

# THE WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN

# Travel

## + LUXURY

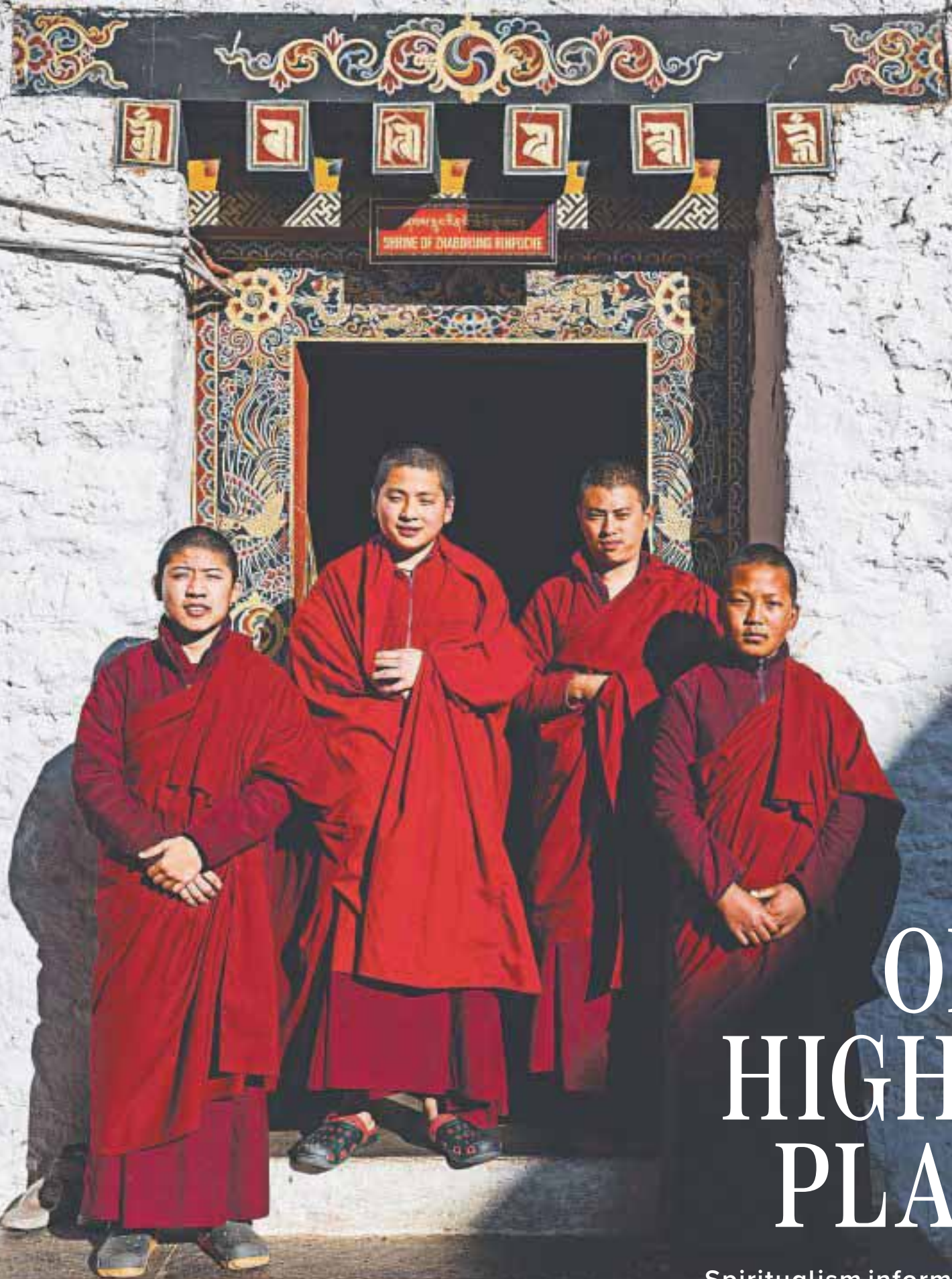
June 29-30, 2024 / [theaustralian.com.au/travel](https://theaustralian.com.au/travel)

**SWEET OBSESSION**

The world's best  
chocolate shops

**FINDING FIORDLAND**

The New Zealand  
alternative to Norway



# ON A HIGHER PLANE

Spiritualism informs everyday  
life in the kingdom of Bhutan



**1 SOUTHERN OCEAN LODGE, SA**

Acclaimed documentary travel photographer Richard l'Anson is running two five-day photo safari workshops on Kangaroo Island in 2024. l'Anson has travelled the world for the past 37 years creating a compelling collection of images from more than 100 countries on all continents. The sessions are each limited to just 10 guests, who will be taken out to explore the island while receiving photography tips and hints on techniques from l'Anson to best capture the destination's dramatic topography, seascapes, fauna and flora. Accommodation is in a Flinders Suite category at Southern Ocean Lodge, which reopened after a complete rebuild earlier this year. Workshops: August 1-5 and September 5-8. [southernoceanlodge.com.au](http://southernoceanlodge.com.au)

**WINTER WARMERS**

Hunker down and relax in style at a range of premier Australian hideaways

KIM WILSON

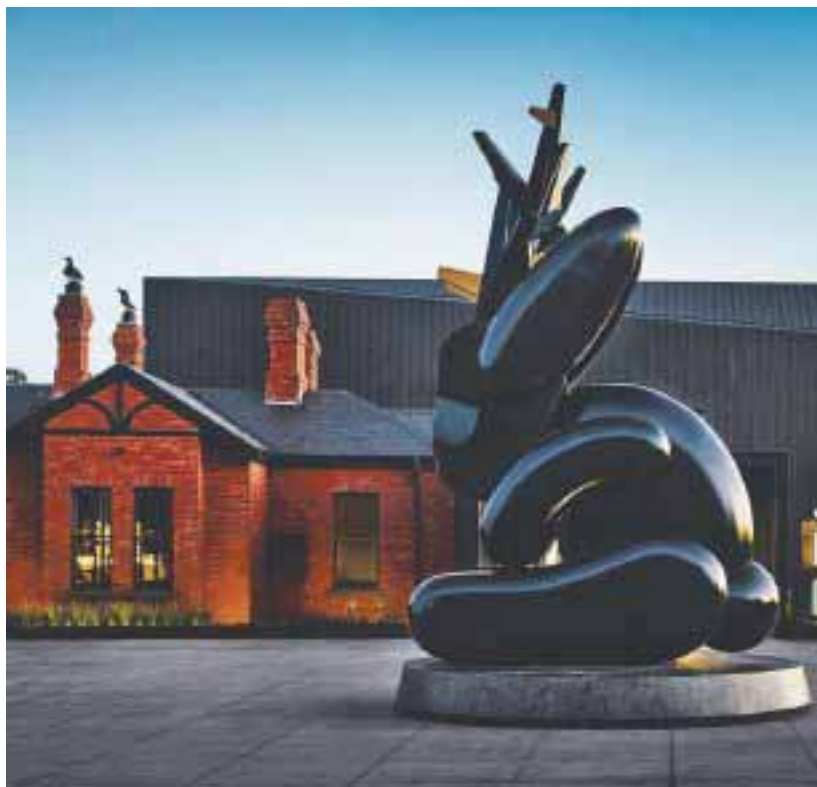
**2 SAFFIRE FREYCINET, TASMANIA**

Raise a glass at Saffire Freycinet's Sparkling Weekend, August 16-18, and toast the stunning setting. Hosted by international wine expert Tyson Stelzer, this unique event brings together the best of French champagne and Tasmanian wines for a very special weekend. Rarely offered outside the estate of champagne house Billecart-Salmon, Stelzer will take guests through a tasting masterclass with vintages dating back to 1996, all poured from magnums. Participants will also explore Tasmania's finest wineries, from the iconic House of Arras to boutique producers Kreglinger and Lowestoft, enjoy locally sourced culinary delights and breathtaking views across pristine Great Oyster Bay and the pink-hued peaks of The Hazards. [saffire-freycinet.com.au](http://saffire-freycinet.com.au)



**3 EL QUESTRO, WA**

El Questro, a homestead that caters for just 20 guests on a vast property in the heart of the east Kimberley region, is showcasing its rich cultural heritage by inviting guests to experience local Indigenous practices and beliefs. Via the Injiid Marlabu Calls activity, participants witness healing rituals, hear ancestral stories and have the opportunity to be immersed in the beliefs and stories of the local Ngarinyin language and traditions. The new initiative is designed to foster a deeper connection between visitors and the land, forging a path towards greater understanding and unity. Injiid Marlabu Calls is available to El Questro Homestead guests on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The property is a member of Luxury Lodges of Australia. [elquestro.com.au](http://elquestro.com.au)



**4 JACKALOPE, MORNINGTON PENINSULA, VIC**

Who doesn't love a snug retreat when chilly breezes blow off the ocean. Boutique hotel Jackalope, opened in 2017 and well known for its art-inspired decor and edgy design, is a haven of warmth in winter. Nestled at Merricks North in the heart of Victoria's Mornington Peninsula wine country, the award-winning bolthole, with cellar door and expansive grounds, is inviting guests to indulge at special dining events in collaboration with Melbourne chefs and restaurateurs. These include French flavours from Melbourne's Entrecote (August 31) and Jackalope yum cha treats on Saturdays from July 20 to August 24 (make it a party and book a mahjong table for extra fun). Until August 31, there's 15 per cent off stays and spa treatments, too. [jackalopehotels.com](http://jackalopehotels.com)



**5 RAES ON WATEGOS, BYRON BAY, NSW**

Byron Bay retreat Raes on Wategos is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. Built in the 1960s, the Spanish mission-style boutique property, with tranquil setting, lush garden and pool, was transformed into a cool coastal hotel in 1994 and underwent a makeover in 2017. Overlooking Wategos Beach, Raes has just seven suites and is a popular haven for well-heeled guests. There are special offers to mark its milestone birthday, including a Winter Escape package (valid for all two-night stays throughout the season), with daily a la carte breakfast, complimentary airport transfers, a bottle of Perrier Jouet Champagne on arrival, spa treatments, infrared sauna session and a special take-home gift. From \$800 a night (without inclusions, room rates usually start at \$1200 a night). [raes.com.au](http://raes.com.au)