraordinarily high," said Baker. "We have a strong repeat factor of 30%.

Lower airfares, packages, non-stop flights make it easier to make more frequent, shorter-stay visits to Australia, says Bill Baker.



"The U.S. dollar is very strong against Australian currency, airfares are much lower, there are now nonstop flights from the West Coast, and there are some very attractive, shorter-stay packages," said Baker, who explained some of the aggressive steps the ATC has recently taken to stimulate travel from the U.S.

"Ours is a completely integrated program, starting with generating consumer demand and going through all stages of the distribution channel," explained Carole Hancock, GM of Oper., Sydney, who preceded Baker as Reg. Dir., The Americas. "At every stage there is an opportunity to convert. Follow-through is the real key."

"We've invested continuously in this market during these

last 10 years," Baker stated. "It was really a first for a long-haul destination to make that kind of investment."

Consumer advertising comprises 56% of the ATC's \$12.5 million budget. The "Feel the Wonder" campaign was launched in the fall of '92 with heavier emphasis on magazines (including full-page ads in *Sunser*; another is scheduled for the March issue).

"Traditionally, we have had 50% of our consumers coming from the Western part of America," Hancock told us.

"It is our intention to place Australia very firmly on the vacation shopping list for travelers from the West Coast," added Baker.

The ATC is gaining the support of selected travel agents with its Aussie Specialist program, which passes on ad leads to those agents who have completed training programs and have become experts on the destination. Some 1,800 agents have qualified, so far, and a recent survey shows 26% of the leads converted to bookings.

Partnership Australia, a cooperative agreement between the ATC and the states and territories, has been formed to provide greater efficiencies in marketing. The states/territories with offices or representatives in SoCal will be able to focus more on trade and market development, and ATC will handle much of the information servicing, Baker explained. ATC's central trade Helpline, in operation for over a year, attracts 700 to 800 calls a week, and a consumer Helpline is being

launched in Feb.

The states can also work with ATC at other levels, such as advertising or fulfilling requests for literature. "We have a number of opportunities to do some good work together," observed Baker.

With Sydney named as host for the Olympics in 2000, Australia has the opportunity to focus, build, and maintain interest in the destination beyond the two-week event, Baker stated. ■

**CANADIAN
PRESS RELEASES / INTERVIEWS**

Before cancelling plans, take a closer look at beaches of Puerto Rico or Australia

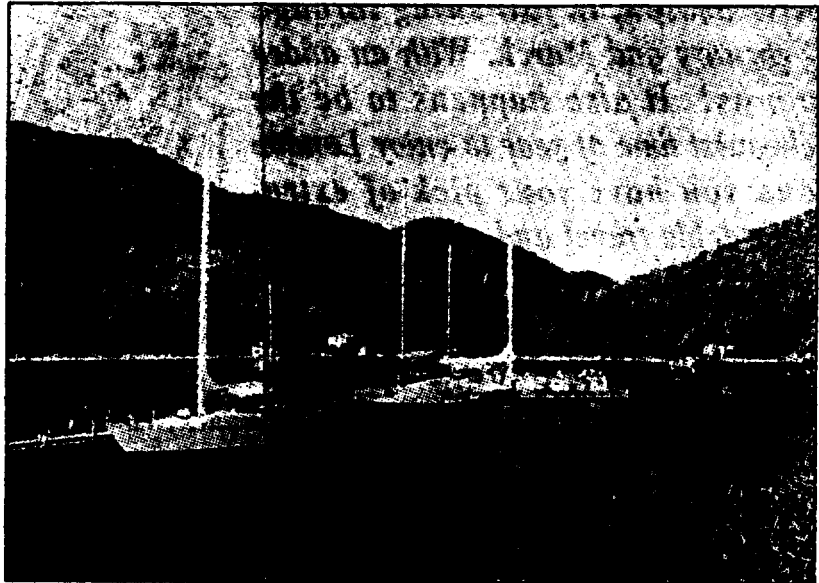
CHRISTOPHER REYNOLDS
Los Angeles Times

AUSTRALIA-BOUND? Proceed with caution, and expect a substantial portion of the national parkland to be black and crunchy.

Puerto Rico? Don't cancel your plans, but if your arrival date is in the next week or two, prepare for the sight of oil-spill cleanup crews along the island's most prominent kilometre-and-a-half of beaches.

From any angle, the images of fires in New South Wales and the oil spill off Puerto Rico were troubling. Authorities say that some of the affected territory, most notably Australia's Royal National Park, may not be the same for generations.

Scores of fires burned, many out of control for days. But if you're a traveller already holding tickets to either accident-marred destination — or if you're contemplating a trip to those locales — take a much closer look before you abandon plans. Along with the devastation in Australia, you're likely to find some reassuring news about most of the country's top tourist attractions. In



HAZEL LOWE/ Sun files

CLEANUP: Recovery projects are under way to clean oily beaches

Puerto Rico, the spill trouble is much milder, the recovery projections quicker.

The bush fires in southeast Australia — more than 150 of them, more than half attributed to arsonists — began to break out in the first days

of January. About 1.5 million hectares of grassland and forest in the state of New South Wales have burned. Some flames rose in Sydney's suburbs, destroying more than 200 homes, killing four people.

But downtown Sydney, its picturesque harbor, bridge and opera house all escaped damage. Airline schedules are normal, and though highway access and rail service were curtailed during the worst of the fires, authorities said all those routes should be functioning as normal by now.

(Australia's three other most visible destinations lie well clear of the afflicted area: Ayers Rock, about 1,610 kilometres to the northwest; the Great Barrier Reef, about 965 kilometres north at its southernmost point; Melbourne, about 650 kilometres southwest.)

Among wilderness destinations outside Sydney, however, the damage is considerable. About two dozen of the 70 national parks in the state closed during the fires, either because of immediate flames or to reduce fire risks posed by 100-degree temperatures and 95 kph winds.

January 22, 1994

Vancouver, B.C.

The Vancouver Sun

January 29, 1994

Toronto, ON

The Globe and Mail

Australia jumps on the ecotourism marketing bandwagon

BY ALAN HARMAN
Special to The Globe and Mail
Sydney

THE Australian Tourist Commission has launched a multi-million dollar campaign to promote 1994 as the year to "Discover the Great Australian Outdoors."

The campaign aims to position Australia as a leading world ecotourism destination and persuade overseas tourists to explore more of the country's natural attractions.

"Ecotourism is one of the fastest-growing segments of the holiday market, with some U.S. studies projecting a growth rate of 30 per cent in this sector worldwide, compared with forecast growth for general tourism of around eight per cent," says John Hutchison, managing director of the Australian Tourist Commission.

The commission plans to attract visitors to a country that includes seemingly countless kilometres of beaches, vast areas of almost unexplored outback and magnificent wilderness areas that offer environmental extremes from sandy desert to rain forests.

Wildlife attractions include 750 species of bird — 300 found only in Australia — as well as 40 species of kangaroo and wallaby, koalas, the platypus and the wombat. There is also the world's only wild population of one-humped camels, first introduced for transportation purposes in the outback.

The Australians see a bonanza in

ecotourism, citing figures from the Pacific Asia Travel Association, which estimated that in 1990, 412,000 ecotourists spent \$24-million (all amounts in Australian funds) in Australia.

Studies by the Australian Tourist Commission show that 70 per cent of U.S. and European travellers consider scenery, vast expanses of land, cleanliness, natural wonders and high-quality beaches as important factors in vacation destination choices. For Japanese travellers, the figure climbs to 85 per cent.

The commission defines ecotourism as "nature-based tourism that includes an educational component and is managed to be sustainable."

Tourism authorities see Australia's record on environmental matters as a natural base for their promotion. Australia created the world's first nature reserve in 1866 and the world's second national park in 1879. To date, more than 400,000-square kilometres — five per cent of country's land mass — has been reserved for 3,000 national parks and reserves.

A commission profile indicated ecotourists are a mix of independent travellers and people who travel in organized groups for scientific, educational or recreational purposes.

As part of the 1994 campaign, the commission has produced an 82-page Natural Holiday Guide aimed at identifying ecotourism operators and creating awareness of Australia's outdoor vacation market overseas.

The commission will hold the fourth World Congress on Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Hobart, Tasmania, Nov. 7 to 12. The congress is expected to attract more than 600 delegates from 60 countries.

The Australian government has allocated \$10-million over the next four years to develop and implement a national ecotourism strategy.

The government has also given the tourist commission a \$77.8-million budget for the 1993-94 financial year. Eighty per cent of the money will be used in marketing activities.

In North America, an advertising campaign is intended to increase the number of visitors from the United States and Canada and to develop new markets in Mexico and South America.

The 1994 campaign follows strong signals that tourism travel to Australia is on the rebound. "The latest figures show nearly 240,000 visitors arrived in Australia in August [of 1993], equivalent to 19 jumbo jet loads a day," Hutchison says.

Total visitor arrivals in the eight months to last August were up 15 per cent from the same period in 1992 and up 28 per cent from 1991.

The Australian Tourist Commission is planning further annual campaigns.

In 1995, it will be The Year of Australian Art and Culture, featuring everything from Sydney Opera House productions to cave and rock shelters displaying aboriginal paintings created before the last Ice Age.

In 1996, it will be the Festivals of Oz.

Dieters will regret the theme for 1997, the Year of Good Living Down Under. It's based on Australia's reputation for freshness and quality from a climate that ensures there is always a vast array of vegetables and fruits available at any time of the year. Then there's the seafood from 36,000 kilometres of coastline, as well as wines that have won awards around the world.

Alan Harman is a
Canadian Press editor.

U.S.
PHOTO / INFORMATION
ASSISTANCE

AMARILLO SUNDAY
NEWS-GLOBE

AMARILLO, TX
SUNDAY 77,464

JAN 9 1994

12 BURRELLE'S FW
Cuba



Courtesy photo

Travel series

1675
Melbourne, the second largest city in Australia, will be among the featured sites during the "Australia - Coast to Coast" Kiwanis Travel and Adventure Film Series to be presented at

7:30 p.m. Thursday at David Crockett Middle School auditorium. Jim McDonald will narrate the program. Tickets will be available at the door.

January 13, 1994

"Best Beaches of the World"

STAR (CHICAGO HEIGHTS, IL)

STAR (ALSIP-CRESTWOOD edition)

STAR (CALUMET CITY-BURNHAM edition)

STAR (CRETE-UNIVERSITY PARK edition)

STAR (HARVEY-MARKHAM edition)

STAR (HAZEL CREST/COUNTRY CLUB HILL edition)

STAR (HOMEWOOD-FLOSSMOOR edition)

STAR (MATTESON & RICHTON PARK edition)

STAR (PARK FORREST edition)

STAR (WORTH-CHICAGO RIDGE edition)

STAR (FRANKFORT, IL)

STAR (LANSING, IL)

STAR (MIDLOTHIAN, IL)

STAR (OAK FORREST, IL)

STAR (OAK LAWN, IL)

STAR (ORLAND PARK, IL)

STAR (SOUTH HOLLAND, IL)

STAR (TINLEY PARK, IL)

STAR (PALOS AREA edition)

Surf, sand & SUN!

Scouting out the best beaches

By Madelyn Merwin

Sun spots!

No, not those dark patches that appear periodically on the surface of the sun. We're talking about those sun spots that are the healing elixir for the winter weary and the after-the-holidays dol-drums.

In other words, beaches.

Beaches with inviting water lapping at their shores, fringed with palm trees. With water sports for those who want to do more than laze in a beach chair and, of course, plenty of sun.

Magnificent beaches can be found all over the world, so come along with me while I hop on my imaginary supersonic jet and we'll check out some of the best locations (at least in my opinion) where escaping the wintry blasts and blahs is a way of life.

First stop is mainland U.S.A., (we'll save Hawaii for later) where my top vote goes to Sanibel Island for its white sand, shell-strewn beach along East and West Gulf Drive. Sans high-rise condos, fast food outlets and neon signs (these are simply not allowed there), Sanibel is known as one of the top shelling spots in the world.

My favorite hideaway is the Jolly Roger Beach Resort, where you walk right out of your accommodation onto the beach. Other recommendations are Song of the Sea, the only European-style seaside inn; the Sanibel Inn; and the Gallery Motel.

Once in Florida, it's only a hop, skip and a jump for our jet to take us to the Caribbean. And there's no doubt about it, gorgeous beaches abound in this setting of turquoise water and tropical foliage, and it's not easy to single out just one or two. However, there are two I visited recently that certainly qualify as top beach stuff.

Peter Island Resort and Yacht Harbour in the British Virgin Islands is your own personal playground, a privately owned island where there are no other resorts, no town and no traffic.

Five private beaches surround the exclusive 50-room resort, which offers sailing, windsurfing, diving, snorkeling and world-class fishing. My favorite was Deadman's Bay Beach, a one-mile crescent of white sand often called one of the most romantic beaches in the world.

To get to Peter Island fly to Tortola's Beef Island, and then take the guest launch to the resort. The launch offers several trips a day to Tortola for shopping or sightseeing. Peter Island's 10 miles of mountain roads are waiting for joggers, walkers or cyclists, with benches placed at strategic spots to rest and enjoy spectacular views.

My other Caribbean stop was Negril, Jamaica, and the Poinciana Beach Resort. Set on more than a thousand feet of Negril's famous seven-mile beach, Poinciana's colonial architecture and lush grounds are merely a step from white sand for early morning walking or lazing in a hammock between the palm trees. Water sports abound, a kids' program is always available, and the cuisine in the Captain's Table restaurant is served poolside.

-Continued-

-From Page 1-

Upon arrival in Montego Bay, stop at the Pork Pit for jerk chicken or jerk pork before starting on the scenic drive to the resort. Two other "must-visit" spots are the legendary sunsets at Rick's Cafe, just down the road from Poinciana, and a true Jamaican meal at Sweet Spice, a favorite Negril restaurant.

In the evening (or daytime for that matter), cross the road to Anancy Family Fun and Nature Park for miniature golf, go-kart racing or fishing in the pond. And there's always a sunset cruise.

Mexico is no slouch when it comes to beaches, and my favorite is the island of Cozumel. Here the water is so clear that it's one of the top spots for professional underwater filming and a favorite of Jacques Cousteau.

Playa San Francisco, five minutes south of Chankanaab Lagoon National Park (a beautiful underwater marine park where one can snorkel) is the best beach on the island. There are no frills, just blue-green water, white sand, palm trees and a small beachside restaurant. There are a number of fine resorts along Cozumel's shore or you can stay in glitzy Cancun and make a day trip to the island where the scuba diving and snorkeling are unparalleled.

Fire up our jet engines and head across the Pacific to the Hawaiian Islands. How you decide which beach is the best in this paradise is really difficult, so I elected to go with what I have experienced firsthand.

First stop is the big island of Hawaii, where the black sand beaches are the results of the volcanic action of many years. The most famous one is at Kalapana. Also on the Big Island in the area of Kau, where you will find a green sand beach.

A quick hop puts us on the island of Kauai, which has a coastline of beaches, including Poipu Beach Park and Brennecke's Beach. Poipu Beach Park boasts a safe swimming area, plenty of locals with whom to exchange fishing stories and fishermen mending their nets. Resort life flourishes in this area. All of the islands have great little beaches tucked in among the cliffs and curves in the road. Just be sure you have your bathing suit and a picnic basket in the car.

Bermuda, that wonderful island in the Atlantic, is a symphony of pink and white, including some pink sand beaches. The south shore, particularly in Southampton and Warwick, lays claim to some of the best in the world.

If you are fortunate enough to stay at the Southampton Princess Hotel, plush and furnished in a Georgian style, you would have access to the Southampton private beach club (transportation provided from the hotel's perch on a hill.) It's definitely an upscale way to take the sun.

Also Bermuda offers an underwater experience called ocean-floor walking. A weighted belt is put around your waist and a deep-sea diver's type helmet with an airhose to the boat above goes over your head, and down you go, walking the ocean floor like you would an on-land garden.



One of five private beaches on Peter's Island in the British West Indies, Deadman's Bay Beach is often called one of the most romantic beaches in the world, a one-mile crescent of white sand.

The Bahamas, blessed with blue-green water everywhere you look, have a proliferation of sun-worshipping locations. Again, it's just a matter of which island you select.

If you want to be away from the more hectic pace of resort life, go to Treasure Cay where a deeply curved white sand beach, almost four miles long, beckons to the tanning and water sports crowd.

Some visitors think Eleuthera is the most beautiful of the Bahamian islands. Try Governor's Harbour on the bay side where wide beaches have a pink tinge from the powdered shells and coral. It's a popular area.

After refueling our imaginary jet, it's time to head for beaches in more far-flung areas of the world.

We start in Australia and its Great Barrier Reef. Not only are the beaches of this tropical section of "Down Under" great (especially at Lizard Island), so is the underwater sightseeing.

This is accomplished by taking a catamaran out to the reef and then boarding a barge-like boat that has a submarine-like lower portion. Down you go to a row of seats; select yours and wait for the show.

As this barge-like boat cruises around the surface, you are about three or four feet below the surface, weaving in and out among coral formations, viewing clam shells three feet long and having eye contact with many species of fish. However,

this is not a jaunt for the claustrophobic.

Don't overlook the Brisbane area, also known as the Gold Coast. It's the Aussies' resort area, and the beaches are terrific.

Italy and France have their share of sun and sand along the Italian Riviera and French Riviera, but Italy's islands have special qualities. For instance, on the Isle of Capri, taking a rowboat ride out among the grottos is a delight. Or the Costa Smeralda at Sardinia, where the cobalt-blue water gives way to hundreds of the coves with beaches. Finally, the tiny island of Elba features sandy beaches for swimmers and waders, rocky beaches for divers.

It may surprise you to learn there are more than 500 miles of beaches in tiny Portugal, but the Algarve is my choice. There are spectacular rock formations that surround little golden sand beaches, some accessible only by boat. Fishermen mend their nets on shore; children race in and out of the water, and it's definitely an unsophisticated atmosphere.

Spain's Costa del Sol and the Balearic Islands beckon sun lovers as do any of the Greek Islands in the Aegean Sea, but by now it's become apparent that the world is loaded with beautiful beaches, so let's head for home and start perusing guidebooks.

And, if our journey didn't find a beach for you, there's always the South Seas. I'm told Tahiti and Bali are paradise. . <

-End-

January 16, 1994
Los Angeles, CA

Adventure Travel

"TRIP PICKS—In the Ever-Expanding World of Vigorous Vacations, a Sampler of Some of This Year's Most promising New Excursions"

Los Angeles Times

A

dventure outfitters are no slouches when it comes to innovation—as their mushrooming numbers (more than 5,000 at my last count) would seem to prove. And 1994 promises to be a full year. Slick new catalogues from dozens of companies have been weighing in weekly, with hundreds of domestic and international itineraries ranging from the merely vigorous to Iron Man endurance tests.

Take an easy hike or climb a killer mountain, paddle along gentle ripples or crash through raging rapids. And when it comes to bedding down for the night, snuggle under the covers at a posh inn, or find a relatively soft piece of ground in a wilderness survival hut.

A few things are missing this year in the adventure travel universe. Expeditions for active travelers mirror the changing world, and several once-popular destinations have become out-of-bounds because of internal strife and political upheaval.

Say goodbye for now to Rwanda, where the famous mountain gorillas and their dwindling habitat are hostage to fierce civil war, and research and visitor programs have been suspended. Ditto for Egypt, which has had the Nile and pyramids virtually to itself as attacks on Westerners by Muslim fundamentalists continue to keep the country off the tourist map. Peru, meanwhile, remains iffy, despite government progress in neutralizing political terrorism by guerrillas who have frightened away potential pilgrims to Machu Picchu and environs.

But some locales long considered taboo are opening up, and adventure companies are moving in to provide options. Gorilla seekers can visit the big apes in Zaire. Ancient ruins in Belize and nearby Tikal, Guatemala, offer a rich setting for archeology buffs disinclined to venture into the Middle East. Villages in northern Vietnam now welcome trekkers who might formerly have favored Peru.

On tamer fronts, companies are offering new twists on familiar themes. Already cycled California's Napa-Sonoma wine country? How about doing it again on a bicycle built for two? Spent a fortune attending Rio's elaborately choreographed Carnival? Why not experience a more soulful version in Bahia, where the Brazilian pre-Lenten festival was born? Had your fill of trendy European resorts, such as Spain's over-developed Costa del Sol? Head instead to the country's untrammelled north, where a hike amid the peaks and valleys of the stunning Picos de Europa mountains will be infinitely more refreshing than sunburn on a crowded beach.

Want more? Kayak around Australia's Great Barrier Reef, or try a women-only (if you are) cross-country ski adventure in Yellowstone National Park or rock-climbing excursion in California's Joshua Tree National Monument.

January 16, 1994
Los Angeles, CA

Los Angeles Times

Should Disasters Halt Travel to Australia or Puerto Rico?

6675
■ **Outlook:** Wildfires and a massive oil spill have left resort areas damaged but not off-limits.

By **CHRISTOPHER REYNOLDS**
TIMES TRAVEL WRITER

Australia-bound? Proceed with caution, and expect a substantial portion of the national parkland to be black and crunchy.

Puerto Rico? Don't cancel your plans, but if your arrival date is in the next week or two, prepare for the sight of oil-spill cleanup crews along the island's most prominent mile and a half of beaches.

From any angle, the images of last week's fires in New South Wales and oil spill off Puerto Rico were troubling. Authorities say that some of the affected territory, most notably Australia's Royal National Park, may not be the same for generations. And as of this writing, on Wednesday, scores of fires were still burning, many still out of control. But if you're a traveler already holding tickets to either accident-marred destination—or if you're contemplating a trip to those locales—take a much closer look before you abandon plans. Along with the devastation in Australia, you're likely to find some encouraging news about most of the country's top tourist attractions. In Puerto Rico, the trouble is much milder, the recovery projections quicker.

The bush fires in southeast Australia—more than 150 of them, more than half attributed to arsonists—began to break out in the first days of this month. About 1.5 million acres of grassland and forest in the state of New South Wales have burned. Some flames rose in Sydney's suburbs, destroying more than 200 homes, killing four people. But downtown Sydney, its picturesque harbor, bridge and opera house all escaped damage. Airline schedules are normal, and though highway access and rail service were curtailed during the worst of the fires, authorities said all those routes should be functioning as normal by now. (Australia's three other most visible destinations lie well clear of the afflicted area: Ayers Rock, about 1,000 miles to the northwest; the Great Barrier Reef, about 600 miles north at its southernmost point; Melbourne, about 400 miles southwest.)

Among wilderness destinations outside Sydney, however, the damage is considerable. About two dozen of the 70 national parks in the state closed during the fires, either because of immediate flames or to reduce fire risks posed by 100-degree temperatures and 60 m.p.h. winds.

The prime casualty—98% charred—was the 37,099-acre Royal National Park, a retreat of cliff-top hiking paths, surfing beaches and river rowboating about 20 miles south of Sydney. Ken Ayres, a district manager for the Wildlife Service there, told the Associated Press that "the park will start growing with the first rain,



Illustration by J.D. CROWE

but it will be generations before it returns to what it was." Royal is the world's second oldest national park, predated only by Yellowstone in the United States.

The Blue Mountains, a popular destination about 30 miles northwest of Sydney, were blackened in the Grose Valley area and many others; as of Tuesday, fire had reached an estimated 250,000 acres of the 2 million acres in the area's several national parks. But one of that area's most popular tourist spots, the Three Sisters rock formation and Echo Point lookout, was unaffected.

Authorities said bus tours to the Three Sisters and other attractions are still being offered, but off-road tours and other activities in the park system were closed.

Authorities said fire also affected parts of Morton National Park, a 377,931-acre preserve that guidebook authors John and Monica Chapman say includes "the best bushwalking in the state."

(More information on Australia is available from the Australian Tourist Commission, 2121 Avenue of the Stars, Suite 1200, Los Angeles 90067 (telephone 310-

552-1988) or the Australian Consulate, 611 N. Larchmont Blvd., Los Angeles 90004 (tel. 213-469-4300).

In Puerto Rico, the trouble began Jan. 7 when the barge Morris J. Berman hit a coral reef and spilled 750,000 gallons of heating oil, coating an estimated 20 square miles of ocean. Cleanup operations collected a large share of the spill, but the damaged areas included Puerto Rico's most visible beaches—the Condado area near San Juan. There, the spill fouled six miles of shoreline, including a 1.5-mile stretch of beaches that serve the island's primary group of international hotels, now in their peak tourist season.

Local authorities said the odor of petroleum lifted in the first few days, and estimated that the beach cleanup would take two to three weeks. The nearest hotels to the spill, the landmark Caribe Hilton and the Art Deco Radisson Normandie, pledged free transportation to other beaches. (Puerto Rico has some 258 miles of beaches.) The neighboring Condado Plaza, Regency, Condado Beach and La Concha hotels made similar offers.

San Juan is a busy stop for Miami-based cruise ship traffic, and its port lies within walking distance of the oil-stained beaches. But Lawrence Fishkin, president of The Cruise Line, a clearinghouse of information on the industry, said the spill and cleanup have had no effect on ship schedules.

(More information on Puerto Rico is available from the Puerto Rico Tourism Co., P.O. Box 025268, Dept. H, Miami, Fla. 33102 (tel. 800-223-6530 or 212-599-6262.)

Reynolds travels anonymously at the newspaper's expense, accepting no special discounts or subsidized trips. To reach him, write Travel Insider, Los Angeles Times, Times Mirror Square, Los Angeles 90053.

Readers Tell What Makes Some Events So Memorable

by Tina Berres Filipski

Think back to the most memorable special event you've either planned or attended. What made it so memorable? We asked that question of MPI planners and suppliers, and chose the best responses to share with you.

A Party as Grand as Mardi Gras ...

The most memorable special event I've planned or attended was one we planned in New Orleans, Louisiana for the Mobile Modular Office Association. One evening we took everyone to the Royal Sonesta Hotel on Bourbon Street where the catering staff of the hotel had transformed the ballroom with marvelous green, purple and gold Mardi Gras decorations. When we opened the door from the cocktail party in the lobby and people saw the festive ballroom, they caught the Mardi Gras spirit. They put on masks, crowns and beads, and began to "parade" among the tables visiting one another.

Then Pete Fountain Productions came through the doors with our very own Mardi Gras Parade — mini-floats, giant figures and dancers throwing more beads and coins, and of course, a brass band.

The finale of the evening was better for being unplanned. As the party ended, we opened the ballroom doors directly onto Bourbon Street and everyone streamed out carrying balloons and wearing their masks and beads. For hours afterwards, we could see our members still enjoying their Mardi Gras Party.

*Toni Sylvester, CMP, President
Sylvester Management Corp., Irmo, South Carolina*



A Farewell Dinner Long Remembered ...

At the center of one of the world's most spectacular harbors lies a building that dreams are made of. It's immediately recognizable, and instantly unforgettable. The Sydney Opera House floats still against the city, its sail soaring above the water in perfect unison with the crafts that pass it. Where else could compare to this as a final night surprise gala dinner venue when your guests represent visitors from 17 nations.

Under a canopy of swathes of silk, amid the twinkle of fairy lights and candles, surrounded by elegant twists of black, silver and white balloons, we dined on a meal made in culinary heaven.

Julie Anthony, one of the country's great singing talents, gathered the 120 of us around her making our hearts soar with her incredible voice. The lights dimmed toward the end as Julie led us to the windows as a spectacular fireworks display burst into the sky bidding a farewell to the 10th International School of Housing Finance. There was hardly a dry eye in the house.

*Martin Turner
International Account Manager
Sanford International Travel Pty. Ltd.
Double Bay, Australia*



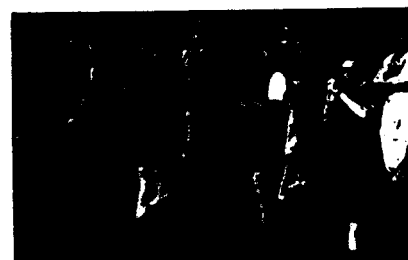
A Memorable Event on a Shoestring ...

We had planned a great meeting with a well-known speaker and exciting events, in a terrific venue, but because our members were

feeling the economic pinch like everyone else, registration was one-third the norm. We quickly revised the budget. Translation, A/V, entertainment and decorations were the first to go, although we retained the disc jockey for the first evening.

Fortunately, we discovered just how multi-talented our staff is! Prior to the opening dinner, the staff had taught a line dance — the Electric Slide — to our international Board of Directors and region governors. Women from Japan, Brazil, Panama, Mexico, the Philippines, Bolivia and Canada joined with Soroptimists from the U.S. in a nonverbal, multicultural expression of fellowship that set the tone for a great meeting, despite low attendance and no "frills." Our members had no idea that this fun cross-cultural exercise was driven by frugality. They might have suspected something, however, when on the closing night, it was our director of finance who played the piano during the candlelight closing.

*Cindy Kunzer, Meetings Manager
Soroptimist International of the Americas
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*



HAMMOND, IN
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Dial up information on foreign destinations

By JOAN MILNE
Times Correspondent

Travel

Here is a selective list of other destinations around the world that have either toll-free 800-numbers or tourist offices in the United States. Though most have English-speaking personnel to offer information, some rely on recording devices. FYI ... A area code 212 is New York. 312 is Chicago, and 310 is California.

Bon Voyage!

AUSTRALIA: (800) 333-0199
AUSTRIA: (312) 644-8029
BAHAMAS: (800) BAHAMAS
BELGIUM: (212) 758-8130
BERMUDA: (800) 237-6832
BRITISH ISLES (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales): (312) 787-0480
CANADA: (312) 616-1860; Alberta: (800) 661-8888; British Columbia: (800) 663-8000; Manitoba: (800) 665-0040; New Brunswick: (800) 561-0123; Newfoundland and Labrador: (800) 563-6353; Northwest Territories: (800) 661-0788; Nova Scotia: (800) 341-6096; Ontario: (800) ONTARIO; Prince Edward Island: (800) 565-0267; Quebec: (800) 363-7777; Saskatchewan: (800) 667-7191.

Germany: (212) 661-7200
Greece: (312) 782-1084
Hong Kong: (312) 782-3872
India: (212) 586-4901
Ireland: (800) 223-6470
Israel: (800) 782-4306
Italy: (312) 644-0990; after March
1, call (212) 245-4822
Japan: (312) 222-0874
Kenya: (212) 488-1300
Korea: (312) 819-2560
Mexico: (800) 44-MEXICO
Netherlands: (312) 819-0300
New Zealand: (800) 388-5494
Poland: (312) 236-9013
Portugal: (800) 767-8842
Scandinavia (Norway, Denmark,
Sweden, Finland, Iceland): (212) 949-
2333
Singapore: (312) 938-1888
Spain: (312) 642-1992
Switzerland: (312) 830-5840
Taiwan: (310) 414-8484
Thailand: (312) 819-3690



A hiker pauses at the base of Switzerland's famed Matterhorn.

Don't let fires, spill upset travel plans

By Christopher Reynolds
Los Angeles Times

Australia-bound? Proceed with caution, and expect a substantial portion of the national parkland to be black and crunchy.

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JAN 23 1994

BURRELLES

Travel Advisory

Beware Mexican Rebellion, Salvadoran Crime

b675

By EDWARD WRIGHT

Latin America

Mexico: Much of the southeastern state of Chiapas remained unsettled following the New Year's Day uprising by indigenous guerrillas that has left more than 100 people dead, the U.S. State Department cautioned. The Mexican government claims to control most of the state and has declared a unilateral cease-fire. Events, however, have changed quickly in recent weeks, and anyone considering a trip to that region is advised to monitor media reports closely. The State Department urged travelers to exercise "appropriate" security precautions while in Mexico. Early in the month, some of the violence spread to Mexico City and Acapulco in the form of bombings and sabotage.

El Salvador: The U.S. Embassy in San Salvador notes that violent crime has surged here. An American citizen was shot to death in late December on a rural road, according to an embassy report. The unidentified woman was in a car

with relatives on La Libertad highway, headed for the beach resort of Balsamar, when they came under attack by about six people, apparently bandits, in another vehicle.

Elsewhere, on the main highway in the tri-border area of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, a bus carrying 21 American tourists was hijacked at gunpoint. Travelers robbed of luggage and personal belongings, the embassy said. Because of the lack of police resources, the embassy says, if a crime victim should telephone for help, "there is no guarantee that the police will ultimately respond."

Nigeria: The State Department cautions that "because of the police will ultimately respond."

Pacific

Australia: As brush fires sweep parts of eastern Australia earlier this month, flames reached to within a few miles of downtown Sydney, burning out entire streets in some of the northern and southern suburbs. The fires, described as the worst since European colonization 200 years ago, have killed at least four people and destroyed up to 150 homes. Au-

thorities suspect that more than half of the 125 fires were set. In another development, a serial killer stalking young backpackers in a remote area of New South Wales has murdered at least seven people over a three-year span, police say. So far, seven students have been identified, three of whom were killed.

Hong Kong: Crime in the British colony fell 15.5 percent in 1993, making it one of the world's safest big cities, according to the Reuters news agency. The overall crime rate dropped 1.6 percent from 1992. Murders were down 30 percent to a total of 86, a population of 5.9 million. This contrasts to 182 murders last year in Washington, D.C., which has 600,000 people.

Hel States: State Department travel warnings are in effect for the following countries: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, North Korea, Peru, Somalia, Sudan, Turkmenistan and Togo.

The State Department offers recorded travel warnings and advisories at (202) 647-5225; the fax line is (202) 647-3000.

Wright is a former assistant foreign editor at The Times. His column appears monthly.

January 23, 1994
Washington, D.C.

The Washington Post

Aftermath Of Disaster

In the wake of the oil spill in Puerto Rico and the Sydney, Australia, bush fires earlier this month, it's still possible to salvage winter trips to both places. Fouled beaches east of San Juan—on the 1½ miles serving the big international hotels—are currently being cleaned up, with work expected to be completed by the end of February. All hotels in the Condado area are open and are busing guests to beaches in the Isla

Verde area, four miles away. Information: Puerto Rico Tourism Co., 800-815-7391.

And in Australia's New South Wales, while Sydney and its tourist attractions went unscathed, the Royal National Park, about 20 miles south of the city and popular with hikers, boaters and surfers, was largely destroyed. Airline schedules and highway and rail routes, however, are all back to normal, tourism officials report. Northwest of the city, attractions in



Smoke over Sydney, Australia, earlier this month.

the Blue Mountains, such as the Three Sisters rock formation and Echo Point lookout, are open. Information: Australian Tourist Commission, 212-687-6300.

MIAMI SAFETY

In an ongoing effort to safeguard tourists in South Florida, a specialized police unit will next month begin patrolling Miami International Airport's car rental area around the clock. Members of the new Tourist-Oriented Police Unit, part of the regular Dade County police department, will patrol the triangular area east of the airport in specially identified cars and uniforms. Officers are bilingual (in either Spanish, French, Japanese or German) and are trained to assist travelers and give directions.

Other new safety measures in and around the airport:

- Two special information booths have been set up by the city of Miami police department at the north and south ends of the airport near expressway exits frequented by tourists.
- Police and state troopers have stepped up patrols and undercover surveillance on main tourist thoroughfares in and out of the airport, watching for lost or disoriented motorists.
- Lighting at the rental car area will soon be improved, according to police.

Montreal Gamble

Gamble on Montreal, now that the new Casino de Montreal is open. Canada's first world-class casino, on its own island in the Parc des Îles, has blackjack, roulette, midi-baccarat and keno, plus electronic track horse racing and more than 1,200 slot machines. For non-gamblers, there are diverting views of the river and the Montreal skyline, dining, entertainment and shop ops, including a tax-free boutique and souvenir shop. There are no entrance fees and parking is free for the casino, about four miles from downtown. Information: 800-665-2274 or 212-397-0220.

R

ON TOUR

A black and white photograph of a Native American man, likely a warrior, standing and holding a long rifle. He has a serious expression and is wearing traditional clothing, including a fringed garment around his waist.

■ And on British Airways, in honor of D-day's 50th anniversary, travelers 60 and older—and one companion, of any age—get 30 percent off the seven-day and 30-day advance-purchase fares to France, all year. Flights go through Britain, but no stopovers are allowed, and other restrictions apply. Details: 800-247-9297.

TRAVEL TRIVIA

**WHAT'S THE ONLY U.S. RIVER
LONGER THAN 600 MILES
THAT'S STILL FREE-FLOWING?**
Answer at left

January 23, 1994

Reno, NV

"Don't Let Disasters in Australia,
Puerto Rico stop trip plans"
Reno Gazette-Journal

Australia bound? Proceed with caution, and expect a substantial portion of the national parkland to be black and crunchy.

Puerto Rico? Don't cancel your plans, but if your arrival date is in the next week or two, prepare for the sight of oil-spill cleanup crews along the island's most prominent mile and a half of beaches.

From any angle, the images of this month's fires in New South Wales and oil spill off Puerto Rico were troubling. Authorities say that some of the affected territory, most notably Australia's Royal National Park, may not be the same for generations.

Scores of fires burned, many out of control for days. But if you're a traveler already holding tickets to either accident-marred destination — or if you're contemplating a trip to those locales — take a much

Along with the devastation in Australia, you're likely to find some reassuring news about most of the country's top tourist attractions. In Puerto Rico, the spill trouble is much milder, the recovery projections quicker.

closer look before you abandon plans.

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in the state of New South Wales have burned. Some flames rose in Sydney's suburbs, destroying more than 200 homes, killing four people.

But downtown Sydney, its picturesque harbor, bridge and opera house all escaped damage. Airline schedules are normal, and though highway access and rail service were curtailed during the worst of the fires, authorities said all those routes should be functioning as normal by now. (Australia's three other most visible destinations lie well clear of the afflicted area: Ayers

Rock, about 1,000 miles to the northwest; the Great Barrier Reef, about 600 miles north at its southernmost point; Melbourne, about 400 miles southwest.)

Among wilderness destinations outside Sydney, however, the damage is considerable. About two dozen of the 70 national parks in the state closed during the fires, either because of immediate flames or to reduce fire risks posed by 100-degree temperatures and 60 mph winds.

The prime casualty — 98 percent charred — was the 37,099-acre Royal National Park, a retreat of cliff-top hiking paths, surfing beaches and river rowboating about 20 miles south of Sydney. Royal is the world's second oldest national park, predated only by Yellowstone in the United States.

The Blue Mountains, a popular destination about 30 miles

northwest of Sydney, were blackened in the Grose Valley area and many others; earlier this month, fire had reached an estimated 250,000 acres of the 2 million acres in the area's several national parks. But one of that area's most popular tourist spots, the Three Sisters rock formation and Echo Point lookout, was unaffected.

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international hotels, now in their peak tourist season.

Local authorities said the odor of petroleum lifted in the first few days, and estimated that the beach cleanup would take two to three weeks. The nearest hotels to the spill, the landmark Caribe Hilton and the Art Deco Radisson Normandie, pledged free transportation to other beaches. (Puerto Rico has some 258 miles of beaches.)

San Juan is a busy stop for Miami-based cruise ship traffic, and its port lies within walking distance of the oil-stained beaches. But Lawrence Fishkin, president of The Cruise Line, a clearinghouse of information on the industry, said the spill and cleanup have had no effect on ship schedules.

Christopher Reynolds
Los Angeles Times

JAN 23 1994

BURRELLE'S

Australia

Los Angeles Times 1/26/94

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But one of that area's most popular tourist spots, the Three Sisters rock formation and Echo Point lookout, was unaffected. Authorities said bus tours to the Three Sisters and other attractions are still being offered.

January 30, 1994
Washington, D.C.

"There's plenty to see in
the middle of nowhere"

Washington Sunday Times

By Frank J. Murray
and Karen Riley

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

WULARA, Australia
hen measuring the number of miles from nowhere, this is the place to start. This is the middle of nowhere. Australia's Red Centre. The fabled Outback.

The nearest cities are on four coasts: Darwin 867 miles north, Adelaide 786 miles south, Perth 1,040 miles west, and Sydney 1,300 miles southeast.

Virtually no inhabited places lie between in a region so isolated that children "attend" school via two-way radio and emergency medical care is given by relatives or friends until someone arrives from the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

The principal road hazard out here in the Northern Territory is kangaroos; they're so pesky that buses, trucks and cars crossing the Outback mount 'roo bars like snowplows on the front bumper to minimize damage to the vehicles — not, however, to the Joeys that inevitably lose such encounters.

But the Red Centre is anything but a dead center.

While the dusty desert floor looks dormant and empty, Aboriginal tradition and the land are both very much alive.

In the stillness of fiery sunsets, the sacred monolith of Ayers Rock awes visitors with the eerie glow that magnetically drew Aborigines from hundreds of miles around.

On the surrounding hot sands, real fire and drops of rain too few to measure breathe vigor into apparently useless sticks and bristles good enough to eat. They offer nectars, nuts, seeds, spinifex gum, burrowing grubs as big as a man's thumb, and grape-sized plums that sustained the nomads who trod these lands with no tools, clothes or supplies.

After dark even the silence gets louder. Bats chirp and soar. Wild dingo dogs howl. And the absence of city light allows unparalleled stargazing.

"You're sitting here in the middle of the desert with no influences from the lights and after a good dinner you see the sky," said Jacquelyn Alexanderson, who recently moved here from the tropical coast city of Brisbane.

Her hotel is exposing guests to the silence with dinner in the desert with open fires and an open bar. After guests watch the light show on the rocks, astronomer Neil Hermes gives them another in the skies while



An Aboriginal artist paints in the hills near Alice Springs, Australia. Such artists have taken "Cultural revival is survival" as a motto.

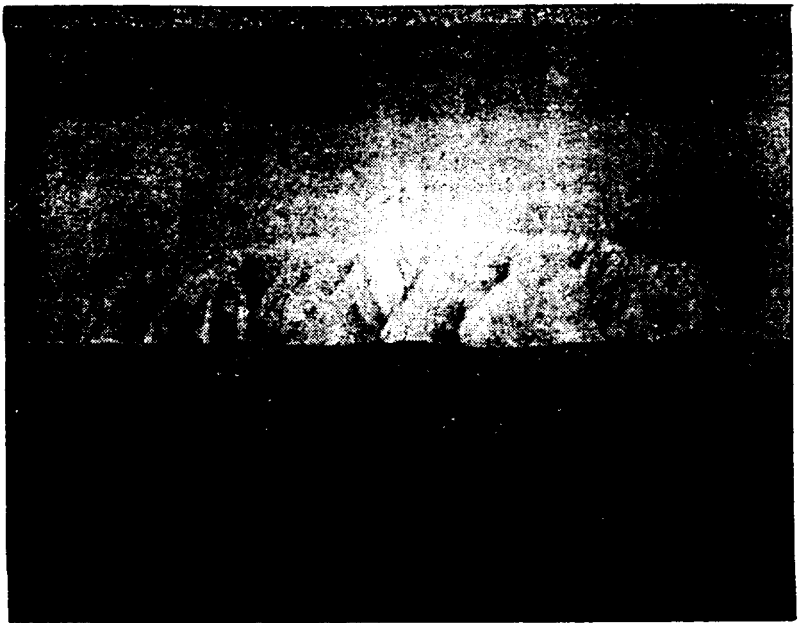


Photo by Frank J. Murray/The Washington Times
Ayers Rock is in the heart of Australia's Red Centre.

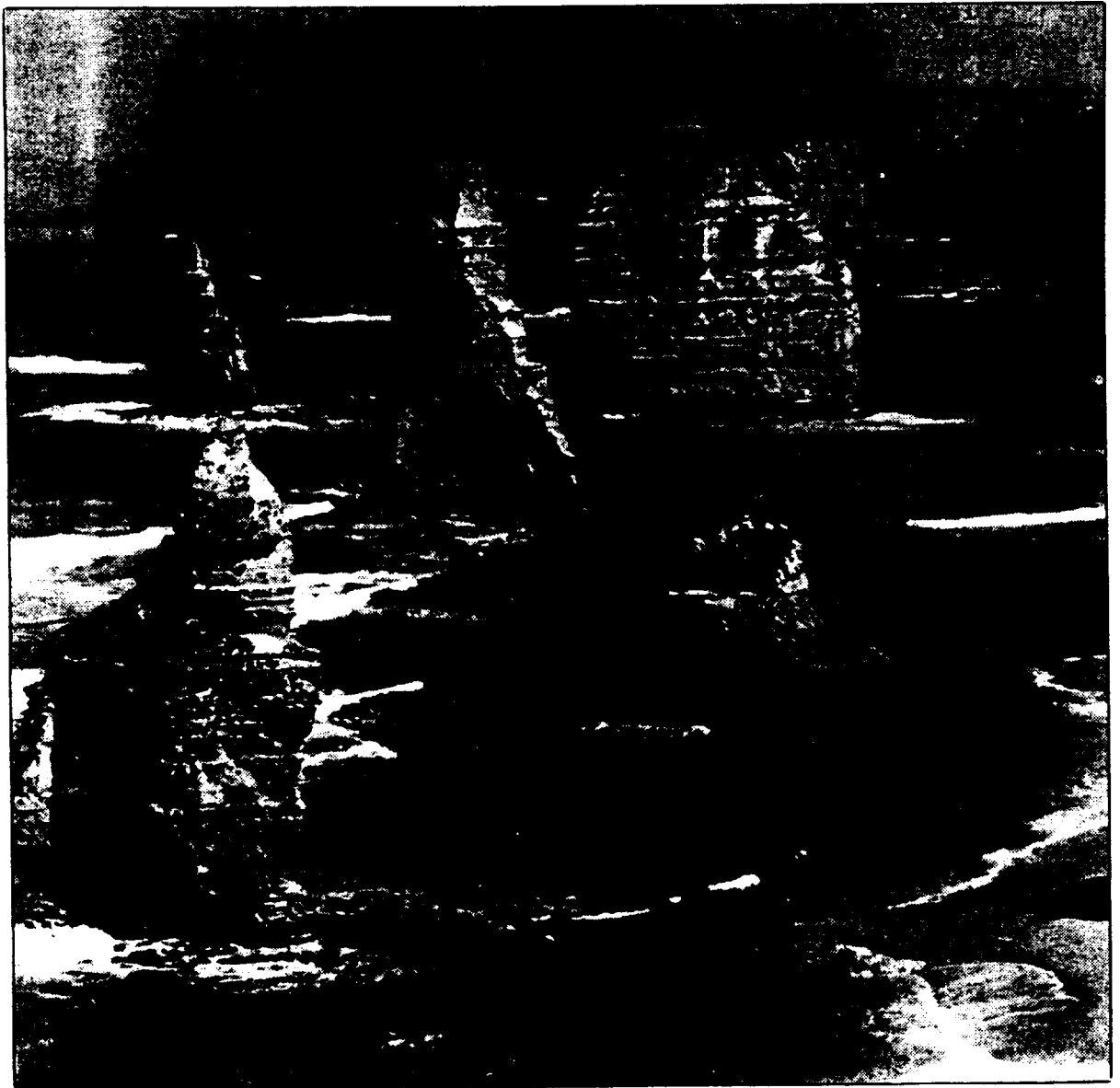


Photo by Eric Wadsworth/Australian Information Service
These rock pillars on the southwest coast of Australia's Victoria state are known as the Apostles.

they are served dessert, beer and excellent Australian wines.

All of this is accompanied by ghostly didgeridoo music. The native instrument now is typically performed in public by whites like the intense and talented Marshall Whyler who recorded an album called "The Power of Uluru," the native name for Ayers Rock.

Mr. Whyler says he never attempts the truly spiritual music, however. "It's beyond me completely."

Mr. Hermes' Uluru Experience company seemed particularly linked to Aboriginal history, particularly in a tour called the "Edible Desert," which helped visitors understand how such primitive people lived off an inhospitable land.

His guide even taught one fumbling Washingtonian to throw a spear a respectable distance with some style.

In this country that is wrestling

with its own racial problem, American blacks appeared to fare well and were made comfortable everywhere.

"Few come but they are highly welcomed," Miss Alexanderson said.

She is the public relations manager of the government-owned Ayers Rock resort and one of about 600 staff members living in desolate Yulara, population 800. Workers here are so isolated and pitched together so intensively that psychologists help select them for congeniality.

They are a happy lot who make the grinning Disney World troops look funereal.

The top-of-the-line Sails in the Desert is backed up by the Outback Pioneer and Desert Garden plus campgrounds. Almost 70 percent of the resort's electrical needs are met by 2,300 solar panels that not so incidentally also help shade the roof from blistering sun.

Only about 150,000 people a year, 6 percent of foreign visitors, ever get this far. As is true elsewhere in Australia, the dominant groups are from Japan, Germany and Britain. Mainland Chinese have begun to come, joining Italians, Spaniards, French and South Americans.

There are many ways to get around, including tours on chauffeured Harley-Davidson motorcycles complete with leather jackets loaned for the occasion.

We enjoyed Renton Kelly's V.I.P. car service, which offers chauffeured cars, group service in vans and sunset champagne viewings with silver service.

His basic tour may be used overnight or taken piecemeal over four days. It includes pickup at the airport in a sedan or limousine, a get-acquainted drive around Ayers Rock, then to the hotel for check-in, a visit to Mount Olga's 36 domes, the must-see sunset at Ayers Rock, a sunrise visit to the Rock when you're most likely to see wild kangaroos (with coffee, pastry, and juice), a

drive to the base for the two-hour, one-mile round-trip climb with ice water and wet towels when you finish, then to the airport after checking out.

The average stay at the Ayers Rock resort is 1.6 nights, a fact of life that management is trying to change. One aspect in its favor is the high quality of the restaurants. It has three-, four- and five-star restaurants that were uniformly excellent.

"It's ludicrous to come all this way to stay one night," Miss Alexanderson said. "We're pushing the extended stay, linked to the experiences of the desert, the climb and the aboriginal people."

They also are adding a heated pool within the next six months for off-season travelers; a recreation hall will become a convention center for 250, and rates drop as the stay lengthens. First night in Sails is \$98 in U.S. currency, but it drops to about \$77 a night for three-day stays.

This is a wonderful winter playground, especially since Australian winter is in June, July and August. The December and January summers here are like Death Valley with daytime temperatures above 100. In July and August the highs average just above 70 degrees and desert lows are in the 40s.

Rain is never a problem in the driest place on the earth's driest continent.

The dry air even helps the star watch. Stars are seen clear and brilliant from horizon to horizon, right down to the ground. There are Jupiter, Mars, popular signs of the Zodiac, Alpha Centauri, the Southern Cross, Arcturus, and a Milky Way milkier than can be imagined by anyone who hasn't seen it here.

Visitors arrive here nonstop from Cairns, 1,100 miles northeast near the Great Barrier Reef, or after stopping at Alice Springs some 280 miles north. The Lassiter Highway in between is scenic and a bit adventurous but not dangerous, recommended at least one way.



Photo by Frank J. Murray/The Washington Times
Musicians entertain visitors to the Outback.

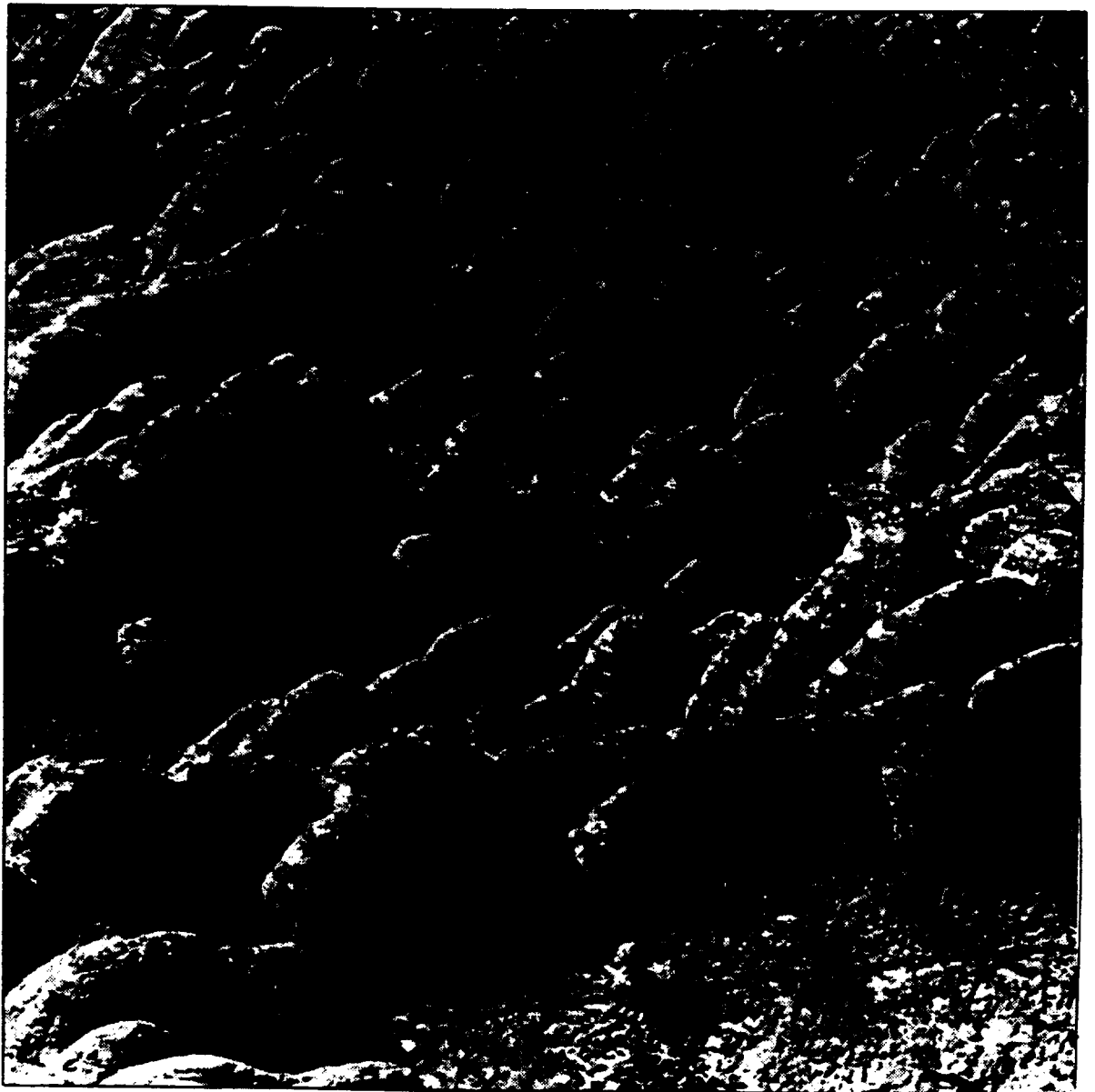


Photo by Mike Brown/Australian Information Service
The spectacular Bungle Bungle region of the Kimberleys is in the north of Western Australia.

We recommend seeing "the town called Alice" as well. But be warned that Nevill Shute's book of that name deals only passingly with Alice Springs.

The Alice Wanderer charges \$15 for a circular route that includes the Royal Flying Doctor base (well worth seeing and hearing how they evacuated 1,882 of the 7,407 patients seen last year), Frontier Camel Farm, the narrow-gauge Old Ghan Train, and the Old Telegraph Station, which should not be missed.

The telegraph relay station on the Adelaide-London cable was the first structure at Alice Springs in 1872 and much of the original is still there with the rest restored. Tables are set, equipment is in place, and historic displays help visitors understand what was done there.

We saw gray kangaroos out here as we had seen in the greener northeast mountains. They are so numerous that legal culling can kill 20,000 in a day.

Where to go, how to go

V I.R. car service offers chauffeured sedans, limousines, vans and four-wheel-drive cars. Provides champagne and hors d'oeuvres, barbecues, breakfasts and tailgate catering. Address is PO Box 69, Yulara 0872, Northern Territory, Australia. Telephone 089-56-5412 or 089-56-2283.

Ayers Rock Resort: PO Box 46, Yulara, Northern Territory 0872, Australia. Telephone 089-56-2144; fax 089-56-2222.

Uluru Experience tour guides may be reserved in writing. The address is PO Box 254, Koorin-gal, NSW 2650, Australia. Phone 069-21-8170; fax 069-21-8346. Ayers Rock office of company director Neil Hermes is 089-56-2066.

Territory Rent a Car: Alice Springs, phone 089-52-9999, fax 089-81-5247; Ayers Rock, phone 089-56-2030.

Butchers said that did not dissuade customers who have begun to develop a taste for the gamy but beefy and low-fat kangaroo steaks at about \$2.50 per pound.

Also seen in hotel barbecues are buffalo, barramundi, crocodile and emu.

"The Americans ask about everything but they don't always try everything. Germans want to try everything. Japanese try nothing," said a chef who was grilling meat and fish to a sameness that demystified some of the exotic foods but didn't make them any more tender.

In protest, U.S. pressure groups have called for an embargo on kangaroo products including the cute stuffed koala bear dolls whose soft skins actually are kangaroo skin.

We hit no kangaroos, rabbits or anything else in our rental car.

At a price we thought reasonable, Territory Rent a Car offered us a range of choices including a Holden luxury sedan and a four-wheel-drive Landcruiser for the trip from Ayers Rock to Alice Springs. We chose air-conditioned luxury and the company accommodated our convenience at both ends of the trip.

About halfway on that road a dead tree was draped with castoff tire casings. "That proves something can too grow in this wasteland," a companion said.

JAN 30 1994

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Easing pain to pocket and posterior

Flying to Australia can be confusing and tiring over massive Pacific distances and figuring out how you lost a day over the International Date-line.

But there are ways to make the long flight easier and, once you arrive, it's cheap and easy to get around the large island-continent by air.

Once in Australia, we used Ansett Australian Airlines' "Visit Australia Pass," one of the great values in air transportation. A traveler can hold costs in check very well by combining an airpass with prepaid hotel passes, of the type offered by the Flag chain. Some deals allow prepaid sightseeing as well but they offer little savings and no flexibility.

For \$444 to \$514 in U.S. currency (tickets purchased beforehand in the United States) Ansett provides flights between four city pairs. Additional passes can add other cities. Our internal flights took us from Cairns to Ayers Rock (1,791 miles), Alice Springs to Sydney (1,839 miles), Sydney to Surfers' Paradise (588 miles), and Brisbane to Sydney (638 miles). That's about 11 cents per mile, a savings of about 60 percent on regular tickets, and the food was terrific. Unlike U.S. flights, Ansett had almost all coach class and offered more leg room.

We flew Air New Zealand direct from Los Angeles to Auckland (6,509 miles in 13 hours), then two days later to Cairns, Australia (2,247 miles in 5½ hours), but non-stop direct flights are offered. The 7,454 miles from Los Angeles to Sydney takes 15 hours.

On our return flight, we flew Qantas to Christchurch, New Zealand, and Air New Zealand to Los Angeles. We did our layovers in New Zealand but Air New Zealand also offers virtually free stopovers coming or going along its Coral Route in places such as Tahiti and Fiji.

Thanks to frequent-flier benefits, we did all that international flying in style. We experienced their best in first class — a joy on flights of 13 hours or more.

United is the other principal carrier direct from the United States now that Continental has dropped out, and it offers Washington-Sydney service in 23 hours. United and Northwest also fly to Australia by Japan.

We found Air New Zealand justified in its slogan, "the pride of the Pacific." The service was superior, including separate check-ins, priority handling of luggage, com-

fortable terminal lounges and sleeper seats.

Air New Zealand and consultant chef Greg Heffernan lived up to membership in the gourmet organization, Chaine des Rotisseurs, with an imaginative menu such as sushi and avocado with feta cheese, mussel soup and a choice of beef filet, swordfish or sherry-poached chicken breast, each with elaborate trimmings.

We thought Qantas took front-cabin passengers a bit more for granted, both in the air and on the ground, although it did offer some fine Australian wines.

Off-season excursion flights to Australia on all airlines between April 1 and Aug. 31 begin at \$948 round-trip (21-day advance purchase, Sunday-Wednesday departures, remain in Australia between seven days and a month) to no-penalty fares of about \$2,600 each way in business class and \$4,000 each way first class.

The travel pass system for a hotel chain can work for an organized traveler who can calculate a bargain, but it can cost more than it is worth when not used properly.

Although they ranged from high-rise beach hotels to motel-style units in a suburb, we had good experiences with Flag properties in Australia and New Zealand. Flag's HotelPass issues vouchers in six colors, from \$44 a night (yellow) to top-level \$133 (silver), corresponding with a color-coded hotel directory arranged by region and price.

Coupling these Flag passes with the four flight air pass offered by Ansett, EastWest and Australian Airlines can lock in the cost of a five-city, 11-night tour for less than \$1,000 a person, plus excursion air fare from the United States. Such plans are ideal for independent travelers or those using tickets without a ground package such as frequent-flier rewards.

Tour packagers offer airfare, hotels and some amenities starting with a 10-day trip for about \$1,600 off-season or \$100 more for Sept. 1 to Nov. 30.

To receive the Destination Australia guidebook, call the Australian Tourist Commission, 800/845-2360.

For information about the Flag HotelPass, call 800/624-3524.

The address for Ansett Australia Airlines' U.S. office is 5933 W. Century Blvd., Suite 306, Los Angeles, Calif. 90045; the phone, 800/366-1300.

— Frank J. Murray and Karen Riley

SUNDAY STAR-LEDGER

NEWARK, NJ
SUNDAY 720,174

JAN 30 1994

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Australian fire, San Juan oil spill shouldn't spoil too many vacations

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By CHRISTOPHER REYNOLDS

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Authorities said fire also affected parts of Morton National Park, a 377,931-acre preserve that guidebook authors John and Monica Chapman say includes "the best bush-walking in the state."

...

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Christopher Reynolds is a Los Angeles Times travel writer

January 30, 1994

Abilene, TX

ABILENE REPORTER-NEWS



Australian Tourist Commission

Kakadu National Park, Australia

I listen to the waves as I drift off to sleep.

MARY ELLEN BOTTER
Denver Post

Maybe it's the snow outside... When I dream, I dream of Australia's "Top End," that sunny, still-wild territory stretching from Cairns on the east coast to Broome on the west. Scant few Aussies inhabit

these reaches and their hearty laughter harmonizes with nature's voice.

My walkabout would begin in the rain-forest area near Cairns, tracking onward to Kakadu National Park and torrid-but-friendly Darwin, with a dogleg to Alice Springs in the continent's Red Center.

My deepest pleasure would be drawn from the glorious open

spaces of the Kimberly in far western Australia — land not unlike the American West before it was fenced and tamed. The Yank and Aussie regions share a common history of cattle drives and pioneer treks, but the mantle of civilization rests more lightly on the vastness down under.

I'd end my dreamtime in Broome, walking the wide and water-scrubbed sands of 13-mile long Cable Beach to the soothing cadence of the Indian Ocean.

Dreamscape

Far away places with strange-sounding names

January 30, 1994
Washington, D.C.
Washington Sunday Times

Travel



The koala, a marsupial, is indigenous to Australia, where it thrives on eucalyptus leaves.

Down Under & Outback

TALICE SPRINGS, Australia
he scope and size of the
only nation occupying
an entire continent over-
whelms even proud
Americans who are in
major awe of their own
nation's deserts, parks and moun-
tains.

We found the off-season an excel-
lent time to visit — especially at
tropical reefs, beaches and northern
deserts but also to urbane Sydney —
during Aussie winter in July, August
and September.

Seasons are as upside down in
Australia as the humorous souvenir
"Down Under" maps. Off-season
visitors compete for accommoda-
tions with fewer domestic or foreign
tourists despite fine weather and
lower prices.

There is more sky, blue in the
days and so clear and dry at night
that stars never glowed more
brightly or in such numbers, more
clean green sea and inviting hori-
zons that seem to stretch further
than anywhere else.

Rain forest and scalded desert
are oddly close together and wildlife

is nowhere else on earth, botanic
and animal species were isolated
when the ancient land mass of Gond-
wana split into continents that
drifted apart while the earth was
young.

Gray kangaroos and dingoes are
seen roaming wild and herds of
camel are out there but less visible.

■ Rain forest and
scalded desert are
oddly close together
and wildlife is like
nowhere else.

Unique butterflies light on plants
seen nowhere else.

Cities look fresh and new, as if
just delivered and unwrapped. Do-
mestic airlines fly on time with lots
of leg room and decent food even in
coach class, served with glassware
and metal cutlery.

Whether watching surfers wait
for the big one on the Gold Coast or

pondering the patterns of ferries
plying Sydney Harbor, it seemed all
unfinished. A nation of answers
waited for travelers' questions.

A skeptical traveler savoring
wige and pineapple custard high
over the barren Red Centre might
doubt how naked Aborigines could
walk so far with literally no supplies
in their annual migrations.

But there could be no question
about why the Anangu still worship
such natural wonders as Uluru. This
treeless stone that visitors call
Ayers Rock is stark gray in the hot
sun, then each evening at sunset it
seems to glow from within like a fur-
nace turned coppery red.

Everything else is a sideshow to
this main event in the dry Red Cen-
tre of Australia, a day's drive even
from the outback shrine of "a town
called Alice."

While they wait and watch, visi-
tors nibble barbecued kangaroo and
crocodile as they hear the haunting
flutelike sounds of the didgeridoo, a
carved instrument almost as tall as
a man and often played publicly by
whites because Aborigines won't
flaunt their culture.

A more genteel group sipped
champagne and nibbled hors d'oeu-
vres laid on a tablecloth spread
across the hood of a white limousine

whose stereo played recorded did-
geridoo music.

The upended loaf-shaped rock
looms above the desert for two-
thirds of a mile, its sides scored by
countless vertical slashes cut by
minute amounts of rainwater over
the centuries. Each day hundreds of
visitors make the two-hour climb up
and down the monolith.

The Anangu people, on whose
land the national park is located, pre-
fer no one ever ascend Ayers Rock
but they tolerate it despite posting
signs at the base of the trail making
their point.

One such sign also warns point-
edly that the climb can cost the life
of an unprepared climber. Three
people have fallen and 25 suc-
cumbed to heart attacks on the im-
probably difficult ascent. Summer
heat dehydrates, sunburn can be se-
vere, and windy wintry weather
takes its toll by exposure.

On the one or two occasions each
year when it rains, climbers at the
top are rewarded for a few days by
seeing tiny shrimp whose eggs
emerge from the dust and hatch in
clear rock pools after each down-
pour. Their first task is to lay eggs
that produce another generation the

see UNDER, page E3 L



Ayers Rock is like the tip of an iceberg, the nose of a formation five times as deep as its 1,100-foot height. Climbers face summer heat or windy winter. Photo courtesy of Australian Tourist Commission

UNDER

From page E1 **L**

next time it rains, and the life of the puddles defines the life of the shrimp.

Ayers Rock is like the tip of an iceberg, the nose of a formation five times as deep as its 1,100-foot height and which extends beneath the sand more than 14 miles to another sacred outcropping called (Kata Tjuta) the Olgas.

Touring Australia in off-season also is to scuba dive or snorkel among rainbows of huge curious fish at the Great Barrier Reef, fend off not-so-wild parrots roosting on head and shoulders at a rain forest in Lamington National Park near Brisbane's Gold Coast, sip strong beer in bars beside rough-hewn swaggies booking legal bets on far-away horse races seen by closed-circuit TV, marvel at the triumphant Australia II that wrested away America's Cup 11 years ago, and from a helicopter watch developers build new Florida-style towns on fill just inland from Surfers' Paradise near Brisbane.

National parks may be a misnomer since they are operated by the state where they are located and there are no uniform policies on information, facilities and services.

Although the rain forest at Mossman Gorge is recognized on the World Heritage List, its public facilities seemed in disrepair. It's still a great walk, however. And the vivid reef defies even the best description.

Wherever a visitor goes he senses discomfort about relations with Aborigines. Their art and culture are highly regarded and incorporated in public life. There is respect for their belief that creation occurred in a fanciful "Dreamtime."

Their need for jobs and cultural appreciation is given a great deal of attention and some lip service in a land where 250,000 Aborigines live, particularly in what Australia officially declared as the Year of the Indigenous People.

Some Aborigines share their millennia of history with visitors whom they allow in their villages, as with the Tiwi or Putjamirra communities on Melville Island. Others remain isolated in off-limits villages where fines are levied on whites who trespass or pass along liquor.

Traditional dot paintings and carved boomerangs or other artifacts are widely sold and many tour operators offer a "glimpse of the Dreamtime" told through paintings and stories. The Aboriginal Museum in Darwin is considered the best.

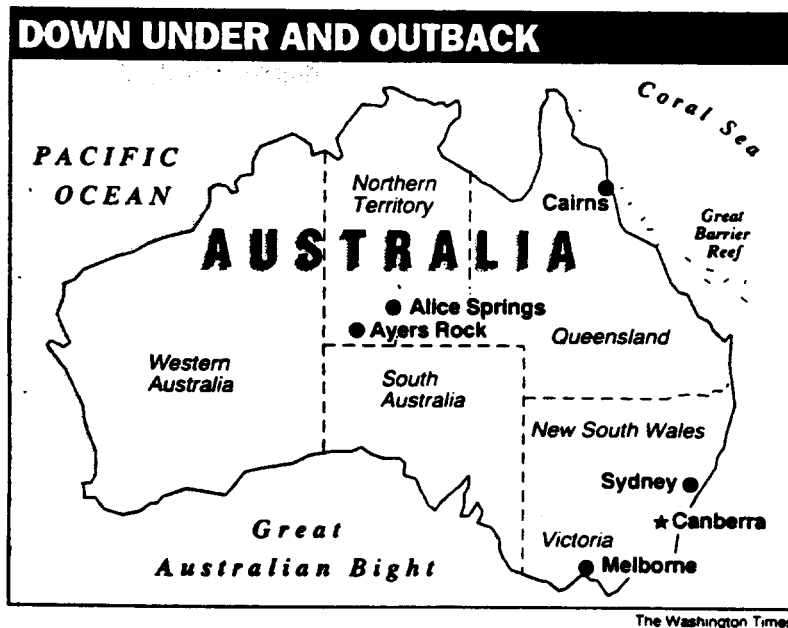
Public concerns coexist with fears about headlined battles about court rulings granting payment to Aborigines whose land was seized, reminiscent of claims for reparations from American Indians. Work-scholarship training programs failed to attract many Aborigines to new jobs.

And a cautious travel industry seeks to show that its objective is to revere Aboriginal traditions instead of to make money and please tourists.

"Most visitors want to see Aborigines and kangaroos. The problem is to keep from equating the



Sails of the eye-catching Sydney Opera House meet the sails of a boat moving through Sydney harbor. Photo by Frank J. Murray/The Washington Times



The Washington Times

currency, with Britons likely to stay two months. Quickie Japanese tours are becoming more prevalent with nine-night shopping visits the growing rule for Japanese.

This brought an explosion of "duty free" with signs in Japanese predominating. Everything in Australia seems a bargain to the Japanese and they average \$800 a person shopping, not counting meals, hotels and tours. Some businesses show an anti-Japanese stance with signs declaring "100 percent Australian-owned" which translates to mean "not Japanese-owned."

The thing to remember at duty-free stores in Australia is that they are, like those in Singapore, cheap to residents of Australasia but well above American prices. We confined purchases to unique objects, such as opal earrings and a craftsman's large stained-glass Winnie the Pooh scene now hung in a window at home.

Although it has problems of high unemployment, where more people receive government welfare payments than pay taxes and even runaway children get a weekly dole of \$107, Australia remains prosperous.

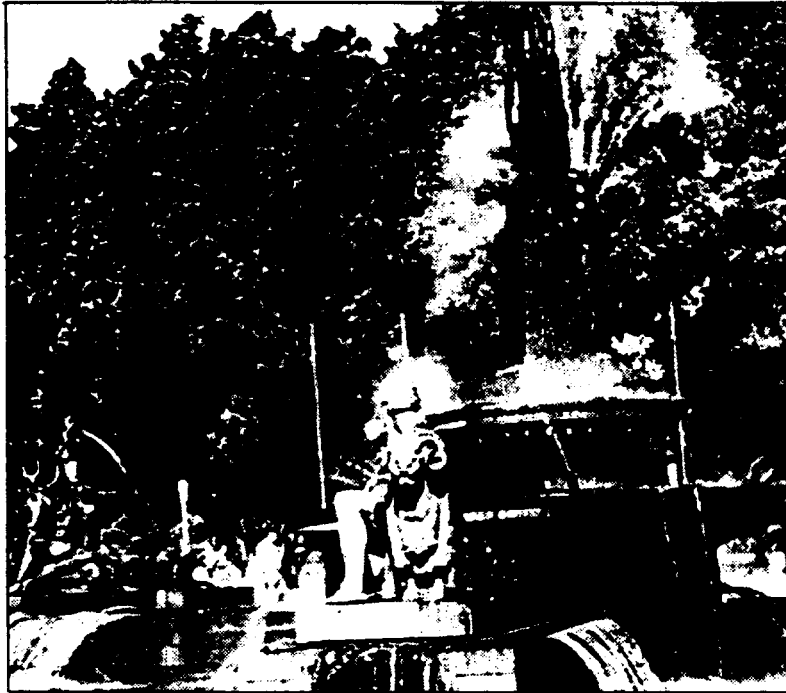


Photo courtesy of Australian Tourist Commission

Fountains help make Sydney a beautiful 200-year-old city.

two, taking visitors out and pointing out examples of each," said a travel industry executive who refused to be identified because he works closely with government officials.

"It's sincere but still a matter also of political correctness — very much PC," he said.

Planning travel here must take into account Australia's huge emptiness, a nation-continent almost as large as the United States with fewer people than live in Texas. A routine change of scene can require a three-hour jet flight as far as Boston to Miami with no cities in between.

The famed Ghan luxury train passes virtually nothing in its 22-hour, 975-mile twice-weekly trip from Adelaide to Alice Springs. Some riders complain because much of the trip is in darkness but the "historical aspect" satisfies most and the Ghan is considered among the world's great train rides. The one-way fare is about \$100 for a chair car and \$160 for a bed compartment.

Australians were pleasant everywhere and tourist sales were somewhere between low pressure and no pressure, even at booths in major holiday spots.

"Wherever you buy, I hope you enjoy your tour," said one shop operator in Cairns near the Great Barrier Reef.

One negative was the traffic. Drivers speed around with the elan of a race driver at Daytona or Indianapolis, challenging pedestrians to dare cross a street and tailgating other vehicles even when they didn't want to pass.

In some cities, with Sydney a notable exception, virtually no spot was protected and the problem was compounded by the habit of Europeans and North Americans to look first to the left for oncoming traffic.

The warm reception for all is bringing more tourists, about 2.4 million during 1992, of whom about 4 percent are American.

About 100,000 American visitors, including business travelers, came to Australia in the last full year tallied (1992), the smallest regional well of tourism that is dominated by Asians, New Zealanders and Britons.

The average Australia visit in 1992 was 25 nights, during which the typical visitor spent \$1,232 in U.S.

ADVISORY

January 30, 1994

San Jose, CA

San Jose Mercury News

Travel News in Brief

State Dept. issues Mexico advisory

Travelers to Mexico were being advised by the U.S. State Department to avoid the southern state of Chiapas and to exercise "normal security precautions as appropriate" when touring other parts of the country.

Mexico has beefed up security at airports and public areas after recent bombings and demonstrations in Mexico City and Acapulco, linked to the New Year's rebellion in Chiapas, a State Department spokeswoman said.

"We don't consider people at risk at this time, but they should just be aware," she said, which means if you see unusual activity or behavior, you should report it and/or leave quickly.

About 1,200 calls to the State Department's information line — (202) 647-5225 — were made last week accessing the message on Chiapas, updated daily.

Still OK to visit

In the wake of the oil spill in Puerto Rico and the Sydney, Australia, bush fires earlier this month, it's still possible to salvage winter trips to both places.

Fouled beaches east of San Juan — on the 1½ miles serving the big international hotels — are currently being cleaned up, with work expected to be completed by the end of February. All hotels in the Condado area are open and are busing guests to beaches in the Isla Verde area, four miles away. Information: Puerto Rico Tourism Co., (800) 815-7391.

And in Australia's New South Wales, while Sydney and its tourist attractions went unscathed, the Royal National Park, about 20 miles south of the city and popular with hikers, boaters and surfers, was largely destroyed. Airline schedules and highway and rail routes, however, are all back to normal, tourism officials report. Northwest of the city, attractions in the Blue Mountains, such as the

Three Sisters rock formation and Echo Point lookout, are open. Information: Australian Tourist Commission, (212) 687-6300.

Customs fees hiked

Returning to the United States from trips to Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean will cost you a bit more now that the U.S. Customs Service has instituted new fees for North American arrivals.

Passengers arriving from those destinations were previously exempt from the \$5 customs inspection fees paid by arrivals from outside North America; they will now pay \$6.50, thanks to an act of Congress.

In addition, the \$5 fee for arrivals from outside North America has been raised to \$6.50 — the first hike in more than seven years, according to Customs.

Meet soap stars

If you've been dying to meet your favorite soap opera star in person — or just to hobnob with other fans like yourself — get ready for this one: The first Soap Opera Fan Fair is scheduled for June 1 through June 5 in Mackinaw City, Mich.

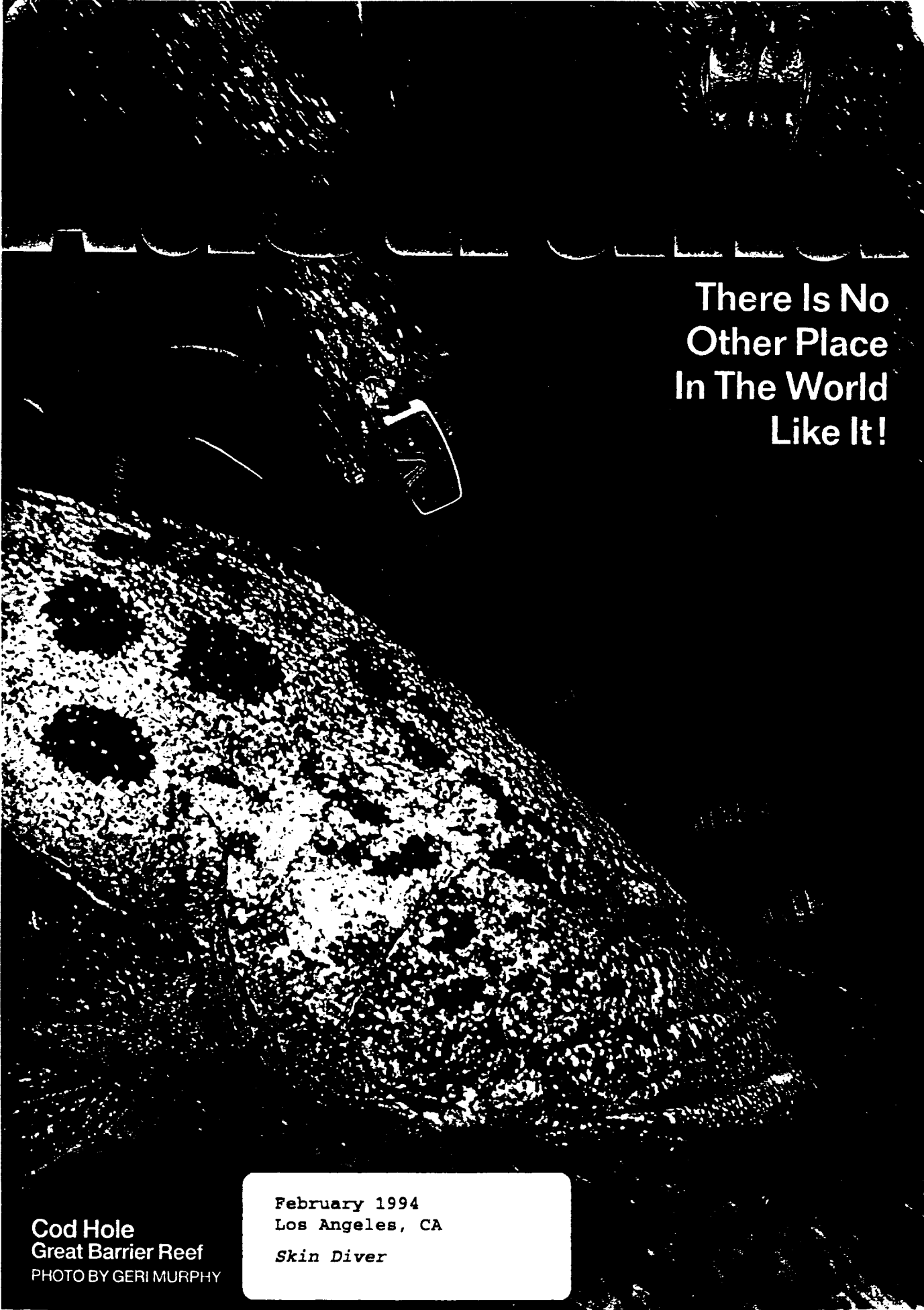
Many stars from the top shows are scheduled to be there, including Linda Dano (Felicia) from "Another World," Michael Knight (Tad) from "All My Children," and Patrick Muldoon (Austin) from "Days of Our Lives." Information: (800) 817-7627.

From Mercury News wire reports.

DATEBOOK

Around the nation:

- **Dixie National Livestock Show And Rodeo:** Monday through Feb. 21, Jackson, Miss. The second largest livestock show east of the Mississippi River, this annual event includes 12 breeds of cattle, six horse shows, junior livestock show, rodeo performances, dances, parades and the Dixie National Western Festival. Information: (601) 961-4000.



There Is No
Other Place
In The World
Like It!

Cod Hole
Great Barrier Reef
PHOTO BY GERI MURPHY

February 1994
Los Angeles, CA
Skin Diver

Australia

A Wondrous Collection of Wildlife Oddities Above & Below The Surface

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERI MURPHY

Today's diver traveler is faced with a wide selection of dive destinations. Sometimes it is difficult to make a choice because all dive destinations offer beautiful coral reefs, abundant marine life and clear water.

Yet when it comes to Australia, it is easy for the traveler to make a decision. This exotic land down under is filled with a wondrous collection of wildlife oddities such that no other

place on earth is quite like it.

From kangaroos to koalas, Australia is definitely a land of firsts. Since 40,000 years ago, this continent of Australia has been away from the Asian land mass and the wildlife evolved in different directions. Today this isolation offers an opportunity to see some of the last of the great animals that once roamed the earth. From platypus to the kangaroo.

And down in Australia is the best place on the globe to see some of the most bizarre marine life. From giant Manta Rays, White Sharks, Barracuda, to giant squid, the marine life in Australia is truly a sight to behold. And the marine environment is so

rich that even the water is

you will find where we live.

Where do you catch a Wobbegong Shark that has a flat head and a mump? How about a Pinkdot Grouper with an odd shaped head? Delicate soft corals are to the size of a Christmas tree and flatfish are electric blue.

Australia has it all. Blue Ring Octopus, sea snakes, Cow Noses, Boxfish, Leopard Sharks, Ribbon Eels, Giant Clams, Lionfish, Quatfish and the Harlequin Tuskfish.

And other South Pacific locations may have one or two of these unique species, no other place has this unique collection of life forms. That is why divers are willing to travel halfway around the world to visit this far off land.

AUSTRALIA--THE COUNTRY

Australia is a big place, approximately the same land mass as the continental U.S. The big difference is that Australia has a resident population of less than 20 million people—less than one percent of the United States.

Despite being a big place, due to Australia's similarities between the two continents, the language is English, the cities are modern, the transportation is the same, the food is in good shape. The Aussies are great hosts and the weather is just what you need in a dry, hot climate.

So if you are looking for a place to visit, and down under is, of course, with a few exceptions, a great place to visit. The climate is just what you need in a dry, hot climate.



most difficult to obtain. The airlines of the U.S. that are permitted to fly from Los Angeles to Sydney are British Airways, United, and Pan Am. They can make the journey for you.

To visit Australia you must have a recent passport. Before entering, you must be informed that you must have a visa. Before departure, you must have an Australian visa for entry. The visa can be done through your designated agent.

Numerous airlines serve the United States to Australia. American Airlines, North American, and Trans World Airlines, Qantas Airways, and the Australian Airlines are the airlines that you can know a little and then you can choose the most convenient for you. Qantas has a fleet of 747 and 707 that operate a flight a week to Los Angeles, and Los Angeles to Sydney. Once you reach Sydney, you can change planes and fly north to avoid the tropic climate. Since Australia is south of the equator, north is all warm and south is cold.

QUEENSLAND

Australia is divided into states and territories, but these are fewer and much larger than those of the U.S. Australia has six states and two territories. Queensland is a large state that occupies the northeast quadrant of the country, with more than 1,000 miles of coastline.

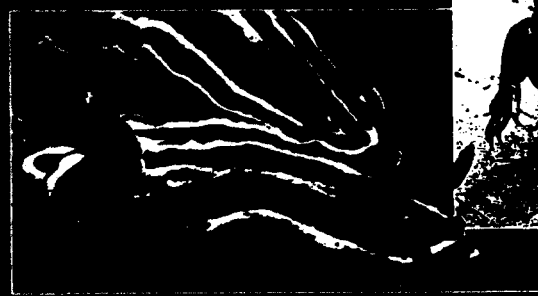
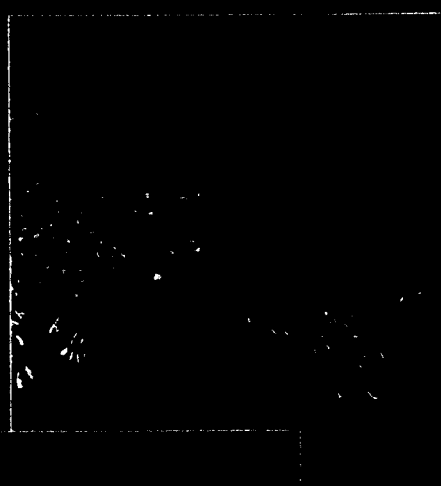
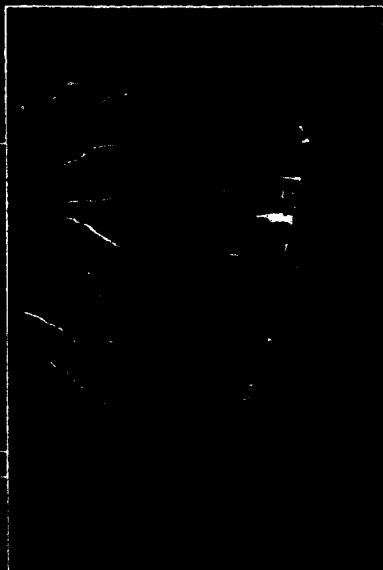
While Australia is completely surrounded by water and is a rain forest, it is actually dry, where Queensland offers the warmest water and the best visibility. Water temperature ranges from 60 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

Two factors have made Queensland a popular destination. It is the home of Australia's Great Barrier Reef, the largest natural structure in the world. The Coral Reef and the Great Barrier Reef are the most beautiful and the most diverse.

The impact of the Great Barrier Reef is that the reef is a natural barrier as shown in the map. Numerous divers can see the reef from the air, but it is somewhat murky. The Great Barrier Reef is a natural barrier and a natural barrier and a natural barrier.

GREAT BARRIER REEF

One of the best places to see the Great Barrier Reef is in the Great Barrier Reef.



Dive Down Under.



Australia's Heron Island is famous with divers from around the world.

As the only international resort actually right on the Great Barrier Reef it is home to the richest and most diverse collection of marine life to be found anywhere in the world.



The size and variety of Heron's marine life will take your breath away. Of the 1500 species of fish to be found on the reef, you'll find 1200 of them right here. It's heaven above and below. So if you've ever dreamt of diving the Great Barrier Reef, be our guest and surface down under on Heron Island.



P&O Resort Holidays

See your dive travel agent or call
P&O Resort Holidays.
(800) 225 9849
USA/CANADA



Heron
The coral island

GREAT BARRIER REEF
AUSTRALIA

Australia

is not like any other barrier reef you may have encountered. It is not a single coral barrier as you might normally imagine. Instead, the Great Barrier Reef is comprised of 2,900 individual coral reefs in a broad chain that parallels the Queensland Coast. This chain stretches for an incredible 1,250 miles—the distance from New York to Florida.

Some of the reef formations are only 100 yards across while others can be 10 miles long. The water surrounding these reef structures can vary from a few inches to depths reaching 130 feet.

Aside from its gigantic size, what makes the Great Barrier Reef so incredible is the prolific marine life. This immense reef chain has 350 different species of coral that serve as habitats for more than 1,500 species of fish.

It is little wonder the Great Barrier Reef was chosen as a World Heritage site and made into a Marine Park. Today, it is fully protected and watched over, as the Australians closely guard one of their greatest natural resources.

AUSTRALIA TRAVEL

There is so much to see and do in a country the size of Australia that it is difficult to know where to begin. The most frequently traveled path is to fly directly to Sydney, Australia's largest and busiest international airport.

From Sydney, you fly 460 miles north via jumbo jet to Brisbane—the gateway to the Queensland Coast. Brisbane is a large city with a busy airport that offers connecting flights to dozens of towns and cities along the Queensland Coast.

One of the closest dive areas that has achieved world wide fame is Heron Island. A short commuter flight will take you 275 miles farther north to the seaport city of Gladstone. This harborside community is home for a number of live-aboard dive boats, as well as the jumpoff place for visiting Heron Island.

HERON ISLAND

From Gladstone you can journey to Heron by high speed ferry or helicopter. The *Reef Adventurer II*, Heron Island's high speed catamaran, will take you from the mainland to the island in two hours. The other, more exciting option is to board a jet turbine helicopter for a spectacular aerial cruise over the Great Barrier Reef.

Heron is a tiny speck of tree covered island sitting right in the middle of the Great Barrier Reef—50 miles off the Australia coast. Less than one-third mile long and 330 yards wide, Heron is just big enough to support one small resort

hotel plus the 40,000 seabirds that utilize this island as a nesting refuge.

Heron Island Resort is a cluster of some 35 small buildings tucked away in the northwest corner of the island—leaving the other 90 percent for the birds and turtles. The buildings blend in with the surrounding vegetation and you hardly know the resort is there.

If you like fish encounters or U/W photography, you are going to love Heron Island. Few places on earth offer such an abundance and variety of fish. It is here at Heron Reef that I encountered my first Wobbie—the Wobbeong Shark. Other fish exotics include Barramundi, Sweetlips, Red Emperor and stately Batfish. It is a zoo without cages; a spectacular show performed daily.

Since Heron Island is at the very southern end of the Great Barrier Reef, water temperatures are a bit on the chilly side—ranging from 65°F in June to a high of 78 in December. The seasons are reversed and the peak summer weather occurs in December. A full one-eighth to three-sixteenths inch neoprene wetsuit is recommended.

Underwater visibility is often affected by tidal flow. The visibility can range from 90 feet on an incoming tide to 40 feet on an outgoing tide. What Heron Island lacks in visibility, it more than makes up for in fish action and marine life.

Heron Island Resort sits between two large coral reef systems; Heron and Wistari. Both come very close to the surface with portions sticking out of the water at low tide. The outer edges of these reefs drop into depths ranging from 30 to 100 feet. It is along these outside edges that more than 50 excellent dive sites have been discovered, marked and named.

Big Bommie consists of five tall coral heads that rise from a sloping reef in a succession of slightly deeper depths. The largest is the actual Big Bommie, home to thousands of fish—many of them tame enough to feed by hand. When the fish feeding begins, the water becomes a thick, squirming cloud of exotic reef fish.

Gorgonian Hole is a favorite spot for U/W photographers searching for nudibranchs and Seahorses. **Blue Pools** is a semi-enclosed tidal area the size of an Olympic swimming pool. The bottom is covered with white sand, horizontal undercuts and ledges line the edges.

Wistari Channel is Heron Island's most exciting dive site, as this is a fast moving drift dive with pelagic fish encounters. The deep water channel between Heron and Wistari Reefs narrows to 650 yards across at the opposite end, thus causing the tidal flow to speed up. Both sides of the channel are lined with excellent dive sites so there is plenty to see as you float along. The drift dives are

Australia

scheduled for a maximum bottom time of 60 minutes or until you run low on air—whichever comes first.

If you still have some energy left after a day of diving, you may want to spend the evening on a turtle watching tour. Heron Island is world famous as a turtle nesting site, as some 700 Green Turtles crawl out of the water and up onto the island's sand beaches where they dig deep holes and bury their eggs.

WHITSUNDAY ISLANDS

The next significant jumpoff point for Great Barrier Reef diving is the seaside resort town of Airlie Beach and adjacent Shute Harbour. It lies another 275 miles north of Gladstone.

You can get there two ways: 1) Rent a car and drive up along the Australia coast from either Brisbane or Gladstone or 2) Fly 550 miles from Brisbane to Proserpine Airport and then drive 20 miles to the coast.

Airlie Beach can be described as the gateway to the Whitsunday Islands Group—a cluster of 74 volcanic islands

lying a few miles off the Queensland Coast. They have become a favorite playground for vacationing Australians, as well as international visitors. The area is ideal for sailing, cruising, swimming, beachcombing, snorkeling and so on.

Unlike the flat, low profile of Heron Island, the Whitsundays are high profile with mountain ridges, valleys and secluded coves. They can best be described as inshore islands, as this group is closer to the Australia mainland than to the outer edge of the Barrier Reef.

The Whitsunday Islands offer two distinctively different types of diving. The first is fringing reefs that are nestled along the edges of Hook Island, Whitsunday Island and many others. While the visibility along these fringing reefs is diminished (30 to 70 feet), the reefs are exceptionally rich with nudibranchs, soft corals, sponges and tropical fish.

The dive boat ride is short because these reefs are close to dive operators at Airlie Beach. These inshore dive sites are well protected by towering bluffs from strong winds and poor weather. Dive boats can always find a lee and calm water no matter which way the wind is blowing. **Butterfly Bay** is considered one of the best dive sites, featuring a lovely coral garden in 30 feet of water and a series of caves at 70. **Wood Pile** is another favorite site that is great for photographing nudibranchs. Other select spots include **Catseye**, **Bay Bommie**, **Turtle Bay**, **Luncheon Bay** and **Catara Bay**.

The other type of diving available in the Whitsundays lies along the outer edges of the Great Barrier Reef, some 18 to 25 miles farther out to sea. These dive sites can be quite spectacular and the visibility ranges from 60 to 120 feet.

The best known of these reefs is Bait Reef Marine Park, some 18 miles from Hayman Island. **Bait Reef** is unique in that it is a perfectly formed coral atoll; a circular reef enclosing a lagoon. One of the best dives is an undersea phenomenon that is known as **Stepping Stones**—a series of vertical coral pillars lined up in a neat row. Each pillar rises from 60 to 90 feet and its vertical sides are covered with corals and fans. Some of the pillars are so close together they form a narrow channel, through which divers can swim and explore. **Manta Ray Drop-Off** is a vertical wall on the outside of Bait Reef that generally offers crystal clear visibility and the possibility of encountering Manta Rays. **Southern Face** is another spectacular drop-off with lots of fish action. **Gary's Lagoon** is a fish feeding station with a population of Maori Wrasse.

Another oddity of the Great Barrier Reef is **Hook and Hardy Reefs**—a pair of large sprawling coral reefs separated by a deep water channel that winds be-

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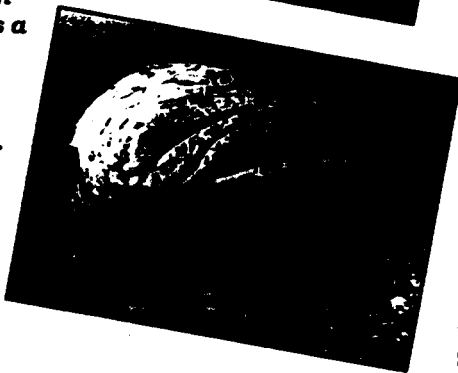
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Australia

tween them. From the air, this deep channel looks much like a river running between two islands.

TOWNSVILLE

Another 140 miles north of Airlie Beach you will find the seaport city of Townsville—a major gateway from both the Great Barrier Reef and Central Coral Sea. With a large jet airport, Townsville is easy to reach from either Brisbane or Cairns. There are flights several times daily for convenient connections.

Townsville is a fairly large city with a well developed downtown with numerous hotels, restaurants and retail shops. This city is also the home of Mike Ball Watersports, the largest and best known dive center on the Queensland Coast. It is a PADI Five Star Training Facility that certifies 2,000 students per year. In addition to a stylish retail sales area, this center features a unique second story training pool with a swim-through transit tube that passes through the showroom to a 25 foot deep training tank.

More important to overseas visitors is that Townsville is a popular departure point for live-aboards sailing into the Central Coral Sea, diving along the outer Barrier Reef or diving the *Yongala*. This

YONGALA WRECK

Although the Great Barrier Reef dive sites in the central region are quite good, Townsville is probably best known for its access to the legendary *Yongala*. This

site is truly phenomenal and rated as one of the best dives in Australia.

This world class wreck dive is 50 miles south of Townsville and thus requires an overnight dive boat trip. The Townsville dive operators regularly schedule two and three day dive trips to this shipwreck.

The SS *Yongala* was once a 350 foot cargo/passenger steamship that sailed along the coast of Australia in the early 1900s. At the time of her sinking, the ship was carrying timber, bricks, tires and bottled goods as well as 120 passengers. On March 24, 1911 the ill-fated vessel vanished during a cyclone. For almost 35 years the *Yongala* remained hidden, discovered in 1945 by a minesweeper clearing the coastal shipping lanes.

The *Yongala* rests at a 45 degree angle on its starboard side in 80 feet of water. The hull is totally intact although the ship's rigging is broken away. At certain times of the year the water around the *Yongala* can be crystal clear, with 150 foot visibility. At other times, visibility can drop to 50 feet and surface conditions can be rough. Although the ship lies inside the Great Barrier Reef, there are many miles of open ocean surrounding it.

Upon approaching the *Yongala*, dive boat skippers and passengers frequently see turtles and Sea Snakes swimming on the surface. Beneath the surface, at 20 to 30 feet, there is often a school of about 100 Pacific Barracuda that slowly circles above the wreck. Below the Barracuda is a large school of stately Batfish that swims just above the wreck like a group of soldiers on parade. The wreck itself is covered with a heavy growth of soft corals, seafans, hard

corals and other marine growth. There are small groups of jacks, Potato Cod, Barramundi, Flowery Cod, Coral Trout and other medium sized fish in just about every crevice and overhang.

Cruising around the outside of the ship are a dozen or more giant Yellowtail Jacks that must weigh 60 to 80 pounds each. Still another unusual sight is a school of 30 or more Cobia that cruises around the wreck. These fascinating fish are approximately four feet long and look something like a shark from afar. The biggest fish on the wreck are the Queensland Gropers. There are six of these great fish. The two largest are estimated to weigh more than 500 pounds and measure seven feet in length. A dive on the *Yongala* is an experience that cannot be matched anywhere else.

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN CORAL SEA

The Coral Sea is live-aboard country—a pristine ocean the size of the Caribbean. It lies off the northeast coast of Australia, well beyond the Great Barrier Reef. This remarkable ocean is totally uninhabited, uncommercialized and unpolluted. Divers who sail these waters speak of incredible U/W visibility, reaching unheard of distances of 150 to 200 feet.

Sprinkled across the vast reaches of this oceanic paradise are more than a dozen isolated coral atolls. In the central and southern region of the Coral Sea, these atolls would include Flinders Reef, Abington Reef, Lihou Reef, Diamond Islets, Marion Reef, Holmes Reef and the Willis Group. These spectacular formations rise straight from several thousand feet, often within inches of the surface. They serve as homes and mating areas for an incredible array of marine life. It is a place divers dream about and hope they will someday visit.

FLINDERS REEF

Flinders Reef is typical of these magical oceanic atolls, where diving is so spectacular it defies description. Flinders lies 130 miles northeast of Townsville, well beyond the reach of most Australian divers. Only a handful of ocean-going live-aboard dive boats can reach this spot.

Flinders is not a single reef but rather a cluster of several reefs covering a large area. Roughly the size of the combined land mass and reefs of the Cayman Islands, Flinders measures 36 nautical miles long and 24 wide. More than 99 percent of this area lies underwater, with only two tiny sand cays jutting above the surface. Yet, Flinders Reef is home to an enormous population of fish and marine creatures. It is here one will find most of the exotic creatures that have brought Australia worldwide diving fame.

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Sophie's Choice, in the center of Flinders Reef lagoon, is a cluster of four pinnacles. The largest is more than 100 feet in diameter and rises to within 20 feet of the surface. Nearby are three smaller pinnacles that come within 50 feet of the surface. The sides of the pinnacles are covered with thousands of black and brilliant yellow Crinoids. It is an excellent location for night diving as it is inhabited by Lionfish, lobsters, etc.

Fan Patches is a series of four large, finger shaped coral heads that lead from the shallow sandy lagoon into depths of 100 to 120 feet. The average depth between the coral formations is 70 feet, with the walls rising vertically to within 30 feet of the surface. In these narrow canyons are forests of giant yellow gorgonian fans.

Watanabe Point is a pinnacle roughly 140 feet in diameter and flat on the top. The sides are vertical, dropping straight down to 150 feet on the inside edge and 180 feet on the outside. The top of the pinnacle rises to within 40 feet of the surface. Because of its proximity to the drop-off, underwater visibility ranges from 150 to 180 feet.

This solitary pinnacle serves as a magical undersea beacon for pelagic fish. The pinnacle is occupied by roughly 200 Bigeye Trevally (jacks) that are separated into four schools. These graceful fish circle the pinnacle in precise formation, zooming up and down the vertical sides and across the top. At times they ball up into a tight circle like a vortex. Their motion is so fluid it tends to mesmerize the observer. A large school of Pacific Barracuda also encircles the pinnacle.

Slightly farther out from the trevally and Barracuda is another school of even bigger fish—a group of four very large Dogtooth Tuna, the largest weighing an estimated 200 pounds. And, below these schools at a depth of 100 feet, you can see several sharks cruising back and forth like tigers pacing in a cage. The entire scene adds up to one giant underwater circus that leaves most divers spellbound.

Scuba Zoo, on South Boomerang, is probably the most unusual shark feeding dive in all of Australia. Mike Ball Dive Expeditions has placed a giant shark cage on the edge of the wall at a depth of 50 feet. It is believed to be the largest shark cage in the world, measuring 9 feet wide, 9 feet tall and 50 feet long! The shark cage is of such great dimensions that divers can actually swim inside.

At feeding time, the divers climb into the cage while two large trash barrels filled with shark food are positioned outside the cage. Each of the barrels contains a flotation buoy and a coiled line laced with fish parts. The lids are held in place by a trigger device. When all the divers are in place (inside the cage) the

lids are released and the coiled lines of fish parts spiral toward the surface. This act initiates an awesome shark feeding frenzy just a few feet outside the safety of the cage. It is a spellbinding experience that few divers will ever forget.

CAIRNS

The most northern airport on the Queensland Coast is at Cairns, 865 miles north of Brisbane. It is the end of the line for luxury jet airline service but it is the heart of diving for international visitors.

Cairns is the international crossroads of Australian diving—the place you are most likely to bump into diving celebrities from around the world or your next door neighbor (if he/she happens to be a diver). On any given day you are likely to encounter divers from France, Italy, Canada, Japan or a dozen other countries.

The reason for this popularity is geographic location. Cairns is a seaport resort city at the doorstep of 80 percent of Australia's best diving. It is the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef as well as the Coral Sea. This city is also home base for most of Australia's live-aboards and just about all of them pass through this port at some time during the year.

CAIRNS REEFS LIVE-ABOARDS

If you are an avid diver with a few days to spare, you may wish to consider a brief trip aboard one of the many local live-aboards that dive the reefs in the Cairns region. These vessels range in size from 60 to 110 feet long and can carry anywhere from 18 to 46 divers. Most of them offer a basic three day/two night trip for a few hundred dollars. It is a quick and inexpensive way to sample a bit of Great Barrier Reef diving with 9 to 11 dives.

Diving from the local live-aboards is a step up from the day boats because you get a lot more diving crammed into a short period.

The live-aboards out of Cairns dive a variety of 25 reefs within a 35 mile radius of Cairns harbor. These reefs are easy and convenient to reach and the trips are comparatively inexpensive.

While the underwater visibility is less than the Ribbons, the coral growth is still as prolific as any spot along the Great Barrier Reef. The marine life is abundant and the varieties just as diverse as you would expect.

Other advantages of diving the reefs adjacent to Cairns is that the current is significantly less and the depth of water comparatively less. The general diving depth is from 5 to 90 feet.

RIBBONS/COD HOLE LIVE-ABOARDS

There is another breed of live-aboard that operate mostly out of Cairns and nearby Port Douglas. These dive vessels

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are much more upscale—designed for long distance travel and smaller numbers of passengers. It is these live-aboards that attract most American dive travelers, those interested in serious live-aboard diving. These long distance live-aboards conduct four day/three night dive cruises along a 150 mile stretch of the outer Great Barrier Reef from Cairns to Lizard Island.

They are able to cover such a long distance in a short four day period by running back-to-back trips to and from Lizard Island. For example, divers selecting the northbound cruise would sail north, terminating their voyage at Lizard. They would transfer from the live-aboard to Lizard Island airport, where they would return to Cairns by commuter aircraft. Divers selecting the southbound cruise do the trip in reverse—flying from Cairns to Lizard Island, where they board for a southward cruise through the Ribbons.

RIBBONS REEFS

The Ribbons is a chain of coral reefs extending for 65 miles along the outer edge of the Great Barrier Reef in the region from Cooktown to Lizard Island. They are named Ribbons after their long, thin shape and each reef is numbered—Ribbon No. 1, Ribbon No. 2, Ribbon No. 3 and so on. The size of these individual reefs varies greatly, ranging from a scant one-quarter mile to an incredibly long 15.5 miles. This chain of reefs is approximately 30 miles off the coast of Australia and thus enjoys exceptional visibility.

Although the Ribbons Reefs are numbered from 1 through 10, there are actually many more reefs in the chain. The total number is estimated at somewhere close to 50 large and small coral reef structures.

The Ribbons Reefs offer some of the finest diving along the Great Barrier Reef, within easy cruising range of live-aboards that conduct short length cruises. The quality of diving is far superior to the reefs in the Cairns region, with underwater visibility often exceeding 100

feet. The outside edges of these reefs, and the passes among them, offer high voltage diving excitement, including encounters with sharks, Potato Cod, Bigeye Trevally schools, giant Manta Rays and Dogtooth Tuna.

Coral Gardens is a shallow coral garden south of Ribbon No. 1. This site is loaded with Plate Corals, soft corals, clownfish and many small reef tropicals. **Snake Gully**, off the southern tip of Ribbon No. 3, is named for Sea Snakes that sometimes frequent the location. **Fish Markets**, is well known for its multitude of reef fish—schools of Fusiliers, Lionfish, Moorish Idols, Potato Cod, Mackerel, Queensland Groper, sharks and the colorful Harlequin Tuskfish.

Temple of Doom is a single coral pinnacle 100 feet in diameter and rising to within 14 feet of the surface. This site is also loaded with giant schools of fish, including gold striped Goldfish, mackerel, Bigeye Trevally, tuna and Whitetip Reef Sharks.

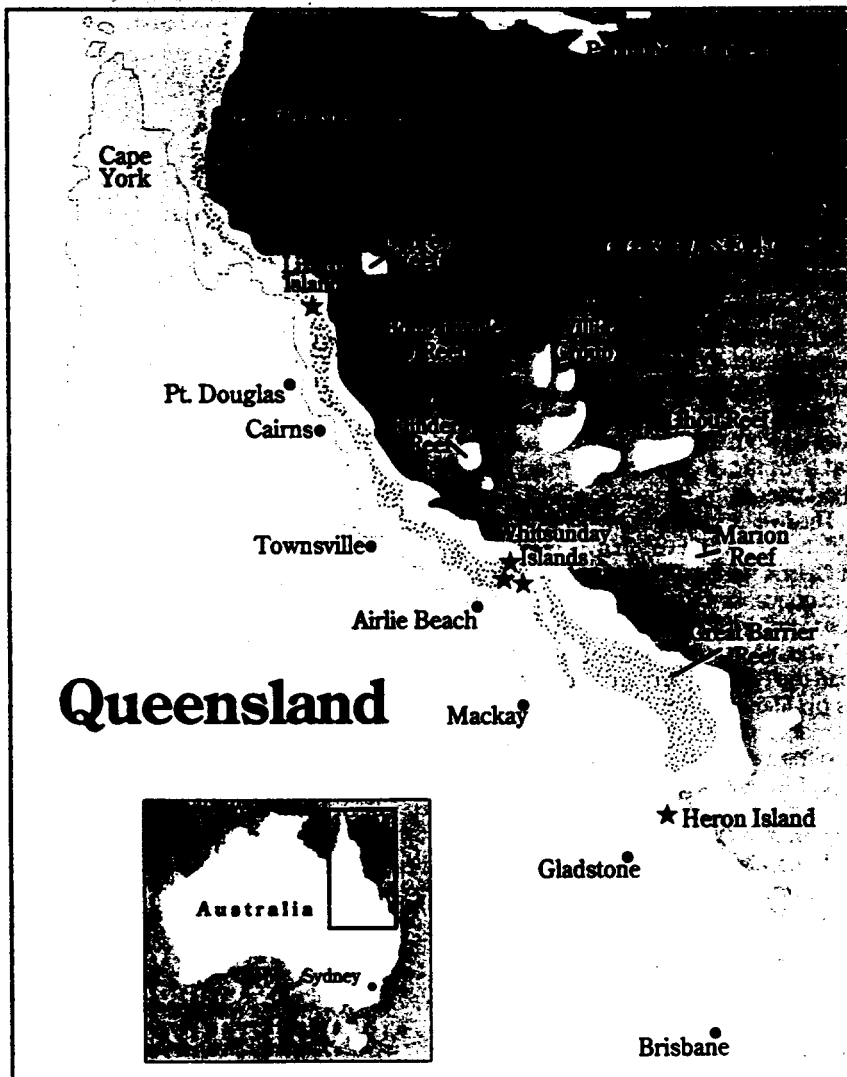
The Drop, off the northern tip of Ribbon No. 8, features a vertical drop-off to 140 feet. The area is loaded with pelagic fish, including Manta Rays, turtles and sharks. **Wonderland Reef**, on the inside of Ribbon No. 9, offers vertical wall diving, schooling fish, soft corals and lots of interesting invertebrates. **Gorgonian Plantation**, between Ribbons No. 9 and 10, is loaded with seafans, soft corals, red seaweeds and Black Coral.

Pixie Pinnacle, in the pass between Ribbon No. 9 and 10, is a coral pinnacle 30 feet in diameter that rises from a depth of 100 feet to within 6 feet of the surface. This spot is a favorite haunt for Barracuda, schools of Bigeye Trevally, tuna and other pelagics. The resident reef fish population includes seven Lionfish that live in a shadowy overhang, plus many clownfish, Coral Trout, Sergeant Majors and Red Sea Bass.

Plate Canyon is a favorite shallow reef dive for night excursions. Diving depths are from 3 to 50 feet. At night, the seafloor is alive with rare seashells, sea cucumbers, Lionfish and the occasional Whitetip Reef Shark.

Cod Hole, on the inside corner at the northern tip of Ribbon No. 10, is a world famous dive site known for its resident population of 18 to 20 tame Potato Cod. These large white groupers range from 50 to 120 pounds and can be handled. Diving depths range from 30 to 60 feet on a sloping bottom dotted with high profile coral heads.

Because of the daily Potato Cod feedings, the Cod Hole has become a fish-bowl of activity. Thousands of fish now gather at this location, including hundreds of Red Bass, three large 130 pound Maori Wrasse, many Flowery Cod and a dozen giant morays. Underwater



visibility is excellent, often reaching 100 feet plus.

One mile north of the Cod-Hole is **Dynamite Pass**, a narrow channel between two unnamed coral reefs. The channel is approximately 100 yards wide, three-quarters of a mile long and 100 feet deep in the center. The sides of the channel rise vertically to within three feet of the surface. This site is usually done as a drift dive, which can last 30 to 40 minutes. The sides of the channel are loaded with soft corals, hard corals and seafans.

CORAL SEA LIVE-ABOARDS

The ultimate in Australia live-aboard diving is to cruise into the Coral Sea. Of all the dive boats operating in Australia, only a handful have the proper marine survey credentials for doing this kind of cruising.

These vessels have home ports all along the Queensland Coast from Port Douglas to Gladstone. Because they are long range cruising live-aboards, these vessels are likely to be operating in any part of the Coral Sea or along any part of the Great Barrier Reef. Their cruise itineraries vary, depending on season and specified destination. The same vessel is likely to be seen visiting coral atolls in the Southern Coral Sea during one part of the year and then switching to the Northern Coral Sea and Northern Great Barrier Reef during another part of the year.

NORTHERN CORAL SEA

Australia's Coral Sea is a vast expanse of virgin ocean that remains untouched by commercialism, tourism or development. Lying well beyond the Great Barrier Reef, this unpopulated zone of the South Pacific is the home of one-half ton Marlin, 16 foot Manta Rays, 600 pound Queensland Gropers, schools of Pacific Barracuda, Whales, sharks and more. The great sea is geographically divided into two zones for diving—the Northern Coral Sea, lying north of Cairns, and the Southern Coral Sea, stretching from Cairns to Gladstone.

BOUGAINVILLE REEF

Bougainville is on the same latitude as Cooktown. It is only 80 miles from the outer edge of the Great Barrier Reef. Live aboard dive boats generally combine a Bougainville trip with diving along the Ribbon Reefs on the Great Barrier Reef. The trip from the Ribbons to Bougainville takes about eight hours. The cruise is generally done at night, departing the Ribbons after dinner. Guests awake the next morning at the dive site.

Bougainville is one of the smallest of the major Coral Sea atolls but it still offers several miles of virgin reefs. Somewhat circular in shape, Bougainville represents the tip of a submerged mountain that ris-

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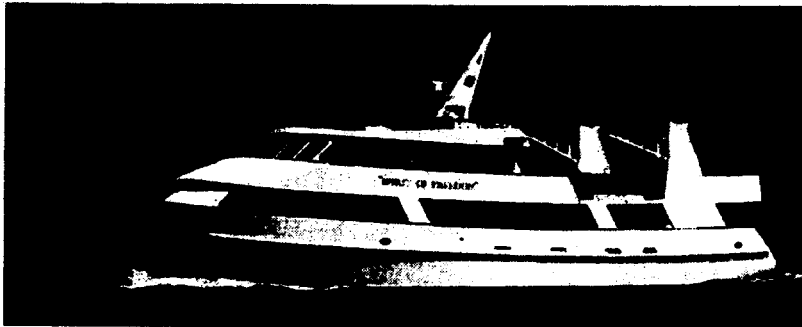
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es thousands of feet from the ocean floor. The waters surrounding Bougainville range from 2,000 to 6,000 feet in depth. As a result, the underwater visibility averages 200 feet. These crystalline seas are unblemished by rain runoff, rivers or pollution.

Bougainville's major attractions are several spectacular drop-offs. These vertical walls are adorned with incredibly large soft corals—some measuring six feet long. The delicate formations jut out from the wall, as their intricate web of filter feeding branches attempts to catch microscopic food in the current.

Another attraction at Bougainville is the wreck of the **Antonio Terabocchi**, an Italian freighter that crashed into the reef. The broken hulk lies in 20 to 60 feet of water and is absolutely loaded with fish life. It's a great subject for underwater photography.

OSPREY REEF

Osprey Reef is Australia's northernmost atoll in the Coral Sea. It lies on a latitude well north of Lizard Island. Osprey is 85 miles northeast of Lizard Island and only 70 miles from the Cod Hole.

Osprey is basically a barrier coral reef that encircles a shallow lagoon with only one opening to the sea. This oblong shaped atoll is approximately seven miles long and two miles wide. The depth inside the lagoon is 60 feet and the protected waters offer calm anchorage. Outside the barrier reef, the reef drops vertically to a depth of 6,000 feet.

Osprey was hit by a cyclone three years ago and the shallow corals were wiped out. The fish life is still there and the gigantic soft corals and Black Coral trees are still intact from 120 feet down.

North Horn, at northern tip of outside barrier reef, offers sheer wall diving and high voltage shark feeding action with Silvertips, Whitetip Reef Sharks and Bronze Whalers—and sometimes Tiger Sharks. There are also lots of pelagics, including Barracuda schools, Manta Rays and Dogtooth Tuna.

Flashlight Ravine is an unusual night dive at the edge of a tiny channel. The area is known for the thousands of rare Flashlight Fish that rise from the deep. **North Point**, on the north side of the lagoon entrance, has lots of coral caves for swim-throughs, a few sharks and lots of pelagics.

Reef Wall, on the southwest side, consists of a vertical wall plummeting to 6,000 feet. This site has Lots of sharks

and pelagics. **Pelagic Gully** has huge red soft corals and yellow soft corals growing side by side. **Dark Side of the Moon** has giant soft corals growing at depths of 120 feet or deeper.

FAR NORTH

One of the newest and most exciting regions for long range live-aboard trips is the Far North—an unexplored region of the Northern Great Barrier Reef, 150 to 250 miles north of Lizard Island. This segment of the Great Barrier Reef is uninhabited and virtually inaccessible except by live-aboard boats.

The Far North is regarded by Australian diving experts as being as good, or better than the Coral Sea. The reefs and marine life in this area are pristine and the water much warmer. There is a tremendous abundance of marine life in this sector, including many unique creatures you might only see in nearby Papua New Guinea waters. The Far North is also rich in shipwrecks and maritime history.

The hottest dive sites in the Far North region are clustered around Great Detached Reef, a portion of the **Great Barrier Reef** that juts out into the Coral Sea. It is here that divers will find numerous shipwrecks—some identified and others not.

South of Great Detached Reef are other spectacular sites at **Wishbone Reef**, **Northern Small Detached Reef**, **Southern Small Detached Reef** and **Tijou Reef**. Wall diving in these regions is awesome and the shark action intense. Underwater visibility is reported to be in excess of 200 feet. Another area that offers spectacular diving is **Raine Island**, farther north from Great Detached Reef. It also offers shipwreck exploration and great marine life.

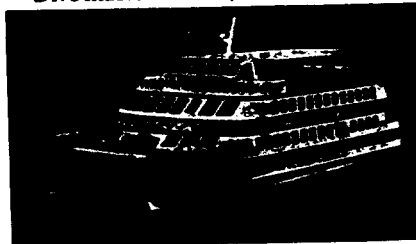
CONCLUSION

We have only described one small sector of Australia—covering less than five percent of the country. There are many other areas of Australia still unexplored and uncharted for diving.

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Disaster updates

■ **Los Angeles/Earthquake:** Most attractions are open, including Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, the zoo, major museums and Universal Studios. Two large hotels in the San Fernando Valley were due to reopen last week; the Holiday Inn Bayview, in Santa Monica, is to reopen Feb. 20. The Sheraton Universal will not reopen until March 15. The damaged freeway most likely to impact tourists is the Santa Monica, which is blocked at La Cienega. Three other freeways have some blockages, but the new I05 freeway running east from the airport will help the situation. Information: Visitor Information Hotline, (800) 228-2452, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. EST.

■ **Puerto Rico/Oil Spill:** Fouled beaches east of San Juan — on the 1½ miles serving six big international hotels — are currently being cleaned up, with work expected to be completed by the end of February. All hotels in the Condado area are open and are busing guests to beaches in the Isla Verde area. Information: Puerto Rico Tourism Co., (800) 815-7391.

■ **Australia/Fires:** While Sydney and its tourist attractions went unscathed, the Royal National Park, about 20 miles south of the city and popular with hikers, boaters and surfers, was largely destroyed. Attractions in the Blue Mountains, such as the Three Sisters rock formation and Echo Point lookout, are open. Airline schedules and highway and rail routes are all back to normal, tourism officials report. Information: Australian Tourist Commission, (212) 687-6300.

February 6, 1994
Washington, D.C.
Washington Sunday Times

Sun, fun on Gold Coast

By Karen Riley
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

SURFERS PARADISE, Australia
Australia's oceanside playground, the Gold Coast, easily holds its own against any of America's fun-in-the sun locations.

It's doubtful you would fly halfway around the world to bask on 27 miles of unspoiled beaches. But if you want a few days to soak up the rays, then the Gold Coast with 300 days of sunshine is your place.

Below Brisbane and 588 miles north of Sydney, it is a favorite for Australian weekend getaways. The airport is Coolangatta, busy and modern and the site of an unusual auto rental company that deals solely in old Ford Mustangs. We enjoyed the area's most developed section known as Surfers Paradise: ho-

tels and gleaming condos, the azure-colored Pacific Ocean to the east and expensive homes along the inlets of the Nerang River to the west.

In March, Surfers Paradise hosts the Gold Coast IndyCar Grand Prix. The streets are lined with tens of thousands of spectators to watch the three-day event.

The white-sand beach here is clean and expansive, the surf worthy of the area's name and there are no tacky T-shirt shops.

When you tire of watching surfers catch a curl, there's deep-sea fishing, water skiing, diving, sailing or parasailing. Golfers may choose from 22 (soon to be 36) area courses, while high rollers can try their luck at Jupiter's Casino.

If shopping at the colorful boutiques in downtown Surfers Paradise isn't enough, there's always nearby Pacific Fair, which claims to be one of the largest shopping centers in the Southern Hemisphere.

For a broad perspective of the sun and surf, take a one-hour helicopter "Joy Flight" over Surfers Paradise. You may be rewarded, too, by sighting a school of dolphins as we did. There also are the usual beach-town attractions such as miniature golf and theme parks.

Try to set aside a day to drive to the rugged hills of Lamington National Park, the largest preserved natural stand of subtropical rain forest in Australia. If you take the road to the park that stops at O'Reilly's Guest House, buy a bag of seed from the carryout to feed the dozens of colorful parrots that reside there.

We stayed at the luxurious ANA Gold Coast hotel, which offers impeccable service. But there are plenty of accommodations available at a modest price. Visitors should be warned, however, that some area motels have been criticized for misleading price advertising suggesting they were charging as low as about \$10 to \$17 a night in U.S. currency when rooms cost four times that much. The low rate may be quoted as a per-person rate or apply only on a stay of seven days or more.

The numerous restaurants are said to be the largest collection per square mile in the country. Our favorite was intimate Geppetto Trattoria on Chevron Island, with a local clientele. It features regional Italian cuisine and personalized service from owner Chris Phillips.

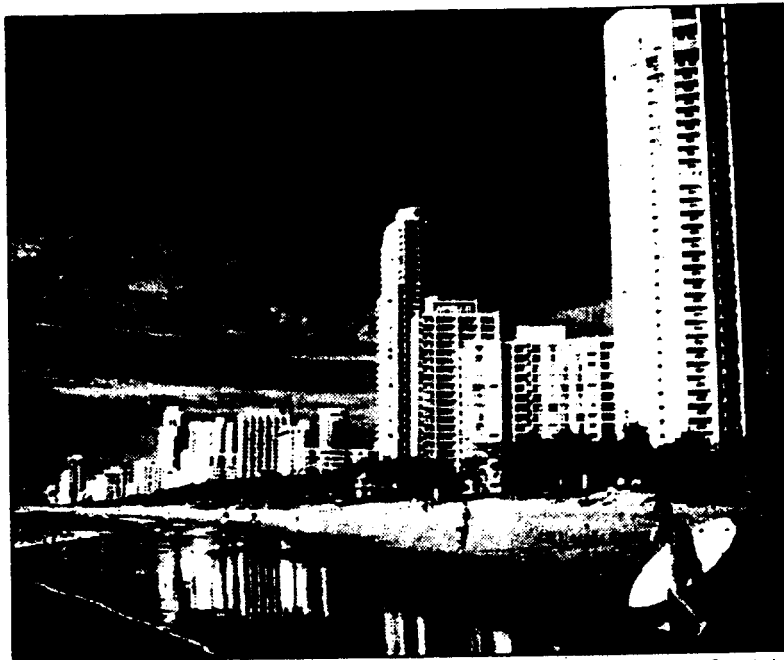


Photo courtesy Australian Tourist Commission

Australia's Gold Coast is miles of beaches along water every shade of blue.

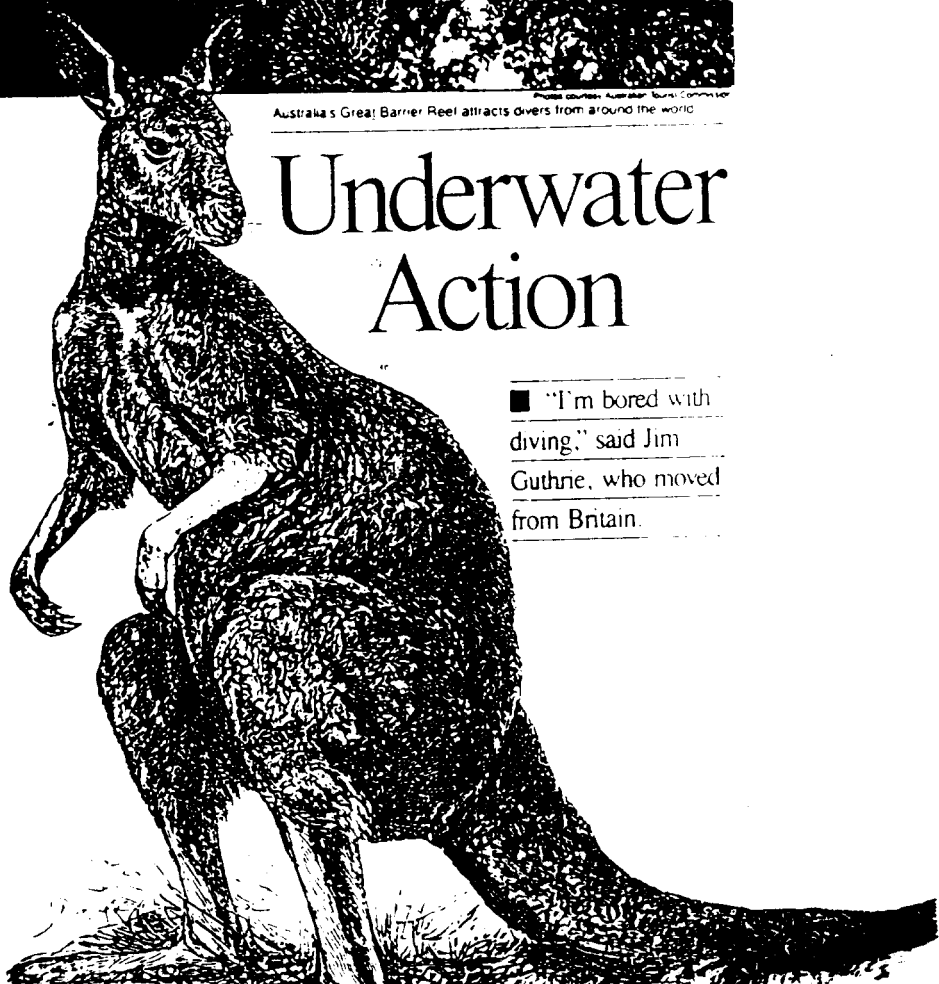
February 6, 1994
Washington, D.C.
Washington Sunday Times



Photos courtesy Australian Bureau of Oceanography
Australia's Great Barrier Reef attracts divers from around the world.

Underwater Action

■ "I'm bored with diving," said Jim Guthrie, who moved from Britain.



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CAIRNS, Australia
Don't bother paying extra for beachfront hotel views when you make Cairns your base to visit the Great Barrier Reef.

The ocean action is way offshore in the Coral Sea, on a scale seen nowhere else on earth. But in this gateway to paradise, the Esplanade overlooks mud flats at half tide or less and mangrove sprouts are taking over.

Even at full high tide, the water near shore is only 2 feet deep and wading birds fish on foot.

"We've got no beach," said David Maguire, editor of the Cairns Post, who explained a local controversy over whether to fill it and put up hotels and a beach out where the water is deep or to live with what old-timers say is spoil dredged up during World War II.

"Environmental concerns are paramount — the Great Barrier Reef on one side and the rain forest on the other — and we wind up talking about mud all the time," said Mr. Maguire, who personally favors development out to the real coastline. Business owners along the present waterfront understandably don't like that idea a bit, but the knowledge could save a visitor money and grief.

At 17 degrees south latitude, far above the Tropic of Capricorn, Cairns is in many ways similar to Acapulco — except for the exotic reef.

There are many paradoxes in this village of 30,000:

■ Nearby rain forests are weathering drought.

■ Scuba divers who emigrate to spend more time underwater give up the sport.

■ Unlike much of Australia, where visitors can make opportunities while the tourist industry is dormant during the school year, there is no off-season.

"Weekends don't happen here," said Paul Gilley, manager of a hotel that relies on Australian ownership to attract heavy trade from Queenslanders. British tour groups are his secondary bread and butter.

"The main sort of Americans I see are fanatic divers," he said. Many organize themselves after arrival with companies such as Down Under Dive, which specializes in serious scuba. Others make the two-hour daily run to the reef or trek in four-wheelers to Cooktown and Cape Tribulation for more primitive access to the reef.

"That is so undisturbed," Mr. Gilley said of the off-road destinations further north, even beyond Port Douglas, which is laid back but with all the comforts and costs of resort life.

June to October is the high season in Cairns when virtually no rain occurs. In normal years, rainfall averages 20 inches a month in January, February or March.

Marlin season begins in September to late November, with other big game fishing year-round.

And there are no marine stingers in the water as there are in January through April when swimmers are advised to stay within protective enclosures.

Many of the half-million visitors who come each year want to get in the water and see their fish close up. The Great Barrier Reef, with 2,000 species of fish and countless types of coral, is a nirvana for professional divers but user-friendly even to people who can't swim.

The thrill of swimming within touching distance of blue-lined surgeonfish, angelfish, parrotfish, the harlequin tuskfish or fairy basslet, and the monster-looking stonefish or hulking potato cod is a powerful magnet.

Although fish were bright in refracted sunlight, the coral is not so colorful in the daytime when the polyps retreat into the white stony skeleton. The full purple and orange and yellow beauty of hard corals is best seen at night with lights.

We also saw huge sea urchins and the crown of thorns starfish, which are taking over some areas of the reef and literally eating it into oblivion.

Tourists view the reef from a variety of boats and stationary platforms at prime locations in this wa-

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REEF

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terry national park. Green Island is the most common first stop and about 200,000 people a year go there, particularly those with families. It offers a swimming beach, small aquarium, limited views of the reef and a few overnight accommodations.

However, those who selected the half-day stop at Green Island before continuing on to Norman Reef found the latter more rewarding.

We chose to go directly to Norman Reef on the Outer Barrier Reef via a large powerful catamaran, the Reef Queen. We got there in comfort, despite wind-whipped waters, and were back at the dock by 5:30 p.m. It was worth the \$75 for each person.

The base operated by Great Adventures at the reef was a moored barge the size of a football field, with awnings for shade, a lavish buffet, lifeguard towers, generous supplies of snorkeling equipment included. Guided "reef teach" tours were offered for snorkelers who could stay in the water for as long as 2½ hours.

For about \$50 more, scuba gear and instruction were available with elaborate packages.

We also took an underwater tour of the reef without getting wet in a semisubmersible boat that seemed like a rather airy submarine. It accidentally bumped the reef several times and we saw scars from previous encounters.

Glass-bottom boats were offered but seemed redundant with the semisubmersible and the wall of glass viewing ports on the base barge. For those wanting to see the

reef from yet another angle, a helicopter tour can be purchased with liftoff from a nearby barge.

Many employees of Cairns businesses who emigrated from Europe and elsewhere to be near the diving grounds found themselves in workaday lives.

"I'm bored with diving," said Jim Guthrie, who moved from Britain and wears an expensive diving watch although he has given up the sport.

There also is danger from sharks in more remote areas. When we were there, experienced scuba diver Julie Hammermeister vanished during a dive in 20 meters on Ribbon Reef from a party boat at Cape Flattery, almost 200 miles north of Cairns, leaving behind only tooth-torn shreds of bathing suit. The only question was whether a shark took her alive or after an unrelated mishap.

There's lots to do on land as well including visits to the most tropical of Australia's rain forests.

Packages sold by an unusually low-pressure group of competing tour operators for about \$77 per adult, include one-way travel by the quaint old Kuranda railway, return by tour bus, a rain forest walk, tea, lunch, the Tjapukai Aborigine dance theater, a visit to a marvelous butterfly sanctuary and a shopping trip. They advertise a view of "the mighty Barron falls" which, due to the semidrought, were dry.

We bypassed the popular train in favor of driving to Kuranda in a rented convertible to give ourselves more flexibility at lower cost.

We truly enjoyed the Australian Butterfly Sanctuary where 35 of Australia's 382 species live and breed in "the world's largest butter-

Trips, rentals and other info

Sunshine Tower, 140 Sheridan St., Cairns, PO Box 220, North Cairns, Queensland 4870, Australia.

Good guide: "Islands of Australia's Great Barrier Reef," by Tony Wheeler, published by Lonely Planet Publications, Hawthorn, Australia, and Berkeley, Calif.

Tour broker: Out and About Tour Centre, 103 the Esplanade (low pressure).

Reef trips: Great Adventures, based in Cairns. Phone 070-51-5644, fax 070-51-7556. U.S. office: 9841 Airport Blvd., Suite 820, Los Angeles, Calif., 90045. 800/354-7471 or fax 213/410-9451. (We chose this one based on local recommendations and got our money's worth.)

Car rental: Reef Rent-a-Car, 142 Sheridan St., Cairns, 070-31-5500. Owners Debra and Ian Wegener were helpful and reliable. Prices range from \$38 to \$60 a day. (Warning: Unless you rent an off-road vehicle, stay on paved roads. That means no trips to Cape Tribulation, Chillagoe Caves or Cooktown. Rental four-wheel drives available for back-country travel, self-drive or chauffeured.)

Cairns information: Far North Queensland Promotion Bureau, PO Box 865, Queensland 4870, Australia 070-51-3588, fax 070-51-0127

Port Douglas information: Douglas Shire Tourism Associates, PO Box 511, Port Douglas, Queensland 4871, Australia.

Australian Butterfly Sanctuary: 130,000-cubic-foot glass aviary. \$9 for adults, \$5 for kids. Kuranda, Far North Queensland. PO Box 345, Kuranda, Australia 4872. 070-93-7575 or fax 070-93-8923.

— Frank J. Murray

fly farm in terms of enclosed flight space." We saw the fluoro-green Cairns birdwing, the stunning electric blue and black Ulysses and the red lacewing.

We then drove inland to Mossman Gorge National Park.

At the Daintree River, triangular signs depict a crocodile with its mouth open. "Don't swim there unless you like company in the water," we were advised.

A side trip to Port Douglas and the Route 4 coastal highway brought us past spectacular empty beaches on the way back. We visited the unusual stony beach near Yule Point and watched hang gliders and parasailers swoop in and out of Rex Lookout.

Port Douglas combines quaint and modern. It offers a four-mile public beach with easy access and parking. The churchyard that passes for a town square is near a marina peopled with characters worth a chat.

For the adventurous there is bungee jumping as it was pioneered by the Maoris. For about \$90 you get a 44-meter jump, a T-shirt and the chance to buy a videotape of the big moment.

"You can come away spending \$200 for a three-second jump," said one skeptic of the people who have their ankles bound together and tied to an elastic cable just before they plunge toward water 150 feet below.

Most visitors stay in full-service hotels, like Mr. Gilley's Sunshine Tower, while others, including ubiquitous backpackers, favor dormitory-style hostels at about \$7 per night. While "motel" means the same in the United States and Australia, the word "hotel" often identifies a pub and has nothing to do with a place to

sleep.

We felt good about paying about \$75 for a Sunshine Tower queen bed suite with living room, kitchenette with fridge and micro, and cable TV with free movies. Even lower prices are possible through the Flag voucher system.

The seven-story lodging place was four blocks from the beach, turning its back on the mud flats in favor of wonderful mountain views of the Great Dividing Range.

As at many hotels in Australia, the best advice on food is: Eat out. Italian, Chinese or other ethnic restaurants are the best option. Aussies offer a lot but we found food low on their priority list, except for the ritual barbecue offering kangaroo, buffalo, barramundi, emu and crocodile.

"That's for people who want to say they had that true experience," Mr. Gilley explained.

The Radisson at the Pier was the town's paramount hotel and stays filled at about \$140 to \$185 despite excellent views of the mud flats. Neither its shopping mall nor the Radisson lobby is to be missed.

The lobby decor reproduces in fiberglass Disneyesque style a rain forest with fiberglass anaconda and boas dangling from fiberglass tree limbs amid real waterfalls, fake kiwi and koala, but real bellhops.

The Pier, on the other hand, was a stylish and outstanding collection of souvenir shops, high-cost fashions, and a food court like none we'd seen. Like a corridor of restaurants at the more egalitarian Esplanade, they offered elaborate eat-in or takeaway meals, primarily ethnic and seafood including the offer of "crabs, bugs, prawns." Bugs are lobsters.

February 6, 1994
Washington, D.C.

"Sydney capitalizes on its
natural beauty and location"

Washington Sunday Times

By Karen Riley
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

6675
SYDNEY, Australia

The most popular tourist destination Down Under claimed world-class status by winning the war to host the 2000 Summer Olympics.

At age 200, Australia's oldest and largest city may lack the depth of history and tradition that draws visitors to such venerable capitals as Rome and London. But beautiful Sydney has something for everyone.

People come for stunning views in a kaleidoscope of blue water, clear air, dramatic soaring architecture and constant bright sunlight.

And they come to party.

All-night blowouts such as the celebration when the city got the nod from the International Olympic Committee and annual New Year's Eve fireworks extravaganzas were seen everywhere on TV. But the harbor and bridges fill with people for festivals and on any given Sunday there may be five street parties going at once in the Rocks historic district.

Sydney also has its own quirky history. It may be the only city in the world that honors the name of convicts who were its first settlers. The city is justifiably the nation's top draw for international travelers, and two-thirds of all foreigners come here while only 6 percent visit the main Outback attractions where you're more apt to encounter shrimp-on-the-barbie or Crocodile Dundee stereotypes.

This commodious spot has also been a magnet for a broad cross section of more permanent residents, giving Sydney a cosmopolitan flavor

all of its own. The vast Sydney Harbor with 152 miles of shoreline and 22 miles of deep water ports defines and dominates the city that it also divides.

Modern skyscrapers push up to the shoreline on either side of the harbor while tour boats, sailboats, ocean-going ships and speedy ferries crowd the deep waters between. Sydney Harbour Bridge and the new tunnel can ease the crossing except at rush hours when they can be as pokey as the Capital Beltway.

Whether by ferry, catamaran or a floating Yellow Taxi, cruise the harbor away from the city center as it flows to the Tasman Sea and pass inlet after inlet whose gentle hills are peppered with expensive residential communities.

The focal point from land and water is the renowned Sydney Opera House located on Bennelong Point jutting out from Sydney Cove, the main inlet into which nonstop boat traffic carries hordes of people to city center.

The opera house's curved arches are designed to look like sails filled by the wind, but it has become a bit tattered since opening in 1973, forcing some recent repairs. No need to bother with a tour. Unless you can get tickets to one of its five theaters — or plan a stop at its two restaurants or six bars — the outer appearance is seen best from afar.

A 15-minute walk around the cove brings you to Circular Quay, where ferries keep their schedules to the minute as they constantly fan out from their 10 slips to destinations all around the harbor. Some visitors watch for hours as daring captains speed into the slips, churning the propellers in reverse only when a

collision seems imminent.

The sidewalk along the Quay, which is at the edge of Sydney's financial district, is dotted with outside cafes, street vendors and sidewalk performers.

Just 10 minutes down the wharf is the Rocks, the oldest settled section of Sydney, where narrow streets wind through one of the city's hilliest sections. It is a colorful maze of restaurants, shops and hotels squeezed into buildings dating to the first European settlement.

One store, Australian Craftworks, is in an 1882 jail. The handiwork of Australian artists is displayed in original jail cells. And for southpaws there's the Left-Handed Products store.

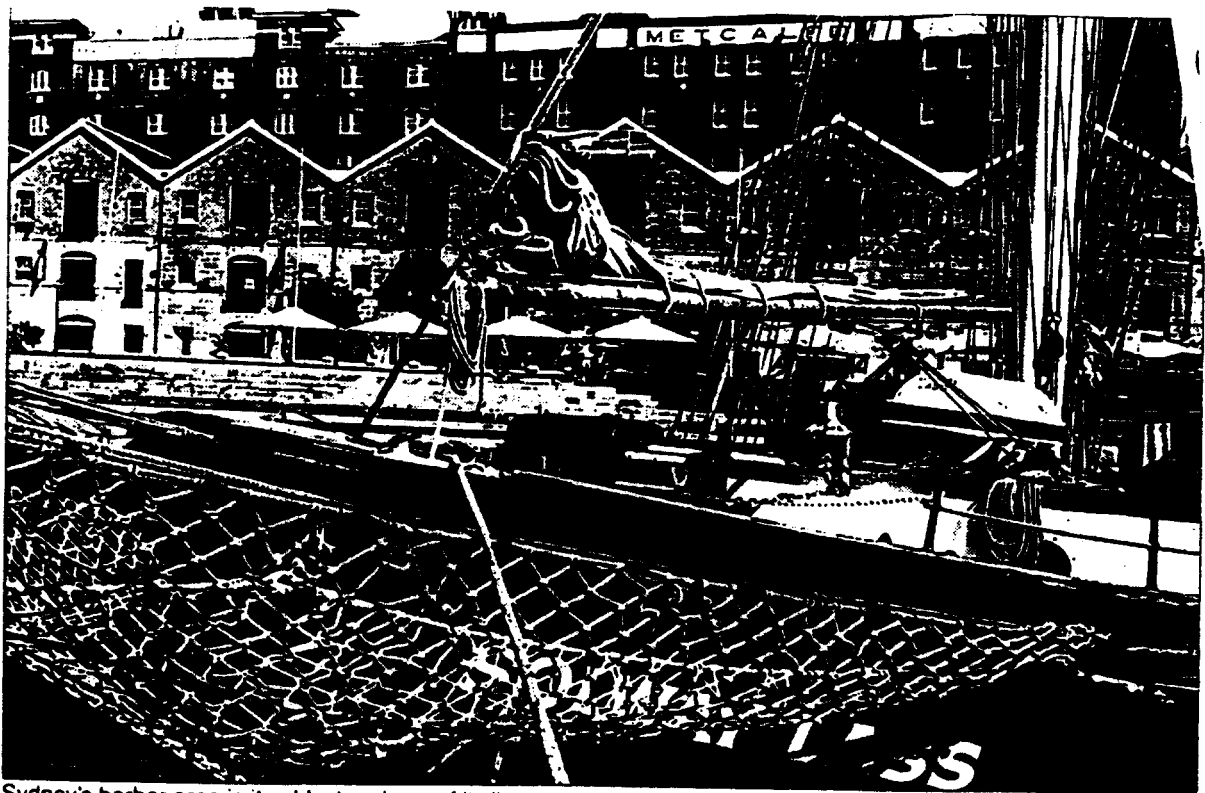
Numerous stores selling opals — or slices of opals for those on a budget. Foreigners who show passports are rebated the 30 percent sales tax on the gems.

The most popular day-trip outside Sydney is to the rolling Blue Mountains, a 50-mile drive from Sydney. The ancient, mouldering rocks appear blue because they are overgrown with eucalyptus trees, the feeding grounds of the fabled koalas. The trees release droplets of oil that mix with the atmosphere to produce a bluish haze. Here you can hike through Blue Mountain National Park, stop at countless waterfalls or stroll through the area's many historic villages and museums.

But be warned to check beforehand on Blue Mountains conditions before making plans. Wildfires roared through this popular area earlier this month, causing extended damage and killing much of the wildlife, including many koalas.



Sydney's Chinatown is just one of the attractions of the city that is to play host to the Olympics.



Sydney's harbor area is its oldest and one of its liveliest neighborhoods.

Photos courtesy Australian Tourist Commission

Another favorite stop is a wine-tasting tour to Hunter Valley, Australia's oldest and most successful premium wine area and an easy two-hour drive. Most of the 50-plus wineries have Napa Valley-style tasting rooms and a few have tours.

The best — perhaps only — way to view Sydney is to hop one of the many ferries at Circular Quay. One ferry goes to the nearby inlet called Darling Harbour, a festival area similar in spirit to Baltimore's Inner Harbor.

There's a carousel and fun park here, the Sydney Convention Centre, a golf driving range, a Chinese Garden, a sports center and two major shopping malls, all linked by monorail.

The highlights are the Sydney Aquarium, filled with fish of the Great Barrier Reef, and the new National Maritime Museum. Its soaring indoor exhibits include graphic displays of the long voyages from Europe by those who settled this island-continent, a wing devoted with gratitude to wartime alliances with the United States at sea, and the piece de resistance, Australia II, the 1983 winner of the America's Cup with sails unfurled and always filled with wind.

Another ferry stops at Taronga Zoo on the North Shore, home to over 3,000 animals and the world's largest collection of Australian fauna.

The ride we found most rewarding goes to the far suburb of Manly on the shores of the Tasman Sea. The more expensive hydrofoil got us there in just over 20 minutes and the ferry took about 35 minutes or so to return. It's a short walk from the Manly docks to the fine sand beach some call a resort within a city.

Sydney has 34 ocean beaches — more than any other city — and the average water temperature is a mild 68 degrees. The weather was warm enough even in wintry mid-August to attract crowds and fill the ferries with Sunday day-trippers.

A bargain three-day SydneyPass, sold at the ferry docks, airport and other key tourist locations for about \$25 in U.S. currency, gives unlimited access to all ferries and buses, including one round-trip to and from Sydney Airport on the Airport Express Bus and unlimited segments on the Sydney Explorer Bus, which operates a 13-mile circuit to 22 top sightseeing attractions, a concept similar to Washington's TourMobile.

Befitting such a cosmopolitan city, Sydney offers hotels to pamper even the most sophisticated world traveler. For the finale of our bargain, off-season journey we chose the newest and most upscale, the ANA Sydney in the Rocks.

The International Olympic Committee has the ANA booked as headquarters for the games in 2000. It's also sold out prepaid for New Year's Eve 1999, when Sydney plans an extraordinary celebration.

This is the first hotel ever built by ANA, a Japanese company that also operates All Nippon Airways. It is decidedly Australian, although the management controls its every aspect. "They went to incredible lengths to make sure this was not a 'Japanese hotel,'" ANA executive Sam Hamilton said.

Take noise, for example. There is none; latex pads have been laid under marble floors. Hydraulically controlled toilet seats are raised and lowered silently and water pressure won't flicker even if every faucet in

the building is turned on at the same instant.

The water for the indoor pool is heated by hot air from the air-conditioner heat exchanger and the building is warmed by heat generated in its laundry and 10 kitchens.

"This was declared Australia's most environmentally sensitive building," Mr. Watson said.

It's also luxurious and has several top-flight restaurants including three in historic houses, each originally built for \$100 or so and now meticulously restored at a total cost of \$6.7 million.

One restaurant, the Lilyvale, was squeezed into nooks of the third-oldest cottage in Sydney, built in 1845. Most recently a shelter for the homeless, it also had been a "gentleman's residence," which appears to be a euphemism for brothel. Its third floor has but one dining room, a private setting for six with an adjacent sitting room for drinks and meetings favored by politicians and business moguls.

Hart's Pub, in one of the old houses, offers beer and all-you-can-eat meat pies, soup and salad for lunch at \$8. It is popular with nearby stock brokers.

As reporters, there were two room amenities that particularly pleased us. One was the fax edition of the New York Times hung on our doorknob each evening. The other was the blue television tuning button marked "news" that featured a continuous flow of live broadcasts from Newsvision, Univision, BBC, NBC, CNBC, Britain's ITN, New Zealand's TVN2 and Financial Times TV — all in addition to the usual CNN channel.