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MAGAZINE

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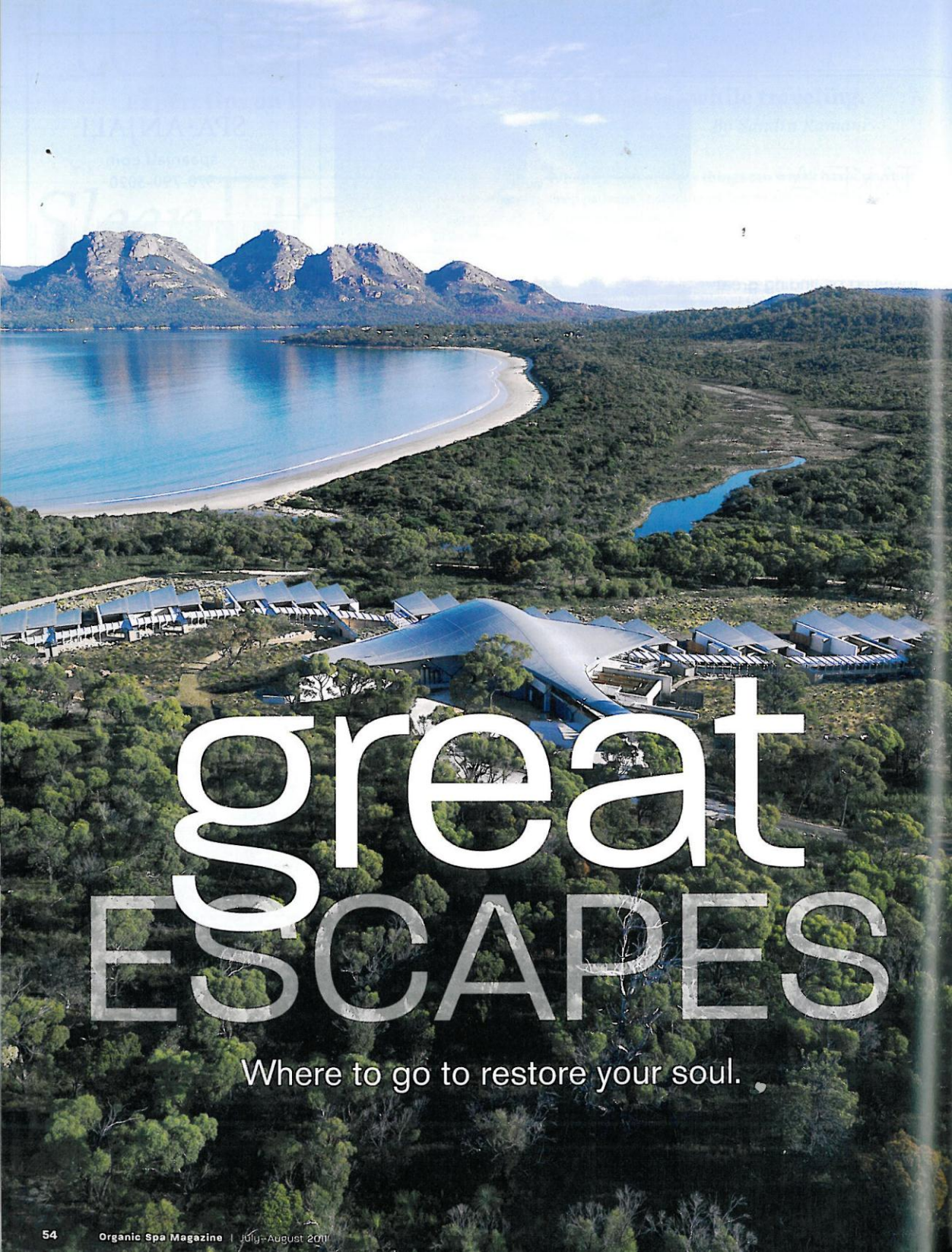
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# great ESCAPES

Where to go to restore your soul.



## SAFFIRE FREYCINET, TASMANIA

**A new luxury boutique hotel welcomes nature lovers with stunning organic design and outdoor adventures.**

When it comes to Australian destinations, Tasmania may not rank as high as Melbourne or Sydney on most travelers' wish lists. But this island state off the continent's southern coast is gaining in popularity, thanks to a growing appreciation of its offerings—rugged and unspoiled natural beauty, abundant wildlife, outdoor adventures, and world-class food and wine.

Now there's another enticing reason to visit Tassie (pronounced Tazzie): Saffire Freycinet, an iconic boutique property that debuted last year on the island's east coast. A study in understated luxury, the resort is adjacent to Freycinet Peninsula, a protected national park boasting the pink-granite Hazard Mountains—visible from all 20 sumptuous suites—and Wineglass Bay, renowned for its crystal-blue water and white-sand beach. It's also perched at the edge of scenic Great Oyster Bay, a major source of succulent seafood and an ideal place for a leisurely beach stroll.

Saffire itself inspires awe with a modern, organic design referencing its surroundings. The sprawling main building roof resembles a stingray and frames the Hazard peaks beyond, while the suite rooflines in the foreground conjure cresting waves. Floor-to-ceiling windows offer expansive views, and accents of stone, water, and wood bring nature inside.

Chef Hugh Whitehouse's superb, five-star cuisine also makes the most of the region's natural bounty. Tasmanian wines complement a dynamic menu showcasing the island's freshest seafood, meat (grass-fed beef and lamb, among others), seasonal produce, and fresh herbs and spices—some grown right in the on-site garden.

Saffire takes sustainability seriously. The site, largely cleared in a previous life, is being re-vegetated with 30,000 native plants in

an effort to restore it to its natural state. Other sustainability efforts include rainwater collection and conservation, natural cycle airflow systems, non-toxic cleaning products, minimal night lighting outdoors, and the use of recycled and environmentally friendly wood and other materials.

Not only are you surrounded by nature at Saffire; you're encouraged to intimately interact with it through small-group-guided and self-guided activities (most are complimentary; a charge for motorized activities covers the cost of carbon offsets). Tour an oyster farm or winery, bird-watch from a canoe, kayak, stargaze, embark on a boat excursion...the list goes on and on. Highly recommended is the Wineglass Lookout Walk, with a friendly guide leading the way along trails through eucalyptus, banksia trees and granite rock faces while explaining the area's history, flora and fauna. (If you're lucky you'll spy a wombat, but don't expect to see the infamous Tasmanian devil anytime soon; sadly, a fatal, contagious cancer has wiped out most of the population.)

If you can tear yourself away from the views, head to the cozy spa for the Saffire Body Spa, one of three complimentary welcome treatment options. A thorough body scrub and soothing massage concludes with an application of the spa's exclusive body cream, rich in hydrating essential oils and pure sapphire dust—purported to balance the chakras while making skin more luminous—and the aroma is divine. Fortunately, the heavenly stuff is available for purchase, enabling you to revisit an unforgettable Saffire experience anytime, even from half a world away.

[saffire-freycinet.com.au](http://saffire-freycinet.com.au)

—Liz Robins