ENDLESS VACATION
PLAY | EAT | SHOP | RELAX | EXPLORE

AUTUMN 2014 (PACIFIC)

26 NORTH QUEENSLAND

21 PERFECT PIAZZAS

FAVOURITE BEACHES
SOME OF THE BEST SPOTS AROUND THE WORLD FOR SUN AND SAND

SPECIAL 40TH ANNIVERSARY MEMBER SECTION

TREASURE HUNT
FIND THE 40s AND WIN AN IPAD
Because your holiday means the world to us

una vacanza romantica

{ romantic holiday }
Welcome

The issue of Endless Vacation magazine marks RCI’s 40th anniversary and we have plenty of great reasons to celebrate with our readers. The world has transformed a lot over the past 40 years with new technology and advances rapidly changing the way we do things. We can now book our flights, accommodation and tours from our mobile phones, take photos on numerous mobile devices and share them instantly across the world through social media.

Through all these changes, RCI has been right there with you. Just check out some of the new Bluetooth wireless speakers on their way in our Travel Gear section (page 4). With greater technology, there comes higher expectations of the variety and quality of accommodation that our RCI members would like to experience. Never before the fun and excitement of taking a well-earned holiday will always stay the same.

This issue is brimming with some exciting holiday options. Check out our 40 favourite beaches from around the world (pages 15-20) and the 40 ways RCI is celebrating with you to make your holidays special (pages 31-44).

There’s shopping in Hangzhou China, pages 10-11, plus a planning calendar to help you book your next memorable holiday experience. Don’t forget to check out our members’ stories as they share some of their wonderful holiday experiences from across the globe (pages 43-45).

We are grateful to have been part of your holiday memories for the past 40 years and we look forward to making the next 40 years even more memorable.

Happy holidays from all of us at RCI.

Autumn 2014

12

YOU'VE ENTERED TO WIN AN IPAD!

To celebrate RCI’s 40th anniversary, the Endless Vacation team hid the number 40 (in red) throughout the magazine. See if you can find all 12. The locations will be revealed in the next edition of Endless Vacation. Here’s a hint — the first one is on page 12. Find all 12 and email a short story (up to 250 words) and photo of your favourite RCI holiday and you’re in the draw to win! Entries close 5pm EST 22 April 2014. The winner will be notified by email at the end of April 2014. Send your entries to marketing.support@rci.com. *Conditions apply.

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Autumn 2014
The Sky’s (Not) the Limit

Space travel may finally be a possibility for a hefty price. Travel tycoon Sir Richard Branson’s Virgin Galactic (virlargentics.com; from $285,000) has already made test runs in the Mojave Desert. His SpaceShipTwo is expected to send six passengers at once into zero g’s starting this year. Next up is entrepreneur Michel Mol’s SXC (spacesc.com; from $110,000). Once it’s up and running, SXC’s Mission campus will offer daily service to the edge of earth’s atmosphere in a specially designed spacecraft that will give passenger astronauts a stunning view of the planet from more than 95km’s up. The queue behind these two risk takers is long, but other companies launching commercial travel to space include Jeff Bezos’s Blue Origin, starting in 2016. - Adam H. Graham

OUTER SPACE

Maui makes a splash

Hawaii’s second largest island is home to a handful of stylish new hotels. The Andaz Maui at Wailea (mauiandaz.hyatt.com; doubles from $470 per night) launched last September with 297 units set on a powder white beach. On the north shore, Lumeria Maui (lumeriamauai.com; doubles from $375 per night) opened with tropical gardens plus wellness and adventure retreats. Meanwhile, the Residences at Kapalua Bay is about to relaunch as the Montage Kapalua Bay (montagekauai.com; doubles from $1560 per night). Its 50 suites and 30,000-square-foot spa will overlook the Pacific, where honey frames views of Shanghai’s skyline. - Christine Ajudua

LOGITECH UE BOOMBOX

A boom box for a new era: Eight mini speakers produce a smooth mix of sound frequencies with significant bass and the box connects to three devices at once and remembers. Eight. Ue.utlogitech.com; AU$276

JBL Charge

Its battery lasts 12 hours and it can charge your mobile devices with a microUSB cable while it plays. With a reservoir carrying case, it can go anywhere you need power. Wwww.jbl.com; AU$188

SONY SPLASH PROOF SPEAKER

No wires necessary. Today’s portable Bluetooth wireless speakers stream music from your mobile device with the touch of a button (some can even work as speakers). Here are some of our favourites. By Adam Baer

1. **“Born to Run” Bruce Springsteen** inspired, hit play on these before the editors created a list of 40 classic rock albums. From $285,000.
2. **“Changes in Latitudes, Changes inAttitudes”** Crosby By His Own Frank Zappa.
3. **“Coach”** Creedence Clearwater Revival.
4. **“The Unknown Future”** Firelake.
5. **“Fly Away” Lenny Kravitz.
6. **“Fly Away From Here”** Aerosmith.
7. **“Fly Away”** Lenny Kravitz.
8. **“The Wanderer” Dion**
9. **“I’m Gonna Be (500 Miles)”** The Proclaimers.
10. **“Like a Rolling Stone”** Bob Dylan.
11. **“Leaving on a Jet Plane”** John Denver.
12. **“King of the Road”** Roger Miller.
13. **“Hit the Road Jack”** Ray Charles.
14. **“Homeward Bound”** Simon and Garfunkel.
15. **“Interstate Love Song”** Stone Temple Pilots.
16. **“I’m Gonna Be (500 Miles)”** The Proclaimers.
17. **“Light My Fire”** The Doors.
18. **“Nothing”** Beach Boys.
19. **“Oooh Child”** 5th Dimension.
20. **“The Wanderer”** Dion.
22. **“We Are the Champions”** Queen.
23. **“We Are the Champions”** Queen.
24. **“What a Wonderful World”** Louis Armstrong.
25. **“We Are the Champions”** Queen.
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39. **“We Are the Champions”** Queen.
40. **“What a Wonderful World”** Louis Armstrong.

Sony SRSBTM8B

With an NFC Smartphone Connection this speaker provides 20 hours playback with just 4 AA batteries. Make hands free calls without missing a beat. Wwww.sony.com.au; From AU$125

Sony SRSBTM12B

Relatively lightweight, it’s also splash proof and has superior sound for poolside placement. One of five colour options will match any cabana. Wwww.sony.com.au; From AU$187

SONY SRSBTM12B

Audiofile’s review

Waterproof and shock resistant, all of the Audiofile review speaker boxes listed here use wireless Bluetooth connectivity, along with NFC technology. We mentioned Bluetooth in our audio review before, but you’ll need it for the get.

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Immerse yourself in history and culture

To gain an understanding of the complete history of the area, visit the excellent and extensive Historical Society Museum, situated in its heritage-listed building at 22 Clarence Street. For a more active experience, join one of the informative heritage walking tours run by former council historian Mitch McKay (Port Macquarie Hastings Heritage, 31 Clarence Street, 0447 429 016). His tours begin at the extraordinary Glasshouse, on the corner of Clarence and Hay streets, which functions as the town’s entertainment centre and regional art gallery. A living cultural museum, it is situated on the site of the 1823 built cottages of the convict overseers, and the first council chambers and school of arts building around 1892. Archaeological remains and artefacts uncovered during the excavation are displayed in the basement. Other must see attractions are the 1890 courthouse, on Clarence Street and the claus Reath House, restored in 1990, which provides a top spot for a refreshing drink or three.

Get out and about in nature

Despite being a busy commercial hub, Port Macquarie is threaded with peaceful green strips. In the Kooloonbung Creek Nature Reserve, which has extensive tracks along the water, you’ll find the historic cemetery with nearly 1500 buried soldiers, convicts and settlers dating back to 1824. To the north of town, the 1869 courthouse, on Clarence Street and the classy Royal Hotel, restored in 1999, the Port Macquarie is the perfect location to experience history and heritage by the sea.

One of the oldest towns in New South Wales, Port Macquarie isn’t just where the rainforest meets the sea – it’s a town with a richly preserved cultural heritage. Founded in 1821, Port Macquarie now boasts around 41,000 residents. Its heritage is preserved proudly in its bricks and mortar, including one of its best known features, the third oldest surviving church in the country, St Thomas Anglican Church. It has services on Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
Foodie’s island fantasy

ESCAPE TO THE TROPICAL PACIFIC RIM ISLAND OF FIJI FOR CULINARY FARE THAT’S FRESH, FLAVOURLFUL AND FUN.

Bula – Welcome to Fiji - this is your place to step back in time, where you can relax, indulge, re-assess and appreciate the things that really matter in life - health, family, your loved ones, nature and a sense of perspective. The heart of the South Pacific, Fiji is a land of blue-green lagoons, lush rainforests, pine forests, mountains and 1600kms of white, sandy beaches. Blessed with 333 tropical islands, Fiji makes for the perfect holiday.

FIJI is the stuff of fantasies, a tropical island boasting stretches of sandy beach, stunning coral reefs and that much-sought after holiday vibe of true escapism. It can also fulfil your gastronomic flights of fancy. Fresh, seasonal produce – from farm to table and sea to plate – and recipes rich in tradition and multicultural influences are just another reason you won’t want to leave paradise.

THE MUSTN’T-MISS MENU

There are staples of the local cuisine – rice, sweet potatoes, taro, cassava, coconut and seafood – as well as time-honoured dishes that you won’t want to pass up on your Fijian holiday:

- Palusami is a traditional dish of corned beef or fresh fish wrapped in taro leaves and steamed in coconut milk.
- Lovo is food slow-roasted over hot rocks in an earth oven. The Fijians take local meats, seafood and vegetables, wrap them in banana or palm leaves and cook them to a tender, smoky goodness.
- Kava is the traditional – and intoxicating! – Fijian drink made from the roots of the Polynesian shrub of the same name.
- Vudi vakalolo – last but never least – is a coconut-infused dessert.

Fiji Palms (0676), for example, is just 50 km to the Fijian capital of Suva, where you’ll find reasonably priced and tasty restaurants as well as bustling markets teeming with tropical produce.

Want to become even better acquainted with Fijian food? Take part in a cooking class at the Flavours of Fiji Cooking School, or stay at the Wyndham Resort Denarau Island (5883). The Wyndham also boasts a swim-up bar with wet and dry seating and a restaurant where you can indulge in some local favourites.

If you want great Fijian food where you lay your head, the Malolo LaiLai Lagoon Resort Club (2884) boasts the Terrace Restaurant, which draws on the island’s diverse flavours and cultures and highlights the freshest local produce.

FIJIAN FINDS You don’t have to go far from your accommodation to find these and other local delicacies.

TAKE ALFRESCO TO THE NEXT LEVEL: (clockwise from above) Think of the best, freshest food you have ever eaten and now imagine eating it on the beach in paradise... this is Fiji. Another perfect day in Paradise. Catch of the day and everyday, Fiji has an abundance of natural bounty but at the top of the list is seafood. After all the eating, drinking and sun-bathing you may well need a relaxing island style massage.

HUNGRY? Well, pack your bags and get ready to relax among the requisite palm trees, turquoise waters and fabulous Fijian sunsets, but be sure to bring that empty stomach and your sense of culinary adventure, too. }
Something old, something new

TIME TRAVELLING IN HANGZHOU IS A REALITY WHEN ANCIENT MONUMENTS RUB SHOULDERS WITH MODERN MEGA-MALLS.

A day out shopping in Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang, showcases what ‘new China’ is all about – the perfect introduction of East meets West, with old enhancing new. From the sensuous pleasure that is shopping for famous Hangzhou textiles to the international brands offered around Wulin Square, Hangzhou deserves its reputation as a shopper’s paradise.

Traditional meets trendy

A lovely place to start your day is in Qinghefang, particularly Hefang Street, one of the oldest streets in Hangzhou, dating back to the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279). Hundreds of quality antique and local crafts stores selling traditional goods such as chopsticks, fans and silk abloom line these bustling streets, as well as ancient pharmacies and teahouses. The trendy Nanshan Road is another excellent place when shopping for souvenirs, including teas and chopsticks, or visit Imperial Street for its historical and cultural merits.

To market

From Qinghefang Street, it’s a reasonable stroll through the heart of Hangzhou to Silk City (253 Xinhua Road), a market with over 600 silk and embroidery vendors, making it the largest in the country. Si Ji Qing market (31-59 Hanghai Road) is also a great place when shopping for souvenirs, including teas and chopsticks, or visit Imperial Street for its historical and cultural merits.

Big brands and even bigger malls

When you’re ready to move back into the 21st century, head for Yan’an Road where large department stores sell everything from the latest fashion to technology to curios. You should also stop in at the Hangzhou Shifeng Tea Company Ltd (228 Yan’an Road) to buy top-quality white chrysanthemum and Longjing teas. For high-end international brands, you can beat the stores along Hanlin Road or the Hangzhou Mansion Shopping Mall (3 Wulin Square). Wulin Square is a shopping destination in itself and a favourite place for fashionable Hangzhou locals to meet up.

Night shop

To end your day, check out one of Hangzhou’s many night markets. Wushan Night Market (between Renhe and Huixing Roads) is a hangout for hip youth and the offerings are suitably trendy and quirky. Haggling here is perfectly acceptable, even expected.

STAY RCI AFFILIATED RESORT IN HANGZHOU:

**FVC @ Jinma International Hotel Hangzhou**

Located in a region known for its world class silk, the FVC @ Jinma International Hotel is around 14 kms from the ancient and scenic Hangzhou and about a 20 minute drive from Xiaoshan Airport. This area has been called a “Paradise on Earth” with its picturesque West Lake. The full service hotel is designed for your enjoyment, comfort and convenience. During your stay you can take a workout at the fitness centre, relax at the sparkling indoor pool or just relax in the sauna or steam room. The 28th floor restaurant offers a plentiful selection of dining choices including authentic Fujian and Hangzhou style dishes. Other local choices include the Chaoshan Seafood Restaurant, as well as Japanese and Italian restaurants. For those seeking unbeatable fashion bargains why not take a taxi ride to the Si Ji Qing Clothing Market, just 15 kms away from the hotel.

7 nights from AUD$169/NZ$189 Hotel Units

For additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 1300 368 800 AU or 0800 368 800 NZ

**LOOK BACK WITH AN EYE TO THE FUTURE:**

(clockwise from above) No signs of quaint historic buildings here, Hangzhou Convention Centre shows Hangzhou’s modern face. Two roads that illustrate perfectly Hangzhou’s split personality, one hundreds of years old through an ancient bamboo forest and the other racing into the future and the heart of Hangzhou city.

Large brands and even bigger malls

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Paradise found

FIND A HIDDEN SLICE OF PARADISE ON THE LITTLE-EXPLORED MALAYSIAN GOLD COAST. WITH MANGROVES STRETCHING INTO THE STRAIT OF MALACCA AND JUNGLE DIPPING ITS TOES INTO THE SEA, SEPANG IS THE PERFECT MALAYSIAN GETAWAY.
CASSIE HARREX

Just 35 minutes from Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Malaysia’s Sepang Gold Coast is a perfect place to rest and unwind. While its Formula One racetrack steals the spotlight, the beaches, rainforests and outdoor activities make this an ideal place to experience the best of Malaysia at any time.

Our Golden Palm Tree Iconic Resort & Spa offers luxurious over-water villas that are meticulously laid out in the shape of a giant palm tree. Stretching almost a kilometre into the sheltered Strait of Malacca, it offers everything from adventure activities to full spa facilities and guarantees you a luxury holiday unlike any other. Three- and four-night stays are available.

Rev your engines
No Sepang holiday is complete without a visit to its Formula One racetrack, and adjoining National Automobile Museum. Here you can view classic cars, learn about the circuit and hear stories from its many motorsport events. Entry is free and the museum is open 9 am-6 pm daily.

Linger on Lover’s Bridge
By far the most spectacular spot to watch the sun dip into the sea, this bridge juts into the sea and is held together with a mix of concrete and, the further out you go, simple wooden planks. Watch fishermen reel in their daily haul, then grab a seat as nature puts on its finest show.

Tour the river
Discover the wealth of flora and fauna dotting the Sepang River as you putter along this mighty waterway in a wooden boat. Once you’ve finished spotting monkeys, otters and waterbirds, refuel on ikan bakar, a grilled fish specialty offered at the seafood restaurants dotting the shoreline.

EAT
Perahu
T: 603-302 3905
No. 07, Jalan Pantai Bagan Lalang, Kg Bagan Lalang, 43950 Sungai Petani, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia.
Perahu serves a wide selection of Malay style barbeque and grilled seafood, specialising in local marinades.
www.goldenpalmtree.com

PLAY
Golden Palm Tree Sea Villa & Spa
T: 603-302 3905
A five star haven of peace, perfect for eco adventure, non motorized water sports, family friendly fun, or just relax and unwind.
www.goldenpalmtree.com

EXPLORE
Sepang International Circuit
T: 0603-8778 2200
Jalan Pekeliling, 64000 KLIA, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia
Home of the Malaysian Grand Prix and the Malaysian Motorcycle Grand Prix. Take a behind the scenes circuit tour. Adults $50, Students $25.
www.sepangcircuit.com

STAY
RCI AFFILIATED
GOLDEN PALM TREE ICONIC RESORT AND SPA
Golden Palm Tree Iconic - 3 Night Studio - AU$349 / NZ$379 Avail. From June
For additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 1300 368 800 AU or 0800 368 800 NZ
Forster, NSW Australia

Situated in the mid north coast region of New South Wales, Australia, Forster is a large coastal town in the Great Lakes Council LGA, about 308km northeast of Sydney. It is immediately adjacent to its twin, Tuncurry, which is the smaller of the two towns.

Because of its close proximity to Sydney, just over four hours drive, Forster-Tuncurry is a popular summer family holiday destination. With its large lakes and white sandy beaches, visitors can enjoy dolphin cruises, fishing, sail boarding and scuba diving. Other notable nearby attractions include the Bicentennial Trail, Cape Hawke and Booti Booti National Park.

Beaches Galore...
The beaches around Foster are all fabulous, starting with Main Beach which is a protected beach, making it ideal for families. Nearby Pebbly Beach is also a good spot for families as is Burgess Beach. Other beaches not to miss include One Mile Beach and McBrides Beach, ideal to escape for a day. Seven Mile Beach stretches south from Cape Hawke down to Booti Hill and the Ruins, great for fishing and surfing.

NAME GAME
The usual local pronunciation of the name is “Foster”. The town got its name from William Forster, who was briefly Premier of New South Wales and who later served as Agent General in London.

1 OCTOBER 1872
The date the first post office opened in Forster, with John Wylie Breckenridge as postmaster at a salary of £10 a year.

STAY
RCI affiliated resorts near Forster include:

Pacific Palms 1808
Just 20 minutes from Forster is the perfect spot for a relaxing holiday with beautiful beaches and numerous bird species to observe. The vast waterways, magnificent wildlife and crystal clear blue water provides for a very family friendly holiday. The resort offers extensive facilities, including a swimming pool, spa, sauna, gymnasium, barbecue and playground.

Seashells Beachfront Resort 3852
Seashells is ideally located next to the beach and surrounding Manning Valley attractions. Guests can enjoy the large swimming pool, sandy beaches with water sports, outdoor tennis and squash courts, miniature golf and a covered barbecue area. There’s also a fully equipped gym and spa, resort playground, recreation room and spa for the perfect holiday experience.

For additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 1300 368 800 AU or 0800 368 800 NZ.
For information about tours and activities check out www.visitnsw.com/destinations/north-coast/forster-and-taree-area/forster

ENDLESS VACATION 15
United States & Canada

- **Polihale Beach**
  Kauai, Hawaii
  Dunes frame this wild 26-miles stretch which is not only the westernmost public beach on Kauai but also the longest sandy shoreline in Hawaii. Since Polihale is accessible only via an old 8-miles farm road, few travelers venture here, so the isolated coastline, known for great shelving and blood red sunsets, is even more rewarding.

- **Venice Beach**
  Los Angeles, California
  Sure, the water is nice, but Venice Beach’s raison d’être is its scene. Here surfers and soccer players strut their stuff along the water’s edge while street dancers, body builders and tattoo artists hang out near the city’s cliffs promenade.

- **Padre Island National Seashore**
  Padre Island, Texas
  Forget the party beach of South Padre Island. Right next door is the longest expanse of undeveloped barrier island in the world, the Padre Island National Seashore, which ambles along for an impressive 120 miles. Empty beaches are almost guaranteed here. Many accessible only by beat or four wheel drive. And the coastline is home to dozens of endangered animals including the Kemp’s Ridley sea turtle.

- **Footbridge Beach**
  Ogunquit, Maine
  The Algonquian Indians called the stretch of powdery white sand Ogunquit, which means “beautiful place by the sea.” Centuries later, just when Ogunquit Beach reached the threat of over development, the city declared it a public park and limited access to three entry points.

- **Head of the Meadow Beach**
  Truro, Massachusetts
  For a quiet retreat along 65kms Cape Cod National Seashore, visit Head of the Meadow Beach. It’s warm summer waters are great for swimming and wading and the ever changing sandbar makes for awesome bodyboarding. Keep an eye out for the dolphins and whales as you stroll the beach or bask in the sun.

- **Hitler Hills Beach**
  Montauk, New York
  After a morning spent exploring Hitler Hills State Park’s woodlands and the walking dunes of Napeague Harbor, spread a blanket on this wide stretch of smooth sand. Families return year after year for a prime front row seat at the edge of the Atlantic and water that’s great for swimming, paddle boarding and fishing.

- **Oceanfront Beach**
  Virginia Beach, Virginia
  At 86kms, the Oceanfront is the longest beach in the city. Its wide yellow sands are divided into two distinct sections. The North End, great for families, is quiet and far from residential while the South End paces a punch with hotels, waterfront restaurants, music venues and a 3-mile boardwalk lined with ice cream stops.

- **Nags Head Beach**
  Outer Banks, North Carolina
  A 2011 beach replenishment reinforced the 18kms long Nags Head shore, protecting it against the wrath of Hurricane Irene and Sandra, which would batter many of its fragile sister beaches. Settled more than 150 years ago, it continues to attract bulldozers and endless dimensions, like storm rolling, sailing, sea kayaking and hang gliding.

- **Ipanema Beach**
  Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
  This city’s beach near the Dois Irmãos. Two Brothers’ mountains may be one of the best places on Earth to people watch. Boardwalk stands sell beer and cachaca, a sugarcane spirit, to tanned, well built beachgoers.

- **Playa Conchal Guanacaste**
  Costa Rica
  The white sands here are made of millions of washed up conch shells that have been crushed to fluffy granules over time. So you walk south, the beach grows wider and more spectacular and Playa Conchal’s relatively calm, crystalline waters almost beg you to take a dip in them.

- **Atacames**
  Province of Esmeraldas, Ecuador
  Bounce up to any of the thatched roofed bars lining the wide beach of Atacames, order a fruity cocktail and let the reggae, cumbia and merengue rhythms move you. Locals come to Atacames mostly to party, especially on weekends and holidays and all throughout the dry season June through September.

- **Playa Brava**
  Punta del Este, Uruguay
  The iconic La Mano statue by Chilean artist Mario Irarrázabal has made this beach Punta del Este’s most photogenic stretch of sand. The sculpture, which has massive concrete and plastic fingers reaching through the beige beach, is only part of what makes the playa stand out among Punta del Este’s long peninsula of emerald shorelines.

- **Playa Negra**
  Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife
  This rocky coastline in this seaside town, 25km north of Tampico, is arched in fine black sands rich in volcanic mineral. That dark hue attracts heat, but don’t let the beach fool you. The water stays cold in these parts, thanks to the Humboldt Current coming up the coast. Still, people enjoy swimming in the comparatively gentle waves.

- **Inch Strand**
  Dingle Peninsula, Ireland
  If its epic beauty you seek, visit this 5kms long stretch of golden sand and dunes in the southern foothills of the Twelve Mile Mountains, where the 1970 classic Ryan’s Daughter was filmed. A certified Blue Flag beach, a mark of high environmental and quality standards, it’s popular for angling, surfing, windsurfing, and sunbathing.

- **Dona Ana Beach**
  Lagos, Algarve, Portugal
  Of all the magnificent beaches that define the Algarve coast, in southern Portugal, the scenic coves in Lagos may be the most beautiful, thanks to their dramatic limestone cliffs and clear turquoise waters.
Australia & The Pacific

Byron Bay
New South Wales, Australia
For everything that Australia has to offer its residents and visitors, there is still one thing that draws visitors to Australia more than anything else and that is its beaches. The sparkling sands of Australia’s most easterly point attracts visitors from all over the world.

Bondi Beach
New South Wales, Australia
If you’re looking for a beach full of things to do, there is nowhere better to go than Sydney’s Bondi Beach. One of the world’s most famous beaches, Bondi Beach offers visitors everything from surf competitions to beachside coffee shops. With about 10m of the world’s softest sand, Bondi Beach is definitely one stop that any visitor to Australia has to make.

Gold Coast
Queensland, Australia
The Gold Coast is a collection of nearly two dozen beaches and provides a very glamorous beachgoing experience. The sea is clean, blue, and very warm in the summer. Main Beach and Surfer’s Paradise are both world renowned for their excellent surfing. For a perfect family outing, BBQ’s or stroll on the shore you could check out Broadbeach and Nobby Beach.

Bells Beach
Victoria, Australia
If you’re looking for a beach that combines culture and a tropical resort atmosphere then Bells Beach in Western Australia is the ultimate destination. Bell Beach is known for its Chinese and Japanese pearl divers and great views of the sunset.

Kaiteriteri Beach
New Zealand
Kaiteriteri Beach has all the ingredients of a perfect beach – sand and surf and the highest rate of sunshine hours in all of New Zealand. Another spectacular stay drawn on Surfers Paradise. Australia is the perfect destination for its staggering beauty.

Ocean Beach
Northland, New Zealand
Whether you count in miles or kilometres, it’s still a really long beach. While the name Ninety Mile Beach is actually a misnomer, it is justly a top tourist destination for its staggeringly long expanse of white sand.

Patong Beach
Patong Beach
For everything that Australia has to offer its residents and visitors, there is still one thing that draws visitors to Australia more than anything else and that is its beaches. The sparkling sands of Australia’s most easterly point attracts visitors from all over the world.

Las Salinas Beach
Ibiza, Spain
This beach is a social place, whether you chat with your neighbours on the white lounge chairs or spend time at one of the many nightclubs, where young soccelfish mingle with Spanish footballers. Las Salinas is a fun time, but the sand and surf aren’t too shabby.

La Grande Plage
Biarritz, France
La Grande Plage at France’s siestat Atlantic coast beach is a wide-sweeping arc backed by stately 19th century residences and backed by rugged cliffs. The reliable waves draw surfers by the bus load and the superride types who cheer them on, all of which makes for great people watching during the busy summer months.

Cala Mariolu
Sardinia, Italy
It’s hard to see the beach for the beachgoers during high season on Sardinia’s congested Costa Smeralda beaches. So make a break for this hidden storefishing cove on the Gulf of Orosei, where cliffs shelter a secret inlet and turquoise waters lap at smooth white stones. Hiking to the beach down the cliffs is tricky.

Red Beach
Santorini, Greece
Don’t expect long white sand beaches when traveling to Santorini. Hidden inlets, many with red or charcoal black sands are much more common here. Visitors to this island rarely skip Red Beach, which gets its name from its volcanic rock sands.

Whitehaven Beach
Queensland, Australia
Located on Whitsunday Island in Queensland, Whitehaven Beach has been voted by many visitors as one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Few who have walked on its baby powder white sand will argue against its magnificence.

Wineglass Bay
Tasmania, Australia
Anyone looking for a bit of adventure will welcome the search for this isolated little beach. Located in Freycinet National Park in Tasmania, Wineglass Bay is shaped like a perfect smile.

Piha Beach
New Zealand
Piha is the country’s most famous surfing beach. It’s rugged cliffs frame the sea while the commanding Lion Rock stands guard and the lush bush of the Waitakere Ranges provide plenty of opportunity for exploration, walking and picnicning.

Ocean Beach
Mount Maunganui, New Zealand
Mount Maunganui is something of an oddity in that it has both an ocean beach and a harbour beach, Pilot Bay. Theplus harbour beach is good for swimming while Ocean Beach is more dramatic, and popular for surfing and bodysurfing. For good reason, Mount Maunganui is dubbed “Surf City.”

Ninety Mile Beach
Northland, New Zealand
Whether you count in miles or kilometres, it’s still a really long beach. While the name Ninety Mile Beach is actually a misnomer, it is justly a top tourist destination for its staggering beauty.

Nadatola Beach
Viti Levu, Fiji
A turquoise sea, pure white sand and palm shade trees, Nadatola Beach has it all. The beach has earned a reputation as the greatest treasure of Fiji’s main island, Viti Levu. The reef forms a lagoon, providing a heaven for swimming and at low tide you can walk all the way out to the reef.

Whitehaven Beach
Queensland, Australia
Located on Whitsunday Island in Queensland, Whitehaven Beach has been voted by many visitors as one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Few who have walked on its baby powder white sand will argue against its magnificence.

Bells Beach
Victoria, Australia
If you’re hungry for a little competition, then Bells Beach is definitely the Australian beach for you. Home of the longest running surf competition in the world, Bells Beach is world famous for one thing, surfing.

Cable Beach
Western Australia, Australia
The birthplace of Malibu board riding in New Zealand, Piha is the country’s most famous surfing beach. It’s rugged cliffs frame the sea while the commanding Lion Rock stands guard and the lush bush of the Waitakere Ranges provide plenty of opportunity for exploration, walking and picnicning. Mount Maunganui is something of an oddity in that it has both an ocean beach and a harbour beach, Pilot Bay. Theplus harbour beach is good for swimming while Ocean Beach is more dramatic, and popular for surfing and bodysurfing. For good reason, Mount Maunganui is dubbed “Surf City.”

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**Asi**a

- **Bo'ao Yudai Beach, Hainan, China**
  Locals on the island province of Hainan, nicknamed China’s Hawaii, consider Yudai Beach the region’s most precious gem. This crescent shaped sliver of white sand snaking between the Wanning River and the South China Sea is said to be the world’s narrowest and longest stretch of beach separating the sea from freshwater.

- **White Beach, Boracay, The Philippines**
  Resort palm trees hang gracefully over the crystalline sands of White Beach, which is often included in the world’s best lists. Visitors from Asia and beyond flock to its mythic shores and despite its far-flung location, they come for its glassy waters, snorkelling, and Boho-chic beach shacks.

- **Chaweng Beach, Koh Samui, Thailand**
  Chaweng is Koh Samui’s busiest and biggest town, which is centred on the island’s best beach. Chaweng Beach is the longest beach on the island and the major centre for both entertainment and shopping. Chaweng is also the major centre for both entertainment and shopping. Chaweng is also the major centre for both entertainment and shopping.

- **Patong Beach, Phuket, Thailand**
  Patong’s 2km strip of golden sand is one of the most popular beaches in Phuket. It’s a place to watch the world go by. By day, Patong Beach is a hive of activity with parasail and STI operators, boat drivers, beach vendors and masseuses all vying for the attention of the many visitors relaxing on the beach chairs.

- **Sanya, China**
  Sanya in Hainan Island is the best choice for a southern China beach holiday after your trip on mainland China. Yalong Bay Beach is about 30 minutes driving from Sanya Airport and 20 minutes drive to downtown Sanya. The most popular beach for relaxing in Sanya, Yalong Bay Beach and its trendy nightspots is the place to dance the night away.

- **Datang Bay Beach, Langkawi, Malaysia**
  Langkawi on Malaysia’s west coast is one of the country’s premier holiday destinations. The island offers beautiful beaches of white sand, palm trees, sandy coves, clear waters and coral.

- **Chaweng Beach, Koh Samui, Thailand**
  Chaweng is Koh Samui’s busiest and biggest town, which is centred on the island’s best beach. Chaweng Beach is the longest beach on the island and is the major centre for both entertainment and shopping. Chaweng is also nightlife central with its sophisticated cocktail bars and restaurants.

For additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 1300 368 800 AU or 0800 368 800 NZ

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**RENTAL RESORTS**

7 nights from AU$1400/NZ$1494

Pomo Koi Resort
Immerse yourself in the island’s culture and traditions at this oceanfront resort.
4 250 Kula Hwy, Kawawa, Kauai, Hawaii

7 nights from AU$599/NZ$649

Royal Decameron Isla del Fuego
Soothing green gardens and traditional Moroccan/African inspired design await you at this all inclusive resort.
Circuito De La Palmira Remateach, Morrocco

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**VENICE’S PIAZZAS**

Venice’s Piazza San Marco. Siena’s Piazza del Campo. Piazza della Signoria in Florence. The iconic piazzas of Italy have played central roles in the country’s history; that you even recognise their names underscores their significance. Centuries after these town squares were created, their gravitational pull is as strong as ever. The piazza is still the main stage for Italian city life, where locals and visitors stroll, flirt, shop, chat and sit back to watch the street theatre unfold. But not all of Italy’s central squares are as famous as Rome’s Campo de’ Fiori. Here are seven lesser known piazzas that offer as much architectural and communal drama, without all the crowds.

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**Massa Marittima** Piazza Garibaldi

This walled hill town is in “the other Tuscany,” the slice of the province along the Tyrrenian Sea known as the Maremma. A slightly askew triangle, defined by the stairs and facade of the 13th-century San Cerbone Cathedral, the piazza is the setting for Lirica in Piazza, a performing arts festival that has been hosted here for the past 28 years. For a few days each August, the small triangle becomes an opera stage, the perfect setting for this public space that is itself an aria.

**Bologna** Piazza Maggiore

This may be the most underrated piazza in Italy. Here the stern Italian Gothic brick Basilica of San Petronio faces off against the grandly arcaded Palazzo del Podestà. The piazza’s long ends are a study in architectural history, with the squinty, pointed windows of the Palazzo d’Accursio and its late medieval sibling, the Palazzo dei Notai, staring down the arches and pillars of the Renaissance Palazzo dei Banchi. Stroll through this former seat of money changers and bankers today and you’ll find yourself embraced not by the echoes of tinkling gold coins, but by the aromas emanating from a web of narrow streets housing some of the city’s finest food markets.

**Siracusa** Piazza del Duomo

The Roman philosopher Cicero described the temple that stood on this spot 2,000 years ago as a beacon, its gilded doors reflecting the sunshine and helping sailors guide their ships. Over the millennia the house of worship was repurposed, destroyed, plundered, rebuilt and redecorated which resulting in a semi-oval public space whose surrounding buildings articulate the styles of nearly every century. Columns of the duomo were taken from the Doric temple of Athena, previously on this spot. The Palazzo Beneventano del Bosco represents the restrained symmetry of the 16th century. The facade of the cathedral, rebuilt after an earthquake in 1693, is entirely Sicilian Baroque with ornate wrought iron gates and elegant statues. Walk around this piazza and it’s as if you were walking through time.

**Marostica** Piazza degli Scacchi

The name means the Plaza of Chess, a reference to this medieval piazza’s giant chessboard. On the second weekend of September in even numbered years, it is the setting for a spectacle in which performers dressed in costumes of the Middle Ages enact a live chess game. The show is allegedly based on a match played in the 15th century to settle a romantic rivalry between aristocrats for the hand of Lionora Parisio, whose father was the lord of Marostica Castle. Even if it’s not true, it makes for a fantastic backstory.

**Lucca** Piazza dell’Anfiteatro

Piazzas are often brilliant accumulations of history and this one is no exception. The elliptical shape reflects its Roman origins as a stadium for large-scale events and gladiatorial games. Over the centuries though it has lived many lives as a prison, a storage place for salt, a communal vegetable garden and terraced housing, all of which nibbled away at the grand shape. Architect Lorenzo Nottolini restored the amphitheatre in the 19th century. It is now crispily outlined by plain-faced 19th-century residential buildings but the remains of Emperor Claudius’s earliest structures are just 2 metres below the pavement.
Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere

In a city of operatic Baroque piazzas, this one stands out as a light, blinding piece. It takes its name from one of the oldest churches in Rome erected circa 1340, which dominates the space. The present structure is an accumulation of additions and subtractions, thankfully, the splendid mosaics inside have remained constant since the 13th century. The rest of the square is reinforced with buildings built after the 16th century and the piazza remains the living room for residents, the very genteled once working-class quarter across the Tiber.

Rome Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere

Carpediem Roma Golf Club 7 nights from AUS$725/NZ$779
Just over 20kms from Rome, Carpediem Roma Golf Club is good base for exploring the villages and countryside near home. A city overflowing with history, culture and nightlife Rome is a must see for visitors. See the famous sites including the Roman Forum, the Coliseum, Piazza di Spagna (the Spanish Steps) and the Vatican which is the heart of the Catholic Church and home to priceless art treasures. Stop by one of the elegant shops on the via Condotti or visit the Trastevere Area with vibrant nightlife and inexpensive restaurants.

For additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 1300 368 800 AU or 0800 368 800 NZ

Carapaprim Assisi Living Club 7 nights from AUS$849/NZ$909
The Carapaprim Assisi Living Club has an excellent location and beautiful views of the countryside. There is an outdoor pool, tennis, sauna and exercise equipment. With many medieval towns in the vicinity car rental is readily available for excursions beyond the mountain. Horseback riding is also available one and a half kilometres from the resort.

Residence Letojanni 7 nights from AUS$929/NZ$999
The village residence is situated in a panoramic position overlooking Taormina on the Calabrian coast. On site there is a bar, snack bar children’s play room and swimming pool. The stunning views, quiet location and nightlife entertainment all make for a great relaxing holiday.

When we think of Italian cuisine, we often think of pizza and pasta. Let’s start by saying that Italian cuisine simply doesn’t exist as there is no single Italian cuisine. Italy has 20 regions and each region or often each province or even each area, has its own culinary tradition. From the north to the south you will find the German style foods in South Tyrol, the African like couscous dishes in Sicily, Tuscany’s rustic foods and spicy Calabrian courses.

Most authentic Italian pasta recipes are very simple with few ingredients such as pasta col sugo (pasta with fresh tomato sauce and parmagiano) or pasta col pesto. You may substitute with dried herbs but the amount in half.

Verona Piazza delle Erbe

The Piazza Maffei dominates this long slim triangle, but that’s the piazza’s only aristocratic touch. The sides are composed of a pleasing miscellany of residential buildings that look as though they were slotted in when a space became available. The effect is not dissimilar to that of a nicely worn in couch. Once you’ve been amply cradled in the piazza’s comfort, to that of a nicely worn in couch. Once you’ve spent some time at the Case Mazzanti, a stretch of residences frescoed with allegories of Ignorance, Prudence, Envy and Providence.

The Palazzo Maffei dominates this long slim working class quarter across the Tiber.

For additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 1300 368 800 AU or 0800 368 800 NZ

TOMATO TOWN:

BY FRANCES MAYES AND EDWARD MAYES

ADAPTED FROM "THE TUSCAN SUN COOKBOOK," BY FRANCES MAYES AND EDWARD MAYES

IT’S HARD TO THINK OF A MORE ITALIAN INGREDIENT THAN THE HUMBLE TOMATO

Roasted Tomato Bruschette

60 or so cherry tomatoes, halved, stem ends trimmed
Half cup extra virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary
3 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
3 tablespoons fresh oregano leaves
5 garlic cloves, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Brushetta or crostini
(grilled or toasted baguette slices)
Preheat oven to 200 degrees

Arrange tomatoes cut side up on a parchment-lined 12 x 16 sheet pan. Drizzle the oil over them; scatter the herbs and garlic, and season with salt and pepper. Bake for two hours, turning the tomatoes once.

Coarsely chop the tomatoes for bruschetta or simply press a tomato onto each crostino.

Leftover tomatoes can be packed into jars, topped with olive oil, and stored in the fridge for a week. 

COOK’S NOTE: You may substitute 25 medium tomatoes, quartered or three, large cans of plum tomatoes, drained and quartered for the cherry tomatoes. If you must substitute with dried herbs cut the amount in half.
A ROAD TRIP IS THE PERFECT WAY TO EXPLORE FNQ. JUMP IN YOUR CAR OR 4WD AND BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY IN BUSY CAIRNS.

**CAIRNS**

The Far North's largest city is also a popular transport hub: domestic and international visitors fly into this laidback provincial city to pick up a car, book tours to the Great Barrier Reef and party hard before heading out to the rest of the region.

Cairns is a great place to bookend your FNQ trip. Take a dip in the stunning man-made foreshore lagoon and soak in some sun. Tottle off and wander to the nearby Salt House (Marina P5, 6, 2 Pier Point Rd) for an afternoon pint or a sandwich. This sleek contemporary restaurant-bar serves up great food and killer cocktails in a picturesque setting beside the yacht club.

The arty set should check out the Cairns Regional Gallery (40 Abbott St) and the Centre of Contemporary Arts (96 Abbott St). The former, set in a 1936 heritage building, hosts high-quality visiting exhibitions such as Goya’s etchings. The latter plays host to fresh contemporary art and has a superb gift shop stocking reasonably priced prints, crafts and jewellery produced by Aussies.

For those seeking adventure, dive shops dot the city and you can easily pick up your PADI scuba diving license in a couple of days. In fact, the Great Barrier Reef is probably one of the most scenic places in the world to tickle your diving fancy and makes for good bragging rights. Check out Deep Sea Divers Den (319 Draper St) or Pro-Dive (cnr Shield and Grafton St).

The world’s largest coral reef system, The Great Barrier Reef, is probably one of the most scenic places in the world to tickle your diving fancy and makes for good bragging rights. Check out Deep Sea Divers Den or Pro-Dive.

The drive to Australia’s northernmost tip is strictly 4WD-only and then only passable outside of the wet season. The 925 km journey from Cairns takes you up the peninsula to Cape York and is arguably one of Australia’s most iconic road trips.

The journey requires careful planning (not exact) and takes you through cattle stations, old homesteads, Aboriginal communities, the mining town of Weipa and Rinyirru (Lakefield) National Park before finishing at the tip of Cape York. To begin your adventure, pick up Ron and Viv Moon’s Cape York – An Adventurer’s Guide.
THE TABLELANDS LOOP

Embark on a counter-clockwise loop of this hilly region, passing through picturesque towns and agricultural farmland in an ambling fashion.

Start your journey at the chilled-out town of Kuranda, best accessed via the historical Kuranda Scenic Railway, which commenced operations in 1901. This 34 km rail journey wends its way from Cairns through 15 tunnels and jaw-dropping vistas. After disembarking, take a stroll through the Kuranda markets, which are held every fourth Saturday of the month, offering visitors a chance to mingle with the locals and stock up on craft and produce. Get directions from the tourism information centre to the platypus-viewing platforms and take out for a sight of these cute monotremes paddling along the stream. Finish your visit with a meal at Flynn’s (cnr Grant and Warner St). Before a spot of craft shopping at the Port Douglas Markets (Admiralty Park, cnr Grant and Warner St), before a spot of craft shopping at the Port Douglas Markets (Admiralty Park, cnr Grant and Warner St).

Continue south, passing through Mareeba, the administrative heart of the agricultural region. Here, the town’s main street evokes mid-west America and makes for a perfect setting for an R. W. Williams commercial. Stop by the MP Lodge-Driftway (36 Wats Rd), Wallaman, for a tasting of its superb whisky rum and honey and a wood-fired pizza or two.

Push on south past Mareeba to Atherton, a good stop-off between visiting Herberton and Yungaburra. Route 22 takes you to charming Herberton, where pretty jacaranda trees line the streets with its backdrop of historical buildings. A must-see here is the Herberton Heritage Village: 6 Broadway St. The site houses a private collection of 30 painstakingly restored buildings — each packed with historical objects — dating back to 1870. Stop for a surprisingly good fish burger at the Atherton Coffee Lounge (22 Grace St) before a spot of craft produce at the local markets, head back down via the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway. The Skyrail is one of the world’s longest gondola cableways and a modern counterpart to the Kuranda tram. If you take the Skyrail, you’ll need to book a transfer back to Cairns as it terminates at Smithfield, 15 minutes from the city.

Continue south, passing through Mareeba, the administrative heart of the agricultural region. Here, the town’s main street evokes mid-west America and makes for a perfect setting for an R. W. Williams commercial. Stop by the MP Lodge-Driftway (36 Wats Rd), Wallaman, for a tasting of its superb whisky rum and honey and a wood-fired pizza or two.

From Yungaburra, take a slight detour south towards Malanda. Join a guided rainforest walk and you might spot a tree kangaroo. The annual parade continues at Malanda Falls — look out for saw-shelled turtles and pademelons.

Heading a further 20 minutes south from Malanda will lead you to Falls Circuit near Millaa Millaa. Satisfy your appetite for waterfalls by doing a loop of the four falls along this 16 km route: Millaa Millaa, Zillie, Ellinjaa and Mungalli Falls. Reward your hard work with delicious homemade ice cream and yoghurt at Mungalli Creek Dairy (52 Brooks Rd).

On the route back to Cairns, drop by Lake Barrine in the Crater Lakes National Park. This popular cruise-free waterhole is perfect for a dip during the summer. If the water’s too cold, go for a walk along a km track through thick rainforest ringing the lake. The Lake Barrine Rainforest Trailhead (Gilles Hwy) overlooks the lake and offers Devochine tea in addition to 45-minute lake cruises. Nearby Lake Eacham, is another idyllic spot with crystal clear waters — jump off the swimming pontoon and keep your eyes out for turtles!

The Yungaburra Markets, held every fourth Saturday of the month, offers visitors a chance to mingle with the locals and stock up on craft and produce. Get directions from the tourism information centre to the platypus-viewing platforms and take out for a sight of these cute monotremes paddling along the stream. Finish your visit with a meal at Flynn’s (cnr Grant and Warner St). Before a spot of craft shopping at the Port Douglas Markets (Admiralty Park, cnr Grant and Warner St), before a spot of craft shopping at the Port Douglas Markets (Admiralty Park, cnr Grant and Warner St).

ON THE ROAD

If you’re hiring a car, note that you’re not allowed to take 2WDs along unsealed roads. If you’re planning a road trip up north through the Cape York Peninsula via Cape Tribulation and the Bloomfield Track or heading west along the Suncoast Way, you’ll need to hire or drive your own 4WD.

Note that mobile phone reception is patchy and you should always ensure your vehicle has space. Carry a spare drinking water in the event of a breakdown. Note also that the region is impassable during The Wet (November–April). If you’re game for adventure, look up Cape York River Crossing on YouTube for some handy 4WD action.

Most of the unsealed roads become impassable during The Wet (November–April). If you’re game for adventure, look up Cape York River Crossing on YouTube for some handy 4WD action.

The stretch of road has abundant turn-offs into creeks and stretches of pristine beaches: just take a chance on one and be surprised.

Another surprise is the Daintree Ice Cream Company: Lot 100, Cape Tribulation Rd., which serves up ice cream made with fruit and produce from its orchard.

PORT DOUGLAS AND AROUND

Sandwiched between Daintree National Park and the Great Barrier Reef’s Lizard Island, flabby Port Douglas makes for a perfect launching pad for further exploration of the region. The town is a great place to splash out on some of the best food in the region.

Book a meal at Harvinn’s: 22 Whitf St; here, chef-owner Spencer Patrick uses his Marco Pierre White training to whip up reasonably priced degustation menus. On Sunday mornings, tip back a perfect espresso at Origin Espresso cnr Grant and Warner St. Before a spot of craft shopping at the Port Douglas Markets (Admiralty Park, cnr Grant and Warner St), before a spot of craft shopping at the Port Douglas Markets (Admiralty Park, cnr Grant and Warner St).

From Port, strike north towards the Daintree region. Mossman Gorge, has a superb 2.4 km walk around the idyllic gorge and surrounding rainforest or you can sign up for one of the Kaia Yalani Dreamtime Walks at the visitors’ centre. For a bite to eat, Mojo’s: 41 Front St. serves delicious fusion Aussie-French fare.

Continue on 2.4 km north towards Cape Tribulation — cross the Daintree River cable ferry for luscious rainforest-covered hills that tumble coastward. There’s plenty to see and do in this region: sign up for kayak fishing tours via Cape Tribulation Paddle Track and spot dingoes along the way.

The Daintree Discovery Centre: Tulip Orch Rd. has a fantastic aerial walkway that gives visitors a bird’s-eye view of the rainforest and its animal species. On the topic of animals, keep your eyes peeled for elusive cassowaries while touring the region. This large prefabricated looking flightless bird is endangered and a rare sight.

The stretch of road has abundant turn-offs into creeks and stretches of pristine beaches: just take a chance on one and be surprised.
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RCI AFFILIATED RESORTS IN FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND INCLUDE:

Ramada Resort Port Douglas
Nestled among rainforest gardens, water features and a lagoon style swimming pool, Ramada Resort Port Douglas is a tropical oasis with sprawling grounds and brilliant resort facilities all within easy access of the World Heritage areas the region has to offer. The resort is an easy five minute stroll from iconic Four Mile Beach and a short drive away from the cosmopolitan cafes, restaurants and bars of Maroochydore and Maroochydore Port Douglas.

7 nights from AU$699/NZ$749
1 brm

Marina Cove Resort
Nestled near the beautiful Trinity Beach, Marlin Cove Resort is a mere stone’s throw away from an afternoon swim, a shopping spree in fabulous boutiques and a romantic alfresco dinner. With the accommodation set among a picturesque rainforest corridor you have the opportunity to frolic with native animals and birds as well as spend long restful hours at the spa or sandy saltwater lagoon pool. More than your average Cairns beach resort, Marlin Cove Resort is a refreshing departure from your humdrum holiday.

7 nights from AU$899/NZ$969
1 brm

Mantra Amphora
Mantra Amphora has a stunning location on the Esplanade in Palm Cove, just metres from the beach. The resort features a spectacular central swimming lagoon with many coves and nooks shaded by massive palm trees. Palm Cove is fast becoming the Riviera of tropical North Queensland and Mantra Amphora provides the ideal base to explore the surrounding area. A mere thirty minutes drive north from the bustle of central Cairns, Palm Cove is for those seeking luxury amidst palm fringed tranquility. The Cove is ideally situated between Port Douglas and Cairns, giving easy access to the multitude of day trips available.

4 nights from AU$949/NZ$1019
1 brm

Half Moon Bay Resort
Half Moon Bay Resort is situated at Yorkeys Knob, a delightful tranquil location on the northern beaches of Cairns. Located just 10 minutes north of Cairns Airport and 15 minutes from the city centre, the resort features a freeform salt water pool with spa pool area and BBQ area. It is within easy walking distance of local restaurants, the local yacht club and marina and the Yorkeys Knob shopping centre.

7 nights from AU$779/NZ$839
1 brm

For additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 1300 368 800 AU or 0800 368 800 NZ

STAY

RCI AFFILIATED RESORTS IN FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND INCLUDE:

Mantra Trilogy
Located on the Cairns Esplanade, Mantra Trilogy is within walking distance to some of Cairns best restaurants, the Reef Casino, Cairns Central Shopping Mall and the newly developed Cairns Lagoon. All of the rooms are comfortably furnished with spacious balconies and some with ocean views. Create guests can lane on the sun-deck by the pool overlooking the ocean. Just a short walk from the hotel you can take advantage of the location by catching a charter boat out to the reef which departs daily from the Cairns Marina.

7 nights from AU$789/NZ$839
1 brm

Marina Cove Resort
Nestled near the beautiful Trinity Beach, Marlin Cove Resort is a mere stone’s throw away from an afternoon swim, a shopping spree in fabulous boutiques and a romantic alfresco dinner. With the accommodation set among a picturesque rainforest corridor you have the opportunity to frolic with native animals and birds as well as spend long restful hours at the spa or sandy saltwater lagoon pool. More than your average Cairns beach resort, Marlin Cove Resort is a refreshing departure from your humdrum holiday.

7 nights from AU$899/NZ$969
1 brm

For additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 1300 368 800 AU or 0800 368 800 NZ

Sunrise at Palm Cove

Endless Vacation

30 AUTUMN 2014
1. **Breakfree Aanuka Resort**
   **Coffs Harbour NSW**
   Just 2km from Coffs Harbour city, Breakfree Aanuka Beach Resort is an absolute beachfront tropical style resort ideal for families and couples. You will love the endless recreation facilities including an outdoor pool with slide, children’s pool and play area, cave spas, tennis courts, mini putt putt golf, beach volleyball and Diggers Beach just a short stroll from your room.

   - 7 nights from AU$899/NZ$969

2. **Mantra Wings Resort**
   **Gold Coast Qld**
   Just two minutes from the city heart of Surfers Paradise and within minutes of the Gold Coast Convention Centre and Broadbeach cafe precinct, Wings combines an unparallelled position with a peaceful atmosphere. The resort provides a variety of activities including tennis courts, lagoon swimming pool, sauna, waterfalls and a grotto style spa.

   - 7 nights from AU$929/NZ$999

3. **Australis Sovereign**
   **Gold Coast Qld**
   Australis Sovereign Hotel provides excellent accommodation minutes away from the beach and in the vibrant town centre of Surfers Paradise. The area offers sensational shopping, restaurants, nightlife, adventure parks and water based activities. A lagoon style swimming pool with a waterfall, children’s wading pool and tropical landscaping ensure you will be rejuvenated throughout your stay.

   - 7 nights from AU$799/NZ$859

4. **Breakfree Great Sandy Strait Resort**
   **Hervey Bay Qld**
   Located in the aquatic playground of Hervey Bay, Breakfree Great Sandy Strait Resort has a perfect waterfront and is a short stroll to offer uninterrupted views of the Bay and Marina. Hervey Bay is famous for its whale watching and the gateway to Fraser Island. While at the resort, there’s a wide range of shopping and eateries to discover.

   - 7 nights from AU$599/NZ$649

5. **Wanaka Villas at Heritage Village**
   **Wanaka NZ**
   These large two storey villas are luxuriously appointed and situated just minutes from Wanaka, with standard features include a fully fitted designer kitchen in a contemporary open plan setting, as well as a gas fire for cozy winter evenings. There’s also the tennis court and gym to keep you entertained.

   - 7 nights from AU$929/NZ$989

6. **Breakfree Rainbow Shores**
   **Sunshine Coast Qld**
   Breakfree Rainbow Shores is located just over 1km from Rainbow Beach on the Sunshine Coast. There are unspoilt sandy beaches, bush walking tracks, wildlife, surfing and windsurfing. With four swimming pools, a heated spa and children’s playground there’s plenty of things to do at this popular resort.

   - 7 nights from AU$659/NZ$709

7. **Allegra Hervey Bay**
   **Hervey Bay Qld**
   Ideally positioned at Hervey Bay’s magnificent Shelly Beach and overlooking World Heritage listed Fraser Island. Allegra beachfront apartments feature beautiful alfresco terraces or balconies with designer kitchens, master suites and zoned air conditioning.

   - 7 nights from AU$191/NZ$209

8. **Aruba Surf**
   **Gold Coast Qld**
   Only two blocks away from one of the most popular tourist destinations in Queensland, Aruba Surf resort puts you in the centre of the action! Close to all the restaurants, nightclubs, supermarkets and tourist destinations in Queensland, Aruba Surf is famous for its whale watching and the gateway to Fraser Island. Step outside and you will find all the restaurants, nightclubs, supermarkets and tourist destinations in Queensland.

   - 7 nights from AU$659/NZ$639

9. **Arlia Sands**
   **Hervey Bay Qld**
   Arlia Sands apartments are situated in the middle of Torquay, 60 metres from Hervey Bay’s best beaches. This is a motel style property.

   - 7 nights from AU$779/NZ$839

10. **Spencer on Byron**
    **Auckland NZ**
    A combination of luxury accommodation and award winning dining with panoramic views of Auckland Harbour and surrounds. Just 500 metres from Takapuna Beach and only 10 minutes from Auckland.

    - 4 nights from AU$669/NZ$709

11. **Quality Hobart Midcity Hotel**
    **Hobart Tasmania**
    Quality Hobart Midcity Hotel is one of Hobart’s leading inner city accommodation hotel. Enjoy meals at ESUS Lounge & Restaurant or simply relax in the comfort of your room and let room service pamper you.

    - 7 nights from AU$899/NZ$969

12. **Breakfree Cosmopolitan**
    **Gold Coast Qld**
    This apartment complex is right in the centre of Surfers Paradise. Step outside and you will find all the restaurants, nightclubs, supermarkets and the great shopping of Surfers Paradise.

    - 7 nights from AU$629/NZ$679

**Prices and availability correct at time of print. All properties subject to availability.**
RCI CRUISE 13

Azamara Club Cruises, Azamara Journey
10 NIGHT Alcazar, Dali & Gaudi Mediterranean Voyage from Lisbon to Barcelona
Ports of call: Lisbon, Cadiz, Gibraltar, Valencia, Mahon Minorca, Port Vendres, Palamos, Barcelona
Selected departure in Sept 2014
Oceanview (08) Twin Share
Was from: $6,855pp
Now from: AUD $3,349*pp Twin Share
RCI Exchange fee included.

RCI CRUISE 14

APT, MS AmaDagio AmaLegro
14 NIGHT Romantic Journey Rhone and Seine River Cruise from Arles to Paris.
Selected departure in Oct 2014
Panoramic Balcony Twin Share
Was from: $9,485pp
Now from: AUD $8,925*pp Twin Share
RCI Exchange fee included.

RCI CRUISE 15

Norwegian Cruise Line, Pride of America
7 NIGHT Hawaii Cruise round trip Honolulu
Selected departures from Nov 2014 to Jun 2015 Balcony (BF) Twin Share
Was from: $2,753pp
Now from: AUD $2,209*pp Twin Share
Promo savings of $544pp are not included.
RCI Exchange fee included.

RCI CRUISE 16

Princess Cruises, Diamond Princess
9 NIGHT Japan Cruise
Selected departure in Sep 2014
Balcony (BF) Twin Share
Was from: $2,199pp
Now from: AUD $1,699*pp Twin Share
RCI Exchange fee included.

RCI CRUISE 17

P&O Cruises, Pacific Pearl
16 NIGHT Bounty Adventure South Pacific Cruise
Selected departure in Oct 2015
Balcony (BA) Twin Share
Was from: $4,299pp
Now from: AUD $3,775*pp Twin Share
RCI Exchange fee included.

See these offers and more at rcicruiseholidays.com or call 1300 724 262 AU / 0800 724 262 NZ

Visit rcitourexchange.com or call 1300 301 022 AU / 0800 301 022 NZ

* All prices based on per person, twin share. Subject to availability at time of print. Prices are shown in Australian dollars. Further conditions apply please contact our travel consultant for more information.
YOU TRY NEW THINGS

Technology inspires your holiday dreams!

Check out these innovative tools on RCI.com. These will make planning and booking your RCI holidays easier!

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Sign in now to RCI.com to find an exclusive offer!

Most of you savvy RCI members are already registered at RCI.com and have access to online exclusive offers, like the one waiting in your My Offers box. Go check it out!

25

With your new account homepage, you’ll have faster access to key account information in a clean summary. As soon as you sign in to RCI.com, you’ll see your RCI subscribing member ID, account balances, confirmed and held holidays, current ongoing searches and your personalised alerts and recommendations, all conveniently in one place.

26

Discover the new Holiday Ideas section and travel anywhere - from Manhattan to Mazatlan to Mykonos via articles, resort reviews, pictures, blog posts, member stories and more. Explore great content for detailed information on every destination, from favourite tourist attractions to trendy restaurants, great places to relax, the best spots to take the kids, even off the beaten path beaches and hiking trails.

27

When you’re ready to book your next holiday, you’ll find that searching on RCI.com is faster than ever. Apply filters to quickly narrow your search results and you’re on your way to booking your next holiday in record time!

28

Holiday Inspiration Through Search Filters

We recommend that you start with the Vacation Types filter and narrow your search from there. The more filters you add, the more your results narrow.

29

Personalised Account Alerts

RCI Alerts Tool makes holidaying easy by helping you keep track of your deposits, holiday opportunities and membership. To check out your alerts, login to RCI.com and look on the left hand side of the page. The information is personalised just for you.

30

Let Technology Match Your Holiday Dreams

RCI’s new online Recommendation Tool provides you with the right holiday choices. This innovative tool reviews your travel history, membership type and combines this information with current availability to match the most relevant holiday options.
Your holidays mean everything to you, & that means the world to us.

We’re honoured to have spent the past 40 years helping millions of RCI subscribing members create extraordinary holiday memories - and we can’t wait to be part of all the countless holidays still to come.

A legacy of holidays that define a lifetime.

Because your holiday means the world to us*

31
YOU’RE ALREADY LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR NEXT HOLIDAY!

Use these planning calendars for 2014, 2015 and 2016 to help you get started.

For more holiday inspiration and planning tools, log on to RCI.com today.

* Some affiliated resorts use their own calendars, which may differ from above. Please verify dates with your home resort before you book.

HOUSING PLANNING CALENDAR

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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF HOLIDAYS
YOU LOVE A GOOD HOLIDAY DEAL

FIJI
Malolo Lailai Lagoon Resort Club
7 nights From $249

TAHITI
Club Bali Hai Moorea
7 nights From $99

BATEMANS BAY
NEW SOUTH WALES
The Moorings
7 nights From $99

MILDURA
VICTORIA
Sunraysia Resort
7 nights From $139

Take advantage of these anniversary deals!

Bonus Weeks are excess accommodation offered as cash holidays.
This means you can enjoy an additional week without using your deposit!

* Some affiliated resorts use their own calendars, which may differ from above.

Subject to limited availability. No Spacebank or RC Points contribution required.
42  A UTUMN 2014

WELCOME

We are proud of both the number and quality of properties added to the RCI exchange network in 2013, and our approximately 3.7 million members will be happy to find that their choices have expanded now to nearly 4,500 affiliated resorts across the globe.

We are thrilled to be affiliated with some of the most well respected brands in the hospitality sector as we work together to propel the holiday ownership industry forward.

In 2013 RCI added 175 new properties to its global exchange network including resorts in North America, South America, Europe, India and Asia.

Several impressive properties were also added from existing affiliation agreements. These include a new resort through Hilton Grand Vacations Club at the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas; 12 properties by Club Mahindra in India; and three new itineraries from TradeWinds Cruise Club in St. Maarten, the British Virgin Islands and Guadeloupe.

For additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 1300 368 800 AU or 0800 368 800 NZ

RCI Silver Service members memoirs

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What Dreams are made of...

In 2012 we had a once in a lifetime holiday, starting with autumn in Ontario, Canada. We stayed a week at Carriage Hills Resort in Huntsville Valley. This was a great spot as you could commute to Toronto and even do a day trip to Niagara Falls. From there it was a short flight to New York, staying at The Manhattan Club. If ever you get the chance to go there, grab it with both hands. We were only a block back from Central Park and a couple back from time square – amazing! On the first day we walked to Time Square and Taylor Swift was performing. On another night after seeing a show on Broadway we ran into Snoop Dog and Square and Taylor Swift was performing.

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Next we flew to Cabo San Lucas in Mexico to attend our son’s wedding. Here we were on a flight overlooking the kind – a perfect day in perfect location.

Thank you to RCI for organizing all our accommodation and ensuring everything went smoothly. Our transition from resort to the next was just perfect!

In 2014 we are heading back to Cabo to meet our brand new granddaughters. What a wonderful life we have and thanks to RCI for being part of that!

- EVELYN & JAMES DEFOE

VILLANDRY RESERVE

brings yet another vacation option in Brazil to our members. The luxury suites feature terraces overlooking the Bosque Encantado Valley, providing visitors with a serene escape into nature. The property boasts a spa, bar and lounge, a state-of-the art fitness center, a heated pool, a wet sauna, a home theater and a bowling alley.

We travelled to New Orleans for Halloween and there’s no place in the world like New Orleans. It was wild and fun. The Resort Windfarm Avenue Plaza organised a ghost tour for us and we were the only lucky ones to get a photo of an actual ghost. “From there we went to the bright lights of Las Vegas staying at Hilton Grand Vacation Club on the strip. Wow! Not much sleep but a lot of fun.”

Next we flew to Cabo San Lucas in Mexico to attend our son’s wedding. Here we were on a flight overlooking the kind – a perfect day in perfect location. Thank you to RCI for organizing all our accommodation and ensuring everything went smoothly. Our transition from one resort to the next was just perfect!

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- AUDREY & ROBERT RANGL’S daughter.

The holiday of a lifetime

Seven years ago my husband and I retired from Australia to Canada. Separated by 26 hours and the Pacific Ocean we found it increasingly difficult to meet with our family still in Australia. Costs of flights, availability of accommodation and taking holidays in high season were just some of the issues we faced in seeing each other.

That was until my mum was “suckered” into purchasing time share with RCI. I was “suckered” because like most I was initially a skeptic. But after eleven amazing RCI holidays over a seven year period Mexico, Thailand, France, Spain, Portugal, Argentina, India, Hawaii I’m a skeptic no more!

Mexico Puerto Vallarta would have to be our favourite. The resort was phenomenon, boasting amazing fine dining restaurants and room service that made you want to stay in for the night. The wonderful night life, relaxing by the pool and lovely friendly and attentive staff made for a fantastic holiday. Puerto Vallarta itself was beautiful - hidden islands, CVX adventures, Horse riding, Tequila that didn’t taste like rubbing alcohol, locals markets, authentic street food all added to our unforgettable holiday experience. We’ve been back since with our newborn daughter.

The above was submitted by - AUDREY & ROBERT RANGL’S daughter.
Having a ball abroad

We left Australia flying Qantas to Dubai where we transited to a flight direct to Manchester. My sister welcomed us at the airport and we enjoyed her hospitality enormously whilst in the UK. We also travelled to Newcastle on Tyne and the Lake District. During our time there we caught up with many relatives and friends. We stayed 6 days at the Vermont Hotel in Newcastle before returning to Manchester and on to Heathrow for our flight to Miami Florida.

In Miami we stayed at the Vacation Villages Resort at Weston for 2 nights then moved on to the Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort in Fort Lauderdale. We found the stay really enjoyable. Our unit was spacious and very comfortable as well as being handy to the beaches. 100 metres away and plenty of excellent restaurants.

The weather in Florida was hot the whole time we were there but we loved it. The timeshares we stayed in were all superb. 3 rooms and a nice swimming pool.

The five star meals were superb and they had an advanced in the world. Outside every lift area there was a touch screen on the wall that gave you directions and maps to anywhere on the ship. With 2,600 passengers and 2,000 crew on board, we had a ball.

The five star meals were superb and they even had a flying fox line that ran for about 100 metres over the central area of the ship. We even had back playing the polka on the ship - every time we played we won! Once my wife made a mistake on one machine and after only one press of the button won 505. Also the minute airboat ride where we saw alligators, turtles, dolphins, sea cows and an abundant variety of birds. We then had another trip on a flat bottomed boat over a lake where we had a buffet lunch. This was followed by a courageous demonstration of alligator handling tricks with a grand finale involving the trainer holding the upright head of the alligator tucked under his chin. We weren’t sure whether he was very brave or just slightly crazy!

We spent a few days in Malta and what a wonderful place it is to visit. The sunrises and sunsets were unbelievable and the crystal clear waters of the blue lagoon were absolutely breathtaking. The caves by the sea were spectacular and this was the place where the Count of Monte Cristo was filmed. The friendly English speaking locals, the great timeshare resort and the cruise boat to the blue lagoon all made for a fun holiday in the sun. How can you ask for any more than that?

- NELLA SPANO

The themed Casinos were well worth exploring. You could go from Paris to Egypt, to Rome and Venice, to New York, the beach and of course the circus all in one day. We took advantage of the Deuce and SDX buses with a 24 hour pass. The Deuce services the Casinos, going from Fremont Street at the southern end to the Four Seasons at the southern end. If you want to do a casino tour and keep off your feet and out of the sun this is the way to go. The SDS travels between the Las Vegas premium outlets - a shopaholic’s dream!

Las Vegas itself may be all about the entertainment and casinos, but it is also a great place to use as a base for exploring the Grand Canyon. The West Rim is home to the Hualapai Indians and of course the now famous Skywalk. The South Rim is perhaps more scenic, but much more crowded. A short walk down the Canyon Rim Trail is rewarded with fewer crowds and some great photo opportunities.

- DONALD & BARBARA GRIFFITHS

Thank you RCI

With the help of RCI the aim of our holiday was to showcase our wonderful country to our well travelled grand-daughters, now resident in Dubai. I was a little anxious at first initially as it was mid July but Mother Nature was kind to us! The girls spent an action packed four fantastic days at Don Duxon Resort, Bargara. They were able to experience boating, bird-watching in the nearby equestrian centre, canoeing, paddle boating, mini golf and bus washing to Honeymoon Point all at our fingertips.

Further afield was the Australian Outback Spectacular at the Albert River Winery, Mt Tamborine and great bush walking in the National Parks. It was just a superb Australian holiday filled with unforgettable experiences.

- GRAHAM CAHILL

Magical Malta

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- GRAHAM CAHILL

Viva Las Vegas

Well we had a spare week in the US following a trip to Disneyland, California - an RCI week waiting to be used! The answer - Las Vegas!

We were able to get a week at the Carriage House on E Harmon Avenue, one block from the strip with the Miracle Mile Shop and Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino all close by. It proved to be a convenient location with comfortable air-conditioned rooms and a nice swimming pool.

- JOHN & ELEANOR GREENER

Graham Cahill, standing nervously close to the edge.
The wildlife is part of the main attraction at Phillip Island.

Evening, the island offers an abundance of wildlife experiences for all ages. Penguins returning to their burrows in the famous Penguin Parade in the first governor of NSW, Arthur Phillip. Besides watching hundreds of little Phillip Island is a place of incredible natural beauty and is named after the HAS UNIQUE WILDLIFE AND IS NO MORE THAN TWO HOURS DRIVE WIDE, PHILLIP ISLAND IS HOME TO UNIQUE WILDLIFE, SUCH AS THE WORLD FAMOUS LITTLE PENGUIN, THE WORLD'S SMALLEST PENGUIN. AN ICONIC DESTINATION PHILLIP ISLAND ATTRACTIONS MORE THAN HALF A MILLION VISITORS ANNUALLY.

Phillip Island is a place of incredible natural beauty and is named after the first governor of NSW, Arthur Phillip. Besides watching hundreds of little penguins returning to their burrows in the famous Penguin Parade in the evening, the island offers an abundance of wildlife experiences for all ages.

You’ll be able see the Penguin Parade from the viewing stands and boardwalks at sunset as they return to their sand dune burrows after a day of fishing. If you haven’t yet witnessed these flightless, aquatic birds waddle from the sea you wouldn’t realise just what an incredible sight it is.

Located just ten minutes drive from the Penguin Parade is the delightful Ramada Resort Phillip Island. Ramada Resort Phillip Island is helping the Penguin Foundation in its quest to protect and preserve the only remaining little penguin colony on Phillip Island.

Managed by the Wyndham Holiday Resorts Asia Pacific Group, the resort provides the perfect holiday destination for couples and families. With its unique private setting, resort guests can enjoy excellent facilities including an outdoor swimming pool and spa, an indoor lippy pool, a health centre with gym and spa, games room, children’s playground, two tennis courts, two picnic barbecue areas, an onsite restaurant, café and pizzeria.

For those who like to explore the surroundings, there are several kilometres of walking and cycling tracks around the resort.

Phillip Island also has many pretty beaches and protected bays to explore and has one of Victoria’s top surfing breaks. Its seaside villages offer an array of shopping, dining, and cafes. And if you didn’t already know, Phillip Island is of course home to the Moto GP, World Championship Superbikes and V8 Supercars.

The sponsorship is in line with the company’s global Wyndham Green program, which strives to reduce environmental impacts via a number of initiatives. “We understand that the sustainability of tourism on the island is a direct reflection of the little penguins and the thousands of tourists that flock to Phillip Island each year to view them,” said Matt Tiplin, Senior Vice President of Resort Operations and Property Development at Wyndham Holiday Resorts Asia Pacific.

“Couple this with our Wyndham Green Program and this opportunity became a great way for us to express our ongoing commitment to not only the environment, but also our appreciation to the Penguin Foundation and Phillip Island Nature Parks for all the work they do to make Phillip Island the best place to holiday in Victoria.”

A registered charity organisation, The Penguin Foundation is erecting a commemorative plaque to thank Ramada Phillip Island on its new corporate sponsor’s board. The board will hang at the Penguin Parade.

Set on 65 acres surrounded by natural bushland, the Ramada Resort Phillip Island provides the perfect holiday destination for couples and families. With its unique private setting, resort guests can enjoy excellent facilities including an outdoor swimming pool and spa, an indoor lippy pool, a health centre with gym and spa, games room, children’s playground, two tennis courts, two picnic barbecue areas, an onsite restaurant, café and pizzeria.

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Bay of Islands…
NZ’s Adventure Playground

WHETHER YOU’RE INTO SAILING, CRUISING, FISHING OR ECO TOURISM THERE’S ALWAYS PLENTY OF FUN STUFF TO DO AT ONE OF NEW ZEALAND’S FAVOURITE HOLIDAY DESTINATIONS. THE BAY OF ISLANDS IS FAMOUS FOR ITS DAY CRUISES, WILDLIFE AND EARLY HISTORY.

A three-hour drive or 35-minute flight north of Auckland, the Bay of Islands encompasses 144 islands between Cape Brett and the Purera Peninsula and includes the boutique towns of Opua, Paihia, Russell and Kerikeri. The islands are located in the Cape Reinga, which is about 210km by road at the northern tip of the country.

The bay itself is a natural harbour with a 5km wide inlet with several arms which extend into the land, notably Waitare Inlet in the south and kerikeri and Te Puna Mangopai inlets in the northwest. The small historic town of Russell is located at the end of a short peninsula that extends into the bay from the southeast.

The Bay of Islands was given its name when Captain James Cook stopped here on his round the world journey in 1769. Anchoring at Robertson Island, Captains took note contact with the local Maori people and immediately started trading with them. At Waitangi you can learn more about the original settlers and the local Maori descendants.

The famous American author Zane Grey marvelling at the beauty of the Bay of Islands in the 1930’s. He was fascinated by the local dolphins and the beauty of the beaches and he returned many times to take part in game fishing.

You can now live a lifelong dream and experience swimming with dolphins. Besides the dolphins, there is an abundance of other breeder including Blue Penguins, Gannets, Grey Warblers, Tui, Kakapo and the New Zealand Dotterel. You can also visit the Poor Knights Islands which Jacques Cousteau rated as amongst the very best diving spots in the world. There you will get the chance to see a variety of marine wildlife including manta rays and silky white whales.

The Waitangi Golf Course
T: +64 9402 8207
Tauranga Dr, Paihia, Northland.
With its well groomed greens and fairways the Waitangi Golf Course provides an exciting challenge, combined with a great panorama of views over the Bay of Islands and Russell as well as Waitangi, Opua and Mount Bedecked. The course is surrounded by flowering native trees, which provide sanctuary for many varieties of native birds.

www.waitangigolf.co.nz/

EXPLORE

The Russell Museum
T: +64 9405 7105
2 York St, Russell.
The museum tells the story of the development of Russell/Kororareka from a small Maori fishing village to a port of call for visiting ships and today’s tourist town. See the one-fifth scale model of Captain Cook’s Endeavour and the Maori taonga including a small waka (canoe). Open every day January (10am – 5pm) and February – December (10am – 4pm).

www.russellemuseum.co.nz

Kerikeri Half Day Tour - Fullers Great Sights Bay of Islands
T: +64 9402 7422.
Uncover the history of the picturesque settlement of Kerikeri. Discover some of Kerikeri’s best keep secrets in this popular afternoon tour.

Adults $65
www.newzealand.co.nz

Hokianga & Tane Mahuta Day Tour - Fullers Great Sights
T: +64 9402 7422.
Explore the Bay of Islands with a full day round trip to the Waitangi National Reserve. Visit Tane Mahuta and learn local stories and legends. A unique and authentic insight into early Maori history. Adults $100
www.newzealand.co.nz/new-zealand-tours

Cook’s Endeavour and the Maori taonga stores of the town of Paihia and a selection of dishes from around the world. There you will find the best New Zealand produce for you to sample and shop for delicious meals in Club Paihia’s own restaurant.

Busby Manor
1374 Tau Henare Dr, Paihia, Northland.
As well as the breathtaking views Club Paihia has every amenity and service to pamper and please. Enjoy multiple swimming pools, spa pools, sauna, fitness centre, a gymnasium, tennis courts, super-sized outdoor chess sets, barbecues and a bushwalking track. Take time to relax in the library or play a game of pool and enjoy delicious meals in Club Paihia’s own restaurant.

Bay of Islands Day Tour + Dolphin Watching Cruise T: +64 9402 8207 or outside NZ +64 9418 5793.
Explore the Bay of Islands with a full day tour departing Auckland combined with a Fullers GreatSights $208
www.newzealand.co.nz/new-zealand-tours

weekenders BAY OF ISLANDS, NZ

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because your holiday means everything to you and that means the world to us.

Let's make 2014 unforgettable!