



SPECIAL EDITION



GRAND AWARDS  
2008

www.AndrewHarper.com

# Andrew Harper's Hideaway Report®

January 2008 | Our 29th Year

*A connoisseur's worldwide guide to peaceful and unspoiled places*

## 2008 Grand Award Winners

EACH YEAR, WE HAVE THE PLEASURE of recalling our travel experiences over the past 12 months and singling out a number of particularly enchanting hideaways for special recognition.

To be considered for our annual awards, a hotel must be relatively small in size and possess a strong individual personality. Properties are also required to have a relaxing atmosphere and to demonstrate a consistent devotion to personal service. We do not evaluate hotels solely by means of a checklist. Rather, we rely on our decades of experience and that intangible summary impression that separates the good from the truly enchanting. Some of our award winners are more lavish than others and provide a wider range of facilities. However, all offer the traveler comfort, warmth and charm, as well as a spirit of sincere hospitality.

### U.S./Canada Page 2

Wheatleigh  
The Resort at Paws Up  
The Heritage House  
Wickaninnish Inn

### Mexico/Caribbean Page 4

Casa de Sierra Nevada  
Hacienda de San Antonio  
Carlisle Bay

### Brazil Page 5

Convento do Carmo  
Pousada Maravilha

### Italy Page 6

Hotel Caruso  
J.K. Place  
Masseria San Domenico

### France/Spain Page 7

Abbaye de la Bussière (see right)  
Hegia  
Hotel Marqués de Riscal

### Scotland Page 8

Cringletie House  
Minmore House

### Southern Africa Page 9

Little Ongava  
Shumba Camp

### South Asia/Japan Page 10

Amankora  
Gora Kadan

### Australia/New Zealand Page 11

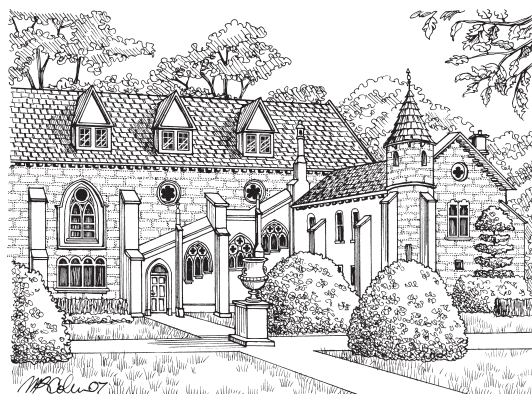
Capella Lodge  
Claremont Estate

Restaurants of the Year and Special Awards Page 12

## HIDEAWAY OF THE YEAR

### Abbaye de la Bussière

*Burgundy, France*



THIS ANCIENT CISTERCIAN ABBEY near Dijon was purchased in 2005 by the Cummings family from England. After meticulous renovation, it is now a truly wonderful property. Wrought-iron gates swing open, and across a walled 15-acre park you glimpse a magical three-story 14th-Century manor house constructed of mellow golden limestone. After uncomplicated formalities in the great hall (everyone at the hotel is bilingual), you are escorted to one of the hotel's 11 rooms. Furnished with antiques and tapestries, these are both comfortable and atmospheric. Stylish baths have granite surfaces, Jacuzzi tubs and monsoon showers. Chef Olivier Elzer is an exceptional talent whose menus marry tradition with the demand for healthier eating. And our meals were animated by a brilliant young sommelier. The hotel does not possess a pool, nor are rooms air-conditioned. Nonetheless, this is a hideaway of real distinction. Deluxe Room, \$510. Tel. (33) 3-80-49-02-29. Email: info@abbaye-dela-bussiere.com

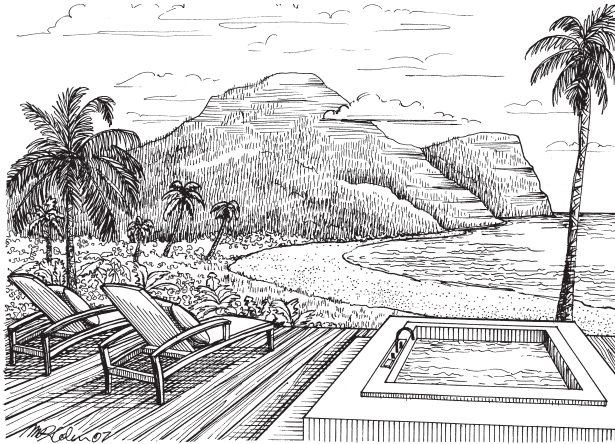


## AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND

### Capella Lodge

*Lord Howe Island, Australia*

LORD HOWE ISLAND LIES two hours by plane northeast of Sydney. The approach by air provides a stunning overview of the island's scarcely believable natural beauty. A crescent of land approximately six miles long by one mile wide, it is covered by a rain forest of ferns, mosses and orchids that extends to a shoreline ringed by white-



sand beaches. Offshore, a lagoon displays every color of a peacock's tail. And at its southern tip, the island rears upward in the twin spires of Mount Lidgbird and Mount Gower (2,870 feet).

Capella Lodge is perfectly situated, with a view of Mount Gower to leave even the worldliest traveler gasping. After a \$2 million refurbishment at the end of 2004, it now offers a chic and sophisticated beach-house ambience. (The property's renewal was supervised by James Baillie, who was previously responsible for the dramatic upgrades of Lizard and Bedarra islands, the two premier resorts on the Great Barrier Reef.) Bleached timbers, white shutters, wicker loungers, polished floors and splashy cushions all help to create an appealing contemporary style.

Capella has nine accommodations, of which the "Lidgbird Suite" is the most opulent, with a spacious wraparound deck, hot tub and spellbinding 270-degree view. We also enthusiastically recommend the duplex "Lagoon Suites" (especially #2). Baths are functional, with single vanities and walk-in monsoon showers.

An infinity-edge plunge pool is set into the deck right off the dining room. There, imaginative three-course dinners feature island produce and fish from the surrounding waters. (A meat alternative is always provided.) The wine list is short but excellent. At the

resort itself, the principal facility is a spa that offers a menu based on native flora and local basalt rocks. Otherwise, you can be as active or as indolent as you wish. Some people make the eight-hour climb to the top of Mount Gower, while others content themselves with a little snorkeling. The ideal time for a visit is December through February, which corresponds to summer in Sydney. Lodge Suite for two, \$1,085, breakfast, dinner, selected wines and airport transfers included. Lidgbird Suite, \$1,385. Tel. (61) 02-9918-4355. Email: capella@lordhowe.com

### Claremont Estate

*Waipara, New Zealand*

LOCATED AT WAIPARA, an hour's drive from the southern city of Christchurch, Claremont is set on a 2,400-acre working livestock farm surrounded by rugged hills, ancient forests and meandering streams. The estate itself is a wonderfully civilized enclave of lush lawns, stately trees and cheerful flower gardens. The house, built in 1866 and restored and modernized in 1999-2000, is a handsome two-story rough-hewn limestone structure with wide verandahs. Walking through the front door, you instantly receive an impression of refined but homey comfort. Guests have the use of two delightful living rooms, both filled with paintings and family photographs, along with a well-stocked library. Glass doors open onto shady vine-clad verandahs and sunny walled courtyards.

Each of the five suites is named for a different flower and is decorated in a traditional style with antique furniture, Oriental rugs and lovely floral fabrics. Large tiled baths offer walk-in showers and deep soaking tubs. We particularly recommend the upper-floor suites, as they afford wonderful views of the property.

Each evening, guests gather with owners Richard and Rosie Goord for drinks and canapés. Dinner is served at a big oak refectory table (though those who wish to dine privately may do so in the conservatory). Lamb and venison from the estate are accompanied by local Waipara wines. Our rack of lamb served with garden zucchini and mushroom risotto was superb. Many activities are within an easy drive. The local wineries are well worth visiting, and at Kaikoura, there is whale-watching year-round. The options for trout and salmon fishing are innumerable. Suite for two, \$585-\$730, depending on time of year, all meals, afternoon tea, beverages and the use of all lodge facilities included. Tel. (64) 3-314-7559. Email: relax@claremont-estate.com