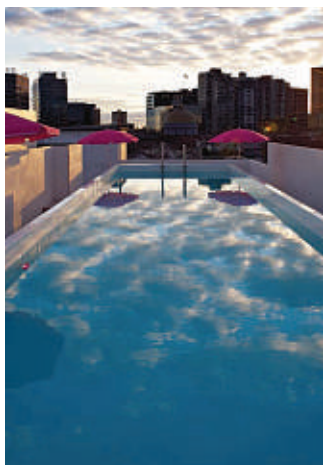


The Bloomfield Melbourne, Australia

The Bloomfield is a hotel of stylish contradictions, where peaceful suburbia meets sultry rock 'n' roll. Sandwiched between two parks in serene South Yarra,



the Bloomfield is a vibrant masterclass in retro glamour inside. Boldly patterned fabrics set against pops of brilliant colour, and 60s-style furniture and artwork combine to create a fabulous pad on the fashionable side of kitsch.

You could take one of the hotel's chauffeur-driven Rolls-Royces into the city, or there are plenty of reasons to stay put. Start with a dip in the rooftop pool; pre-dinner, clink bellinis in the leather-booted bar, then proceed to the bistro and linger over chef Anthony Siketa's modern French and Italian-style dishes — all the ingredients you need for a rock-star weekend.

Has 32 rooms, including four suites.

Rates: AU\$129–AU\$400pn (€82–€255), including tax at 10pc. Breakfast from AU\$6.50 (€4).



North Bundaleer

Jamestown, South Australia

There's a quirky English feel to the almost plantation house-like North Bundaleer, set in 400 acres of bush and farmland near South Australia's Clare Valley wine region.

The four rooms, including one suite, are lavishly decorated in Victorian style, with patterned armchairs, ornate screens and sturdy antique furniture. But don't equate



Victorian with stuffy — the vibe here is casual and convivial.

In the evening, guests meet to enjoy a dinner party of modern Australian dishes. Bring some walking shoes for the climb up to Maslin's Lookout and for exploring the centuries-old pine North Bundaleer Forest across the road.

Rates: Doubles from AU\$390–AU\$500pn (€249–€319), including breakfast and tax at 10pc. Two-night packages, including breakfast, dinner and an open bar, cost AU\$1,080–AU\$1,300 (€689–€830); three-nights, AU\$1,470–AU\$1,800 (€938–€1,149), inc tax.

The Boatshed

Waiheke Island, New Zealand

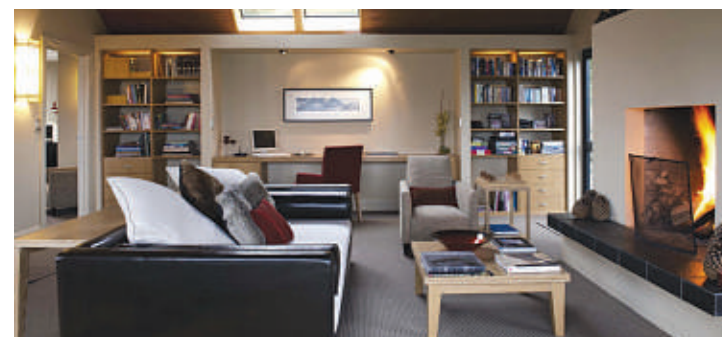
Lazing on a lounge in the shutter-dappled shade of your suite, the sound of the lapping waves lilted you towards sleep, you'd never know you were just 35 minutes from Auckland.

The Boatshed's simple-yet-stylish double suites mix wood and white for a sophisticated nautical feel, with quirky seaside accessories. Feast in the Boatshed's airy, relaxed dining room or opt for private all-day dining on your balcony, by the fire or al fresco.

The Boatshed's Wellbeing menu means you can book an in-room treatment, such as a Polynesian Floor Work massage.

Stretched and realigned, you'll be ready to discover the shops, cafés and galleries of nearby Oneroa village. Little Oneroa Beach below the hotel, and adjacent Oneroa Beach, are just three minutes' walk away.

There are five rooms, including three Boatshed suites. **Rates** NZ\$745–NZ\$910pn (€381–€465), including 12.5pc tax, breakfast and on-island transfers.



Azur Lodge

Nr Queenstown, New Zealand

Azur Lodge may well boast the best views in Queenstown, but it doesn't allow its cinematic backdrop to do all the work — its stone and silver beechwood lodges are equally impressive.

Offering uninterrupted views of Lake Wakatipu and the majestic Remarkables range wherever possible, each lodge features so many sliding doors, picture windows and skylights that the bedroom, sitting room and even the bathroom are flooded with light.

There's no restaurant, but the concierge can book you in to one of Queenstown's many foodie haunts. No need to justify the calories when you're in NZ's adrenaline capital: skydiving, bungee jumping, canyoning — select your nerve-jangler of choice.

The nine lodges each come with a separate lounge area and en suite. **Rates:** NZ\$1,300pn (€664), December–April, including airport and town transfers, breakfast, mini-bar drinks, afternoon tea, pre-dinner drinks and canapés. Excludes taxes at 12.5pc.



Eagles Nest

Bay of Islands, New Zealand

It may sound like the command centre of a dastardly Bond villain, but Eagles Nest, on North Island's east coast, is far too good for baddies.

This luxurious estate sits atop a secluded outcrop overlooking the bay — its sleek contemporary villas pitched for maximum privacy across 75 acres of subtropical bush, edged with secluded coves. With a breathtaking choice of activities — golf, scuba, skydiv-

ing, kayaking, hiking and more — you can do as much as you please. Then reward yourself with rock star-style relaxation: lazing on the deck with an occasional dip in your villa pool, while a personal chef whips up dinner.

The five villas are each decorated differently in neutral tones with glass and stainless-steel details and minimalist furniture. **Rates:** NZ\$1,013–NZ\$19,995pn (€518–€10,215) a villa, including breakfast, Champagne, some mini-bar drinks and tax.

Islington Hotel Hobart, Tasmania

High on a ridge above the Tasmanian capital, the Regency exterior of the Islington Hotel belies the opulence and nostalgia within. An irreverent cocktail of antiques, animal prints and patterned furnishings is too consciously mismatched to come across as entirely traditional.

In the hotel's 11 rooms, the eccentricity is toned down with modern touches such as clean white bathrooms and khaki-cream walls. A stunning double-height

conservatory serves as the glass church of a hotel restaurant, where gastronomes worship the Australian and European fusion menu. Head to Hobart for harbour-side walks, markets and cafés.

There are 11 rooms — five in the original house, the remaining six in a garden extension. King-size beds, heated bathroom floors, shoji screen walls, deep baths and overhead rain showers feature throughout.

Rates: AU\$300–AU\$550 (€191–€351), including breakfast, mini-bar soft drinks and tax at 10pc.



Establishment Hotel Sydney, Australia

This is a hip, everything-under-one-roof hotel housed within a complex called the Establishment, with a choice of three restaurants, four bars, a nightclub, oh, and 31 rooms, including two penthouse suites.

Its decor is modern and minimalist; its scale grand. Heavy-weight stone and wood flooring, marble panels and simple dark-wood furniture stand the test of time and fashion like a Savile Row suit. Drink Champagne at the vast marble counter in the elegant Establishment Bar. On the fourth floor, Hemmesphere is a colourful cocktail lounge.

Establishment's restaurants are just as varied: Gin Garden for Thai and Indian food, or casual drinks; you can savour Australian fine dining at est., or try acclaimed Japanese fare at sushi e.

All that, and Sydney's world-class sights on your doorstep too — the Establishment Hotel is one for the hedonist's address book.

Rates AU\$350–AU\$1,250pn (€223–€797).



Mr & Mrs Smith Australia & New Zealand Hotel Collection — £19.95 (€22.13), Spy Publishing — is available from mrandmrsmith.com/shop. Irish Independent readers can avail of a £5 (€5.55) discount on the book by entering the promotional code IRIN10 when they purchase online.

