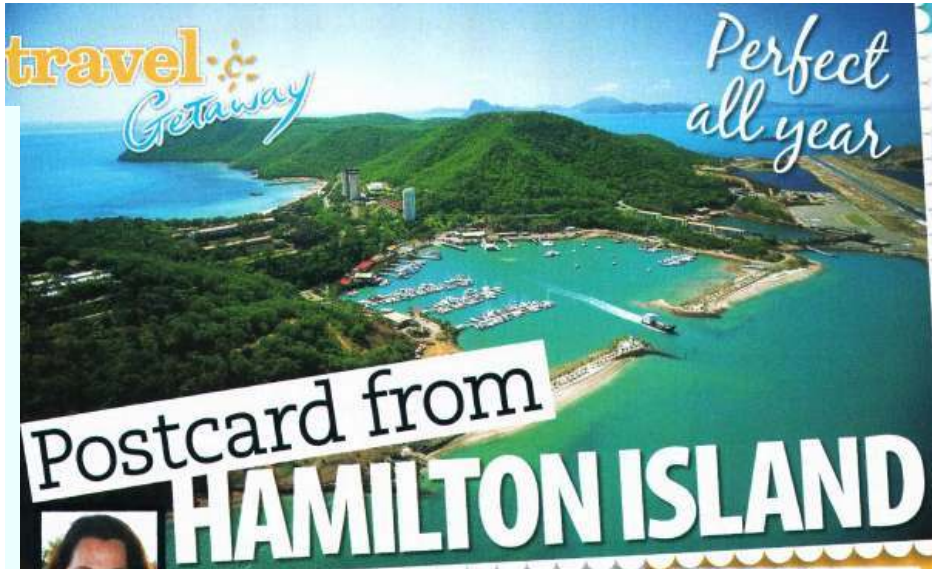




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# Postcard from HAMILTON ISLAND



**JACQUI LANG HAD A WHALE OF A TIME IN HEAVENLY 'HAMO'**

**E**ver seen a whale give birth? I hadn't expected that thrilling spectacle to be part of my visit to Hamilton Island. But while out at sea viewing a yacht race - whoosh! Suddenly a whale was breaching beside our boat. Ten minutes later, she swam away with a youngster at her side. We all cheered and clinked our glasses. It added to the fun of our stay.

The annual Audi Hamilton Island Race Week sees thousands of yachties converge to compete in daily races around the Whitsundays' most popular isle.

Hamilton Island is never cold - so there's no excuse not to get outside. Aside from boating, there's bushwalking, kayaking and snorkelling, and spectacular sunsets to view from the scenic

lookouts dotting the island. Luckily for me, nine-times Wimbledon doubles champ Todd Woodbridge was hosting a tennis clinic during my visit. After a few hours with him, I felt ready to take on the Williams sisters.

I even became a better cook during my week at "Hamo", as the locals call it. Melbourne chef Geoff Lindsay hosted a class showing us all how to whip up some sexy oyster snacks.

Sydney's celebrity chef Luke Mangan was also on hand to prepare a seafood feast for paying customers at swish restaurant Beach House.

These foodie and sporting events are all part of a concerted effort by the island's owners, the Oatley family, to ensure Hamilton holds its appeal.

They're about to open Qualia, an ultra-luxury resort certain to attract the international jetsetter (pavilions are from \$1400 to \$1600 per night.)

And a new yacht club is soon to grace the island, its garden designed by celebrity landscaper Jamie Durie. Wonder if his new best friend, Oprah, will pop over to check it out?

## 3 of the best things to do



▶▶ Catch a ferry to nearby Airlie Beach or Whitehaven Beach, Whitsunday Island.



▶▶ Hire a golf buggy and chug around the island, enjoying scenic lookouts.



▶▶ Enjoy a scalp massage at the Relaxation Centre. Call (07) 4946 8669.

## RACE WEEK

### ▶▶ Hamilton Island Race Week

Australia's largest offshore yachting regatta, with a variety of races. Enter with your own yacht or contact yacht-hire company Sunsail, which will also help loners find a crew.

(www.sunsail.com.au)  
Race Week 2008 is from August 22 to 30. See www.hiyc.org.au



## GETTING THERE

▶▶ Jetstar and Virgin Blue fly daily to Hamilton Island, 1000km north of Brisbane. Or fly to Proserpine, take a bus to Airlie Beach, then a ferry to the island. Call 13 73 33.

## WHERE TO STAY

▶▶ The Reef View Hotel has spacious rooms and suites with ocean views. The 4-star hotel is a short stroll from the marina and its strip of eateries. Book at www.hamiltonisland.com.au



▶▶ Getaway's Catriona Rowntree answers all your travel questions

## EXPLORING EGYPT

**Q** Should I do a tour of Egypt? Which is the best one?  
**Faye, by email.**

**A** Egypt is a place that I'd definitely recommend seeing with an organised tour. The language barrier can be a problem here. As well, there is a lot to see and it's pretty spread out, so a tour will organise your transport and get you around in the shortest possible time.

It's difficult to tell you exactly what tour to take as this depends on your budget, the time you want to spend there and the type of accommodation you're after.

There are five-star luxury packages where you stay in fancy hotels and go cruising down the Nile; at the other extreme are camping tours.

A couple of places I would make sure are included in your itinerary are Cairo, the Pyramids of Giza, Luxor, the Valley of the Kings and Abu Simbel.

Check out www.egypt.travel for info and for tour operators that visit Egypt. To check travel warnings for the region, go to www.smartraveller.gov.au.

Bon voyage!

▶▶ Catch Getaway on the Nine Network this Thursday at 7.30pm.

Send questions to...  
Been somewhere amazing? Got a travel tip? Send to Your Holiday, Woman's Day, GPO Box 5245, Sydney, NSW 2001, or email womansday@acpmagazines.com.au See contents page for location of our privacy notice.

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