

BEST OF THE BEST

THE DECADENT CITY BREAK

Where Mollies, Auckland, New Zealand.

Cost About \$2611 per couple for three nights.

Why? To find out why New Zealand is one of our top five international destinations and why boutique hotel Mollies – with its luscious art and antique-filled interiors – is an Auckland gem. Experience it for yourself with a special three-night *Gourmet* offer. For about \$2600 plus GST, you'll be chauffeured from Auckland airport to Mollies for a glass of NZ bubbly and a welcoming spa bath.

The next day you'll spend a leisurely afternoon at The Sanctuary, the in-house spa, followed by canapés and an aperitif before dinner in the hotel's restaurant. A tour of Waiheke Island, an Indian massage, breakfasts and dinners are all included in the *Gourmet* offer, which is valid until 30 September. If you can drag yourself away, check out some of Auckland's highlights (Mollies is five minutes from the city hub), including hot new eatery Clooney, in Sale Street, and NZ superchef Peter Gordon's new tapas bar, Bellota, in Federal Street. *For bookings, call +64 9 376 3489. www.mollies.co.nz.*

THE BALI BREAK IN MELBOURNE

Where Balinese Retreat, Montrose, Vic. Cost \$799 per couple for one night.

Why? Who needs to fly when 'Bali' is just a short drive from Melbourne? Picture you and that special someone, barefoot in your Balinese hideaway, with your own chef on a pavilion on your own lake. It's Bali, Jim, but not as we know it. In fact, this exotic getaway lies in the foothills of Victoria's Dandenong Ranges. Balinese Retreat is proving a great summer destination for couples who prefer not to battle for the buffet with hordes of other guests (you'll have the retreat all to yourself). With a mid-week Exotic Romance offer of \$799 per couple, including one night's accommodation, a banquet and a massage for each person, you can have that 'Bali' break without leaving the country. *For bookings, call (03) 9737 0413. www.balineseretreat.com.au.*



A WORLD AWAY
Antique fittings at
Auckland's Mollies.
Below right:
Norfolk Island.

THE STEP BACK IN TIME BREAK

Where Tintoela, Norfolk Island.

Cost \$1299 per person, twin share for four nights.

Why? Step back in time 100 years. Best-selling author Colleen McCullough loved it so much she married a local and made it her home. With its quaint customs (the local phone book lists people by their nicknames), one of the world's rarest languages, pine trees instead of palms and a population of just 1800 (most of them descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers), Norfolk Island is a taste of yesteryear. Attractions include coral lagoons, surfing beaches, a nine-hole golf course overlooking the ocean and some of the best examples of Georgian architecture in the Southern Hemisphere. Oh, and there's duty-free shopping. Tempted? Tintoela and Oxley Travel are offering *Gourmet* readers a special short-break package. For \$1299 per person, twin share from Sydney or \$1229 from Brisbane, you'll get return airfares, transfers, four nights' accommodation, car hire, an island tour and bottle of wine,



plus a platter at Two Chimneys Winery. The offer, which excludes the \$30 Norfolk Island Departure Tax, car insurance and fuel costs, is valid until 14 June, subject to availability. *For bookings, call Oxley Travel on 1800 671 546. www.oxleytravel.com.au, www.tintoela.nf. →*

A U S T R A L I A N

GOURMET

TRAVEL

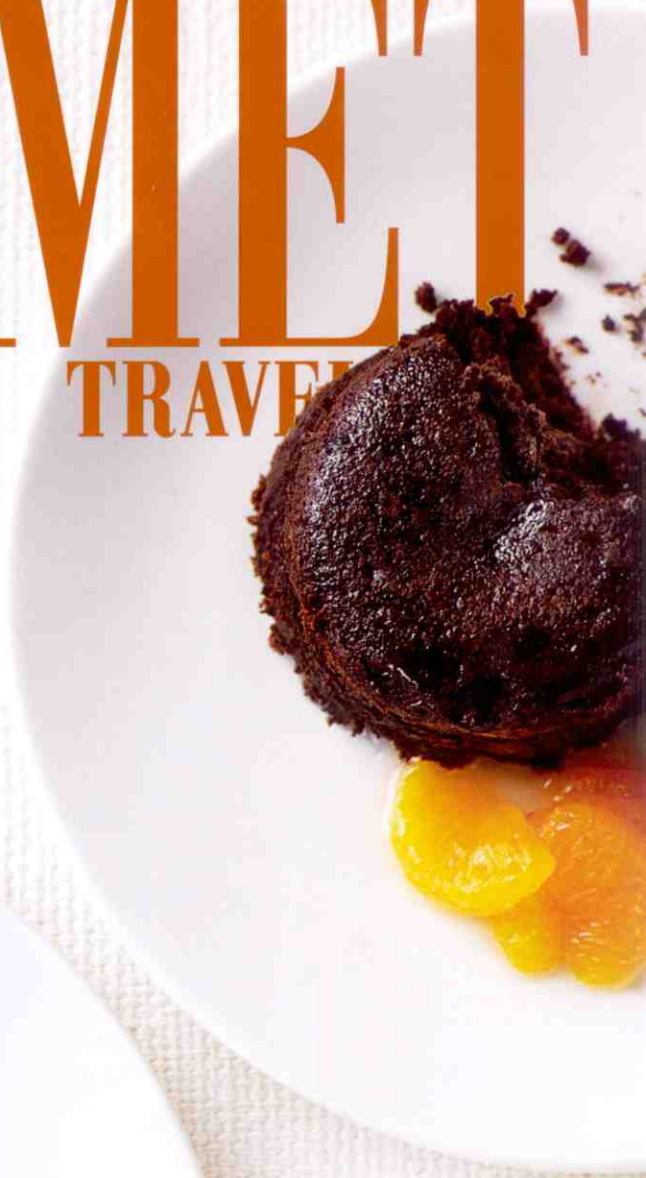
best of the best

It's back! Chefs to watch, dining hot-spots, most decadent dishes, favourite food shops, sexy wine bars and more...

PLUS
BLACK BOOK
SECRETS
FROM OUR
TOP FOODIES



Chocolate mud cakes with chocolate and mandarin ice-cream



APRIL 2007 AUST \$7.95

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