

It's a WILD world

Here's our pick of 10 quirky places and little-known attractions you may not have heard of, but are deserving of attention. WORDS: MITCH BROOK



OMARAMA, SOUTH ISLAND, NZ

Visitors to New Zealand's South Island should not miss Omarama, an area of stunning mountain vistas and fun things to do. Take a tour through the Clay Cliffs area, where spiky, rocky towers jut into the sky. At Wrinkly Rams you can see a demonstration of shearing through the ages and a sheepdog show. Another option is to take to the skies. With scenic glider flights and hang-gliding on offer you could be soaring over the spectacular Southern Alps and countryside. Omarama is about 70 kilometres north of Wanaka.



THE WORKSHOPS RAIL MUSEUM, IPSWICH, QLD

The site of this locomotive museum is steeped in the history of Queensland's railways. More than 200 locomotives have been built at The Workshops, as it's known locally. During World War II, more than 3,000 people worked here. In 2002, the site was converted to a museum celebrating the history of rail. Anyone with an interest in history or machines will enjoy the expansive model railway, replicating the Brisbane suburban network and lines servicing the Darling Downs wheatbelt, central Queensland coalfields and north Queensland sugar district, among others. There are many permanent, temporary and touring exhibitions, so check online to see what's on. If you're feeling nostalgic, there is a steam train ride through Brisbane on Sundays. www.theworkshops.qm.qld.gov.au

>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

Ipswich: BEST WESTERN Ipswich Heritage Motor Inn ★★★★
51–55 Warwick Road, Ipswich QLD 4305



>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

Wanaka: BEST WESTERN Belvedere Luxury Apartments ★★★★
29 Warren Street, Wanaka 9305



ELSEY NATIONAL PARK, KATHERINE, NT

Immerse yourself in nature at Elsey National Park, where terrific palm-fringed swimming holes and thermal pools bring 30 million litres of lovely warm water to the Earth's surface each day. There are tables and barbecues, plus walking tracks to explore further, but the highlight has to be a soak in the springs.

>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

**Katherine: BEST WESTERN
Pine Tree Motel ★★★**

3 Third Street, Katherine NT 0850

CARNARVON SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM, WA

Did you know Carnarvon played an important part in some of the most significant space events of the 20th century? The Carnarvon Tracking Station was constructed in support of several NASA missions and the OTC Satellite Earth Station, which opened in 1966, initially with the 12.8-metre-wide Casshorn antenna, relayed Neil Armstrong's first steps on the Moon to an eager audience. The station was recently converted into this museum, which testifies to the area's involvement in the bridging of space. www.carnarvonmuseum.org.au



DID YOU KNOW?

One of Tasmazia's hedge mazes is an exact copy of the one at Hampton Court Palace in England.

>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

Carnarvon: BEST WESTERN Hospitality Inn Carnarvon ★★★

6 West Street, Carnarvon WA 6701

LONDON COURT, PERTH, WA

Escape the bustle of the streets and enter the world of jesters, banquets, Guy Fawkes and Shakespeare at Perth's London Court, an arcade in the style of Elizabethan England. Built in 1937 between Hay Street Mall and St Georges Terrace, it contains shops, cafés, businesses and homes. Wander through the shops and sip on a coffee as you admire the replica architecture.

>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

Perth: BEST WESTERN Plus Ascot Serviced Apartments ★★★★

308-318 Great Eastern Highway Perth WA 6104

Perth: BEST WESTERN PREMIER The Terrace Hotel Perth ★★★★★

237 St Georges Terrace, Perth WA 6000 (opening October 2012)



DID YOU KNOW?

More than 1,000 historical examples of stone circles exist, including many in Britain and Ireland, plus Scandinavia, Pakistan and West Africa.



TASMAZIA AND THE VILLAGE OF LOWER CRACKPOT, TAS

In a town named Promised Land in northern Tasmania is Tasmazia and the Village of Lower Crackpot. It's the largest maze complex in the world, comprising eight mazes and a wacky village of miniature houses designed by co-proprietor and artist Brian Inder. The town's motto is *Fractis Sed Utilis*, which means 'broken, but still useful'. The whole place is a celebration of people who find themselves down and out but manage to pull themselves together and strive for a better life. www.tasmazia.com.au



DID YOU KNOW?

Cuttlefish can change their colouring in an instant, using cells in their bodies called chromatophores.



GIANT AUSTRALIAN CUTTLEFISH, WHYALLA, SA

Between May and August thousands of strange creatures – Giant Australian cuttlefish – appear in the shallow waters near Whyalla. With the right gear you can jump in and see these squid-like animals with their strange mouths and spotted bodies. Among the largest cuttlefish in the world, they're certainly unique, but don't seem to mind being the object of human curiosity. Diving and snorkelling instructors are on hand in town to help you see these, and other, underwater wonders.

>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

**Whyalla: BEST WESTERN Alexander
Motel ★★★★**

99 Playford Avenue, Whyalla SA 5600

>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

**Ulverstone: BEST WESTERN Bass and
Flinders Motor Inn ★★★**

49-51 Eastland Drive, Ulverstone
TAS 7315

STONEHENGE AOTEAROA, NORTH ISLAND, NZ

Experience the mysticism of the UK's Stonehenge – on New Zealand's North Island. Built to a similar scale as the British landmark, Stonehenge Aotearoa is based on standing stones around the world. It's a place of wonder, linked to the sun, planets and stars. Stone circles have been a feature of many cultures and Aotearoa Stonehenge draws from ancient Egyptian, Babylonian, Celtic and Maori star lore. Seen from the centre of the structure, the pillars and lintels

form windows on the horizon, framing the rising and setting points of stars and planets. You can book guided tours, with explanations of the site's features and answers as to why civilisations built these magnificent structures.

>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

Wellington: BEST WESTERN

Wellington ★★★★

17-19 Burgess Road, Johnsonville,
Wellington 6037



TROPICAL FRUIT WORLD, DURANBAH, NSW

This fun-filled park boasts the widest selection of tropical and rare fruit in the world. See, taste and learn about such unusual varieties as carambolas (starfruit), sapodilla and red dragonfruit. Tours and tastings are available. Produce, including fresh fruits, jams and sauces, can be bought in the Farm Fruit Market. The park also has plenty to keep the kids busy with safaris, jungle riverboat cruises, koi fish feeding, an animal park and mini-train rides. www.tropicalfruitworld.com.au



>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

**Tweed Heads: BEST WESTERN Kennedy
Drive Motel ★★★★**

203 Kennedy Drive, Tweed Heads NSW 2485



**Tweed Heads: BEST WESTERN Twin Towns
Motel ★★★★**

21 Minjungbal Drive (Old Pacific Highway),
Tweed Heads NSW 2485



KEW, VIC

A Melbourne suburb with a grand history. Town planners were subject to fewer restrictions than usual when planning Kew, which led to larger land blocks and grander houses. There are many glorious Victorian, Edwardian and art deco buildings in the area, while the 1870s lunatic asylum, now converted into apartments, is an impressive sight. Bordered by the Yarra River, Kew also has many great restaurants and bars. [EN](#)

>> REST YOUR HEAD AT

**Kew: BEST WESTERN PREMIER Hotel 115
Kew ★★★★**

115 Cotham Road, Melbourne (Kew) VIC 3101