

Save

# Take-off

**YOUR SUNDAY TRAVEL DOSSIER**

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SHOWCASE

Celebrating destination weddings and life milestones in Sri Lanka merges two key trends in the travel world: our love of holidaying with the extended family, and the turquoise-fringed shores of what's been dubbed the New Ball.

The Tasmanian-sized, teardrop-shaped island is a longstanding favourite with sun-starved Europeans, and fuelling the boom in Australian visitors is the resumption of direct flights between us and Sri Lanka after a 16-year pause. National carrier SriLankan

## Viva la villa vacation

flies direct between the capital, Colombo, to Melbourne, and is dropping hints of further links with Australia.

The walled old town of Galle on the sunny south coast has always been the island's top des res for sunseekers who like a historical hit: it's a busy little spot in peak season, from December to April, and again July to September. An hour east of Galle near the surfing nirvana of Unawatuna, the new beachfront Meda Gedara villa has seven bedrooms that sleep up to 18.

FIND

## Alice's time to shine

The Red Centre glows all the colours of the rainbow when Parrtjima (say par-CHee-ma) Indigenous light festival sparks up in Alice Springs from September 28 to October 7. Appropriately, the festival's name in local Arrernte language means "to shine" and is now in its third year and growing up.



The 10-day event maintains its light installations in Alice Springs Desert Park on the outskirts of the town and now also in

Todd Street Mall. Watch films screened every night of the festival, catch the local Tinkerbee Dancers and the music events are headlined by South Australian duo Electric Fields, singing in Pitjantjatjara and English.

Festivalgoers can meet artists coming from art centres across central Australia. The showpiece is seeing lights flood the West Macdonnell Ranges at night - ask the festival's director Rhonda Rhodes and lighting designer Richard Neville how they did it at one of the Knowledge program's forums. Admission free. See parrtjimaaustralia.com

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Coogee beach, 2016 - FXB99765



# BKI

## WHICH AIRPORT IS THAT?

This code is for the main airport of a state capital on the world's third-largest island. It was built by the Japanese Army during WWII, when the city was known as Jesselton. **The answer is on page 42**



Designed with active families in mind, when you're not racing crabs on the beach in front of the villa, there's a yoga shala (pavilion), cinema and the best way to hit the split-level pool is down the 20-metre water slide. Like most Sri Lankan villas, the rates include a housekeeping team and chef, and you can also opt to take fewer bedrooms. Stays at the villa cost from \$US940 a night, which works out at \$US135 a room a night in the low season. See [medagedara.com](http://medagedara.com)



### GEAR

## Power hungry

What do you mean, your phone doesn't match your portable charger? Melbourne digital tech company Cygnett knows it matters, which is why their new mini smartphone powerbank comes in rose gold. The 2500mAh charger measures just under 10 centimetres long and weighs 66 grams, so it slips easily into a clutch, but is big enough to fully charge your phone once, or to boost speakers or anything that charges by USB. Happily, the powerbank comes pre-charged, so you can rip it out of its packaging and power up with the supplied 10cm USB/micro-USB cable. A glittery LED display lets you know the battery's energy level, and you can turn it off to conserve power. It's the polar opposite of Cygnett's big boy, the 20,000mAh powerbank, which packs enough grunt to power a full laptop or tablet (or your phone 10 times), while remaining well under airlines' lithium battery size limits. InCharge 2500mAh powerbank costs \$19.95, ChargeUp Pro 20K costs \$149.95. See [cygnett.com](http://cygnett.com)



### EXPAT

## I live here ... Los Angeles



**WHO** Jac Hunt, co-founder and designer, Jac+ Jack. See [jacandjack.com](http://jacandjack.com)

**FROM** Bondi Beach, in Los Angeles for two years.

**SEE** Fredrick F Weismann Art Foundation is a house that shows an incredible contemporary collection in the context of someone's house and how they lived with their art. The underground museum has a bit of everything from gallery to performance space, meditation garden, sitting area and market. See [weismannfoundation.org](http://weismannfoundation.org)

**DO** We live very close to Runyon Canyon and Griffith Park, which have a multitude of trails and tracks to hike depending on mood, energy level and fitness. There are trails great for people-watching and overhearing the craziest Hollywood conversations, and then there are challenging trails for solitude and being close to nature.

**EAT** Walking into the Apple Pan is like stepping back in time. It opened in 1947 and remains the same today, from the decor (all 26 seats are red swivels at the counter) to the menu. It's a classic burger joint that serves hamburgers and sandwiches (I like the Hickory cheeseburger), sodas and fries. They serve daily baked pie for dessert. That's it, small, simple and delicious. 10801 West Pico Boulevard

**DRINK** My favourite bar is Sunset Tower: candlelit, piano, low key and often with someone very famous at the next table. Dimitri runs the place and is charming and always gives everyone the same service and feeling of being special. See [sunsettowerhotel.com](http://sunsettowerhotel.com)

**AVOID** Steer clear of the busy 101, take the alternate route offered by the GPS for a much more scenic and inspired view of LA.

Know an expat who's in the know? Contact [belinda.jackson@fairfaxmedia.com.au](mailto:belinda.jackson@fairfaxmedia.com.au)

### FLY

## Daytripping in Antarctica

Ice and aviation aficionados are gearing up for Antarctica's summer flyover season, with the first day trips by Antarctica Flights departing November 18.

The company, which is owned by touring group APT, kicks off its Antarctic season with one flight each from Sydney, Perth and Hobart, and two Melbourne flights including its New Year's Eve special, which sees 2019 in



from above the ice continent. Flight time is roughly four hours each way, with another four hours spent within the Antarctic region except for Hobart departures, which will first

fly via Melbourne to refuel the privately chartered Qantas 747s. Prices start from \$1199 for a middle seat in Economy, while window seats start at \$1999. All seats include meals and drinks, maps and icy documentaries as well as expert commentary from researchers and expedition leaders. Earlybirds note: the group has also announced its first 2019 departure dates next November. See [antarcticflights.com.au](http://antarcticflights.com.au)



## Get ready to tiptoe through the tulips this Spring!

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