

11 HOTTEST HOTEL RESTAURANTS

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HOTTEST HOTEL RESTAURANTS

Forks at the ready as Matt Shea dishes up the best eateries in Australian hotels

Gone are the days of tired buffets, cookie-cutter drinks lists and dishevelled servers. In 2021, a terrific restaurant is the tip of the spear for any well-executed hotel. Here are 11 of the best around Australia right now.

Hellenika, The Calile, Qld

1 There's a bunch of exceptional Brisbane hotel restaurants, but Hellenika is the best, particularly if you're lunching at one of the outside tables that overlook the Instagrammable urban resort's breeze-block and travertine-lined lap pool. On the menu is saganaki, 1.2kg baked Junee lamb, and pastitsio with

wagyu beef and béchamel. There's also an extensive selection of sustainably caught seafood. The food is accompanied by a tight 150-bottle wine list with a fabulous range of Greek varietals. hellenika.com.au

Lona Misa, Ovolo South Yarra, Vic

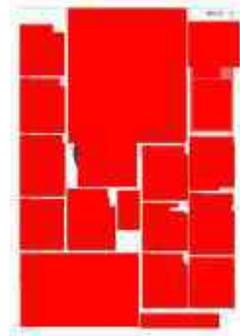
2 Lona Misa is the new star of Ovolo Hotels' phenomenal collection of restaurants. Celebrated chefs Ian Curley and Shannon Martinez oversee a menu that's almost entirely vegan, with dishes such as konjac vegan prawns with spicy coriander and lime dressing, and whole peri-peri cauliflower fire-roasted on a Jospier grill. For drinks, there are seasonal cocktails and a wide-ranging wine list. The digs? They're defined by a wall of Renaissance-style art graffitied with the words "mételo en la boca" – that's Spanish for "put it in your mouth." ovolohotels.com

Automata, The Old Clare Hotel, NSW

3 Part of the new wave of Sydney restaurants that made hotel dining cool again, Automata is efficiently wedged in a two-storey semi-industrial brick, concrete and glass space in gentrified Chippendale. Still, it's celebrated chef-owner Clayton Wells you're really here for, his local produce-focused set menus dishing up the likes of Murray cod with a bug roe emulsion, braised fennel and Geraldton wax, and globe artichokes with mussels, braised pumpkin seeds and a white pepper broth. Drinks keep it curious, from local vermouth and beer to unique French wines and junmai sake. automata.com.au

Lollo, W Melbourne, Vic

4 The jewel in the glittering crown of the new W Melbourne, Lollo sets itself apart with its warmly furnished capacious dining room and star chef Adam D'Sylva's inspired Italian-inflected menu. There's asparagus and ricotta tortellini with silverbeet, rotolo lasagne elevated by minced duck, and a cacio e pepe Caesar that subs in grilled cos lettuce for the pasta. Wine leans hard into Victorian drops, and the imaginative



cocktail menu will have you arriving early or staying late. marriott.com.au

Hearth at the Ritz-Carlton, Perth

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Bentley, Radisson Blu, NSW

Arguably the Australian hotel restaurant by which all others are measured, Bentley is parked beneath the Radisson Blu in Sydney's CBD. It's an intimate, inviting space defined by a striking lighting installation and the wine fridge and racks that line a back wall. Co-owner chef Brent Savage's modern Australian menu includes dishes such as Skull Island prawn with koshihikari rice and 'nduja, and Jerusalem artichoke with buttermilk, chestnut and plum. As for that wine, co-owner Nick Hildebrandt has compiled a list 1000 bottles strong that includes a stack of Champagne, European riesling, Burgundy and Rhône Valley varietals. thebentley.com.au

Yamagen, QT Gold Coast, Qld

6 The long-awaited reimagining of Yamagen in 2017 revealed a fun, funky venue of dark timber, rope chairs and fishing-basket lampshades, where the lights are kept low and energy high. Still, don't underestimate the food, chef Adam Lane (formerly at Tetsuya and Nobu) effortlessly remixing traditional Japanese cuisine with modern techniques. You might have truffle wagyu tartare with a 63-degree egg, or miso-glazed toothfish with pickled cucumber, hazelnut and shiso. Pair with sake, or a cocktail from one of the best lists on the Gold Coast. qthotels.com

CC's Bar & Grill, Bailey, Qld

7 CC's Bar & Grill sources its meat from Crystalbrook Station, the farm from which the Crystalbrook Collection of hotels takes its name. Here, it's all about steak (aged in an in-house Himalayan rocksalt room) and served in cuts ranging from a 200g sirloin to a 65-day dry-aged tomahawk, and paired with an Australian-focused wine list. Rounding out the experience is a fabulous timber and red-leather dining room, and big-city-precise service. crystalbrookcollection.com

Wildflower, Como The Treasury, WA

8 Set in a steel and glass box above Perth's State Buildings, Wildflower has sweeping views of the Swan River and CBD. It adds to the sense of place at a diner that goes deep on its celebration of WA produce and native ingredients. Menus change seasonally, but you might have Perth Hills pork jowl with chestnut, wattleseed and Jerusalem artichoke, or Wagin duck breast with desert lime, witloof and quince. The wine ranges across the old world and new, and make time for a pre-dinner signature cocktail on the outdoor terrace. wildflowerperth.com.au

MORE THAN ONE JEWEL IN THE CROWN

With 14 restaurants and bars, Crown Sydney is a hotel-dining hotspot. The cognoscenti will love the Italian flair at Alessandro Pavoni's a'Mare. Internationally acclaimed chef Nobu Matsuhisa delivers the sparkling modern Japanese cuisine he's famed for at Nobu. At Woodcut, Ross Lusted continues to wow Sydneysiders with his mod-Aus fare. And coming soon, *Oncore* by Clare Smyth, the first British woman chef to win three Michelin stars,

will round out a stellar line-up.

Hearth, Ritz-Carlton, Perth, WA

9 Set inside a gleaming white and royal-blue dining room with views across Perth's Elizabeth Quay, Hearth would attract punters on its location alone. But it's the locally sourced food you're here for, chef Danny Feng using a charcoal hearth to prep fire-roasted Albany celeriac with black barley risotto and purple congo potato, and smoked Abrolhos Islands scallop with apple, fennel, scallop dashi and finger lime. The wine list also leans local, with a fabulous selection by the glass. hearthrestaurant.com.au

hearthrestaurant.com.au

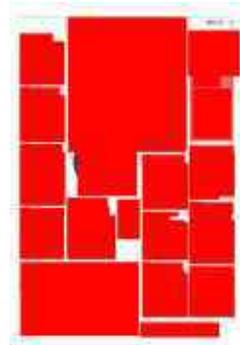
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Landscape, The Henry Jones Art Hotel, Tas

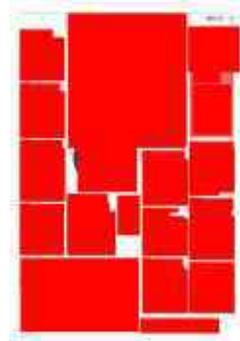
Hobart may be all aflutter about chef Massimo Mele's new restaurant, set to open in The Tasman hotel later this year, but it will do well to knock Landscape off its celebrated perch. The magic here is in the name, local produce fired over an asado grill and served in a low-lit 19th-century dining room lined with the artwork of painter John Glover. Chef Alex Katsman delivers octopus from Stanley, Wild Clover lamb from the northern midlands, and a steak menu that favours cuts from King Island and Cape Grim. A huge wine list spans from Tasmania to France. landscaperestaurant.com.au

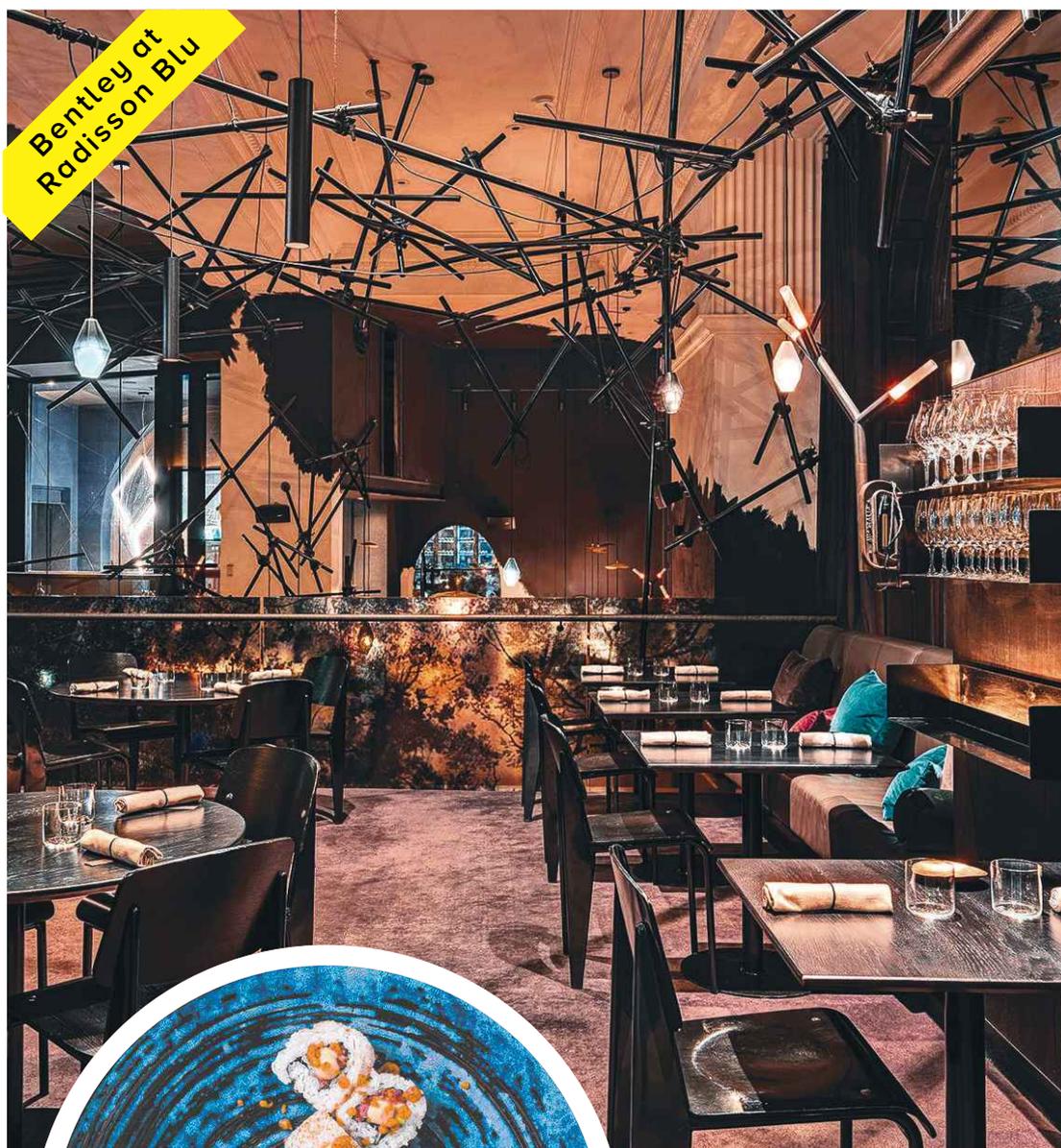
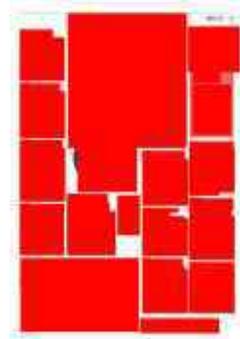
Koomo, Crowne Plaza Adelaide, SA

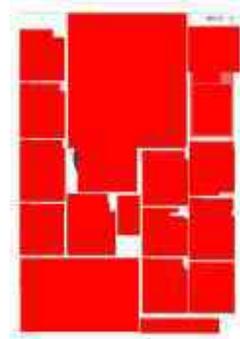
11 Slotted into a 10th-floor space with floor-to-ceiling windows, Koomo has remarkable views of the CBD and parklands, and the Adelaide



Hills in the distance. The fit-out is all pine timber, marble and brass pendant lights, a gentle reference to Japanese design that's reflected in a menu featuring Port Lincoln hiramasa kingfish, a chicken katsu sando, and roasted barra with burnt nagi oil and black garlic cream. For drinks, there's sake, a locally focused wine list and a clutch of creative cocktails. koomo.com.au







Opposite:
Hellenika at The Calile, Brisbane, Qld. From top:
Bentley at Radisson Blu, Sydney, NSW;
sushi at Yamagen at QT Gold Coast, Qld;
the kitchen at Hearth at the Ritz-Carlton, Perth, WA.



Yamagen at QT Gold Coast

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