Heading off for a holiday, a day at the beach or a night at the bar? Before you go, take a look at our guide to summer’s hottest products and places. Whether you’re looking for something to eat, drink, play, wear, read or drive — we’ve got you covered for every day of the season.
Located on Woolloomooloo’s Finger Wharf, China Doll (top right) is the definitive dining experience, combining Sydney’s love affair with Asian-inspired cuisine and alfresco dining. With both water and city skyline views, China Doll has earned its reputation for being one of the city’s hottest lunch spots. The menu is brought together by chef Frank Shek, using Asian techniques and local produce. Think prawn and bean dumplings, tea-smoked duck with tamarind dressing or Cone Bay barramundi with chilli garlic. 4/6 Cowper Wharf Rd, NSW; www.chinadoll.com.au.

Ricky’s River Bar & Restaurant, which sits right on the riverfront, showcases the very best of Noosa. The menu caters for those wanting a few small bites and a glass of wine at the bar, right through to a three-course meal in the main dining room. Signature dishes include spanner crab spaghetti with chilli, garlic and lemon and Ricky’s wood-fired Mooloolaba prawns. Arrive by boat to the private jetty, order a glass of crisp Australian wine and watch the world go by. Noosa Wharf, 2 Quamby Pl, Noosa Heads, Qld; www.rickys.com.au.

The food at The Source (left) reflects the innovative nature of its home, Hobart’s Museum of Old and New Art (MONA). At dinner and Sunday lunch, diners are left in the hands of chef Philippe Lebanon, a former sous chef with Guillaume Brahimi, and his creative three-, five-, seven- or nine-course degustation menu. On it, you might find whole roast duck with braised witlof, apple and miso puree, or pan-fried scallop gnocchi with yuzu puree and a ponzu foam. All that, and the Derwent River flowing by. 650 Main Rd, Berriedale, Tas; www.mona.net.au.

Named in honour of two rascally 19th-century bushrangers, you’ll find Bib & Tucker Restaurant among North Fremantle’s sand dunes, a delightful setting for a long summer lunch. Owned by swimmer Eamon Sullivan, pole vaulter Steve Hooker and hockey player Jamie Dwyer, the breezy, casual eatery is as handsome as the view across the road to Leighton Beach. The food is equally breezy. 18 Leighton Beach Blvd, North Fremantle, WA; www.bibandtucker.net.au.

Perched on the edge of Melbourne’s Federation Square and with sprawling views of The Yarra, Taxi Dining Room (above left) offers the best of Asian-influenced modern Australian food. As you would expect, the menu is designed to share. Offerings might include Blackmore’s chargrilled Wagyu minute steak with parsley, garlic and lemon or hickory-smoked ocean trout with horseradish. Don’t miss the passionfruit soufflé with a caramalised white choc centre and banana ice-cream. Cnr Swanson St and Flinders St, Melbourne, Vic; www.taxidiningroom.com.au.
SALT & BATTERING
Nothing says Aussie summer more than fish'n'chips on the beach. Fry away...

10 What qualifies as the best fish and chips is a contentious subject, especially in Perth, where they love their seafood. But local food blogger Mei Leong puts forward the Kailis Fish Market at Fremantle’s Fishing Boat Harbour. “Their fish and chips are fresh, crisp and well-cooked, with local seafood well represented. There’s also a grill section for oysters, lobsters and chilli mussels.” 46 Mews Rd, WA; +61 8 9335 7755; www.kailis.com/fremantle.

11 You can almost hear the seagulls squawking at this inner-city chippy. The Fish Shop (below) is the essence of a relaxed beach shack and chef Jeremy Strode has a strict policy of never using seafood that is endangered or in short supply. Here the fish is golden and the chips are the perfect balance of fluffy and crisp. Add a splash of malt vinegar and a dollop of the excellent house-made tartare and you’ve got summer on a plate. 22 Challis Ave, Potts Point, NSW; +61 2 9326 9000; www.merivale.com.au/thefishshop.

12 A suburban fish and chip shop this is not, but The Fish House serves some of the best seafood on the Gold Coast. The focus at this elegant restaurant is on simplicity and you can choose from a selection of fillets, either crumbed or battered. Pair with a crisp white wine and take in the great views. 50 Goodwin Tce, Burleigh Heads, Qld; +61 7 5535 7725; www.thefishhouse.com.au.

13 Tommy Ruff couldn’t be accused of having a limited menu, or ripping you off. The fish and chips start from $9.90 and for that you get crisp, golden fish — usually barramundi; sometimes red snapper — and a side of chips. For the same price you can get a burger with fish crumbed in Japanese-style panko breadcrumbs. Shop 3/1-3 Carre St, Elsternwick, Vic; +61 3 9077 8815; and 574A Main St, Mordialloc, Vic; +61 3 9580 2525; www.tommyruff.com.au.

14 You’ll find people lined-up 30-deep at Cow and the Moon. The gelato bar took out the Gelato World Tour title in Italy this year, nudging out 23 other contenders with its Almond Affogato — almonds folded through with coffee and salted caramel sauce on a Madagascan vanilla base. 181 Enmore Rd, Enmore, NSW; +61 2 9557 4255.

15 Lab coats, protective eyewear, liquid nitrogen — welcome to N2 Extreme Gelato. Part science laboratory, part theatrical gelato emporium, here the product is made in front of you by mixing your flavour of choice with liquid nitrogen. The nitrogen forms microscopic ice crystals in seconds, ensuring a smooth texture. 329 Brunswick St, Fitzroy, Vic; 43/1 Dixon St, Sydney, NSW; www.n2extremegelato.com.au.


Finally, there's Carol. Patricia Highsmith wrote it under a pseudonym, because a lesbian love story was too controversial at the time. I’m keen to read this before the film adaptation starring Cate Blanchett comes out.

24
ANNA BEL CRABB, JOURNALIST

I’m really eager to start the latest Helen Garner, This House of Grief, about the trial of

25
WILLIAM McINNES, ACTOR/AUTHOR

I’ll be reading The Whitlam Mob by Mungo MacCallum, a collection of character notes on key figures of the Whitlam era. MacCallum is an entertaining writer and has a fascination with all the characters from this riotous period.

Summer means cricket and Christmas, so I always like to have a cricket book to flick through. KP: The Autobiography by Kevin Pietersen is one no cricket fan would want to miss. I don’t tend to read much fiction but I like Favel Parrett. When the Night Comes is her second novel. Her first was a cracker so I am looking forward to this one.

26
BOB CARR, HISTORIAN

Henry Kissinger’s World Order is my summer reading priority. I got to know the legendary diplomat when he and his wife came to Sydney for the 2000 Olympics. While cheering our respective athletes, we talked world politics. I’m proud to say I’ve read all the Kissinger volumes. I also enjoy literary classics and my favourite right now is Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life by George Eliot.
When asked if he thought Bar Económico’s claim of serving Melbourne’s best mojito was accurate, owner and head bartender Matthew Bax said: “Just Melbourne? Pfffht. We would say the world but I’ll settle for Australia.” We agree.

10 mint leaves, plus three mint heads to garnish
15ml lime juice
60ml Havana Club Añejo 3 Años rum
15ml gomme syrup

**METHOD**
Clap the 10 mint leaves between your hands to release the oils. Place into a highball glass, add the lime juice and fill the glass with crushed ice. Pour in the rum and gomme syrup. Stir well — the trick is stirring rather than muddling so not to bring out the bitterness in the mint — and taste. Add another 5ml of gomme if you like it sweeter. Twirl the 3 mint heads together into a kind of floral bouquet and place inside the drink, next to the rim. Insert a straw next to the mint, so you can enjoy the aroma when sipping.

438 Church St, Richmond, Vic; www.bareconomico.com.au.
TEDDY TAHU RHODES, OPERA SINGER
1. The Proclaimers, 500 Miles. I love the sentiment of the song. Great lyrics, great time. 2. U2, Beautiful Day. When this first came out, I had just started living in Australia [Rhodes is a New Zealander]. The U2 CD was in my car and I loved starting the day with this. 3. Pietro Mascagni, Cavalleria Rusticana Intermezzo. This is one of my favourite moments in opera. A perfect orchestral interlude that always makes me stand backstage and listen. 4. Dave Dobbn, Slice of Heaven. Reminds me of incredibly hot dry days in Canterbury working on sheep farms. 5. Bryan Adams, Summer of 69. Just a great song for summer. I loved having this playing on long drives around the New Zealand coastline. 6. John Farnham, You're the Voice. Who doesn’t love this song? A legend and voice without peer. 7. Paul Simon, You Can Call Me Al. Reminds me of long summer days during university holidays at the Golden Bay region in NZ.

ZAN ROWE, TRIPLE J RADIO PRESENTER
1. Caribou, Can't Do Without You. This song builds from a looping whisper into a crescendo that makes you think of all the best hands-in-the-air summer festival moments. 2. Neil Young, On the Beach. The title track of my favourite album of his, this song captures the beautiful lethargy of summer. 3. The Antlers, Endless Ladder. Eight minutes of bliss. This song sounds like diving underwater and feels just as good. 4. Bag Raiders, Way Back Home. The ultimate build-up of a song with a bassline that rumbles far across fields; I always drop this at festival sets. 5. Major Lazer, Get Free. Heavy dub beats with Amber Coffman’s vocals dancing across them equals instant recline on the banana lounge.

JAKE STONE, BLUEJUICE FRONTMAN
1. Yurs, Race. No one knows about this London-based guitar-pop band, but they should. 2. Kendrick Lamar, i. A fantastic single from the hip-hop artist in the probably the most progressive crossover hip-hop artist in the world today. 3. The Vines, Metal Zone. Craig Nicholls knows how to write a rock song, and he brings all the genuine crazy you could ever want in a punk tune. 4. Metallica, Jump in the Fire. If you’re a fan of heavier music, you’re already into this, but if you aren’t, I think this is an ideal first step into something a bit tougher than your average pop fans. 5. Drake, Headlines. This dude is unbelievably ambitious, and this song sums it up beautifully. 6. James Brown and The Famous Flames, Please, Please, Please. This guy will knock you out with either hand, even on a ballad. 7. Erik Satie, Gymnopédie No.1. My favourite piece of classical music. I’m not really very educated in this area, but I think Erik Satie managed to write one of the most evocative melodies ever here. It’s just goosebump material from start to finish.

MEGAN WASHINGTON, MUSICIAN
1. The Preatures, Cruel. These guys are probably the hippest band in the country. Their debut album is straight out of a John Hughes movie. 2. Meg Mac, Grandma’s Hands. This girl is so talented and her cover of Bill Withers’s song is transcendent. I can’t stop listening to it. 3. Alt-J, Hunger of the Pine. I adore this band, get the whole album. 4. Bic Runga, Sway. I’ve recently rediscovered this 1990s gem. It’s a classic. 5. Many Things, Dear One. Great new band from London. I’m a fan. 6. Marina and the Diamonds, Froot. This song is addictive. It’s like a really dark disco rave inside a slot machine. 7. Kimbra, Carolina. Kimbra’s new album is ambitious and wonderful.
**Big Blue Backyard** is a boutique hotel at St Andrews Beach on the spectacular Mornington Peninsula. Set within secluded bush and just steps from the sand, you can choose from three themed rooms — African, beach or bush — each with its own spa and shower on the deck. The highlight of every stay is the daily seasonal breakfast hampers, packed with treats like goat's milk feta and fresh mint omelette, vodka-cured salmon or soft boiled eggs. 56 Paradise Dr, St Andrews Beach, Vic; +61 3 5988 6011; www.bigbluebackyard.com.au.

You'll need to take a chartered plane from Cairns, a four-wheel drive and/or a river boat to get to **Bloomfield Lodge** in Far North Queensland, but it will be worth the effort. Located between the Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef, you'll spend your nights sleeping in timber cabins overlooking Weary Bay and your days either lazing by the pool or snorkelling. **Deep Impact**

Make waves with the season’s most stylish diving watches.

54. Maurice Lacroix 'Pontos S Diver' watch, $3640, +61 2 9264 7822.
55. Girard-Perregaux 'Hawk', $13,940, +61 2 9363 1088.
56. Cartier calibre de cartier diver, $9650, 1800 130 000.
57. Victorinox 'INOX', $725, +61 3 9572 9820.
The Last Straw


Strap Yourself In

72. Ancient Greek Sandals 'Ikaria' perforated sandals, $260, +61 2 9365 7775.

Come Out Smelling Like Roses This Summer with These Five Scents.

61. Marc Jacobs Daisy Dream EDT, $90 (50ml), 1800 812 663.
62. Prada Candy Florale EDT, $105 (50ml), +61 2 9663 9277.
63. Vera Wang Forever Vera EDP, $69 (50ml), 1800 812 663.
64. Diptyque 'L'eau de Geranium' EDT, $128 (100ml), www.mecca.com.au.
65. Tom Ford Private Blend Mandarin Di Amalfi EDP, $295 (50ml), 1800 061 326.
66. Prada Candy Florale EDT, $105 (50ml), +61 2 9663 9277.

Light Relief

Wines that don’t get in the way are the wines for hot weather.

73. Rosé Turkey Flat Rosé 2014, $18. Too many people go through life thinking wine is either red or white. Drink rosé and add 33.33 per cent recurring to your wine pleasure. This Turkey Flat from the Barossa is dry, not sweet, but there’s some grenache tutti-fruitiness on display that makes it a versatile yet very proper wine.
74. Riesling Peter Lehmann H&V 2014, $22. Lemon and lime zest with a lot of floral aromatics make this pure and pristine white a winner — and it’s only 11.1 per cent alcohol.
75. Semillon Margan 2014, $44.99. A classic Hunter Valley style with strong citrus notes, lots of acidity and great length. Clean and dry, it’s the ultimate humid weather wine.
76. Sauvignon blanc Villa Maria Private Bin 2014, $15. Yes I know some of the hipsters reckon sauvignon blanc from NZ is social death, but its piercing grassy, gooseberry and grapefruit aromas and flavours deal with high temperatures and Asian food well.
77. Pinot Noir De Bortoli Windy Peak 2013, $14. A Yarra Valley pinot with all the red berry, violets and forest floor pinot characteristics in an approachable red. Chill it slightly and it will tame your barbecue offering.

Aroma Therapy.

Come out smelling like roses this summer with these five scents.
There’s lots to love about this boho weatherboard shack in Sydney’s Palm Beach. Cranky Fins Holiday Inn (above) is the perfect summer venue — relaxed, fun and breezy. Make your drink of choice the Cool Your Melon (Hendrick’s Gin blended with fresh watermelon, grapefruit and a hint of lime) and pair it with simple food like a bucket of tiger prawns, Jamaican jerk chicken wings, spiced fish tacos or pan-roasted barramundi.

Newcastle has some of Australia’s best beaches and Merewether could be its finest. And where better to take it all splendour in than the primely positioned Merewether Surfhouse? Watch the locals frolic in the water below as you sit back with a refreshing cocktail in the bar, which has stunning ocean views from the terrace. There is also a cafe on the beach promenade level for great breakfasts or a fancier eatery serving modern Australian fare. Henderson Pde, Merewether Beach, NSW; +61 2 4918 0000; www.surfhouse.com.au.

Kidogo Arthouse, housed in a Heritage-listed, 19th-century sandstone building on Fremantle’s Bathers Beach, is enough of an attraction in its own right. But from late summer, when its Kelp pop-up bar opens for business, the place is heaving. Great drinks, good food and views of the sunset over the Indian Ocean. Roll on WA summer. Bathers Beach, Mews Rd, Fremantle, WA; www.kidogo.com.au.

All that water and nowhere to swim. It’s a conundrum Darwinians face thanks to those pesky stingies and crocs, and when temperatures reach 30-plus degrees, it’s an increasingly frustrating problem. Welcome, then, to the Darwin Waterfront precinct where you’ll find the historic Stokes Hill Wharf, restaurants, cafes, a network of walkways, promenades and (drum roll please)... a wave pool and recreation lagoon. Lap it up. Darwin Waterfront, NT; www.waterfront.nt.gov.au.

The newest entry on Noosa’s uber-trendy Hastings Street could also possibly be the coolest. Miss Moneypenny’s is a bar and restaurant, housed in an open-to-the-elements space, all timber and refined elegance. But don’t go for the architecture: go for the great cocktails, from classics such as Bellinis to ‘80s cruise ship’ staples including Pina Coladas (with spiced coconut foam). 6 Hastings St, Noosa, Qld; +61 7 5474 9999; www.missmoneypennys.com.