

## **FED: Travel news in brief**

### **HIDDEN TREASURE**

Whether you're a first time traveller or a lifetime resident, there's always something to discover beneath the city's surface.

Explore Australia has compiled a list of Sydney's best kept secrets including places to visit, shop and eat as well as enjoy at night.

The guide aptly titled *Hide and Seek: Sydney*, explores such hidden treasures as the Mu-Meson Archives, a cinema which screens underground movies and documentaries, hidden away in the inner west suburb of Annandale. The venue's wallet friendly, costing only \$10 which includes homecooked soup, coffee, tea or cake.

Also listed, infamous amongst Sydney's indie culture, is Glebe Markets. Run every Saturday from 10am till 4pm, you can relax on the grass and listen to local musicians jamming. Shoppers can discover second hand treasures or pick up some of Sydney's hottest up and coming designer clothes.

Feeling a bit peckish and sick of those small portions mainstream cafes are serving you? The book suggests some great cafes, such as Corelli's Cafe Gallery in Newtown.

The guide offers insight into some of Sydney's best night spots. Tucked away up the Paddington end of Oxford Street, Ruby Rabbit offers an ambience of class as well as a naughty suggestive flavour. Favoured by celebs such as Mick Jagger, Snoop Dogg and the Foo Fighters, the club is littered with secret rooms which disappear into walls and offers extravagant features such as a 23-carat gold gilded wall panelling.

The guide is written by in-the-know Sydneysiders who have brought their wealth of experience to the printing press.

*Hide and Seek: Sydney* is published by Explore Australia and is available from bookstores from December. RRP \$14.95.

By Max Mason  
AAP mm/drp

### **GIFT IDEAS**

If you're stuck for gift ideas this Christmas, you can always give family and friends the gift of a getaway with an Accor Hotels Gift Card.

The gift cards range in value from \$100 to \$1,000 and can be used towards accommodation and in-house dining.

The recipient has 12 months to use the card and can choose to stay at one of 135 hotels, resorts and apartments in Australia, New Zealand or Fiji, ranging from affordable three star accommodation to five star luxury.

You can obtain a card by either phoning Accor or visiting Australia Post, Woolworths or Big W.

Details: visit [www.accorgiftcards.com.au](http://www.accorgiftcards.com.au) or call (02) 9280-9764.

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### **CHATEAU ELAN**

Rest, relaxation, oh and of course your own spa.

Tucked away in the NSW Hunter Valley the new \$30 million resort Chateau Elan will be a slice of the good life for those looking to indulge when it opens in February next year.

The brainchild of American entrepreneur Don Panoz, Chateau Elan's first resort launched in Braselton, Georgia, USA in 1992.

Having triumphed in the US and other parts of the world, Panoz was intrigued by Australia's Hunter winery region, and decided to build a resort which boasts 20 luxury spa suites as well as 40 luxury one-bedroom spa villas.

It also has a Greg Norman designed golf course, The Vintage.

And then there's the wine. Surrounded by local wineries and cellars the resort offers a wide range of wine tours and tastings. And for those who don't want to venture out, each room will have a selection of six different wines.

Details: visit [www.chateauelan.com.au](http://www.chateauelan.com.au) or call (02)4998-2500.

AAP mm.

### **STOPOVERS**

Stopovers in Asia are becoming more popular among Australians, according to online travel agent [travel.com.au](http://travel.com.au).

Travel.com.au's General Brand Manager Lisa Ferrari says an increasing number of travellers are requesting a stopover on long-haul journeys.

She says travellers head to Asia on the way back home from Europe primarily to shop and take advantage of the bargains available.

"A stopover is the ultimate solution when breaking up a long trip and they allow you to pick up some great bargains you can't get at home," says Ferrari.

"Not only will you eliminate the affects of jetlag, it allows travellers to see two destinations for the price of one flight."

The top five stopover destinations for bargain hunters are:

1. Hong Kong
2. Shanghai, China
3. Singapore
4. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
5. Bangkok, Thailand

Details: [www.travel.com.au](http://www.travel.com.au)

By Belinda Merhab

AAP bm

#### **PENINSULA PARIS**

The Hong Kong Group, The Peninsula Hotels, is opening its first European hotel - the Peninsula Paris - in 2012.

The group has had its eyes out for a European site for a long time so grabbed the chance when the former Hotel Majestic became available.

The building was originally constructed and opened in 1908 as the Majestic but until recently has been used as the Centre International de Conferences by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It's on Avenue Kleber near the Arc de Triomphe on the Champs Elysees.

The hotel will have 200 rooms.

Details: [peninsula.com](http://peninsula.com)

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#### **LATEST DEALS**

##### **FLIGHTS**

Fly return from Sydney to Christchurch, New Zealand, with Emirates from \$420 per person, including taxes.

Book by April 26, 2010 for travel to April 30, 2010.

Details: visit [www.travel.com.au](http://www.travel.com.au).

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#### **SINGAPORE/MALAYSIA**

Fly and stay in Singapore and Malaysia for nine nights from \$1,959 per person.

The price includes:

Return economy airfares with Singapore Airlines to Penang, Malaysia, as well as a two-night stop-over in Singapore.

In Singapore, guests will stay at the Hotel Royal and enjoy a half-day city tour.

In Penang, guests will spend seven nights at the Shangri La Golden Sands Resort with breakfast daily.

Return hotel/airport transfers and all pre-paid applicable taxes and charges are included.

Book by March 22, 2010 for travel between February 2 and March 31, 2010.

Details: visit [www.travel.com.au](http://www.travel.com.au) or call 1300-130-483.

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#### **CALIFORNIA**

Online travel agent ZUJI Australia is offering deals on accommodation in California, in the US.

Spend three nights at the Hacienda Hotel in Los Angeles for \$90 per room, per night.

Stay at the Larkspur Hotel in Union Square, San Francisco, for \$155 per room, per night.

Spend three nights at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront, for \$96 per room, per night. Request a free upgrade on availability.

Book by December 31 for travel up to February 28, 2010, or until sold out.

Deals are subject to availability and blackout dates apply.

Details: visit [www.zuji.com.au](http://www.zuji.com.au).

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#### **BROADBEACH**

Spend Christmas at Broadbeach on the Gold Coast with these accommodation deals from the four and a half star Freshwater Point Resort.

Stay in a one-bedroom apartment for seven nights from \$195 per night or from \$210 per night for a five night stay.

Available from December 25, 2009 to January 17, 2010.

Stay in a one-bedroom apartment for seven nights from \$86 per night.

Available until December 24, 2009 and between January 18 to March 31, 2010.

The resort offers air-conditioned apartments as well as a gymnasium, pool, spa, sauna and barbecue areas.

Details: visit [www.discoverqueensland.com.au](http://www.discoverqueensland.com.au) or call 1300-788- 553.

#### TERRIGAL/HUNTER VALLEY

Celebrate Christmas in Terrigal on the NSW Central Coast or in the Hunter Valley, north of Sydney, with these deals and events from Crowne Plaza Hotels.

Stay at the Crowne Plaza Terrigal from \$175 per night until December 24.

Stay at the Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley from \$200 per night for a deluxe guest room, from \$270 per night for a two-bedroom villa and from \$340 per night for a three-bedroom villa, until December 31, 2009.

Crowne Plaza Terrigal is offering A Night Under the Stars party on December 4 and December 11, from 7pm to 11pm, offering wines, beers, entertainment and finger foods for \$95 per person.

The hotel is also offering a White Winter Christmas sit-down dinner party on December 5 and December 12, from 7pm to 11pm, offering a seafood buffet, platters, hot dishes, salads, desserts, wines and beers for \$150 per person.

Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley is offering Christmas Day Lunch and Dinner with a buffet, beer, wine, entertainment, an appearance by Santa Claus and presents for the kids, at \$165 for adults and \$55 for kids aged 5 to 12.

Deals are subject to availability. Conditions and blackout dates apply.

Details: visit [www.crowneplaza.com.au](http://www.crowneplaza.com.au). Call Crowne Plaza Terrigal on (02) 4384-9113 and call Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley on (02) 4991-0900.

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#### MALDIVES

The Coco Palm Bodu Hithi in the Maldives (North Male Atoll) has a Christmas adventure for something totally different.

It starts at 5pm on Christmas Day and finishes at 5pm on Boxing Day (December 26). You're taken by private sea plane from Bodu Hithi to the picnic island, Emboodu.

A waiter is on hand to serve unlimited Moet and Chandon during your overnight stay in a private Robinson Crusoe style hut. A gala Christmas BBQ is provided served under the stars. You also have a private midnight cruise and are served a champagne breakfast the following morning before a half-day game fishing trip.

The total adventure costs \$US10,000 (\$A10,953) plus 10 per cent surcharge per couple.

Or for something a bit less extravagant enjoy a sunrise breakfast on a sandy beach (6am -9am) for \$US140 (\$A153.30) per couple. Includes a bottle of house champagne, coffee or tea, and a selection of baked items and fresh fruits.

Details: visit: [www.cocopalm.com.mv](http://www.cocopalm.com.mv) or call 0413-433-133.

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