

# SAFFIRE FREY — No3 / CINET



1

Set facing the Hazard Ranges, Tasmanian resort Saffire offers a holistic experience drawing on the natural beauty of its surrounds.

**words**  
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**photography**  
PETER WHYTE

1. THE FORM OF THE MAIN BUILDING ECHOES COASTAL LAND FORMS, DUNES, WAVES OR SEA CREATURES

2. THE ROOF IS MADE FROM CURVED TASMANIAN TIMBER BEAMS BUILT IN A RIBBED STRUCTURE

3. THE PALETTE OF MATERIALS, STONE AND TIMBER, CLOSELY RELATES TO THE LANDSCAPE

The “operational goal” of Saffire is to create lifelong memories for people. This immediately raises the stakes – no claims here about being “the best” or “the most.” it’s more about depth of experience. There is a homely quality, which is something the staff strive to deliver through their natural smiles and attention to detail, committing to memory things you mention in passing and delivering back surprising gifts throughout your stay.

This is a place very much about location. Architect Circa Morris-Nunn Walker’s contemporary scheme takes inspiration from the coastal setting, opening sightlines toward Coles Bay and the Hazards, while the interior design by Chada was inspired by the natural surrounds in the selection of

materials and colour palette. These mountains are icons of the east coast of Tasmania that shroud the renowned Wine Glass Bay just an hour walk on the other side. The main building capitalizes on expansive views from all spaces, as does the entrance pier that projects the newly arrived guest to the highest vantage point. This theme continues in the suites, detached from the main building with large celery top pine box windows framing the vista.

Custom rugs that reference the local flora and fauna appear throughout the suites and the main building, known as “The Sanctuary.” While the twenty suites have an international luxury feel, they are imbued with objects, books, materials and finishes that set them apart.

Sandblasted grey and red marble and Tasmanian timbers – mainly Huon pine and celery top pine – abound in the interiors and architecture. This, combined with the eclecticism of small functional and decorative design features, lends the warmth and comfort of a coastal shack.

Light is definitely a key feature of the experience of both the interior and exterior of Saffire. David Becker, director of Point of View, charged with the task of lighting the interior and the complex curves and glass walls of the exterior, aimed to use as little light as possible and to focus on the guests’ ability to see the view. Another concern was reducing the external light impact of the building, “preserving the darkness of the environment as much as possible.” This is sensitively achieved through practically invisible ceiling lighting as well as floor and pendant lamps with zero spill.

As I write this there’s a wide rainbow slung low across the Hazards clearly visible from the lounge and library areas that are filled with luxury design classics from Walter Knoll, Fames and Artifort. Mixed in with this are solid Huon pine coffee tables propped on large root and buri sections and 2.5-foot high and wide Huon pine stumps also doubling as coffee tables.

The two-tiered dining room is one of my favourite spaces, elegant and restrained. Leather upholstered pedestal Turtle chairs by Walter Knoll offer comfort and allow the diner a great vantage of the rest of the restaurant, especially from the top level. The feature suspended lights on the upper dining level were commissioned from Hobart-based designer Judith Abell. The downward form of the lights mimics the contours of the Hazards, the perspex rods sparkle, transmitting a fluorescent white light without dominating the tables below. Upstairs on the entry level there is a library lounge that, at night, is dominated by reflections from the large expanse of glass.

When you go to Saffire, book a spa treatment. I recommend the hot stone massage. Sourced from a disused quarry, the 375-million-year old pink granite stones have been carved and polished by a stone smith. I’m told that this same stone paves the way at the Empire State Building. It is beautiful, local and feels like coming home. **A**

**project**

Saltire Freycinet  
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**interior design practice**

Chada (formerly Chada's)  
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www.chada.com

**architectural practice**

Robert Morris-Nunn Walker  
27 Hunter Street  
Hobart Tas 7000  
+61 3 6236 8544  
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**lighting design**

Plan of View  
Level 1, 184 Brunswick Street  
Fitzroy Vic 3065  
481 2 9017 4161  
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**project team**

Chada Juliet Ashworth  
(creative director), Michael  
Watson (planning and  
project coordination), Kristi  
Weyman (senior designer),  
Robert Morris-Nunn Walker,  
Peter Walker (design), project  
architect, Poppy Taylor  
(interior architect), Jarrod Hughes,  
Robert Morris-Nunn, Ganche  
Onus, Judi Davis, Chris  
Roberts, Garry Flemming,  
Tina Curtis

**time schedule**

Design, documentation  
16 months

Construction 16 months

**project cost**

\$32 million

**builder**

Fairbrother Construction

**structural engineering**

Gandy + Roberts

**services engineering**

Wood + Greaves

**facade engineering**

Hyden Consulting

**project manager**

Stanton Management Group

**ESD**

Wood + Greaves

**landscaping**

Inspiring Place

**products**

**walls**

Timber veneer from New Age

Veneers. External timber Orca

**flooring**

Swire gum from Modwood

Tech. Recycled blue gum

from Australian Architectural

Hardwoods. Tascoot carpets

from Ulster Carpets. Rugs and

carpets from Cadrys.

**finishes**

Stones and marble from Apollo

Marble & Granite. Elmicoth

leather panels. Mirror and

glass finishes from ASG Safety

Glass. Plastic laminate from

Farbury, Wilsonart. Fabrics

from Specified Textiles. Bed

coverings and cushions

from Turner Brothers. Mural

panel finishes supplied by

Tasmanian Special Timbers

**furniture**

Furniture from AH Beard

Chairmans Rest, Country

Design, Dickson Avenue,

Fairbrother Joinery,

Interstudio, Jordan, KE-Z J,

Living Edge, Plantation Group

and Thurstans Joinery

**lighting**

Custom pendants by Judith

Abell of Jago. Other lighting

from Brenell Lighting, Diffuse

Glass Lightworks, Gineco,

Hub, ISM and Lightforce.



2



3