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Snap happy Freeze-drying is piquing restaurants' interest and adding snap, crackle and pop to fruity desserts.

THE HOTTEST (COLD) NEW (OLD) TECHNIQUE

Freeze-drying is becoming increasingly popular in restaurants, adding intensity and texture, particularly at the sweet end of the meal. Companies such as New Zealand's **Fresh As** and the Mornington Peninsula's **Totally Pure Fruits** are freeze-drying everything from apples and pears to pineapple, coriander, Pedro Ximénez and manuka honey, products that have been gracing menus at restaurants including Victoria's **Maze**, **Attica** and **Royal Mail Hotel**. As **Attica's Ben Shewry** says, "It's not a replacement for a fresh product, just a way of adding an interesting texture."

85 MOST LAVISH WAY TO GET BACK TO NATURE

Tasmania's Federal Group has pulled perfection out of the hat with its 20-suite **Saffire** resort on the Freycinet Peninsula. This timber, stone and glass showpiece occupies a former camp ground, but there's nothing basic about the accommodation. Sleek pavilions are equipped with marble-lined bathrooms, 1000-thread-count linen and custom furnishings, though such luxuries pale into insignificance against the view. Full-length walls of glass frame idyllic dioramas of Great Oyster Bay and the multihued Hazards Range. Exhilarating activities, from speedboat safaris to Wineglass Bay hiking, work up an appetite

ably catered for in **Palate** restaurant, where chef Hugh Whitehouse prepares feasts showcasing pure Tasmanian produce such as Mount Gnomon Wessex saddlebacks and Birchs Bay Grandvewe cheese. saffire-freycinet.com.au

86 RAISING THE BAR IN HONG KONG

Though its food is the stuff of legend, and its wine scene is now well and truly taken off, Hong Kong hasn't been a real player in the cocktail stakes. Bars have tended to be naff bottle-service barns, clustered with trustafarians. The flavoured-vodka-and-lychee paradigm has been shattered, though, with the arrival of **Lily**. The bar – part of a

venture that also takes in brasserie **Bloom** – trades the dated, fruity, fauxtini-plagued Hong Kong style for a more grown-up, brown-spirit-friendly approach courtesy of New York holistic design firm **Avroko**. Hit a classic Southside or a mercifully unreconstructed Julep, or go neo-old school with a Penicillin and revel in the superb detail work. lily-bloom.com

87 WINE: FOR THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE

A heap of grassroots Australian winemaker-driven initiatives have popped up over the past couple of years: from the grandness of **Australia's First Families of Wine** to the Twitter-fed, viral **Rosé Wine Revolution**; from the feral collective of winemakers called **Natural Selection Theory** to the controversial call to arms of **All for One Wine**, these promotions and events have injected much-needed energy and optimism into the local wine scene. Importantly, they have also been enthusiastically embraced by wine drinkers, so expect to see more emerge this year. (For more on these exciting developments in

Australian wine, see Max Allen's wine column on page 101.) australiasfirstfamiliesofwine.com.au; rosewinerevolution.com; naturalselectiontheory.com; allforonewine.com

88 LIGHTEST WAY TO TRAVEL

Baggage carousels are so last century. With airlines increasingly charging for checked-in bags – and still losing an average 25 million of them a year – **bespoke luggage services** seem a smart alternative. The UK-based **First Luggage** takes the heavy lifting out of long flights by contracting global couriers **Fedex** and **DHL** to collect luggage from your home pre-departure and then deposit it at your destination. Local outfit **Personal Porter** offers a similar service. **First Luggage** claims 99.8 per cent on-time delivery, a success rate most airlines could only dream about. firstluggage.com; personalporter.com.au

89 BIGGEST FUN AFLOAT

This year brought very big news in the cruise world with the launch of **Royal Caribbean International's Allure of the Seas**, a 6138-passenger

behemoth complete with 16 passenger decks, 22 restaurants and the very first floating Starbucks. At 361.8 metres long, she's five centimetres longer than her sister, **Oasis of the Seas**, and the largest cruise ship to set sail. Meanwhile, Australia's **Orion Expedition Cruises** takes delivery of its new ship, **Orion II**, and departs for the wilds of Asia – Russia's Far East and Japan's Inland Sea for starters. All aboard. royalcaribbean.com; orionexpeditions.com

90 FAVOURITE HIGH-TECH HOSPITALITY

We're not sure whether to file this under fad or here-to-stay, but the phenomenon of restaurants and hotels issuing guests with iPads – as readers, menus or wine lists – is circling the globe, from London's **Berkeley Hotel** to the **Anantara** in Phuket. **Sofitel's** hotels in London, Paris, Munich and Brussels offer iPads to guests; at the **Four Seasons Scottsdale** in Arizona, rent a luxe poolside cabana and get an iPad thrown into the deal; and, back home, the **Mundo Global Tapas** restaurant at Rydges Hotel North Sydney sparked excitement by being the first Australian restaurant to give diners an iPad menu and wine list. Would Sir like an iPad with that?



Café Vue

91 TASTIEST AIRPORT UPGRADES

Vue de Monde's Shannon Bennett is the latest top-flight chef to branch into aviation, opening an outpost of his **Café Vue** brand at Melbourne Airport. He'll be joined airtide later this year by **Bar Pulpo**, a new

offering from **MoVida's Frank Camorra**. Sydney stole the jump on the designer airport dining craze when it lured hip city restaurateurs **Danks Street Depot** and **Bambini Wine Bar** to Mascot. Overseas eateries of note include Gordon Ramsay's **Plane Food** at Heathrow's Terminal 5, a branch of San Francisco's esteemed **Ebisu** at the SFO International Airport, **Wolfgang Puck** at Denver International, and Geneva's **Altitude**, conceived by a posse of Michelin-starred chefs.

92 DO IT YOURSELF ONE-UPMANSHIP

It's just not good enough to buy the best any more. Good restaurants have always offered their own bread, but recently the bar has been raised. That's not house-made butter? How very last century. You don't make your own lardo? How can you hold your head up in public? At **Garagistes**, Tasmania's temple to all things house-made, they tick all of the above boxes. And they're also at the forefront with the next big thing – not only do



Camp elite Minaret Station's "luxury tented lodge" ain't no bivouac.

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ULTIMATE CAMP SITE Camping in New Zealand's chilly southern alps looks a lot more appealing with the advent of the country's first tented resort at **Minaret Station**. Owned by the Wallis family, noted pastoralists and sheep and deer farmers, the 22,000-hectare station has no road access so guests at this elite camp must arrive by chopper. What a drag. Pampered stays (sheepskin carpets, hot-tub decks) and guided walks are standard at the camp, which sits at the head of one of Minaret's six valley systems with only alpine fields and snowy peaks for company. +64 27 588 9865, minaretstation.com

they have their own vegetable garden, but a few of their gardeners and farmers grow just for them. You buy your vegetables from a wholesaler? Dear oh dear. garagistes.com.au

94 THE AUSSIE BOY DONE GOOD

He's an Aussie, and he holds three Michelin stars, but you'll be forgiven if you've never heard of **Brett Graham**. The chef from Newcastle (north of Sydney, that is, not oop north) isn't such a big name back home because he's been based in London since he left Banc more than a decade ago, and his ascent to stardom has all been in the Big Smoke. His three stars are split between two locations. He has two for **The Ledbury** restaurant, and one for a more recently opened gastropub in Fulham, the **Harwood Arms**. Despite its trendy Notting Hill location, **The Ledbury** has the feel of a Mayfair restaurant (just like its older Mayfair sibling, **The Square** – another two-star), with refined modern European dishes, attentive waiting staff, and a wine list that can tempt your credit card towards its limit. But it's the **Harwood Arms**, where he's part-owner, that's really raised his profile in London – very few gastropubs are awarded Michelin stars, and it manages to produce terrific British pub food in a casual, affordable setting. theledbury.com; harwoodarms.com

95 GREECE'S HOTTEST HOT SPOT

Thessaloniki has long played second bouzouki to Athens, but Greece's second largest city is emerging as a destination in its own right. Direct flights by British and European carriers have opened up **Salonica's** unsung charms, such as the World Heritage-listed Paleochristian and Byzantine monuments of the Upper City, and the permanent party vibe that comes from having a strong student population. Just south of here, in **Pieria**, lie Greece's highest summit, **Mount Olympus**, and the country's longest sandy beach. After an unsettled 2010, things are looking sunny again for Greek tourism. visitgreece.gr



Tassie jewel Saffire at Freycinet Peninsula.

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