

AUSTRALIAN

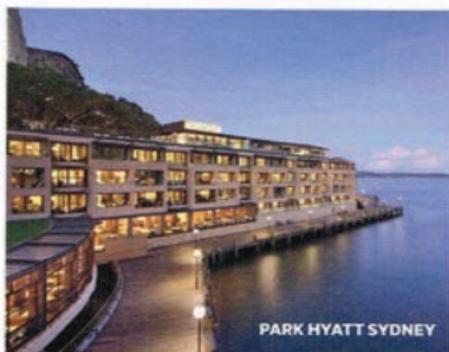
GOURMET TRAVELLER

2014
AUSTRALIAN
HOTEL
GUIDE

IN PROUD ASSOCIATION WITH

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THE AWARDS



Best Large City Hotel

PARK HYATT SYDNEY, NSW

It's about the service – seamless and sharp – and the rooms, which feel like chic harbourside apartments. And the rooftop pool. And the spa. But what clinches it for Park Hyatt Sydney, what gives it the edge over its five-star rivals, are those drop-dead, dress-circle views of the Opera House and Circular Quay. A truly memorable hotel. sydney.park.hyatt.com

Best Boutique City Hotel

HOTEL HOTEL, CANBERRA, ACT

We love the exquisite attention to detail, and the lack of preciousness. Peel back the layers of quality and you'll find more underneath, right down to the bones of the building. Interiors brim with so much inspiration that no two rooms are alike. It's not about creating a hotel that's "good, for Canberra"; it's about a terrific hotel, full stop. Hotel Hotel – so good, they named it twice. hotel-hotel.com.au

Best Regional Hotel

LAKE HOUSE, DAYLESFORD, VIC

It has taken more than 30 years of tireless enthusiasm and meticulous attention, but Alla and Allan Wolf-Tasker have created a remarkable property that sets the standard for regional hotels in Australia. Take a beautiful setting, add sumptuous accommodation, a restaurant so good it's a destination dining spot, a decadent spa and the sort of calm, considerate service that makes every guest feel special, and you have Lake House. lakehouse.com.au

Best Hotel Service

CROWN TOWERS, MELBOURNE, VIC

It starts with Kevin Gleeson, Crown's doorman since the day Melbourne's glossiest hotel opened in 1994. He greets guests by name, offers insider tips to the city and, perhaps most miraculously, can accurately predict Melbourne's famously fickle weather. He's the first (and often the last) contact guests have at Crown Towers, and he and his colleagues set the tone for unparalleled, intuitive service that reaches its peak in the lavish Presidential and Chairman's villas. crownmelbourne.com.au

Best Hotel Breakfast

QT GOLD COAST, QLD

There are hotel breakfasts, and then there is the "interactive marketplace" that is Bazaar restaurant at the QT Gold Coast. If the popping colours and modern

THE LOBBY AND
GRAND STAIRCASE



AN ORIGINAL ROOM

HOTEL HOTEL

Wait, did you just say the best boutique hotel in Australia is in Canberra? That's right, folks: no need to adjust your set or check your dosage – this is the real thing. Canberra's day has come and this remarkable property is a lightning rod for all that's good and great about our capital. It's a quality build this, and there's depth to its appeal. Its environmental friendliness and architectural ambition haven't come at the cost of comfort or elegance. It's cool, but in an inclusive way; no one wants a chilly space in Canberra, regardless of whether we're speaking literally or figuratively. There's wit in the packaging, personality in the art and furnishings, a refreshing absence of collateral in the rooms and just a hint of the scent of popcorn wafting in the air from the adjoining arthouse cinema. It's also practical: a centrally located hotel with plenty of parking, easy access to the city's cultural and business centres, and with a smart approach to food and beverage, all sited within a precinct that's quickly becoming one of the territory's most interesting micro-neighbourhoods. Hotel Hotel? Hear hear.

We love The level of artistic engagement with designers and makers results in a hotel where no two rooms are truly alike. The richness of texture is utterly seductive.

Don't miss Take one of the fixed-gear Italian bicycles for a spin round the lake; you can be at the National Museum in under five minutes and, if you're quick, the National Gallery in 15.

Feeling hungry Sean McConnell, brother of Melbourne's Andrew (Cutler & Co., Cumulus Inc.) and Matt (Bar Lourinhã), maintains the family reputation for approachable culinary smarts with the likes of house-made crumpets at breakfast, pork and kimchi buns at lunch and twice-cooked duck with quince and chestnut for dinner.

Thoughtful extras There's evidence of care at every turn, whether it's the long-sleeved grey

linen robes, or the A Baker coffee in the cupboard.

Stepping out There's a Palace cinema under the same roof, the National Film and Sound Archive over one road, and Lake Burley Griffin over the other. The precinct is also home to a clutch of notable eateries and bars.

Room service A menu drawn largely from the eatery in the lobby includes a Barcelona-inspired jamón and Manchego sourdough toastie, oysters, Ortiz anchovies, and a fine zucchini, farro and goat's curd salad.

Drink up Cocktails in the lobby bar are pleasantly left-of-centre: "gin, violet and citrus", say. Canberra wines are well represented, as are small Champagne houses and key producers from the Loire and Burgundy, Gippsland and McLaren Vale. Nick O'Leary riesling and 4 Pines kölsch pep up the minibar.

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without breakfast.
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mavens, culture
vultures.
AT A GLANCE
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wheelchair access;
café-restaurant,
bar, gym, library,
boutique, paid
parking.

IN ROOM
Free WiFi, iPad
compendium,
plunger coffee,
Aesop bathroom
products.
BEST BEDS
Room 320 has
a particularly
pleasing shape,
a sweet bath,
and its walls are
thickly clustered
with framed
pictures and
objets trouvés.