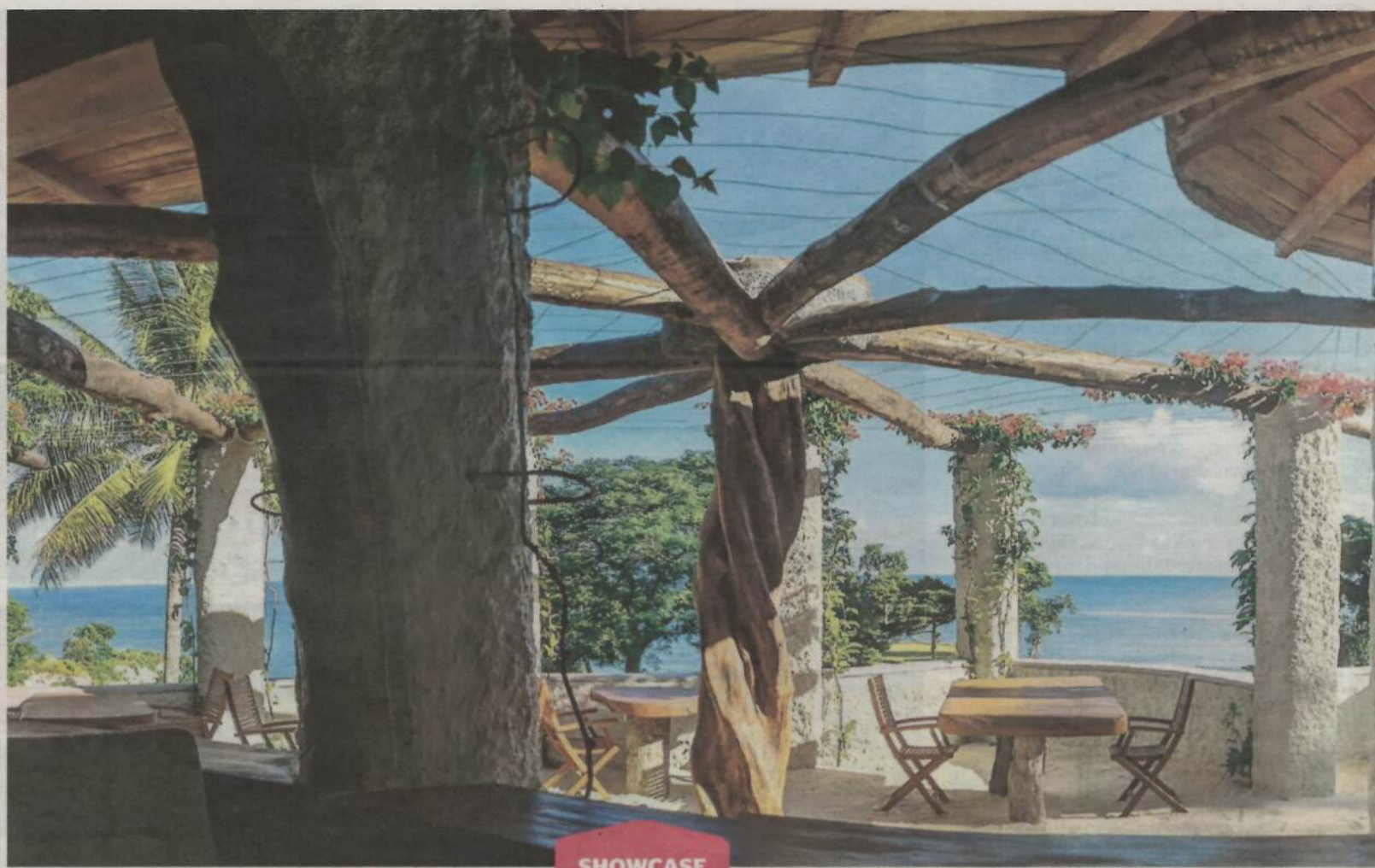


Take-off

YOUR SUNDAY TRAVEL DOSSIER

Edited by **BELINDA JACKSON**

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SHOWCASE

Rock star

Winter sunseekers should turn their eyes east to our near neighbour, Vanuatu's Tanna Island, endearing not only for its sandy beaches, showy, accessible volcano Mount Yasur and its belief that Prince Philip is actually a holy mountain spirit.

Its latest hotel opening is Rockwater, a three-year labour of love with handmade bricks carved from limestone found on

Tanna, which is sprinkled with bespoke furniture wrought from local timbers. Set on Ipak Bay, there are just 10 sunset-facing suites: the Rock suites sleep up to four, while the Resort rooms sleep two apiece.

The property quotes the Greek island of Santorini as its reference and also hosts a Mediterranean restaurant, but here you can swim, snorkel and scuba dive right off the

FIND

No bar to stopover fun

It's fair to say Abu Dhabi isn't known for its sandy-toes-beach-bikini lifestyle. However, the St Regis hotel on the emirate's Saadiyat Island has become the site of the world's first permanent Buddha Bar Beach club.

The French lounge-bar concept is now more than 20 years old, and is as glamorous as ever. With Abu Dhabi's opening, it's the



fifth Buddha Bar Beach bar around the world, with seasonal pop-ups appearing in beachy Bali, Santorini and the Maldives.

Owing to the Arabian Gulf's all-round balmy temps, dipping into its pool at sunset is always an option. Top dishes include a Wagyu rib-eye, or cruise the sushi counter and cevicheria to match an Art of Essence cocktail, featuring jasmine, bergamont and dry lemon. Naturally, there's guest and resident DJs and a saxophonist at sunset.

Just 20 minutes from Abu Dhabi's airport, this is shaping up as a great stopover option: just remember to pack swimmers in your carry-on. See buddhabar.com



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TNM

WHICH AIRPORT IS THAT?

This one is on King George Island, part of Chile's Antarctic territory and the northernmost airport on the continent, serving the village of Villa Las Estrellas and the base, Presidente Montalva. **The answer is on page 39**



shore in front of the resort amongst coral gardens and visiting turtles. The warm waters are also a highway for migrating whales. Long-time Vanuatu residents Silvana and John Nicholls designed and managed the hotel's construction, and encourage visitors to take a trip on a traditional canoe with a local, visit a self-sustaining Kastom village or hug the world's largest living tree.

It's part of their vow to protect the local environment while benefiting residents through skills training and opportunities. Vanuatu's peak season runs from July to December: January to June sees the humidity rise, while prices drop. The resort accepts children 12 years and older. Stays costs from VUV20,000. See rockwaterresort.com

GEAR

Life cycles

If a stationary cycle has just appeared in front of your big-screen TV, chances are you're living with a Tour de France tragic. What to give the person with every known piece of cycling technology? Go low-tech (and drop an unobtrusive hint about housework) with these cotton tea towels, printed with vintage drawings of bikes from the Tour - in this case, the 1950 Hirondele No. 6. Avid magazine collectors and graphic designers La Brocante are based on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, and personally scour France and Belgium for antique magazines, reproducing original photos of pelotons in action from the evocative '50s. The tea towels are 70cm x 50cm, printed on heavy, 100 per cent cotton and designed and manufactured in Victoria. Costs \$35, see thestore.com.au



EXPAT

I live here ... Broadstairs, Kent, UK

WHO Lisa Martin, 65, B&B owner, Broadstairs, Kent. See broadstairsbeachhouse.co.uk
FROM Sydney and Cobar, NSW, in England for 35 years.



SEE The horseshoe-shaped Viking Bay is the main attraction of this quintessential English seaside resort. With a little fishing boat harbour at one end and backed by an elegant promenade lined with restaurants and old world hotels, it's the ideal place for a leisurely stroll. Literature lovers should check out the buildings associated with Charles Dickens, who visited from 1837 to 1859 - Dickens Museum, the Royal Albion Hotel and Bleak House tearooms. See visitbroadstairs.co.uk
DO A sensational 15.7-kilometre walk over chalk clifftops and along sandy beaches runs between Margate and Ramsgate, and Broadstairs sits midway between these two towns. On the way you'll see traditional bathing boxes and a dozen glorious bays, including Botany Bay - named after the famous Australian bay, and a photographer's delight with towering white chalk stacks. On a clear day you can see the coast of France.

EAT The Tartar Frigate, overlooking Broadstairs Harbour, serves locally caught fish and seafood. The Dover sole is excellent. See tartarfrigate.co.uk
DRINK The Chapel, a former 17th-century church and more recently a bookshop, is a quirky bar with loads of charm. Local real ales and ciders grace the menu along with Kentish cheeses, while the shelves groan under the weight of hundreds of books for sale. The regular music nights are popular. See chapelbroadstairs.com
AVOID The seagulls - do not open fish and chips on the beach at any cost! See visitkent.co.uk

Know an expat who's in the know? Contact belinda.jackson@fairfaxmedia.com.au

FLY

Airport spreads wings



Travellers flying to Vietnam's burgeoning southern coastline will now pass through a new international terminal at Cam Ranh airport, which is ramping up access to the popular beach city of Nha Trang, 30 kilometres from the airport.

Local hoteliers say the airport's limited capacity has stifled growth to the region,

renowned for its white-sand beaches. Architecture fans should note the curved roof, modelled on the nests of swifts that live

on this coastline. On the cards is a new golf course designed by Greg Norman, and the 57-room Wyndham Grand hotel opens later this year.

With its expansion, the airport anticipates more flights in from Singapore, Thailand and Japan, as well as increased domestic links. Jetstar Pacific and Vietnam Airlines fly from Australia's east coast to Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, and then onward to Nha Trang's airport.

See nhatrangairport.com, Jetstar.com, vietnamairlines.com



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