

SOUTHERN OCEAN LODGE

Business with purpose

Re-creating a Leading Light in Luxury Tourism.

When Southern Ocean Lodge opened in 2008, it was lauded for setting a new standard in Australian luxury tourism: a property that could hold its head high among the finest in the world. However it wasn't the traditional concept of 'luxury' that set the lodge apart: it was the holistic approach taken by Baillie Lodges to creating a premium nature-based experience and a sense of place; and a strong focus on sustainability.

"We engaged Kangaroo Island-born architect, Max Pritchard – known for his organic forms and environmentally considerate approach – to create a high-end property that paid homage to its wild location and astonishing Southern Ocean views," explained Baillie Lodges Co-Founder, James Baillie.

"The lodge itself was sensitively designed to minimise its impact on the landscape and delicate coastal ecosystem. We cleared just one hectare – less than one per cent – of the total property and placed the remainder under permanent protection from development."

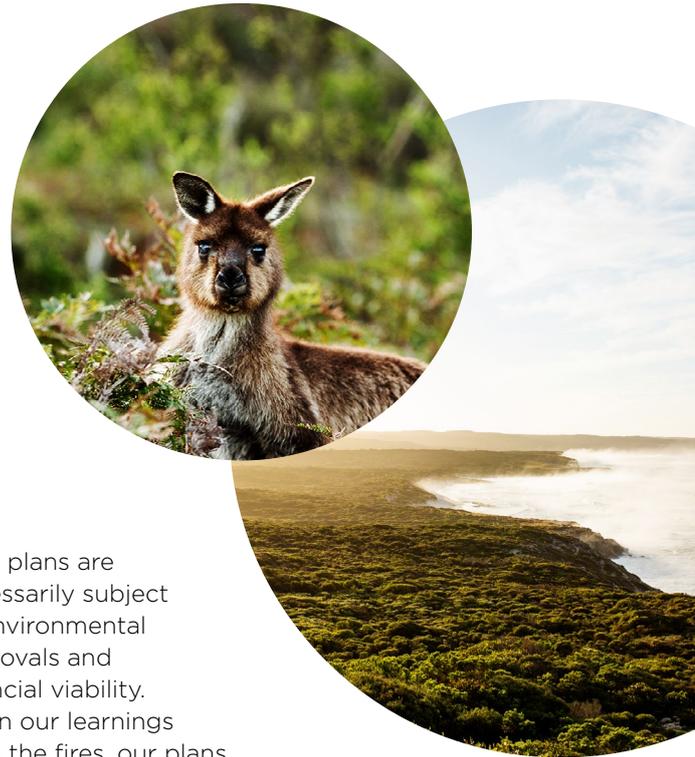
In January 2020, Southern Ocean Lodge was razed by devastating bushfires that swept across Kangaroo Island, affecting around half of the 440,500-hectare island. "Our immediate response was to pledge to rebuild Southern Ocean Lodge," said James Baillie.

Fires Hugely Impacted Local KI Community

"The original Southern Ocean Lodge was an absolute catalyst and leader in the luxury lodge field. The magnitude and plain gutsiness of the project was unlike anything we'd seen previously in Australia," commented Penny Rafferty, CEO of Luxury Lodges of Australia.

"It gave quality tourism and hospitality operators the confidence to invest deeply in this style of high-end experiential product in incredible, often very remote Australian regions. It was a game changer for Kangaroo Island, South Australia, and Australia globally."

The loss of Southern Ocean Lodge in the 2020 bushfires consequently had a far-reaching impact on Australian luxury tourism and on the economy and community of Kangaroo Island.



"Our plans are necessarily subject to environmental approvals and financial viability. Given our learnings from the fires, our plans for a 'Southern Ocean Lodge 2.0' will include a strong focus on the property's operational sustainability and consideration for the environment in which the lodge stands.

"In June 2020, we are well into the planning stages and we're already in conversation with the South Australian Government, National Parks and also Adelaide University in a whole-of-government approach to creating a property that is a model for sustainable development."

Prior to the fires, Southern Ocean Lodge worked closely with over 170 local suppliers and tour operators ranging from the Ligurian honey producers and the gin distillers at KI Spirits, to island tour operators who brought a lifetime of knowledge and experience to interpreting the island's extraordinary wildlife and landscape.

The lodge was key to the island economy, bringing more than 37,000 guests from 40 countries to the island in its first decade of operation. With the Baillie Lodges culinary philosophy focused on sourcing local, seasonal, fresh produce, this translated to monthly purchases of – among many other items – 390 dozen KI free-range eggs; 55 kg of live KI marron; 170 fresh KI pheasants and partridges and 1200 bottles of South Australian wine.



Plans for Southern Ocean Lodge 2.0

“Thankfully, we can use the original designs for Southern Ocean Lodge to recreate our vision, with some exciting new enhancements still under wraps. And we’ll look to take advantage of the technological advances of the past 12 years, particularly in the areas of energy sustainability and fire resilience,” said James Baillie.

“In planning to rebuild Southern Ocean Lodge, we’re looking forward to re-connecting with the many premium food and beverage producers, talented artisans including Janine Mackintosh and Indiana James, and the passionate tour operators who have been such an integral part of the unique Southern Ocean Lodge experience.

“And of course, we look forward to again welcoming guests to experience the incredible land and seascape of Kangaroo Island through signature experiences that will tap into the essence of this wild southern island.”

Other Sustainability Actions (Our Mandatories):

The plan for Southern Ocean Lodge 2.0 would see the lodge operate under a detailed and evolving Sustainable Management Policy, which would steer operations and use the best available technology to reduce energy consumption and waste and to minimise environmental impact, ultimately enhancing guests’ experience of the destination.

Top level environmentally sustainable initiatives include:

- State of the art hybrid power generation harnessing the latest in renewable technologies.
- Wastewater converted for use on native plantings as part of new bushfire protection buffers.
- Rainwater harvesting from roof surfaces, storing well over two million litres of water, ensuring the property is self-sufficient.
- Toiletry amenities presented in refillable vessels in guest suites.
- The original Southern Ocean Lodge Environmental Fund contributed \$10 per guest to KI environmental projects, raising more than \$500,000 in its first decade.
- In 2020, Southern Ocean Lodge made donations – matched by personal contributions from James and Hayley Baillie – to a total of \$100,000 to a number of organisations, including the KI Mayoral Relief and Recovery Bushfire Fund to assist the KI community following the fires.

