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The classic Australian holiday
(minus the crowds)



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Australia's luxury wilderness lodges rival the world's best. They're breathtakingly beautiful, utterly secluded and – with every fine detail covered – take indulgence to the next level. The experience? Priceless. Go on, spoil yourself...



Longitude 131° offers
modern luxury in an
ancient landscape

LONGITUDE 131°

Yulara, NT

\$1200 per person, per night
(twin share); two nights minimum
longitude131.com.au

Uluru has sat in the middle of Australia for hundreds of millions of years but the show it puts on changes constantly. Just before sunrise, “the rock” resembles a pale-purple hulk sleeping in the distance. At midday, it’s a bright-red mound revealing weather-beaten gashes and caves. But it’s at sunset that Uluru really turns it on, burning orange like molten lava against a crisp blue sky and surrounded by flat red earth that stretches to the horizon.

The best venue to watch the spectacle unfold is from one of Longitude 131°’s 15 elevated luxury “tents” dotting the desert

landscape. With a flowing white-fabric ceiling, king-size bed and spacious ensuite, it’s an indulgent outback oasis.

At the centre of the lodge is Dune House, the dining and lounge area featuring a canopied ceiling and glass walls that maximise the views. It’s where chef Seona Moss plates up dishes like wattleseed and cinnamon French toast and Hervey Bay scallop linguine.

As tempting as it is to hunker down here, venture beyond the lodge for excursions such as the Sunrise Walk, which takes you to the base of the 348-metre-high monolith and acquaints you with its backstory – not just the geology but also Uluru’s timeless connection to Anangu, the traditional owners.



**SOUTHERN
OCEAN LODGE**
Kangaroo Island, SA

From \$1100 per person, per night
(twin share); two nights minimum
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They loll on the sand like giant slugs: sea lions, exhausted after hunting at sea, snuggled up to each other. But while the adults rest – occasionally one will deign to lift its head before plonking it back down – the babies are up for fun. One five-month-old pup even blocks our path as we wander down the dunes to Seal Bay. “Stay perfectly still,” says Ben, our Southern Ocean Lodge guide. “She just wants to check you out.”

Kangaroo Island abounds with close encounters with nature. Yes, that is a koala in

the tree in front of you. Yes, you will have to stop the car to let a Cape Barren goose and her chicks cross the road. And when you spy an echidna digging for ants, be sure to advance gingerly.

It’s fitting, then, that Southern Ocean Lodge has been designed quietly, to complement the stunning landscape rather than brashly stand out. The owners, Hayley and James Baillie, determined there was no need to compete with the best of nature and instead made the most of it, with 21 suites facing the Southern Ocean for ever-changing views.

This is luxury at its finest, from the spacious suites to the dining experience, which champions Kangaroo Island produce and offers everything from fresh marron to South Australian grain-fed beef, as well as a largely local wine list.

Although the Southern Spa is a wonderful respite and the open bar beckons, the beauty of the lodge lies in its location so do tear yourself away to see the local wildlife up close and discover the natural sculpture of the Remarkable Rocks. Then head back to your private terrace and loll like a sea lion, taking in those extraordinary views.



A curious local at Seal Bay; nature and design are in perfect harmony in the Remarkable Suite (below)

