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>SPRING 2009



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# 04.

## GO > CHECK IN

By Aaron Gulley

**FLOATING LUXURY**  
An example of the lodge's effort to be in communion with nature, the great room provides an unobstructed panorama of Hansen Bay.



## A Leap Ahead

AUSTRALIA'S NEW SOUTHERN OCEAN LODGE PUTS KANGAROO ISLAND ON THE LUXURY TRAVEL MAP

**“LOOK,”** SAYS BEN LANYON, **“YOUR FIRST KANGAROO.”** A hundred yards up the road, the wan carcass of a retriever-size 'roo is splayed face up on the bitumen. It's almost dusk, and Lanyon, the bright-blue-eyed co-manager of Southern Ocean Lodge, is driving me west from the airport to Kangaroo Island's newest hotel. “You basically can't drive after dark,” he laments. “That's how much wildlife there is here.”

Anchored ten miles off the coast of Adelaide, Kangaroo Island is Australia's answer to the Galápagos. Travelers head here to behold koalas gnawing sedately on blue gums, prehistoric-looking goanna lizards rustling through the mallee bush, and mobs of kangaroos bounding across vast pastures.

Last March, James and Hayley Baillie unveiled Southern Ocean Lodge, the island's first high-end accommodation. “In terms of luxury travel, Australia has fallen behind New Zealand and Asia,” explains James. “We wanted to change that. Southern Ocean is a cross between an Aman resort and a Lindblad cruise.” Balanced on a

COURTESY OF SOUTHERN OCEAN LODGE



THE NEXT ADVENTURE

Five New Hotels Where Staying Means Playing

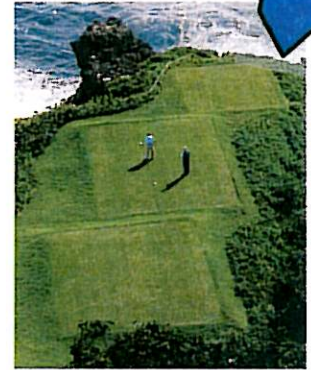
**1 | Banyan Tree Mayakoba, Riviera Maya, Mexico**  
Play the Greg Norman-designed course and recharge in your villa's private pool or the hydrotherapy spa. From \$735; banyantree.com

**2 | Dakota Mountain Lodge & Spa, Park City, Utah**  
The slope-side Waldorf-Astoria Collection lodge is filled with contemporary furnishings and steam showers. From \$175; dakotamountainlodge.com

**3 | Viceroy Anguilla, Anguilla**  
You'll earn your sea legs here—guests have access to a 78-foot charter yacht on Meads Bay. From \$550; viceroyanguilla.com

**4 | Banjar Tola, Madhya Pradesh, India**  
Overlooking Kanha National Park, this safari lodge offers 18 luxe tents with bamboo floors, plus tours of the tiger reserve by 4x4 or elephant. From \$380; tajsafaris.com

**5 | Phulay Bay, A Ritz-Carlton Reserve, Krabi, Thailand**  
Private butlers, plunge pools, and personalized yoga retreats make it hard not to relax at this hideaway. From \$750; ritzcarlton.com —KARA WAHLGREN



For more of Kangaroo Island, check out the video at [outsidego.com/kangaroo](http://outsidego.com/kangaroo).

jagged promontory where 250 acres of undeveloped bush collide with the surging Indian Ocean, the 21-room lodge is a rib of sun-bleached wood and glass that spills down the shoreline. At the head of the hotel is the split-level great

room, with floor-to-ceiling windows, a modern hanging fireplace, and an infinity hot tub spilling over the veranda. The minimalist decor is one of clean lines, awash in muted whites, blues, and grays that reference the wild surrounds without drawing attention away from them.

Connecting with the natural world is the point, I find, during my stay at the start of the austral summer. There are daily bush walks, seaside drives through Flinders Chase National Park, and Aboriginal-inspired massages. The lodge's appeal zooms into focus early one morning when I wake to the thrum of distant waves on the shore below and spy a wallaby foraging outside my window. I'm swaddled in puffy bedding, sipping black coffee and communing with the wildlife. It's a slice of nature—only more comfortable. ☺



**COASTAL COMFORTS**  
Clockwise from top left, tonight's special; sunset from the hotel; the links at Banyan Tree; a bath that beckons; maid in heaven; the lodge



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JEN JUDGE (2); MARY HENEBRY/WESTIN RESORTS; COURTESY OF SOUTHERN OCEAN LODGE; JEN JUDGE; COURTESY OF SOUTHERN OCEAN LODGE