

CHECK-OUT

CHECK-OUT COMPILED BY ROBYN IRNSIDE
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A cheer for beer

THERE'S no need to wait to October to celebrate all things German. The Seabreeze Beach Hotel at South West Rocks on the New South Wales' Mid North Coast will turn into Bavarian heaven later this month for the annual Germanfest. Festival-goers can expect a hearty selection of winter dishes including roast pork knuckle with creamy mash, sauerkraut and Bavarian beer jus; crackling pork belly with braised red cabbage and chat potatoes; Kransky on a bun with sauerkraut and cheese; and classic apple strudel.

The thigh-slapping Sentosa Trio should get everyone yodelling on the weekend of August 28 and 29, as Bavarian beer flows from the hotel taps. Throughout the 11-day festival from August 27, the annual Sculpture in the Gaol will transform the historic grounds of nearby Trial Bay Gaol in beautiful Arakoon National Park. Tickets for Germanfest entertainment nights are \$25, which includes a \$20 food and drinks voucher. seabreezebeachhotel.com.au



Bloomin' lovely

WESTERN Australia is the wildflower capital of the world. More than 12,000 species grow in the state – the most of anywhere in the globe. The best time to see the flowers in bloom is mid-spring, when the state's southern region stages its annual Hidden Treasures Great Southern Bloom Festival. Held over four weeks across eight shires from September 11, the festival features 37 events or activities to introduce visitors to the wonders of the Great Southern. These include guided bird and bush walks in the Stirling Range, and Fitzgerald and Porongorup National Park, flower-arranging workshops, visits to open gardens, self-drive tours, bush tucker experiences and whale-watching along the coast. Many events are free or require a gold coin donation. Albany, the main centre of the Great Southern region, is a 4.5-hour drive from Perth. See hiddentreasures.com.au



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Smart sleepwear

THE fastest-drying pyjamas in the world are being pitched as the latest must-have for globe-trotters. Called cool-jams, the PJs are made from fabric originally designed for the Canadian military, and are scientifically engineered for high moisture absorption, high thermal absorption and rapid evaporation. They dry four times faster than cotton, and are lightweight and wrinkle resistant. The antimicrobial technology means it isn't really necessary to wash the pjs at all while travelling because they stay fresh and odour-free. Shrink and fade resistant, the cool-jams come in sizes small to XXXL.



Konnichiwa Qantas

POPULAR Asian destinations have never been so accessible for Australians, with more direct flights on offer. Qantas is now flying twice daily to Tokyo, with new services between Sydney and Haneda, and Brisbane and Narita. Sale fares for \$799 to Narita and \$899 to Haneda are available until tomorrow for selected travel dates. Japan has been attracting significantly more Australian travellers and the new services are tipped to aid that growth and help bring more Japanese Down Under. In another aviation coup for Queensland, Hong Kong



Airlines is set to operate charter flights to the Gold Coast between January and March next year. Designed to meet demand during the hectic Chinese New Year period, the flights will deliver about 10,000 inbound seats. Finally,

Etihad has launched a second daily service between Melbourne and Abu Dhabi, with connections to more than 50 destinations in Europe and the Middle East. The services will be operated by a three-class Boeing 777-300ER.



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