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MAGAZINE

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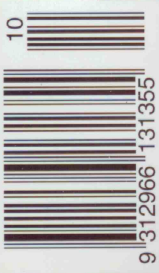


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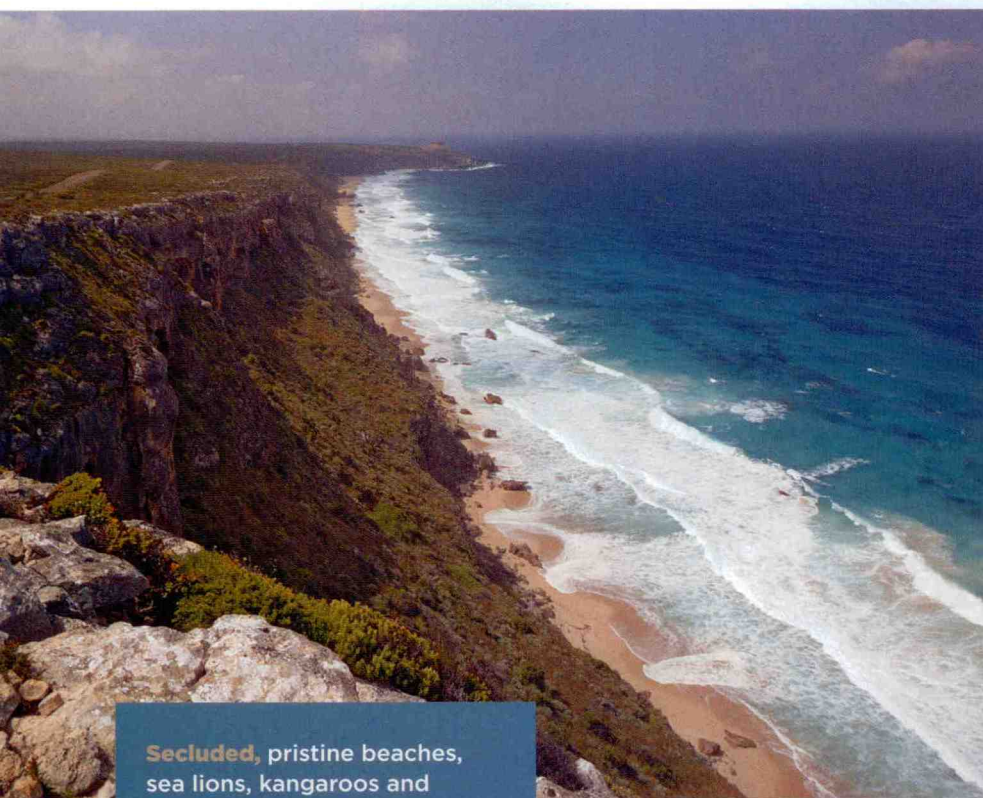
# Kangaroo Island

Looking for the complete package? From wildlife to sweeping vistas, this stunning island off South Australia's coast has it all – food and wine included.

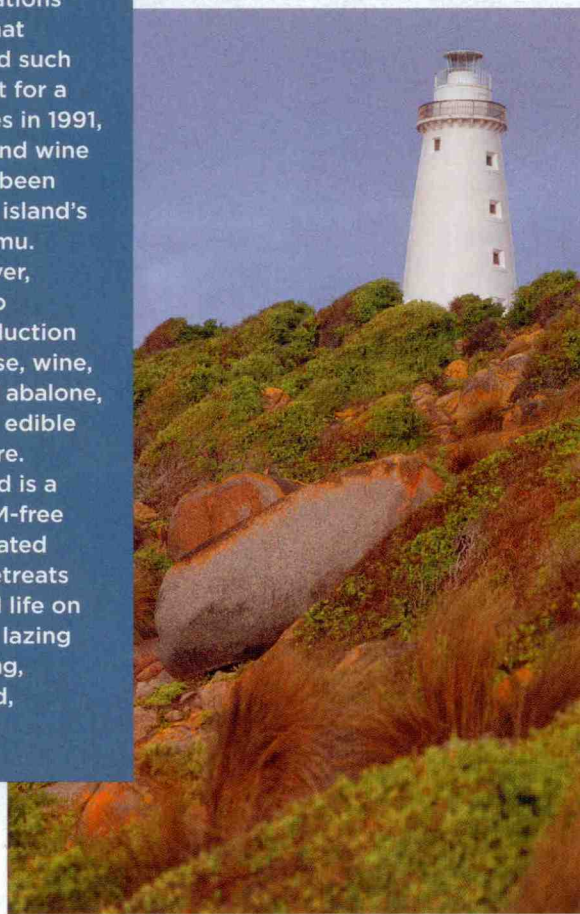




Local pelicans. Opposite:  
Southern Ocean Lodge.



**Secluded**, pristine beaches, sea lions, kangaroos and astounding rock formations – they’re all part of what makes Kangaroo Island such a special escape. If not for a plummet in wool prices in 1991, its now-vibrant food and wine industries might have been as non-existent as the island’s once-thriving dwarf emu. The hard times, however, encouraged farmers to diversify, causing production surges in artisan cheese, wine, honey, marron, farmed abalone, olive oil, samphire (an edible coastal plant) and more. Today, Kangaroo Island is a produce haven and GM-free to boot. Add sophisticated lodging – from rural retreats to luxury resorts – and life on this isle is as good for lazing around as it is for hiking, boating, swimming and, our favourite, grazing.



Clockwise from left: Flinders Chase National Park; a blue marron; Cape Willoughby lighthouse.



### what to do

The Ligurian bees brought here from Italy in 1884 are purer than their now cross-bred ancestors back home and, today, reside in the world’s oldest bee sanctuary. For a taste of their coveted honey, head to **Island Beehive** (59 Playford Hwy, Kingscote, (08) 8553 0080), which bottles honey from some 1000 hives. The varieties vary depending on seasonal flowerings, from smoky and molasses-rich ‘stringy bark’ to light and sweet ‘sugar gum’. Take an up-close look at the busy bees – the Ligurians are famously tame – during tours that take place every 30 minutes. Another honey mecca is **Clifford’s Honey Farm** (Elsegood Rd, MacGillivray, (08) 8553 8295), a family business housed in an old grain shed. It produces a dozen types of honey, as well as honey mead and a renowned honey ice-cream.

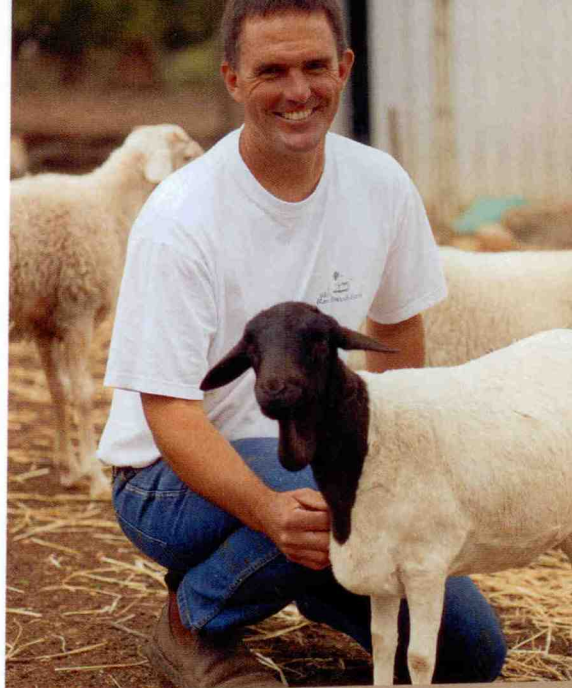
For a fun, mid-island stop, drop in to **Andermel Marron** (804 Harriet Rd, Newland, (08) 8559 4128) for tours of its marron ponds and holding tanks. The cellar door for **Two Wheeler Creek Wines** is also here. Have a gander at an atypical blue marron, then hit the cafe for a glass of sauvignon blanc and maybe the Poacher’s Platter for two (\$80), which will have you feasting on marron, scallops, prawns and more.

The owners at 1400-hectare **South Rock Lamb** (*Antechamber Bay, (08) 8553 1444*) say it's the oldest working farm in South Australia. Lamb prices are so reasonable (think \$20 for a kilo of loin chops or racks) that it's not uncommon for out-of-towners to take meat home with them. They also produce a lamb chorizo and German-style mettwurst. There's no actual store, so call in advance. Or, find them at the **Penneshaw Farmers' Markets** (*Lloyd Collins Reserve, (08) 8553 1185*) between 9.30am and 1pm on the first Sunday of each month, along with other prime local produce.

Some of the animals at Will Marshall's **Rare Breeds Farm** (*North Coast Rd, (08) 8559 2115*) are more endangered than those found in zoos - especially his pure baudin pigs, which are descendants of those left on the island in the early 1800s by French explorer Nicolas Baudin. Some 28 rarities live on the farm, including Persian sheep, miniature nadudana cattle and araucana chickens that lay blue eggs. Tours are held at 12.30pm every day (*\$15 per person*) except Tuesday.

One of the island's most famed brands, **Island Pure Sheep Dairy** (*Gum Creek Rd, Cygnet River, (08) 8553 9110*), milks hundreds of ewes to produce its sheep's milk yoghurt and cheeses. The main attraction here is the tour (*3pm; \$5.50 per person*), when sheep are marched from the paddock into a milking room with a glass window. Also included is a tasting of the haloumi, feta and manchego, plus other cheeses. The owners are soon to build a cafe, which will feature an open fire and sweeping farm views.

Open only during the fishing season from November through April, award-winning **Ferguson Australia** (*48 Kohinoor Rd, Kingscote, (08) 8553 0377*) is a sustainable fishery specialising in lobster. Live lobsters average out at an attractive \$60/kilo (though prices vary), while whiting, snapper and octopus are available in convenient



*Known as a little Aussie version of the Galápagos, Kangaroo Island is the perfect choice for animal lovers.*



vacuum packs. Lobster medallions, uniquely cross-cut through the shell, are a popular pick for the barbie.

**Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Distillery** (*Wilsons Rd, MacGillivray, (08) 8553 8228*) is one of only a few remaining in Australia, and its self-guided tours allow visitors to wander through the farm's traditional distillery process. The family-run property is sustainable, using solar and wind power to stay off the grid. It's also the cellar door for Rookery Wines and a gallery for daughter Tiffany Turner's surreal landscape artworks.

**Clockwise from top left: Will Marshall at Rare Breeds Farm; Island Pure Sheep Dairy products; Peter Davis at Island Beehive; coastal colour.**



Get to know the island by taking a relaxed tour of the region's award-winning wineries.

From top: one of the island's long stretches of road; a fresh drink made with KI Spirits; Jacques Lurton at The Islander Estate.



## what to drink

**The Islander Estate's** (*Bark Hut Rd, Parndana, (08) 8553 9008*) French winemaker, Jacques Lurton, hails from a renowned wine family in Bordeaux and is in a league of his own. Unlike at most Australian vineyards, he uses double-thick oak barrels from Burgundy and French cement fermentation tanks instead of stainless steel. He also ages his wines for a minimum of four years. The results are some of Kangaroo Island's best wines – finessed yet complex. The cabernet franc is a stunner.

Amid a cosy shack laden with gin memorabilia, penguin cocktail shakers and a small copper still, enjoy tastings of the numerous flavoured liqueurs, vodkas and gin at **KI Spirits** (*856 Playford Hwy, Cygnet River, (08) 8553 9211*). The gin combines juniper-like berries that grow naturally on the coast with real juniper, coriander, citrus and mint. Most popular is the honey and walnut liqueur made with local Ligurian honey. Equally intriguing is the samphire vodka, bottled with local pickings. It makes a dry martini unlike any other.

Set in a former aeroplane hangar, **Chapman River Wines** (*Cape Willoughby Rd, Antechamber Bay, (08) 8553 1371*) has an eclectic interior styled by co-owner and artist Diana Keir. A chandelier hangs over vintage furniture, abstract artworks adorn tin walls and rugs abound. The easy-quaffing wines, including the popular rosé, are best enjoyed outside with a platter of salami, marinated vegies, aged parmesan, cumin and sesame biscuits. Top it off with a velvety homemade cheesecake for dessert.

**Cape d'Estaing** is another quality wine label, but is currently in transition as the owners' children take over the business. Its Reserve Shiraz is especially worthwhile when spotted on a local wine list. Other wineries worth visiting include **Bay of Shoals** (*Cordes Rd, Kingscote, (08) 8553 0289*) for its award-winning riesling and **False Cape** with a cellar door at Sorrento's (*49 North Tce, Penneshaw, (08) 8553 1028*).

For a night on the town, hit the local pubs. Try the newly revamped **Penneshaw Hotel** (*North Tce, (08) 8553 1042*), **Parndana Hotel** (*Cnr Cook and Wedgewood Rds, (08) 8559 6071*) or Kingscote's **Queenscliffe Hotel** (*57 Dauncey St, (08) 8553 2254*). There's also **Emu Bay Bar** at Kingscote's Aurora Ozone Hotel (*The Foreshore, (08) 8553 2011*). Its signature cocktail is made with KI Spirits' Pinklily Strawberry Liqueur.

## where to eat

Is **Fish** (43 North Tce, Penneshaw, 0439 803 843) the best fish 'n' chip shop in Australia? It's certainly on the shortlist. The line-up changes according to the catch, with fresh stars including whiting, garfish and flathead, as well as swordfish and pink snapper. Sauces, from wasabi mayo to barbecue, are made on-site. More creative specials range from abalone ravioli to grilled scallops with Guinness aïoli.

**Yellow Ash 'n' Chili** (59 Dauncey St, Kingscote, (08) 8553 0330) is run by second-generation Mexican-American Esther Stephens, who's growing her own tomatillos and chillis, and crafting homemade tortillas with organic flour. Stephens is easing locals in gently with ceviche, quesadillas and green enchiladas, but plans to introduce more adventurous dishes with time.

The cooking school at **Kangaroo Island Source** (Lot 104, Willoughby Rd, Penneshaw) features top island chefs making the most of local produce. Meals are enjoyed on an enclosed deck overlooking grazing cows and the Penneshaw coastline. Classes are held once a month or can be organised for private groups.

It's almost not fair to mention dining at **Southern Ocean Lodge** (see *Where to Stay*, page 137), since it's only open to guests, but it truly is the island's premier dining destination. Chef Tim Bourke takes a minimalist approach to produce that's largely local and almost exclusively South Australian. Dinner might include Island Pure Sheep Dairy manchego with Fleurieu baby beetroot and pickled samphire.

Mere steps from the bay, the best beachside possie is at **The Rockpool Cafe** (Stokes Bay, (08) 8559 2277). Chef Matthew Johnson encourages people to dine in his leafy covered courtyard for protection from the sun, but the biggest drawcard is his seafood cone, a fry-up of squid, prawns, scallops, hoki and chips.

One half of **Restaurant Bella** (54 Dauncey St, Kingscote, (08) 8553



0400) is a bistro, the other a casual pizzeria. In the bistro, Swiss chef Andrew Nelder straddles French and Italian flavours, serving dishes such as King George whiting in a verjuice sauce with lemon verbena leaves. As for pizza, try the Mediterranean lamb with garlic yoghurt sauce, capsicum and goat's and mozzarella cheeses.

Other notable dining venues include fine diner **Sorrento's** at Kangaroo Island Seafront Resort (49 North Tce, Penneshaw, (08) 8553 1028) and **Kangaroo Island Seaside Inn** (7 Cygnet Rd, Kingscote, (08) 8553 2707).

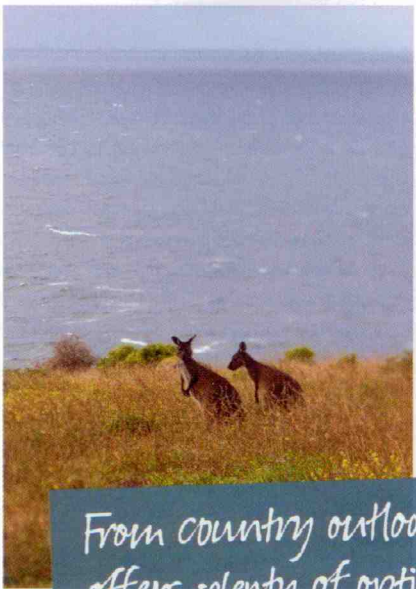
From top: Southern Ocean Lodge's dining room; chef Tim Bourke's salad of pickled baby beetroot; the verandah at Kangaroo Island Source.

Stock up on local produce or sample the fresh selection found in the island's cafes and restaurants.



Gantas operates flights to nearby Adelaide from all capital cities, [qantas.com](http://qantas.com). With thanks to South Australia Tourism for their assistance with this story. For more information, visit [southaustralia.com](http://southaustralia.com).





*From country outlooks to cliff-top vistas, Kangaroo island offers plenty of options to relax and just enjoy the view.*

**where to stay**

**Stranraer Homestead**, a hilltop Federation house, offers a memorable rural outlook. The wraparound verandah overlooks a 1200-hectare farm and the 14 rooms are all tastefully preserved, with wood fires and deluxe beds. A highlight is co-owner Lyn Wheaton's cooking. She bakes her own bread, serves hearty dinners, such as roast pork, marinated kangaroo or baked, stuffed chicken, and produces a CWA-worthy pavlova. At night, husband Graham happily takes guests in his 4WD to track kangaroos, wallabies and other wildlife. *Wheatons Rd, MacGillivray, (08) 8553 8235, stranraer.com.au. From \$185 per person per night.*

**Southern Ocean Lodge** may be on the pricey side, but it *is* one of the country's premier resorts. Straddling the cliff top above Hanson Bay, it delivers endless ocean views via floor-to-ceiling windows in the lobby and dining room, backed by a sandstone wall that's the Southern Hemisphere's longest. All 21 designer suites feature modern furnishings and horizon-ogling outdoor sitting areas. There are quad biking and hiking on the property and, nearby,



fishing and kayaking, but it's tempting just to settle in. *Hanson Bay, (02) 9918 4355, southernoceanlodge.com.au. From \$990 per person.*

Built by whaler Nat Thomas in 1820, **Nat's Homestead** at South Rock Lamb is South Australia's oldest inhabited home. A recent refurb pairs white-painted stone walls and modern beds with heritage timber frames. The views of Backstairs Passage are great for dolphin spotting. *Antechamber Bay, (08) 8553 1444. From \$250 per night.*

With night driving a no-no, staying in town allows for exploring after dusk. **Willows at the Wharf** offers self-contained, modern units within minutes of the bay, restaurants and bars. *9A Kingscote Tce, Kingscote, (08) 8648 6391, willowsquorn.com. From \$180 per night.*



**Clockwise from top left: wildlife at Cape Willoughby, Stranraer Homestead; its verandah; a view of Emu Bay from Birubi.**

For a beach holiday, try the dual townhouses at **Birubi**. Each sleeps six and offers a gourmet kitchen, outdoor dining deck with Emu Bay views, and grassy backyard with barbecue. *31 Hawthorn Ave, Emu Bay, (08) 8553 5238, birubiholidayhomes.com.au. From \$200 per night.* (TM)