

**Brisbane**



Brisbane River

**SHOP TALK**

Men's fashion in Brisbane can be a bit hard to get excited about but **Pistols at Dawn** manages to be modern and stylish while steering clear of fashion fads. Level 2, Wintergarden, 171-209 Queen St, <http://pistolsatdawn.com>

**CHEAP EATS**

Venture to the near northern suburbs for a typical Queensland breakfast at **Willow & Spoon**. 28 Samford Rd, Alderley, tel: +61 (0)7 3113 3810, [www.willowandspoon.com.au](http://willowandspoon.com.au)

**TOP TABLES**

Located in the emerging Burnett Lane precinct, **The Survey Co** is understated and classy with a simple but well-executed approach to food. Burnett Ln, tel: +61 (0)7 3012 8725, [www.surveycoco.com.au](http://www.surveycoco.com.au) **SS**

**AT YOUR LEISURE**

The annual **Abbey Medieval Festival** has developed into a major regional event with broad appeal. Polish up your armour and let the jousting commence. Abbotsowe Festival Grounds, 1-63 The Abbey Place, Caboolture, tel: +61 (0)7 5495 1652, <http://abbeytournament.com>

**LATE & LIVELY**

The western suburb of Ashgrove is home to **The Junk Bar**, a space filled with '70s kitsch that boasts a laid-back, late-night vibe. 215 Waterworks Rd, Ashgrove, tel: +61 (0)7 3168 2993

**OVERNIGHT**

A one-time government building, **Rendezvous Hotel Anzac Square** is affordable and is located close to shopping and restaurants. 255 Ann St, tel: +61 (0)7 3001 9888, [www.rendezvoushotels.com.au](http://www.rendezvoushotels.com.au) **SS**

**Cairns**



Millaa Falls

**INSIDER TIP**

One of the best ways to explore the city and northern beaches is to hire a scooter and seek sightseeing advice from family-owned **Cairns Scooter & Bicycle Hire**. Shop 3, 47 Shields St, tel: +61 (0)7 4031 3444, [www.cairnsbicyclehire.com.au](http://www.cairnsbicyclehire.com.au)

**CHEAP EATS**

Visit the new Botanical Gardens Visitors' Centre in Edge Hill. While there, stop in at the newly opened **Wild Bean Café** for a cuppa and freshly made tropical treats. Cairns Botanical Gardens Visitors' Centre, Collins Ave, Edge Hill, tel: +61 (0)7 4053 4311

**TOP TABLES**

Award-winning **Ochre Restaurant** specialises in game and seafood – the owner is one of the region's most celebrated chefs. 43 Shields St, tel: +61 (0)7 4051 0100, [www.ochrerestaurant.com.au](http://www.ochrerestaurant.com.au) **SSS**

**AT YOUR LEISURE**

**The Tanks Art Centre Market Day** is held on the last Sunday of each month on a leafy promenade. Stallholders sell quality, locally produced arts and crafts, vintage clothing and fresh produce. Collins Ave, Edge Hill

**LATE & LIVELY**

**The Union Jack Hotel** is billed as the best live music venue in Cairns and it more than lives up to the hype. Cnr Spence and Shield Sts, tel: +61 (0)7 4051 2490, [www.thejack.com.au](http://www.thejack.com.au)

**OVERNIGHT**

A quiet, romantic getaway spot, **Platypus Springs Rainforest Retreat** has all the ingredients for the perfect weekend, including a heated, outdoor spa bath. 19 Platypus Close, Kuranda, tel: +61 (0)7 4093 8140 **SSS**

**Gold Coast**



Broadbeach

**INSIDER TIP**

Whale-watching season runs from June to October and if you're prone to seasickness, the **SkyPoint at Q1** provides the ideal alternative vantage point for the migration. Q1 Surfers Paradise Blvd, Surfers Paradise, tel: +61 (0)7 5582 2700, [www.skypoint.com.au](http://www.skypoint.com.au)

**SHOP TALK**

**Kitten D'Amour's** vintage-y clothing has found favour with celebs such as Paris Hilton and the Pussy Cat Dolls. Pacific Fair Shopping Centre, Broadbeach, tel: +61 (0)7 5538 9855, [www.kittendamour.com](http://www.kittendamour.com)

**TOP TABLES**

Book in advance if you want a table at **Hellenika** as it's a popular spot, famous for its Greek fare and fantastic wine list. Thanks to an extensive vegetarian menu, it suits most palates, but I'll stick with the giant octopus char grilled. 2235 Gold Coast Hwy, Nobby Beach, tel: +61 (0)7 5572 8009, [www.hellenika.com.au](http://www.hellenika.com.au) **SS**

**AT YOUR LEISURE**

The weekend of 17–19 August sees the arrival of the annual **Broadbeach Jazz Festival**. Held just south of Surfers, it serves up an unforgettable weekend of cool jazz. Admission to the festival is free. tel: +61 (0)7 5539 8416, [www.broadbeachjc.com.au](http://www.broadbeachjc.com.au)

**OVERNIGHT**

Just a block from Cavill Avenue, the newly refurbished **Vibe Hotel** overlooks the Nerang River but is just 200m from the surf. The staff is friendly and the rooms spacious and comfortable considering the affordable price. 42 Ferny Ave, Surfers Paradise, tel: +61 (0)7 5539 0444, [www.vibehotels.com](http://www.vibehotels.com) **SS**

**Melbourne**



Centre Place

**INSIDER TIP**

The **South Melbourne Market** is a much more intimate affair than its well-known sibling, Queen Victoria Market. Filled with fresh food, clothing and giftware, it's the ideal spot to shop for presents or mementos. Peckish? Try the famous South Market dim sum. [www.southmelbournemarket.com.au](http://www.southmelbournemarket.com.au)

**CHEAP EATS**

Tucked away in tree-lined backstreets, the **Tramway Hotel** serves some of the city's best burgers. 165 Rae St, North Fitzroy, tel: +61 (0)3 9489 6100, [www.tramwayhotel.com](http://www.tramwayhotel.com)

**AT YOUR LEISURE**

In August, Melbourne goes to the movies, hosting one of the world's leading film festivals. Celebrating its 60th year, the **Melbourne International Film Festival** highlights local productions and top directors from abroad. [www.miff.com.au](http://www.miff.com.au)

**LATE & LIVELY**

Arguably Collingwood's most popular pub, the historic **Grace Darling Hotel** has been rejuvenated in recent years, showcasing live acts throughout the week. 114 Smith St, Collingwood, tel: +61 (0)3 9416 0065, <http://thegracedarlinghotel.com.au>

**OVERNIGHT**

Within walking distance of the vibrant culinary and music scenes of Fitzroy and Collingwood, the newly renovated **Baden Powell Hotel** is home to 11 simple yet comfortable rooms, located above its highly rated bar and restaurant. 61 Victoria Parade, Collingwood, tel: +61 (0)3 9486 0811, [www.badenpowellhotel.com](http://www.badenpowellhotel.com) **S**

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