

24-hour babymoon

If you're going to go on a whirlwind babymoon, it'd better be somewhere blissful. LUCY CHEEK discovers the perfect quick break with a bump.



“DO NOT DO ANY WORK,”

Latte editor Rebecca Bodman implored just before I left for a babymoon a week before this issue went to the printers. The break was terrible timing. I had a mountain of work to do, I was dreadfully behind in my baby shopping, and was gripped by pregnancy insomnia. “We should cancel,” I said to my partner tearfully. “I don’t have time to drink mocktails right now! I have to work! I still have to choose a nappy bin!” Linden raised an eyebrow as if to say, “Okay, then. You call Jonah’s and say we can’t stay because you’re not sure how you want to dispose of your future child’s excrement.”

Realising I was perhaps being just a teeny-tiny bit irrational, I pushed aside thoughts of nappy disposal and my other baby, *Latte*, tossed my prenatal vitamins and Bridget Jones-esque bloomers in a bag (sexy!) and we choofed off to Jonah’s Restaurant & Boutique Hotel. Perched on a clifftop overlooking Whale Beach on Sydney’s Northern Beaches, the startlingly spectacular backdrop of these luxury coastal lodgings is just the icing

on the cake. The cake, I discovered as soon as I waddled into our Ocean Retreat room from the car, is not the ornate room with the recently refurbished Hamptons-meets-French-Riviera vibe, either, or the balcony with glittering water views. It’s the massages. Well, more specifically, my pregnancy massage.

Two massage beds had been set up, with two angels (masseurs dressed in white) smiling beatifically at us. I heaved my weary, aching body on one of the beds overlooking the ocean and proceeded to enter 60 minutes of perfect happiness. Fluffy towels covered me and pillows softer than a baby’s you-

know-what were gently placed between my legs and arms as I lay on one side in a euphoric cocoon, my top-to-toe aches and pains and worries melting away. After the hour was up, I sat up and blinked stupidly in the sunlight, staring at the angel above me. “That was the best massage of my life,” I declared. When I mentioned this later to one of Jonah’s staff, she laughed. “You know what? Everyone says that here!”

The magical in-room massages and treatments are all part of Jonah’s magnetic charm. Since it opened in 1929 – they recently celebrated 90 years – the boutique hotel has been renowned for its luxury, private and comfort, and has hosted everyone from members of

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the royal family of Monaco, Sir Anthony Hopkins, Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall, to One Direction, Justin Bieber and Jesinta



Clockwise from top right: Jonah's award-winning cuisine; the heavenly Ocean Retreat room; dining waterside; me on the terrace post-massage.



Campbell and Buddy Franklin. It's not hard to see why. I can picture Mick and Jerry strolling arm-in-arm through the lush gardens and settling on the terrace with a G&T; Jesinta and Buddy floating in the clifftop pool; and Sir Anthony dining at the award-winning restaurant which offers another staggeringly pretty view of the Pacific Ocean and headland. (Bieber, I'm not sure. He'd probably be holed up in his room in the spa bath.) Jonah's offers

11 Ocean Retreat rooms which all have a private balcony, spa and 180-degree views over the Pacific. If you want more privacy or are in a group, Jonah's Private next door has its own entrance, large balcony and swimming pool. Oh, and you can also arrive via seaplane, if driving is a bit beneath you.

The thing is, despite its A-list patrons and luxury accents, Jonah's doesn't feel pretentious, and the prices aren't exorbitant. The Babymoon package includes overnight accommodation in an Ocean Retreat room, full à-la-carte breakfast, mocktail on arrival, Molton Brown gift, soft-white snuggle toy (I nearly cuddled it all night myself), one hour-massage for both parents-to-be, and a three-course à-la-carte dinner in the restaurant, from \$1,586. It's well worth the splurge, but if you just want a regular stay here, prices start from \$398 per person for a twin share for bed and breakfast.

When I woke up in the dreamy king-size bed after sleeping well for the first time in months, without any sciatica twinges or soccer kicks from my child (even the baby was relaxed at Jonah's), I knew the whirlwind stay had been totally worth it.

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WHY ARE YOU A BUSINESS CHICKS MEMBER?

My first Business Chicks experience was a breakfast with Michelle Bridges in 2013. With my scepticism of lady groups on high alert, I was surprised how incredibly uplifted, positive and motivated I felt.

WHAT'S BEEN THE BIGGEST PINCH-ME MOMENT OF YOUR CAREER?

At the end of 2018, I was named as a finalist for Young Businesswoman of the Year with Canberra Women in Business. It was a huge year for me, transitioning into my business full-time, and the nod from my local community was special.

WHAT'S BEEN THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?

"Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day that says, 'I will try again tomorrow.'" – Mary Anne Radmacher.

WHICH WOMEN INSPIRE YOU?

I come from a long line of strong women – a cook on a sheep-shearing station, two nurses who you could never sneak a sick day past, and a sister who could flatten Tina Sparkle in a 'fruity rhumba' competition [from *Strictly Ballroom*]. These resilient women have refused to be victims of their situations and build doors when opportunity doesn't knock. They're true to their word, aren't too proud to ask for help, and always have a chocolate biscuit in their cupboard.

WHAT ARE YOU GOOD AT?

I love working with small businesses who are ready to breathe life into a new venture or project, and I feel fortunate to have the skills to help make that happen. I also like to challenge the way we approach marketing and design. Oh, and I make a pretty good zucchini slice.