

Weekender

BEST BUYS, HOT SPOTS, NEW IDEAS



PINETREES LODGE Within half an hour of touching down at the white-picket-fenced airport on Lord Howe Island, it's possible to find yourself standing alone in the limpid shallows of Ned's Beach, as shoals of fish weave silken ropes around your ankles. Nature is *everywhere* on Lord Howe Island. The tropical hideaway-cum-World Heritage site is two hours' flight north-east of Sydney and numbers among its charms the world's southernmost reef and nearly 300 endemic plant and bird species. (Travel writer Jan Morris has memorably called Lord Howe Island an aviary without a roof; it's also paradise without the crowds.)

At Pinetrees, the oldest of the island's resorts, the welcome is as warm as the cloudless blue sky above. It's the only resort offering full-board lodging - that is, accommodation in a cosy unit or a bigger, stand-alone cottage, and three meals a day - and it does so sumptuously.

FIVE-NIGHT PACKAGES FROM \$1065 A PERSON (EXCLUDING AIRFARE); (02) 6563 2177. FOR DETAILS OF THE FIVE-DAY "FOOD & WINE WITH TOM KINE" MASTERCLASS (OCTOBER 13-17), GO TO PINETREES.COM.AU.