



ntering Hobart's newest hotel, Moss, is like crawling into a rock cave on the rainforest floor, except there's an elevator, plenty of standing room and you don't have to touch any dirt. It's dark but not too — ambient rather than hazardous. Plants climb the walls and shards of natural light poke through slivers of glass. The colour palette is, unsurprisingly yet satisfyingly, moss green. Moss: a sign of renewal. A fitting analogy for a Georgian-era building that was once a whalers' warehouse, a brothel and a nightclub, and is now Instagrammable accommodation with Grown Alchemist toiletries.

The building's storied past has been embraced by Ganche Chua from Tasmanian architects Circa Morris-Nunn. The firm specialises in conserving and adapting historic buildings and transforming Hobart's waterfront (The Henry Jones, Macq 01 Hotel and Brooke Street Pier are all their handiwork). As such, the history of the

building is omnipresent: convict-cut sandstone, rafters and corrugated iron ceilings from the 1830s, and DJ posters from the 1990s are on display in various rooms.

In a showcase of local talents, just about everything here is Tasmanian: Hannah Lorenz's cushions; Andrew Bull's Tasmanian bedheads; Matt Prince's chairs; Derek Henderson's photographs; the items in the (street-priced) minibar. Even the plants are local, grown in a nursery in the foothills of kunanyi/Mount Wellington.

Every detail, right down to sound-proofing (it's above a pub, after all), has been carefully considered in the making of this sanctuary. Emerging from the sliding green door out onto the busiest strip in town is jarring: like stepping out of the rainforest into a major train station — but knowing you can retreat back under your canopy any time is a glorious feeling. — ALEXANDRA ENGLISH

Moss, 39 Salamanca Place, Hobart; stage two, Moss 25, opens at 25 Salamanca Place on December 26, mosshotel.com.au.

aising the sails and mooching around Sydney Harbour on a yacht isn't a punish, by any means, but as we can now personally attest, doing it 40 kilometres north on Pittwater is definitely better. You don't have to dodge ferries. You can pull up to a secluded beach for a skinny. And your outlook is gum-lined shores, as opposed to crowded mansions.

You don't need your own boat, either. Palm Beach-based chartered-yacht business Taylor Made Escapes has partnered with the iconic Whale Beach hotel Jonah's to launch a Stay & Play package, which involves you checking in, then boarding Taylor Made's Beneteau Oceanis yacht, lunching on the picnic hamper packed by Jonah's and cracking open a bottle of Bolli. You can then lie back while skipper Michael Ireland takes care of the hard work.

About two hours later, the Jonah's van transfers you back to the 90-year-old accommodation, which has recently undergone a refurbishment, and 'that' view of Whale Beach, where we instantly spot a pod of whales. Our Ocean Retreat (one of 11 rooms) is all Hamptons polish: neutral tones, oak parquetry floor, killer minibar and limestone bathroom with shutter windows that open so you can see straight out of the glass doors to the terraced garden and ocean below. Indulge in a pre-dinner soak, then head to the hatted

clifftop restaurant where Matteo Zamboni will whip up a three-course à la carte feast including seared pork belly and grilled Mooloolaba king prawns.

Back it up in the morning with breakfast overlooking the Pacific. And more whale watching, natch. -EK

69 Bynya Road, Whale Beach, New South Wales, jonahs.com.au.

