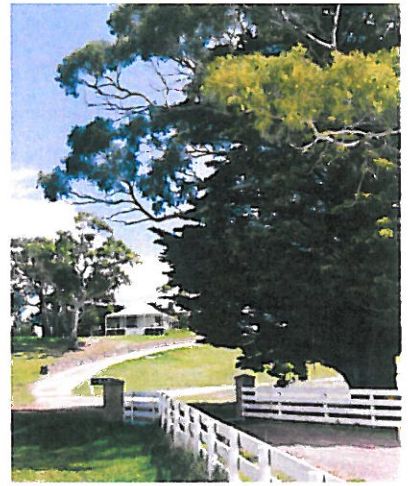
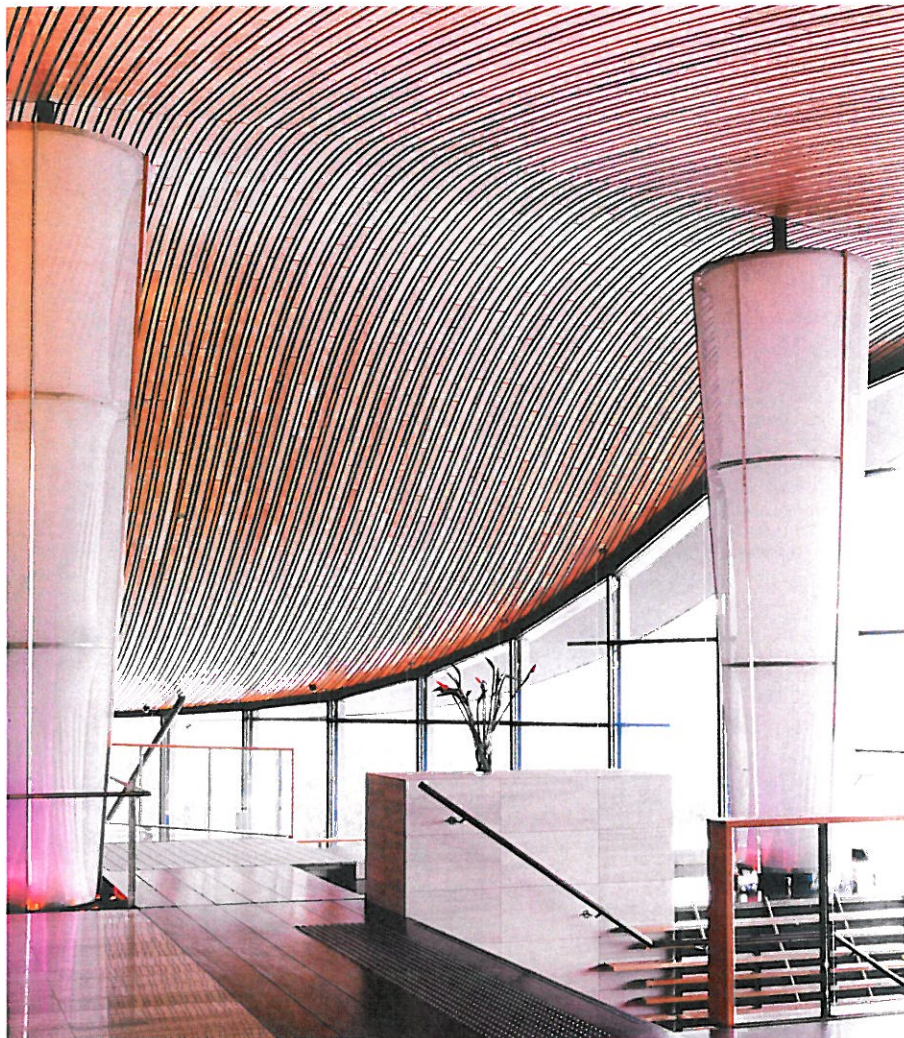


South-east

mania

Australia's island state is small but perfectly formed, with amazing natural assets – from its scenery to its produce. No wonder people are mad about the place.





Further north, the road curves east to Coles Bay, winding past oyster farms, walnut groves and wineries. Stop at **Milton Vineyard** (www.miltonvineyard.com.au) and order a case of excellent pinot noir or riesling.

Coles Bay is a tiny seaside hamlet at the entry to Freycinet National Park. Its population of about 400 rises to 5000 in the holiday season, so there's plenty of houses available, plus family-friendly cabins at **Iluka Holiday Centre** (iluka-holiday-centre.tas.big4.com.au) or **Freycinet Lodge** (puretasmania.com.au).

If you fancy a splurge or win the lottery, treat yourself to a night at the new **Saffire Freycinet** resort. The experience is one of relaxed luxury – from the warmth of the staff, to the stunning design. Plus, there's executive chef Hugh Whitehouse's great food. Hugh, who took Darley's restaurant at Lillianfels in the Blue Mountains to two hats, looks set to do it here, too. He's sourcing plenty of local produce to cook refined but unpretentious food that's perfect after a day out with the seals at Schouten Island, or among the oysters at Freycinet Marine Farm. Standouts at dinner were a perfect baton of crisp confit Berkshire pork belly; and a blood-orange crème caramel with ruby grapefruit granita and marmalade ice-cream. saffire-freycinet.com.au. From \$1250 a night, including breakfast, lunch, spa treatment and generous mini-bar. ©

Clockwise from below: blood orange crème caramel; chef Hugh Whitehouse; Saffire's entrance; Milton Vineyard.



With thanks to Tourism Tasmania for assistance with this story. For more information, call 1300 827 743, or visit discovertasmania.com.