

THE AUSTRALIAN

TRAVEL+ LUXURY

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MOTEL MAKEOVERS

How roadside stays graduated
from pit stops to hot spots

Row 10 CAR PARK



Above: The pool at Barossa Palms.
Right: Riverfront Motel; The Monty.
Below: Room at Blue Water

with kitchenettes and all with pastel interiors and patio seating. For recreation there's a palm-lined pool, a tennis court and volleyball net. DIY dinners at the riverside BBQ pavilion and firepit, or visit the Timothee's popular Indian restaurant, Curry Port, for butter chicken and biryani cravings. It's just a few minutes' into downtown Busselton, and top Margaret River wineries are less than half an hour away.

thetimothee.com.au

Riverfront Motel, Berriedale TAS

Hobart's Riverfront Motel is a refurbished 1960s relic in Rosetta and, while not exactly handy to central Hobart, it sits just across Berriedale Bay from MONA. The sprawling property mixes motel rooms, villas and holiday houses on more than three hectares of prime riverfront real estate. Accommodation can be a mixed bag (perhaps avoid the faux-Tudor Coach House) but for fans of retro styling the river-view motel rooms combine 60s vibes with Derwent views. The pick of the property is the four-bedroom River House, with mid-century modern style. Facilities include a solar-heated lap pool, a restaurant and bar, waterside BBQ and friendly ducks.

riverfrontmotel.com.au

The Monty Motel, Anglesea VIC

Opened in December, The Monty is a Great Ocean Road landmark from the 1970s that's been reimagined for the 2020s. The 16 rooms, now boldly decked in white and orange, open onto a California-cool pool area of green umbrellas and chequered tiles. Owner Damien Cerantonio has plans for a rooftop bar and lounge overlooking the pool and the coast. A Cali-Mexican restaurant, Nina Cantina recently sprouted, serving fish tacos, pork caritas and margaritas in a dining room and terrace facing the Anglesea River. "We wanted to create an experience, not just a stop on the Great Ocean Road," says Cerantonio.

themontymotel.com.au

The Blue Water Motel, Kingscliff NSW

There's a classic surf-holiday feel to this revamped 80s



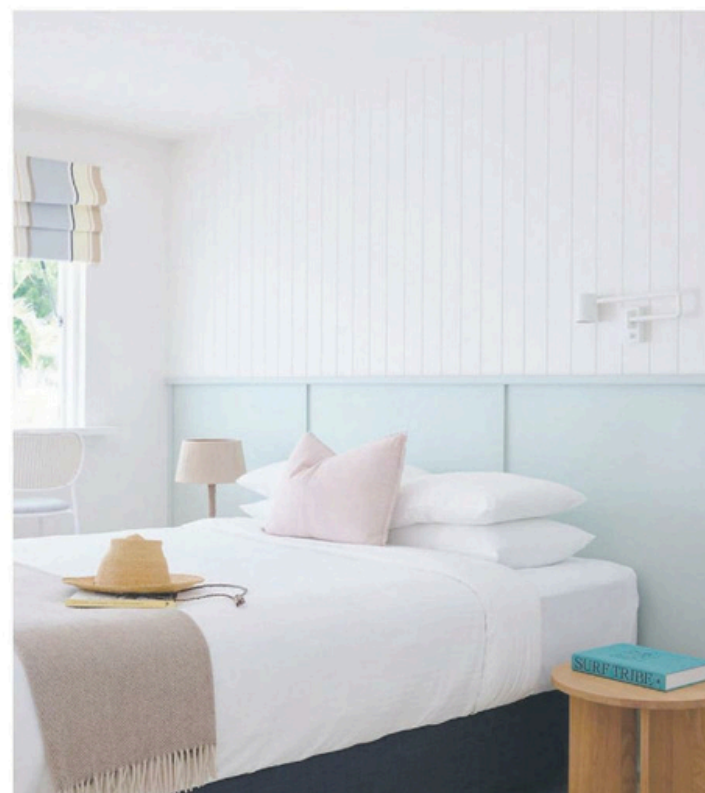
motel, a mere block away from the waves of Kingscliff and Dreamtime beaches. Comprising 17 rooms and a four-bedroom beach house, the Blue Water is set in palm gardens and decorated in a soothing palette of off-whites and muted marine tones, with terrazzo flooring and added character from local artworks and vintage objects (like the concrete pelicans standing sentry at reception). Amenities include a saltwater pool and a shared kitchen for self-catering breaks. Kingscliff town is a 25-30 minute walk, or grab a hire bike and breeze down Marine Parade.

bluewatermotel.com.au

The Pink Hotel, Coolangatta QLD

Even if you've never stayed there, chances are you already know The Pink Hotel. This Coolangatta landmark is home to a burger joint called Eddie's Grub House, better known to Australians as the Chinese restaurant from Muriel's Wedding. (Deirdre Chambers, what a coincidence!) The circa 1962 Ocean View Motel, which looks directly onto Greenmount Beach, was given a shocking pink facelift last decade, transforming its 17 rooms into 60s crash pads with graphic art and vintage furnishings. Top suites come with turntables and vinyl, neon-signed cocktail bars and even a grand piano and pinball machine.

thepinkhotelcoolangatta.com



Blame Halcyon House. Formerly the 1950s north-coast NSW motel The Hideaway, it emerged from an extreme renovation in 2015 with a dazzling white facade, furiously fashionable interiors and Amalfi-inspired pool vibes. The new-look lodging launched a raft of motel revivals across the continent. A decade on the trend shows no signs of fading. Now, seemingly everywhere you turn off the highway, there's a pastel pit stop waiting to welcome you. Here are some of the nation's newest motel makeovers, and a couple of classics.

Surf Hotel, Torquay VIC

In May, Torquay's 1980s-era Surf City Motel became the Surf Hotel, a drive-in lodging where the high-pitched rooms come with turntables, fireplace and inviting platform beds. The 16 rooms, including two suites with skylit baths, open onto a carpark in authentic motel style. At the beach-facing restaurant and bar, former Victorian chef of the year Jo Barrett brings her sustainable ethos to bear on a menu that mixes wild-boar dim sims and venison schnitzels with crowd favourites of fish-finger sandwiches and steak frites. To come: a compact spa and gym, with stretching and strengthening kit chosen by pro boardrider Mick Fanning.

surfhotel.com.au

Dolphins Motel, Mollymook NSW

On the NSW south coast, three hours' drive from Sydney, Dolphins brings a touch of Malibu to Mollymook Beach. Cheery striped umbrellas? Tick. Neon signage? Present. Painfully hip interiors curated by a committee of experts? Also yes. The Dolphins' 10 king studios – one of them accessible, one pet-friendly, all with terraces – nail the nostalgia brief with their Portuguese cork floors and Fibonacci terrazzo and cater to modern needs with Smeg appliances and St Ali

coffees, Dyson hairdryers and Leif amenities. Guests can borrow bicycles and surfboards, refuel at on-site cafe Dolly's, walk to the beach or laze by the pool under those jaunty umbrellas.

dolphinsmollymook.au

Mysa Motel, Gold Coast QLD

The palm-tree neon beside Mysa Motel's jellybean-shaped magnesium pool is a nod to both its former life as the Palm Trees Motel and its location in the heart of Palm Beach's cafe strip. Owners Eliza and Jason Raine took a dark and dull motel on the Gold Coast Highway, kept the blond-brick exterior but infused interiors with light and colour, vintage furnishings and tradie Jason's eye-catching tilework. There are just seven colourful rooms – each with outdoor spaces – including the former manager's residence, now a two-storey, two-bedroom suite with kitchen, laundry, and BBQ. Fittingly for the Gold Coast, the entire property is powered by the sun.

themysamotel.com

Barossa Palms Motel, SA

From the outside Barossa Palms looks like your average upcycled motel – low-slung whitewashed facade, wicker seats and potted plants on the patio beneath a bullnose veranda. But its secret ingredient is goats. Pygmy goats, to be precise, with names like Sage, Basil and Storm, who work as the property's "emotional support staff". Guests can pet them, feed them and do yoga with them while staying in one of the motel's 27 rooms, which include triple rooms for families. They're the star turn of the Palms' wellbeing-focused amenities that feature a small gym, massage room, pool and yoga deck. There's also a basement bar for when things get thirsty.

barossapalms.com

The Sunseeker, Byron Bay NSW

It's an unlikely success story – a red-brick eighties



Above: Surf Hotel. Below: The Timothee; The Pink Hotel

motor hotel turned into a stylish stay on the outskirts of Byron Bay. In a lush tropical setting on Bangalow Road, 15 minutes' walk from Tallow Beach, The Sunseeker's 22 rooms range from spacious 34sq m abodes with balcony, to two-bedroom family rooms and bungalows with full kitchens and servery windows that open to gardens equipped with hammock, BBQ and mineral pool. There are bikes and surfboards for hire, as well as an on-site coffee cart, thatched-roofed tiki bar and occasional music events but, for all that, The Sunseeker is a genuinely family-friendly stay.

thesunseeker.com.au

The Timothee, Busselton WA

This resort-style property in parklands beside the Vasse Riversits on the edge of bustling Busselton in southwest WA. The motel's 32 rooms, each with parking out front, come in one- and two-bedroom configurations, some

