

VOGUE

POWER TO THE YOUTH

Zendaya and the new
age of enlightenment

**RENEWABLE
CHARGE**
People
and fashion
with purpose



After the fires

With the end of this devastating fire season in sight at long last, we highlight how to help affected regions in their recovery efforts by visiting and discovering – or rediscovering – our own backyards. By Mark Sariban.

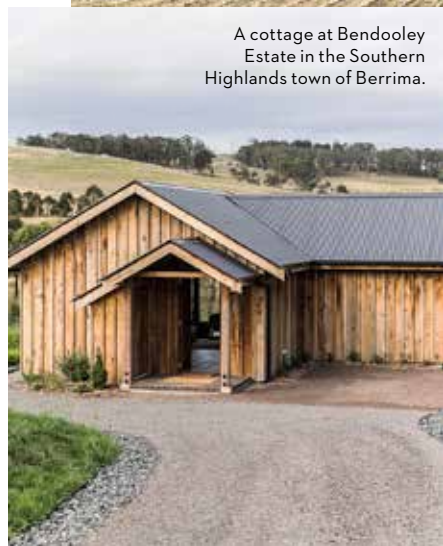
LONG BEFORE THE fire risk had receded across the eastern states this summer, a number of grassroots movements had sprung up to help bushfire-affected communities. The most high-profile of these is the Empty Esky concept, which encourages travellers to support businesses in bushfire-hit areas by visiting with an empty esky and leaving with it full of local products (www.emptyesky.com.au). Then there's Spend With Them (www.instagram.com/spendwiththem) and Roadtrip For Good (www.roadtripforgood.org.au). In that spirit *Vogue* shines a light on tourist destinations in New South Wales's Southern Highlands and South Coast, Victoria's East Gippsland and South Australia's Adelaide Hills district and Kangaroo Island. Be inspired!

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS, NSW

This picturesque country New South Wales destination, a 90-minute drive from Sydney, has long been a foodie and wine-lover's haven. While fires burnt through large areas of Nattai National Park and bushland bordering Kangaroo Valley, the main tourist areas from Bowral to Robertson remained intact and open for business. Stay in chic cottages at Berrima's Bendooley Estate (www.bendooleyestate.com.au) and sample cool-climate wines at PepperGreen Estate's cellar door and tasting room in Berrima town (peppergreenestate.com.au). Then head to the Shaggy Cow cafe in Mittagong for lunch (www.theshaggycow.com.au), and Biota in Bowral (www.biotadining.com) for a sublime dinner.



An olive grove at PepperGreen Estate. The winery's tasting room in Berrima town offers breakfast, and long lunches showcasing its olive oils and wines.



A cottage at Bendooley Estate in the Southern Highlands town of Berrima.



Locally sourced fare at Birch in the Southern Highlands town of Robertson (www.birchrestaurant.com.au).



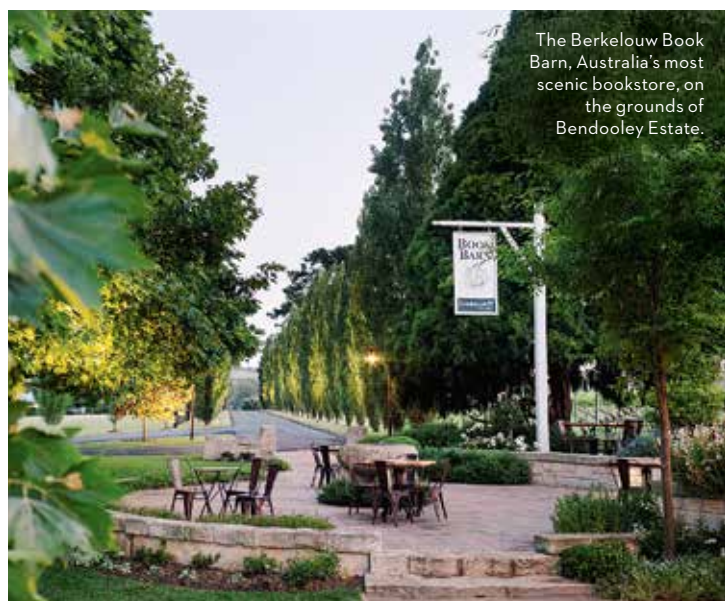
Bangalay Dining, the fine-dining restaurant at Bangalay Villas in Shoalhaven Heads.



The Honorbread sourdough bakery in Bermagui.



Glamping at Tilba Lake Camp in Central Tilba.



The Berkelouw Book Barn, Australia's most scenic bookstore, on the grounds of Bendooley Estate.



Sunrise over Tathra Beach in Tathra, between Narooma and Bermagui, on the New South Wales South Coast.

DESTINATION NSW LISA MEDICKE ROB LOCKE
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From Moruya to Eden, the coastline is dotted with low-key towns, including Moruya, Narooma, Central Tilba and Bermagui, all of which were spared

SOUTH COAST, NSW

The beaches and inland towns of the coast stretching south from Sydney to the border of New South Wales and Victoria have always attracted urban dwellers seeking to get away from it all for a week or two and blissfully sync in to a relaxed local vibe.

The Shoalhaven region, the stretch of the South Coast most accessible from Sydney, was badly hit by this summer's bushfires, although the coastline from Wollongong to Jervis Bay was fortunate to remain untouched. Base yourself at Bangalay Villas, next to Seven Mile Beach National Park at Shoalhaven Heads (www.bangalayvillas.com.au), for lazy days at the beach, fine dining and forays to the charming town of Berry and beyond to Kangaroo Valley, or at Bannisters at Mollymook (www.bannisters.com.au/mollymook), which offers a mix of hotel-style rooms and luxurious beach houses on site. From Mollymook, which with neighbouring Ulladulla escaped the terrible destruction visited upon adjacent areas, head to the tiny town of Milton, home to Milk Haus (milkhaus.com.au), a wholefood canteen with its own rustic accommodation, the 1930s-era Dairy Fields (dairyfieldswoodstock.com.au). Also in Milton is the highly recommended Small Town Food + Wine (smalltownmilton.com.au).

From Moruya to Eden, the coastline is dotted with low-key towns, including Moruya, Narooma, Central Tilba and Bermagui, all of which were thankfully spared from the fires inland. For a stay with a difference, check out Tilba Lake Camp (www.tilbalakecamp.com.au), which offers luxe camping and 'pods' (tiny homes). It's a good base for exploring the old dairy town of Central Tilba – be sure to visit the Tilba Real Dairy shop on the main street (tilbarealdairy.com). →

EAST GIPPSLAND, VICTORIA

The long beaches of Victoria's Lakes Entrance and the surrounding towns of Bairnsdale and Lindenow were spared from the firefronts that famously threatened communities such as Mallacoota, further along the coast. Stay at The Riversleigh in Bairnsdale (www.riversleigh.com.au) and pop next door to The Loft restaurant, which champions East Gippsland produce, as does the nearby Northern Ground (northernground.com.au). Ferryman's Seafood Cafe, housed in an old car ferry on the waterfront at Lakes Entrance (www.ferrymans.com.au), showcases the coast's famous seafood. And Toms Cap Vineyard Retreat in Willung South, Central Gippsland (www.tomscap.com.au) is also a great option as a base for exploring the region.



The main street of Briagolong in East Gippsland.



The Loft restaurant in Bairnsdale, East Gippsland.



Looking out over the Adelaide Hills from Mount Lofty House's Sequoia private retreat, which is due to open in June this year. **Right:** Fred Eatery in Aldgate (fredeatery.com.au), Mount Lofty House GM Jesse Kornoff's favourite local cafe.



ADELAIDE HILLS, SA

This wine region just outside the South Australian capital was hit by a large bushfire, and a number of wineries have been destroyed or lost vineyards, however Crafers, Mount Barker and Hahndorf were untouched. Base yourself at Mount Lofty House in Crafers (www.mtloftyhouse.com.au) and the helpful staff can tell you which cellar doors are open for business. (And Penfolds Magill Estate, home of Grange, is only 15 minutes from Mount Lofty House.)

FROM THE ASHES

On January 3, Southern Ocean Lodge, on South Australia's Kangaroo Island, was destroyed in a bushfire. Here, Hayley Baillie, who with her husband James owns this unique luxury lodge, describes their loss and their intention to rebuild.

IT'S BEEN TWO months now since James and I were at Capella Lodge on Lord Howe Island, on holidays with our four boys, and had the call from the managers at sister property Southern Ocean Lodge that bushfires were fast approaching on three sides. That evening we learnt that the lodge had been razed, but that everyone, including guests and some 50 staff, had been safely evacuated.

The images of Southern Ocean Lodge – before and after the fires – appeared in media reports here and around the world. For James and I, and ultimately our team of staff, suppliers and trade partners, Southern Ocean Lodge was a very personal labour of love. We had planned the property and guest experience from the ground up, working with local designers, craftspeople and food and wine producers to offer a real taste of Kangaroo Island.

The award-winning lodge was really a dream realised and a life's work for us. We'll never forget the very first time we set foot on the site on Kangaroo Island's wildly beautiful southwest coast with our baby son Finn and imagined a luxury lodge that would offer an experience of the island to guests from Australia and around the world. We welcomed three more sons over the journey, with our youngest, newborn son Caz, very much part of the picture when we opened the lodge in 2008.

In the days and weeks after the fire we were overwhelmed with support and well wishes from people

everywhere, from past guests and the media and people we'd worked with on a day-to-day basis. It really touched us, and our team, and showed us just how the lodge had a special place in the hearts and memories of so many.

James and I immediately vowed to rebuild Southern Ocean Lodge. Just a day after the fire, James visited the site with Kangaroo Island-born architect Max Pritchard, the original design mastermind of the award-winning lodge. So we're already excited about creating Southern Ocean Lodge 2.0!

We're very conscious that this story is not all about us at Southern Ocean Lodge, but about the KI community as a whole. We worked closely with many small businesses on KI, from the gin distillers at KI Spirits and farmers at Southrock Lamb to the students at the Parndana school, and each made the experience of Kangaroo Island a genuinely memorable one for our guests. In all, we worked with around 150 local businesses, from food and beverage producers to artists, tour operators and local adventure specialists. Local mechanics, tradespeople and suppliers were often working behind the scenes.

Kangaroo Island locals are a resilient bunch, and we feel genuinely honoured to be part of this tight-knit, inclusive community. With much of Kangaroo Island unaffected by the fires, we'd like to encourage people to plan a trip to KI, to visit all the key attractions like the sea lion colony at Seal Bay, to see the eagles at Raptor Domain and swim with wild dolphins at KI Marine Adventures on the north coast. There are plenty of places to eat and drink, with Sunset Food & Wine and the Cactus Cafe among the highlights. Visitors can try the wine at the Islander Estate cellar door or the world's only pure Ligurian honey at Island Beehive.

Southern Ocean Lodge will take some time to rebuild. In the meantime, we've dedicated the website home page to community news, so travellers can discover even more reasons to plan a trip, have a great time on KI and support the locals – we think it's a win-win-win. See more at www.southernoceanlodge.com.au.

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One Kangaroo Island, a five-bedroom retreat at Brown Beach (www.onekangarooisland.com.au).



Kangaroo Island's Kingscote Jetty. **Left:** Sunset Food & Wine at Kangaroo Head (www.sunsetfoodandwine.com).



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