

YOURS TO KEEP

# VOYAGES

MAGAZINE

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## Island Hopping

So many islands,  
only one lifetime

### HEALING WATERS

Tropical treatments  
in the Daintree

### LET'S GET HITCHED

Go on holiday,  
come back married



# Treats from on high

*Gourmet Tasmanian indulgence doesn't get much better than Cradle Mountain Lodge's Tastings at the Top, writes Winsor Dobbin.*

Cradle Mountain is one of the most beautiful spots in Australia; a wild, remote slice of the Tasmanian countryside much loved by hikers and fly fishermen. Each June, Cradle Mountain Lodge hosts a feast for lovers of fine food and drink. Tastings at the Top, a gourmet event ranked among the country's best food and wine experiences; limited to 50 guests and often selling out in

advance, it's a festival of the finer things in life – a chance to celebrate the very best of Tasmanian produce.

Tastings celebrated its 13th anniversary in 2007 with a stellar line-up of presenters, as expected by the guests, many of whom return year after year. Presenters, who were uniformly informative without being stuffy or too technical, included the likes of Andrew Pirie, the pioneer of Tasmanian winemaking, who hosted a structured

tasting of fine Tasmanian pinots noir and a superb Taste of Tasmania dinner. The following night, Bay of Fires winemaker Fran Austin – one of Australia's brightest young talents – presented a range of wines matched with regional produce.

Visitors were also able to enjoy a tutored tasting of sparkling wines hosted by wine writer and TV personality Peter Bourne, a cooking demonstration by Cradle Mountain Lodge chef Jane-Therese Mulry (who has worked with leading London chef Marco Pierre White) and degustation dinners accompanied by some of the island's best cool-climate wines.

Mulry and co-presenter Helen Waterworth, a food consultant, took guests through creating a three-course dinner party menu and made it all look easy. Guests are given the recipes so they can try to replicate the dishes when they get home.

The marketplace on the opening evening gives guests the chance to sample a wide range of local gourmet goodies while engaging with the producers (think fresh Freycinet oysters, Swan Bay wasabi gravlax, cured local meats and Tongala curd cheeses), maybe with a glass of Clover Hill bubbly in hand.

Throw in cheese and seafood samplings, food and wine trivia quizzes, tastings of labels including Dalrymple, Tamar Ridge, Chartley Estate, Barringwood Park, Stoney Vineyard, Brook Eden and Meadowbank,

tutored fly fishing and wine workshops and you have a weekend to savour.

Bourne and Waterworth make the workshops both informative and fun, and if you've eaten just a little too much (very easy to do), you can walk off any excesses with a stroll through the spectacular World Heritage wilderness beauty of Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair National Park, or maybe around Dove Lake, or by just enjoying a drink in front of a crackling fire in the Weindorfer Lounge.

There's a range of rustic but extremely comfortable cabin accommodation (think roaring fires and piping hot showers), while some of the upmarket suites even have their own spas and hot tubs. There's also the Waldheim Alpine Spa, where guests can enjoy a range of body treatments, steam rooms, plunge pools and an outdoor spa. ■

*win // It's a veritable foodie's paradise at Cradle Mountain Lodge's Tastings at the Top.*

## MUST VISIT

Northern Tasmania is dotted with superb wineries and boutique gourmet food producers, all within a couple of hours' drive of Cradle Mountain Lodge. Here are five not to be missed:

### 41° SOUTH SALMON FARM

**AND GINSENG FARM //** A salmon and ginseng farm in the Meander Valley, it is also an eco-experience offering walks through wetlands alongside the Western Rivulet. (03) 6362 4130, [www.41south-aquaculture.com](http://www.41south-aquaculture.com)

### SPRINGFIELD DEER FARM //

Located at Mole Creek in the foothills of the Great Western Tiers 30mins from Deloraine, this rustic venison farm is home to up to 600 deer at any one time. (03) 6363 1282, [www.springfielddeerfarm.com](http://www.springfielddeerfarm.com)

**+ ASHGROVE CHEESE //** Ashgrove Cheese has been producing English-style cheeses since 1993 and offers a range of over 20 for complimentary tasting, as well as giving visitors the chance to watch the cheese-making process. (03) 6368 1105, [www.ashgrovecheese.com.au](http://www.ashgrovecheese.com.au)

**+ CHRISTMAS HILL RASPBERRY FARM CAFÉ //** You'll find just about anything that can be made from raspberries at this Elizabeth Town complex; from jams to soaps. (03) 6362 2186, [www.raspberrymfarmcafe.com](http://www.raspberrymfarmcafe.com)

**+ DANIEL ALPS AT STRATHLYNN //** Part of the Ninth Island winery cellar door complex at Rosevears outside Launceston, Strathlynn is home to Daniel Alps, one of Tasmania's best-known chefs. Open for lunch only. (03) 6330 2388

## GETTING THERE

### + CRADLE MOUNTAIN LODGE

is a 2.5hr drive from Launceston Airport, and 90mins from Devonport and Burnie airports. Transfers can be arranged for guests who don't wish to drive. For more info, contact Voyages on +61 2 8296 8010 or 1300 134 044, email [travel@voyages.com.au](mailto:travel@voyages.com.au) or visit [www.voyages.com.au](http://www.voyages.com.au)

