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r Valley, Lovedale, when a passing interest ely laid-back resort, ated its first birthday. ou shouldn't take ompanying 18-hole welcome (just watch an simply find a safe hat obliging staff will ur pick of food and i menu). The resort, ney, is bang in the ntry, so cellar-door wine stands tall in the Red Salt, its Asian-rawing grounds are ained two-bedroom and suites, floodlit ened Tea Tree Spa pool (heated to a cocktails from the and, who needs golf? m/huntervalley

arwin: This is one of could imagine both ing up if apocalypse clear winter to ride ect-designed villas in pected world of their one of Darwin's rrounding a tiered i, the villas feature ak furniture, splashes and the slow, hypnotic here are hints of Bali selection of Chinese 7-year-old lacquered ring moments from the Kama Sutra in t a short walk away, ts sunset market, but them all and loiter hort of nice places to been comes close to

illas.com

Staying power: Clockwise from top, Rawnsley Park, Seahorse Inn, Moonshadow Villas, Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley and Peppers Salt Resort

PICTURE WINDOWS

From city to country, Tiana Templeman presents a selection of Australia's best rooms with a view

■ **Capella Lodge, Lord Howe Island, NSW:** Mounts Gower and Lidgbird provide the ultimate backdrop to the southernmost reef in the world. Glimmering waves beckon as contented cows graze nearby and I am so transfixed by the view it's almost impossible to put on a swimsuit and head out.

Tip: The premium Lidgbird Suite has a dramatic 270-degree ocean and mountain outlook but the lowest tariff Lagoon Lofts also offer excellent views from their mezzanine levels. www.lordhowe.com.

■ **Kooljaman Resort, Cape Leveque, Western Australia:** Migrating whales are a regular sight from July to October, yet this view is spectacular any time of year. Russet-coloured earth and white sand provide the perfect contrast to an impossibly blue ocean. With accommodation ranging from campsites to up-market safari tents, Kooljaman has views to suit every budget.

Tip: Time your visit to coincide with a full

moon, when the landscape is bathed in silvery light. www.kooljaman.com.au.

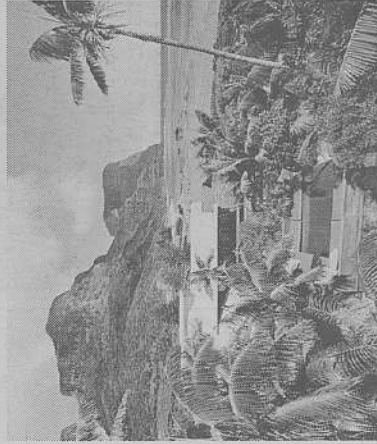
■ **Voyages Longitude 131, Uluru, Northern Territory:** Most visitors drive to a designated viewing area and join the masses to watch the sun rise or set over Uluru. From one of the luxurious tents at Longitude 131 this same view is yours to enjoy in cosy privacy.

Tip: Tents 12 to 15 are the most private. www.longitude131.com.au.

■ **The Deckhouse, Wye River, Victoria:** This "view for two" is a self-contained studio apartment located along the Great Ocean Road. Koalas snooze in nearby gum trees and surf lifesavers limber up on the beach; by night myriad stars twinkle and lights shine from distant ships.

Tip: Book early as the Deckhouse is popular. www.thedeckhouse.com.au.

■ **Tingirana, Noosa, Queensland:** From balconies at Tingirana, the passing parade along Noosa's busy boardwalk provides constant



Howe marvellous: View from Capella Lodge

entertainment. Sun-worshippers head towards the beach and joggers dodge tiny tots in designer gear while everyone pretends not to notice the celebrities. With so much going on all around, the breathtaking ocean view seems almost superfluous.

Tip: Centre rooms on levels two and three are best for views. www.tingirana.com.au.

■ **Sofitel, Melbourne:** With accommodation starting on level 36, even low floors offer amazing views. At night a sparkling carpet of lights from Melbourne's outer suburbs stretches into the distance and on weekend mornings hot-air balloons float past.

Zen Day Spa and Penny's Lane restaurant. Diamant features smart contemporary decor and (hurrah) guestroom windows that open. Early reviews dub it the precinct's swankiest new player. A sister property will open in Canberra next year. www.diamant.com.au.

■ **Pool, Port Douglas, Queensland:** This northern holiday town is booming and Pool is the latest to launch. Water is the leitmotif here, with many guestrooms opening on to terraces with direct pool access. All is light, bright and 21st-century cool. (There's even a poolside barista for instant espresso fixes.) www.pool-portdouglas.com.au.

■ **Altitude One40, Mission Beach, Queensland:** It's all happening in the Sunshine State, it seems. This glam four-bedroom modern retreat, in a hillside rainforest setting, offers fab views towards Dunk and Bedarra Islands, 18m pool and vast sundecks and living spaces. Split costs and book a house-party rental. www.altitudeone40.com.au.

Susan Kurosawa

Tip: Bay view rooms are considered premium yet I prefer the other side of the hotel. www.sofitelmelbourne.com.au.

■ **Bay of Fires Lodge, Bay of Fires, Tasmania:** Hikers who sign up for the Bay of Fires walk enjoy the ultimate reward: two nights at Bay of Fires Lodge. Located on a hilltop 40m above the ocean and surrounded by national park, the building affords breathtaking panoramas of pristine bushland and beaches.

Tip: The walk to this accommodation also offers spectacular views. www.bayoffires.com.au/firetime.

■ **Q1 Resort & Spa, Surfers Paradise, Queensland:** This is the Gold Coast as you have never seen it, with views stretching from Byron Bay, NSW, to Brisbane. The surf-lifesaving helicopters fly past lower than my room yet I am nowhere near the hotel's top 80th floor. Swimmers bob prettily like coloured corks and the ocean stretches seemingly forever.

Tip: Ocean-view rooms on high floors are worth the extra cost. www.q1.com.au.

■ **Park Hyatt, Sydney, NSW:** Jaunty green and yellow ferries bustle in and out of Circular Quay and the Sydney Opera House appears close enough to touch. Room-service dinner on the balcony bathed in the distant glow of those famous white sails is not to be missed.

Tip: Opera Deluxe rooms have two balconies. www.sydney.park.hyatt.com.