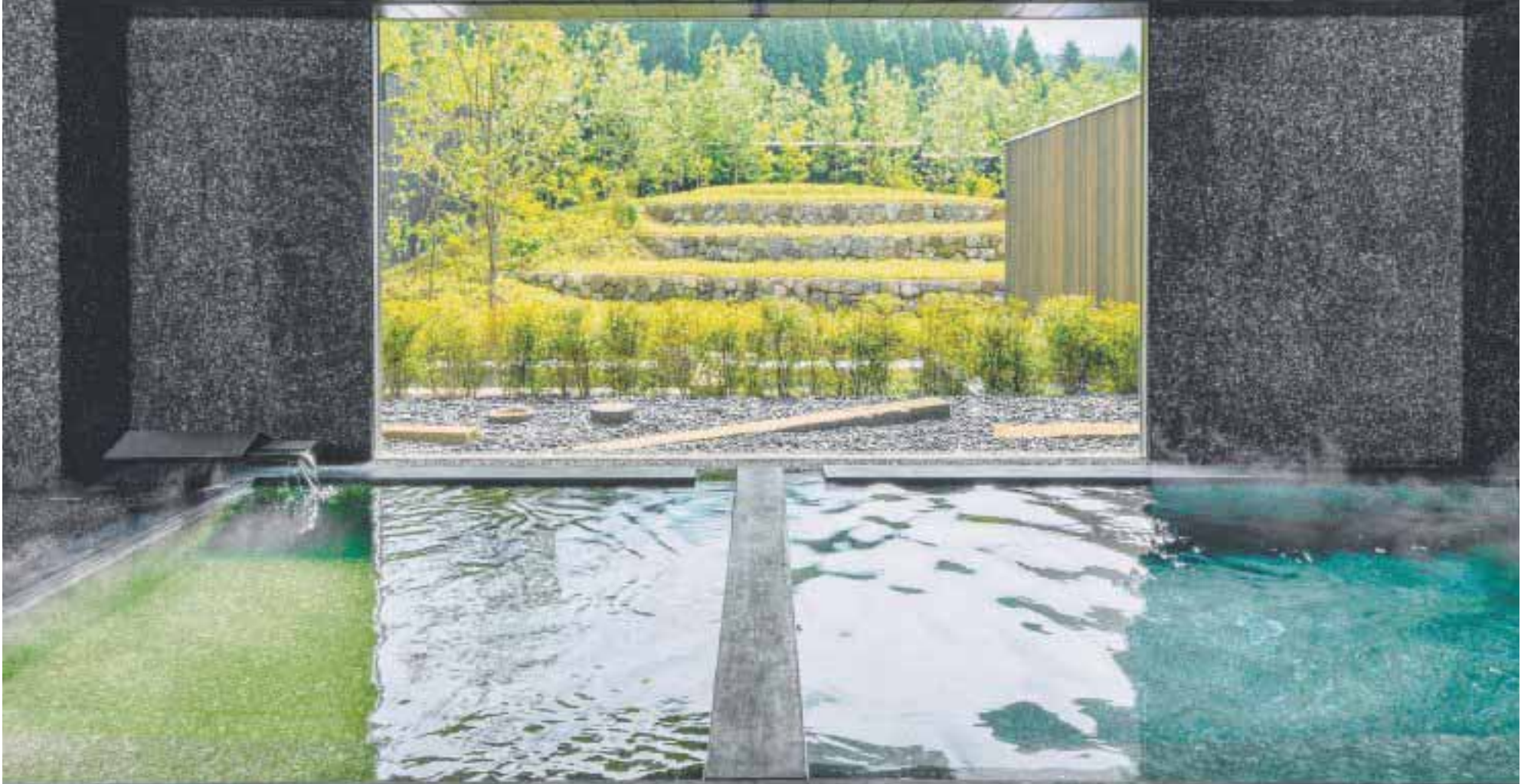


# THE WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN Travel + LUXURY

NOVEMBER 5-6, 2022

- The Louise's new look in the Barossa
- A Tassie eco-tourism pioneer turns 30
- Doha gets ready for kick-off
- How to live like a queen in London



## STEEPED IN TIME

Traditional values on Japan's island of Kyushu

Page 8

Subscriber-  
exclusive  
competitions



### Win an LG 65-inch C2 OLED TV

Members of The Australian Plus have the chance to win an immersive home-cinema experience with LG's latest 65-inch C2 OLED TV valued at \$5,399.



### Win 1 of 5 \$200 littala eGift Cards

The Australian Plus members have the chance to win 1 of 5 \$200 littala eGift cards to add some distinctive, combinable and multi-functional glassware to the home.



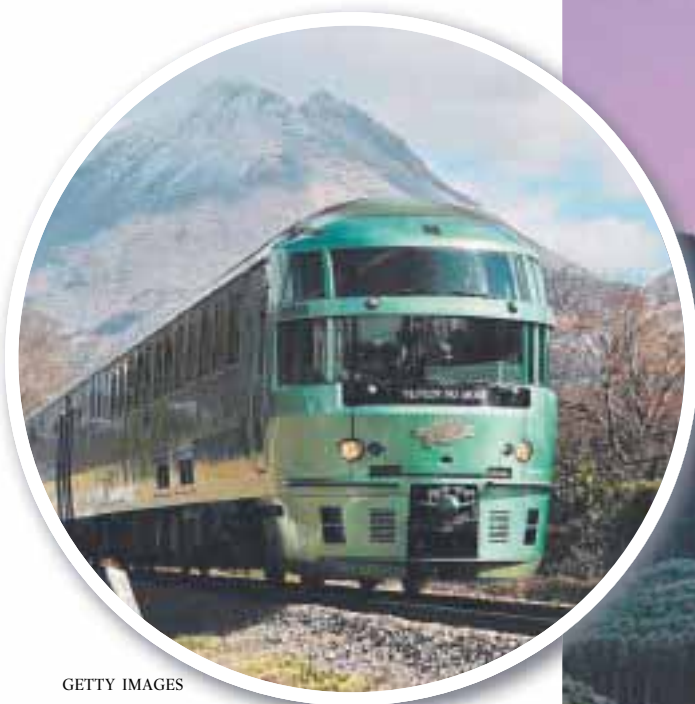
### Win a double pass to the NGV Gala Party

Members of The Australian Plus have the chance to attend the sold out NGV Gala Party on December 10 with exclusive access to the Alexander McQueen: *Mind, Mythos, Muse* exhibition and the chance to experience the NGV like never-before.

THE AUSTRALIAN *plus*

The Australian Plus members, explore these offers and more at [theaustralianplus.com.au](http://theaustralianplus.com.au)

Offer 1: Entries open 9.00 am AEST on 1 October 2022 and close 11.59 pm AEST on 30 November 2022. Australian residents aged 18 years and over only. Limited to one entry per eligible The Australian Plus member. Winner drawn on 1 December 2022 at 4.00 pm AEST at Nationwide News Pty Ltd, 2 Holt Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010. Winner's name to be published within 7 days after the draw date on The Australian Plus website. There is 1 x LG 65-inch C2 OLED TV to be won. Total prize pool valued at \$5,399. Winner drawn from entrants who are eligible The Australian Plus members. ACT Permit TP 22/01608 SA Permit T22/1311. Full terms and conditions available at [theaustralianplus.com.au](http://theaustralianplus.com.au). Offer 2: Entries open 9.00 am AEST on 1 October 2022 and close 11.59 pm AEST on 30 November 2022. Australian residents aged 18 years and over only. Limited to one entry per eligible The Australian Plus member. Winner drawn on 1 December 2022 at 4.00 pm AEST at Nationwide News Pty Ltd, 2 Holt Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010. Winner's name to be published within 7 days after the draw date on The Australian Plus website. There are 5 x \$200 littala eGift cards to be won. Total prize pool valued at \$1,000. Winner drawn from entrants who are eligible The Australian Plus members. Gift card terms and conditions apply. Full terms and conditions available at [theaustralianplus.com.au](http://theaustralianplus.com.au). Offer 3: Entries open 9.00 am AEST on 1 October 2022 and close 11.59 pm AEST on 13 November 2022. Australian residents aged 18 years and over only. Limited to one entry per eligible The Australian Plus member. Winner drawn on 14 November 2022 at 4.00 pm AEST at Nationwide News Pty Ltd, 2 Holt Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010. Promoter will attempt to contact the winners by telephone within 48 hours of the draw. If contact is not made in that time or the prize remains unclaimed for those 48 hours then the prize will be forfeited by the winner and cash will not be awarded in lieu of the prize, this will result in a redraw at 4.00 pm AEST on 17 November, 2022. Winner's name to be published within 7 days after the final draw date on The Australian Plus website. There is one prize to be won. Prize is a double pass to attend the NGV Gala Party. The double pass will admit up to 2 adults to attend the NGV Gala Party being held at NGV International on Saturday 10 December, 2022. Total prize pool valued \$750. Winner are drawn from entrants who are eligible The Australian Plus members. Ticket terms and conditions apply. Tickets not redeemable for cash and not transferable. Tickets cannot be re-sold. If event is cancelled due to government restrictions and or due to COVID-19, there will be no substitute tickets awarded. Attending the event is at your own discretion in relation to COVID-19. Full terms and conditions available at [theaustralianplus.com.au](http://theaustralianplus.com.au).



GETTY IMAGES

## Traditions survive and thrive on Kyushu Island

DENISE CULLEN

As a child, Ayumi Shiiba used to capture hotaru (fireflies) in a straw basket and watch them dance. Now, in her guest-facing role at the newly opened KAI Yufuin hotel in the northeast corner of Japan's Kyushu Island, she urges me to turn off all the lights at night except a spiral-shaped pendant lamp designed by craftsman Chika Iwakiri. Suspended above my futon, the lamp is woven from sweet-smelling shichitōi grass grown locally and also used in tatami matting. "It's a very beautiful light that reminds me of the fireflies," she says. I later read that Japanese firefly basket lanterns once served as light sources for rural villagers.

KAI Yufuin is built in the style of a ryokan where immersion in onsen hot springs and other aspects of local culture are part of the experience. I'm intrigued by the promise of the lamp, but I'll need to wait a few hours to try it because the sun is yet to set over terraced rice paddies cascading down the nearby hill. Earlier in the day, I flew into Fukuoka, Kyushu's capital, before boarding the Yufuin No Mori (meaning Yufuin's forest) express train for the two-hour journey to Yufuin. Built in 1989, Yufuin No Mori was the first of 13 sightseeing trains now operating in Japan. Its classic design with elegant wood-paneled interiors offers a sharp contrast to the country's sleek Shinkansen bullet trains.

From the station and the charming streets of the main town, KAI Yufuin is a short drive up a winding mountain road, situated amid a thicket of bamboo. With 45 guestrooms, including two free-standing suites, it's the latest of 20 hot springs properties operated by Japanese-owned Hoshino Resorts under its KAI brand. An understated entrance flanked by walls lined with unsplit bamboo leads into the main building, designed by architect Kengo Kuma to resemble a (very fancy) farmhouse. The dark, subdued reception area and lobby is minimally furnished, and the textured floor mimics the traditional earthen tatakai style. The lobby flows into the "travel library", where guests can help themselves to reading



# PAST PERFECT



GETTY IMAGES



matter and tea, then out to a sweeping deck overlooking rice fields.

The deck, in turn, connects the main building to the onsen, a soothing space comprised of indoor and outdoor baths, along with a post-bathing lounge. With a ceiling made of black woodgrain panels and walls and floors lined with black pebbles, the indoor bath has the same moody charcoal cast as the lobby, dramatically framing views of 1583m-high Mount Yufu. The dining room is located on the lower floor of the main building, where softly lit washi paper walls delineate different seating areas.

The multi-course kaiseki dinner features food rich in flavour that emerges from the

kitchen with the relentless efficiency of a sushi train. There's wild boar meat and shiitake mushroom pate wedged into wafers, soup with abalone fish cake, assorted sashimi, tempura prawns and a shabu-shabu hot pot of thinly sliced beef and game meats, served with dipping sauces.

I return to my room certain in the knowledge that I have overeaten. Before collapsing into bed, I turn on the one special lamp and fall asleep to its gentle flickering, dreaming of fireflies.

The next day, I take the train to Saga prefecture, home to rich cultural traditions, including carpet weaving, sake brewing and tea making. From Takeo-Onsen station in Saga,

the Nishi Kyushu Shinkansen line – Japan's newest and, at 66km and 23 minutes, its shortest bullet train route – runs to Nagasaki, a compelling destination in its own right, but I'm catching a jetfoil to the far-flung Goto Islands, a scattering of about 140 isles off Kyushu's west coast. Japan's oldest surviving historical record, the 1300-year-old Kojiki, holds that Heaven and Earth were conjured from primordial oceans, before kami (gods) birthed the islands of Japan. It seems easy enough to believe during the two-hour journey to Fukue Island, the largest and southernmost in the Goto archipelago. Through salt-sprayed windows, I gaze at the muscular, mostly uninhabited, rocky forma-

### MORE TO THE STORY

After Japan banned Christianity in 1614, followers were jailed or executed, missionaries banished and churches destroyed. However, so-called Hidden Christians continued to secretly practise their faith after fleeing to the remote Goto Islands, also known as the Islands of Prayer. Hiding in plain sight amid Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, they venerated mountains and islands, squirrelled away Christian icons such as images of Saint Michael slaying a dragon, and fashioned devotional tools such as an abalone shell with markings reminiscent of the Virgin Mary. When the ban on Christianity was lifted in 1873, these

Christians re-emerged, rebuilding churches and reinstalling religious icons, many of which can still be viewed or visited today. On Fukue Island, a statue of the Virgin Mary gazes calmly from her coastal perch out to sea, while the gothic-style Dozaki church contains many significant artefacts from this period. There are more contemporary nods, too, such as the stained-glass windows at Fukue airport. In 2018, the Hidden Christian Sites in the Nagasaki Region, comprising 10 villages, a cathedral and the remains of one castle, were World Heritage listed by UNESCO.

[whc.unesco.org/japan.travel](http://whc.unesco.org/japan.travel)





volcano, Mount Onidake. "But the last eruption was thousands of years ago, so don't worry about it," she adds.

That eruption is what laid down the rugged black "lava coast" rock upon which Retreat Goto Ray is built. Designed by the late Yukio Hashimoto, it forms part of the Okcs hospitality brand. The clean, simple lines of this low-set structure's exterior reveal little, but step inside, and the 6m-high floor-to-ceiling glass in the lobby reveals breathtaking views of sea and sky. Also eye-catching are the stained-glass windows that pay homage to this region's Christian heritage, after communities of the faithful arrived seeking refuge from persecution during Japan's two-centuries-long ban on Christianity (see More to the Story).

Drained of colour, the windows offer glimpses of the vibrant green foliage beyond. Over three levels, 26 spacious guestrooms each feature an open-air onsen, ocean views and abundant natural light. After settling in, I shrug on the supplied yukata robe and head upstairs to the dining room for another kaiseki meal, this time shaped by the abundant produce of the Goto Islands. A keen spear fisherman when not in the kitchen, chef de cuisine Ko Takahira snagged some of the ingredients in the nine-course meal, including mackerel sushi, amberjack sashimi and simmered long tooth grouper. Yet the melt-in-the-mouth grilled Goto beef is the star. The proximity of the sea means the cattle graze on mineral-rich grass, enhancing the flavour and texture of the meat.

The island offers ample diversions. Producers and craftsmen, including noodle-makers, camellia oil-extractors, blacksmiths and oke (wooden bucket) builders, all have open-door policies. We visit the workshop of Hitoshi Yamada, who scoops crystallised salt from giant urns as he explains how to harvest salt from seawater. It's a process that dates back to the 17th century and here, as elsewhere in Kyushu, the past hangs suspended in the present, close enough to touch.

*Denise Cullen was a guest of the Kyushu Tourism Organisation.*

tions rearing out of the East China Sea. The landscape seems just as primeval and mysterious today as it must have done when the Kojiki's author, an eighth-century scholar, sat down to impose order upon an unruly collection of stories at the behest of Empress Genmei.

From Fukue Port Terminal, it's a 10-minute journey by road to the Retreat Goto Ray. As manicured trees give way to jungle so untamed it threatens to reclaim the bitumen, guide Miyuki Ogawa notes that Fukue Island is blessed with lush pastures, unspoilt beaches, jungle-clad mountains, the rambling ruins of the last castle built in Japan and a grand street of samurai-era residences. Oh, and a



The sleek lines of KAI Yufuin resort, main; Yufuin No Mori train, top left; spacious accommodation at Retreat Goto Ray, top right; above, from left: beach on Fukue Island, Dozaki Church and outdoor bath at KAI Yufuin; Goto beef, far left; rice terraces at KAI Yufuin, left

#### IN THE KNOW

Fukuoka, Kyushu's capital, is a two-hour flight from Tokyo (Haneda). KAI Yufuin is located in Oita prefecture, a renowned hot springs region; standard room from JPY35,000 (\$370) a person; suites from JPY51,000 (\$540). Rates include breakfast and dinner. All Nippon Airways operates thrice-daily flights (40 minutes) between Fukuoka and Fukue Island. An alternative route is the Relay

Kamome limited express train from Hakata in Fukuoka to Takeo Onsen, then the Nishi Kyushu Shinkansen to Nagasaki. The one-way trip takes about 90 minutes; from JPY5000-6000. Standard rooms at Retreat Goto Ray from JPY57,200 a person a night, including dinner and breakfast.  
[visit-kyushu.com](http://visit-kyushu.com)  
[hoshinoresorts.com](http://hoshinoresorts.com)  
[ana.co.jp](http://ana.co.jp)  
[goto-ray.com](http://goto-ray.com)

# NORFOLK ISLAND

## DISCOVER WORLD HERITAGE PARADISE!

### YOUR HOLIDAY INCLUDES:

- Return airfares to Norfolk Island
- Return airport transfers
- 7 nights accommodation
- 7 days car hire with full insurance
- Island Concierge Service
- Island Orientation Guided Coach Tour
- History in the Making Guided Coach Tour
- Norfolk Laengwij Class with Refreshments
- The World of Norfolk Exhibit
- World Heritage Norfolk History Tour
- 6 x DIY Norfolk Tours
- Bounty Pass-on island discounts

### CREST APARTMENTS

Self-contained one bedroom apartments set on 8 acres of lawns and only minutes from World Heritage Listed Kingston.

**\$1739PP**  
SAVE UP TO \$1200

### GOVERNOR'S LODGE

Centrally located with 55 stand-alone cabins, on-site cafés, restaurant and pool. Includes café-style cooked breakfast.

**\$2139PP**  
SAVE UP TO \$1200

### JACARANDA PARK HOLIDAY COTTAGES

Self-contained, one bedroom cottages close to town and historic Kingston. Includes Entry to The Norfolk Bounty Folk Museum.

**\$2439PP**  
BONUS INCLUSIONS

### CHRISTIAN'S OF BUCKS POINT

Original island home beautifully restored with stunning views overlooking Ball Bay. Includes breakfast hamper.

**\$2839PP**  
SAVE UP TO \$550

SALE ENDS 30 NOV!



Ph **1800 800 722**

Visit [www.spacificatravel.com](http://www.spacificatravel.com)

Book Online | Open 7 Days

*We know the South Pacific like the frond of every palm*

Prices are departing Sydney, per person, twin share, inclusive of pre-payable taxes and for new bookings only. Valid for sale until 30NOV22 or until sold out. Please consult our website for travel dates and for full terms and conditions. Spacifica Travel is a division of Wave Hospitality Group Pty Ltd, an accredited travel agency and member of the International Air Transport Association. (IATA). Image courtesy of Norfolk Island Tourism.