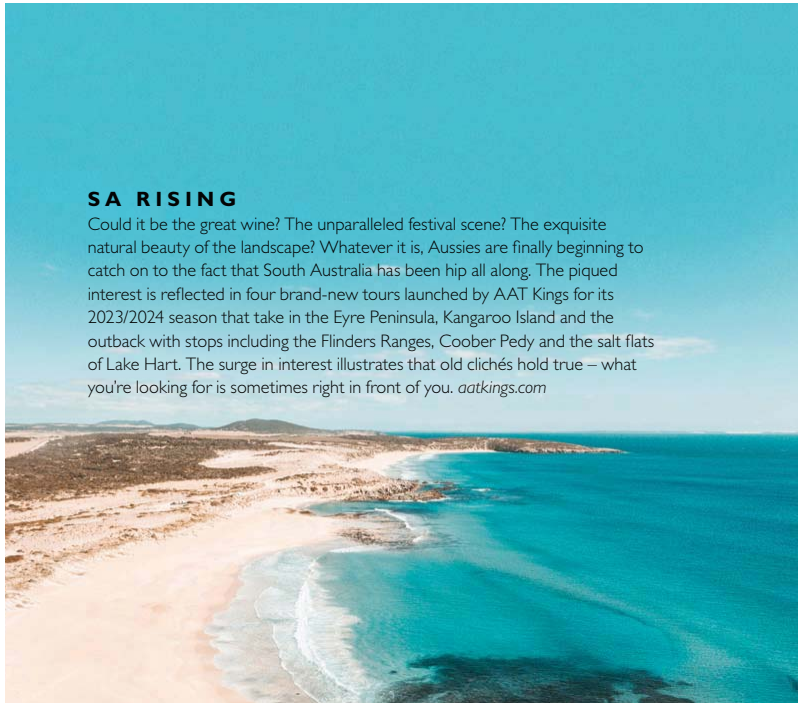




MARCH, 2023

TRAVEL BUZZ

Australian Traveller, National



SA RISING

Could it be the great wine? The unparalleled festival scene? The exquisite natural beauty of the landscape? Whatever it is, Aussies are finally beginning to catch on to the fact that South Australia has been hip all along. The piqued interest is reflected in four brand-new tours launched by AAT Kings for its 2023/2024 season that take in the Eyre Peninsula, Kangaroo Island and the outback with stops including the Flinders Ranges, Coober Pedy and the salt flats of Lake Hart. The surge in interest illustrates that old clichés hold true – what you’re looking for is sometimes right in front of you. aatkings.com



Flick the switch

Caught the Bruce Munro bug since seeing his acclaimed *Field of Light* installation at Uluru? Make plans to return to the Red Centre as the British artist unveils *Light-Towers*, a new sound and light installation at Discovery Kings Canyon in April. Consisting of 69 technicoloured towers, the installation will take visitors on an enchanting aural and visual journey, providing them with another reason to immerse themselves in the wilderness of Watarrka National Park. discoveryholidayparks.com.au

TRAVEL BUZZ

Set your sights on South Australia, *MAKE A DATE* with the season’s best **FOODIE FESTS**, hot foot it to some hot springs and *MORE*, with all that’s **MOVING AND SHAKING** in travel news.



AT loves... Hagon Workroom

Souvenir tea towels are a classic travel memento, but sometimes they’re just too pretty to use. What about to wear? Edwina Hagon’s eponymous label Hagon Workroom is the latest fashion project exploring the creative possibilities of upcycling vintage materials. “On a recent trip along the NSW South Coast, I found a few souvenir Australian tea towels,” Edwina tells us. “I was drawn to them immediately for the illustrative depictions of our native flora and fauna, the sentimental kitsch aspect and the quality of the linen.” For more one-of-a-kind pieces visit hagon.com.au



Hiking with heart

Coastrek’s hiking challenge is the ultimate active getaway with purpose, encouraging more Aussies to get moving in support of the Heart Foundation across five incredible locations in 2023. Not only improving the health and wellbeing of every trekker, Coastrek is also raising valuable funds for lifesaving research and programs to fight heart disease. The events will be held at the following locations: Northern Beaches, NSW – 24 March; Mornington Peninsula, Vic – 26 May; Sunshine Coast, Qld – 21 July; Fleurieu Peninsula, SA – 1 September; and Margaret River, WA – 27 October. coastrek.com.au



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SHORTCUTS | Travel buzz

Food & drink festivals not to miss

EQUINOX – AUTUMN CELEBRATION OF THE SENSES
Blue Mountains, NSW

10 MARCH – 2 APRIL
 There's nothing like the magical glow of autumn in the Blue Mountains. To ring in the season, restaurants across the region will be offering up sumptuous autumn-inspired menus as part of the Equinox celebration. visitbluemountains.com.au/equinox-taste-2023

MANDURAH CRAB FEST
Mandurah, WA

18–19 MARCH
 Mandurah Crab Fest celebrates the crux of blue swimmer crab season with an abundance of tasty ocean fare accompanied by local music and entertainment. crabfest.com.au

ORANGE F.O.O.D WEEK
Orange, NSW

24 MARCH – 2 APRIL
 Central West NSW is known for its wine, fertile farmlands and fresh produce, and Orange F.O.O.D Week pulls it all together over 10 days. Joining the best local talent, guests can sample some of the region's finest flavours with foraging excursions, night markets and dining events. orangefoodweek.com.au

MELBOURNE FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL
Melbourne, Vic

24 MARCH – 2 APRIL
 As Australia's unofficial foodie capital, it should come as no surprise that Melbourne Food and Wine Festival comprises some of the country's brightest talent. As per tradition, more than 2000 diners will assemble for 'the world's longest lunch', this year headed by Lake House culinary director, Alla Wolf-Tasker. melbournefoodandwine.com.au

NEWCASTLE FOOD MONTH
Newcastle, NSW

APRIL
 Celebrating Novocastrian talent and produce, this month-long series of events evokes the flavours of the Hunter Valley. The festival's flagship event Le Diner en Blanc will cloak Foreshore Park in a dress code of white for an elegant Parisian dinner with more than 1000 guests. newcastlefoodmonth.com.au

FRESH HOP BEER FESTIVAL
Derwent Valley, Tas

14–15 APRIL
 Calling all beer aficionados! Australia's southernmost state has carved out a reputation as one of the world's best brewing regions. This April, the Fresh Hop Beer Festival celebrates the Tassie hop harvest and all the things that make Apple Isle beer so special. freshhop.com.au

TASTING AUSTRALIA
Adelaide, SA

28 APRIL – 7 MAY
 When it comes to food, South Australia has got it going on. Tasting Australia (pictured above) intends to demonstrate exactly why, with a series of lunches hosted by acclaimed local chefs and masterclasses where guests can get in on the action. tastingaustralia.com.au

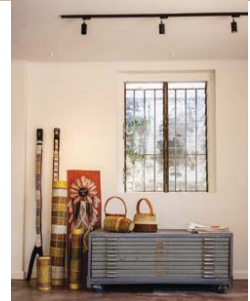
GRAMPIANS GRAPE ESCAPE
Halls Gap Recreation Reserve, Vic

5–7 MAY
 This fun and fruity festival invites oenophiles to the picturesque heart of Victorian wine country for a weekend of wine, food and music. Indulge in all things cool climate and find your flavour – from peppery shiraz to crisp, fruity whites. grampiansgrapeescape.com.au



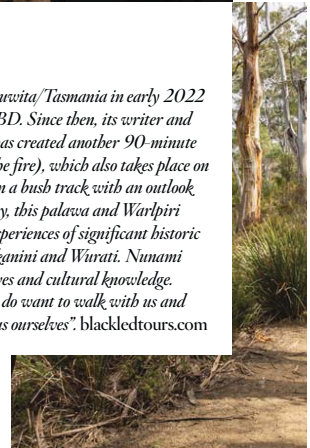
LAUNDRY DAYS

Laundry Gallery is a new showroom combining modern iterations of First Nations art and culture with age-old stories. Housed in a repurposed 1970s laundromat in uptown Darwin, the urban-cool space will showcase multi-disciplinary creative works (including basket weaving) and host monthly exhibitions and workshops helmed by Aboriginal Elders. laundrygallery.com.au



Wood for the fire

Blak Led Tours launched in southern lutruwita/Tasmania in early 2022 with a walking tour through Hobart's CBD. Since then, its writer and performer, Nunami Scultorpe-Green, has created another 90-minute walk called mumara patrula (wood for the fire), which also takes place on homelands of the Southeast Nation but on a bush track with an outlook to lunawuni/Bruny Island. Along the way, this palawa and Warlpiri storyteller draws walkers deep into the experiences of significant historic figures Fanny Smith, Tanganutura, Trukanini and Warati. Nunami also shares invaluable personal perspectives and cultural knowledge. "People do want to know our stories, they do want to walk with us and understand our history and culture from us ourselves". blackledtours.com





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SHORTCUTS | *Travel buzz*



Spring to it

Metung Hot Springs has opened for business, placing the tiny town of Metung in East Gippsland on the luxury bathing trail map. Rachel and Adrian Bromage and Charles Davidson, of Peninsula Hot Springs, have joined forces to develop the architecturally designed complex, aided by generous tourism grants. "The health and wellbeing space is one of the fastest growing tourism industries in the world," says Adrian.

Geothermal water, discovered here in the 1930s by a company drilling for oil, bubbles up to fill the rock pools and giant barrels dotted throughout the resort. Paths wind through native vegetation leading to nooks and restful places to bask, bathe, breathe and take in the views. Sit up to your neck in warm and healing water watching the boats glide by on Lake King.

Ten safari-style tents, oozing romance and style, offer interiors that generate gasps of delight. Earthy furnishings – timber four-poster beds, leather chairs and hand-crafted ceramic pendant lights – make up a colour palette of verdant green, ecru and rust, inspired by the surrounding bush. A pair of hot spring barrels sits on each private deck, enticing the lucky guests to hop in.

Yoga, massage, sauna and a cafe are nestled around the grounds, turning a spectacular clifftop setting into a world-class resort for all seasons. metunghotsprings.com

FIVE MORE NEW SPAS TO TRY

From natural thermal springs to oases in the city, these new spas will have you blissing out.



Alba Thermal Springs & Spa, Vic

Discover the regenerative forces of nature at Alba Thermal Springs and Spa in the Mornington Peninsula, where more than 30 natural pools, from geothermal hot springs to herbal-infused botanical pools, are surrounded by coastal Moonah woodland. Opt for a night pass to soak up the tranquillity of the sunset or starry sky. albaternalsprings.com.au

Aurora Spa & Bathhouse, Vic

This European-inspired bathhouse (pictured left) in Sorrento will take you on a wellness journey with luxurious treatments and year-round mineral bathing. An understated yet decadent interior is inspired by the soothing palette of the surrounding Mornington Peninsula, a slice of serenity just an hour outside of Melbourne. auroraspa.com.au

BODHI Yallingup, WA

The Margaret River region is renowned for its pristine, unspoilt beauty. BODHI Yallingup spa continues this legacy with sustainable practices that include a 220,000-litre rainwater tank and 71 solar panels. The restorative power of nature is at the heart of this spa, and you'll find that relaxation comes naturally with views over Lake Gunyulgup. bodhispa.com

Sofitel Spa, Sofitel Sydney Darling Harbour, NSW

The soon-to-open Sofitel Spa pulls together the best in wellness from around the world, with harbour views, French skincare by Biologique Recherche and contemporary design by Bondi company Pike Withers. It's relaxation with a high-end cosmopolitan twist. sofitelsydneydarlingharbour.com.au

VILLA AMAN, Port Douglas, Qld

If you prefer total privacy, Villa Aman is the new addition to the Private Collection by Spicers portfolio that offers luxury accommodation with its own terrace spa. The property sits at the highest point of Port Douglas, allowing breathtaking views of the tropical paradise (as you're sequestered in your own). privatecollectionbyspicers.com