

TASMANIAN REVEL

FOR YEARS Tasmania was regarded as mainland Australia's bumpkin cousin: a rustic outpost without much to offer beyond offbeat wildlife and an awe-inspiring landscape. Understandably, the prospect of kangaroos and Tasmanian devils wasn't enough to make the arduous journey from Europe or the U.S. worthwhile for most travelers. But the owners of Saffire Freycinet, a 20-suite boutique property that opened last July on the island's eastern edge, are hoping to change that.

Azure seas and the 400-million-year-old Hazards Mountains are the backdrop for the three-story main building's organic architecture, designed by the Tasmanian firm Circa. With its sweeping roof and pine ceiling (which took six months to create), the structure resembles a giant bird in flight. Guests can enjoy the signature Hazards hot-stone massage during the day; make a late-afternoon visit to nearby oyster beds to sip champagne with just-shucked bivalves from some of the most pristine waters on earth; join the nightly marsupial walk in hopes of spotting a wallaby; and finish off with a locally sourced dinner at the glass-walled restaurant. Thanks to the detail-oriented but relaxed Aussie attitude toward service, the place feels like a superluxurious yet down-to-earth summer camp (61.3.6256.7888, saffire-freycinet.com.au). SAMEER REDDY

An aerial view of Saffire Freycinet; a suite at the hotel.

