

EXCLUSIVE EXTRACT: MY MOTHER'S SECRET BY BARRIE CASSIDY

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# GOOD WEEKEND

## 52 WEEKENDS AWAY

Your ultimate guide to Australia's  
best short-haul escapes



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A WEEKEND  
AWAY  
THANKS TO  
TFE HOTELS  
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# Urban

For big buildings, big ideas and a big buzz, the big smoke beckons: whether you want a staycation or interstate escape, our capital cities transform on the weekend.



**URBAN RENEWAL:** The striking foyer in Canberra's Hotel Hotel.

**HOTEL HOTEL**  
25 Edinburgh Avenue, Canberra, ACT  
**PHONE:** (02) 6287 6287  
**WEB:** hotel-hotel.com.au

**THE LOCATION** Canberra is cool. *The New York Times* has acknowledged it, so it must be true, right? Well, pockets of Canberra are cool. NewActon, Hotel Hotel's home, is a case in point: a hip precinct that's quickly filling with restaurants, bars and galleries.

**THE PLACE** Hotel Hotel is spread over three floors of NewActon's Nishi building, an environmentally sustainable apartment and retail block with a Japanese-inspired design, which has become a bit of a local landmark since its completion early last year. Arrival at the 68-room hotel can be underwhelming (there's no private parking or concierge to take your bags; guests must park in the public Nishi car park and lug their bags up to their rooms), but don't

let that put you off. The atrium-style lobby-cum-restaurant, with its large open fireplace, wall of vintage suitcases and open library stacked with art and design books makes you understand immediately why this hotel has been creating the buzz it has. Rooms are elegantly designed, with Danish furniture, raw concrete and fabric-papered walls, leather banquet seating, iPads and Aesop products. Request a lake view room; those on the inner layer of the first floor, which look out onto a verdant but dark courtyard, feel a tad war-bunkensh.

**THE EXPERIENCE** Hotel Hotel has 10 slick Goodspeed pushbikes for free hire. Take one for a spin to Telstra Tower for a city view, to the Botanic Gardens to commune with rosellas, cockatoos and roos, or to the National Arboretum for a picnic beneath the cedar trees. If you're feeling lazy, catch an arthouse flick on the Nishi building's ground-floor Palace Electric Cinema, or sup on delectable

share-plates and wine at Hotel Hotel's Monster kitchen and bar. You'd be equally as well served heading across the road to A. Baker, an industrial-styled restaurant, pumping speakeasy and elegant wine room in one.

**DON'T MISS** Lonsdale Street Traders in Braddon, the hipster heart of town. A former tyre warehouse, the space now hosts an array of independent shops, including Frith Street for vintage clothing, Moxom & Whitney florist (they sell gorgeous terrariums), and vegan bakery Sweet Bones.  
**NINA KARNIKOWSKI**

**NEED TO KNOW**

**COST:** From \$275 a night.  
**DISTANCE:** 3 hours' drive (287km) south-west of Sydney.  
**CHILDREN:** Yes.

**THE HENRY JONES ART HOTEL**

25 Hunter Street, Hobart, Tasmania  
**PHONE:** (03) 6210 7700  
**WEB:** thehenryjones.com



**THE LOCATION** Beside Victoria Dock on Hobart's historic harbourside, where the settlement of Hobart town began. A salty precinct, where wheeling gulls preside over a working fishing fleet, tourism outlets and restored warehouses from the 1820s.

**THE PLACE** The hotel spans a row of revived warehouses that once housed Tassie's iconic IXL jam factory. The hotel was named for one-time factory worker Henry Jones, who rose from sticking labels on jam tins to running an empire involving jam, fruit, timber, shipping and mining. Most rooms and suites offer water views; others overlook the preserved IXL Atrium, or show glimpses of the old jam factory's rough-hewn interior. The spacious rooms blend weathered beams and crumbling bricks with stylish décor. The hotel has an in-house restaurant and bar.

**THE EXPERIENCE** The hotel showcases many works by local painters, sculptors and artisans, and is itself an award-winning feat of creative architecture. All rooms exhibit original artworks, most of which can be purchased, while furniture and fittings – making use of Tasmania's famous timber veneers – are part of the theme merging history with a sense of place and cultural identity. Signs dotted about the place recall the days when the jam factory was "heavy with the fragrance of boiling fruit, [and its] floor slippery with spilt jam".

**DON'T MISS** Hobart offers a range of local art and craft galleries. Cruises of the Derwent River depart from nearby docks, and there is a range of typically creative local eateries to check out while strolling the waterfront precinct. **FRANK ROBSON**

**NEED TO KNOW**

**COST:** From \$345 a night.  
**DISTANCE:** A short walk from Hobart CBD and Salamanca Place.  
**CHILDREN:** Yes.

**TYRIAN SERVICED APARTMENTS**

91 Johnston Street, Fitzroy, Vic  
**PHONE:** (03) 9415 1900  
**WEB:** tyrian.com.au

**THE LOCATION** For those requiring speedy access to Melbourne's CBD, but aren't thrilled with sleeping in a high-rise, Fitzroy – bohemian, multi-ethnic and colourful – is the place to be. Melbourne's oldest suburb offers what every visitor is really seeking out in this city: character.

**THE PLACE** Corporate-looking but comfortable, the furnishings – all chrome and royal purples – bring to mind a slick airline lounge. A deluxe apartment has a balcony with a Melbourne CBD skyline view. There's a kitchenette and laundry, and supermarket downstairs.

**THE EXPERIENCE** From here, you can pack the quintessential Melbourne experience – museums, trams, restaurants, galleries, shopping, laneway coffee – into one day. Stroll through Carlton Gardens and Museum Victoria, grab a bite in Brunswick Street's iconic restaurants and cafes, shop at its boutiques, then hop on a tram into

Federation Square. Walk to the National Gallery, and you've seen the best of the city.

**DON'T MISS** Johnston Street itself is home to Melbourne's only dedicated queer bookshop, Hares and Hyenas, and Video Dogs, one of the city's last surviving independent DVD shops. **BENJAMIN LAW**

**NEED TO KNOW**

**COST:** \$274 a night on weekends.  
**DISTANCE:** 2km north-east of Melbourne CBD; 15 minutes by tram.  
**CHILDREN:** Yes.

