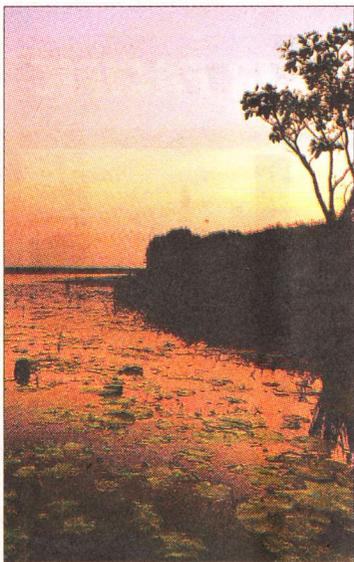
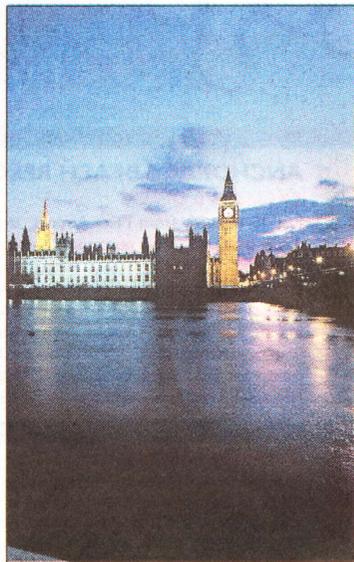


Deals



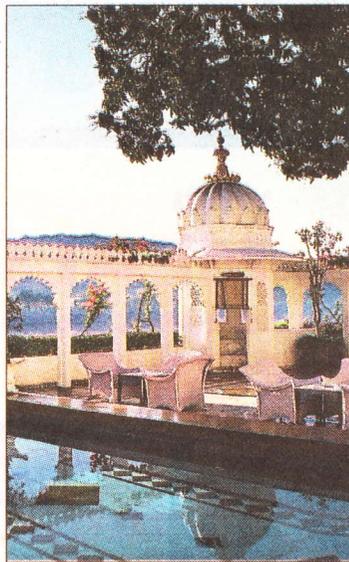
> UNDER \$1000

KAKADU'S wet season tends to start in late November so now is a great time to explore before road closures make some areas unreachable. A four-day Kakadu, Katherine and Litchfield camping safari will take you across stunning landscapes. Connections offers discounted, all-inclusive Top End safaris until December. They include hotel pick-up in Darwin, tents with beds, meals, crocodile spotting, canoe or cruise on Katherine Gorge, overnight stay at a cattle station and swimming by waterfalls. Prices start at \$588, twin share, for guests who book and travel within seven days; \$672 twin share for guests who book and travel within 14 days. See connections.travel.



> UNDER \$2000

LONDON is a gap-year favourite for travellers who combine pulling beers with backpacking. However, visa changes from this month mean young Australians will have to have a minimum of \$3900 in their bank accounts to be given a working-holiday visa. Knowing how expensive accommodation can be when you arrive, STA Travel has joined forces with leading airlines to fly Sydney to London from just \$1714 (sale and travel periods apply). Base yourself at the home of Big Ben without the big price tag; STA's dorm-stay near funky Notting Hill includes breakfast and costs from \$9 a night. The fly-and-stay offer is valid to March 31. Phone 134 782, see statravel.com.au.



> UNDER \$5000

CLIMB aboard the Palace on Wheels for a seven-night Indian rail adventure that includes spotting tigers while on safari and exploring the Taj Mahal. Departing Delhi on Wednesdays between January and April 2009, travellers discover India in style with air-conditioned salons, a choice of restaurants, bar and lounge. A camel ride in the sand dunes of Jaisalmer, lunch at the famous Lake Palace Hotel in Udaipur and spotting tigers in the Ranthambore National Park are in the \$3353 per-person, twin-share price, as are all meals on board the train, sightseeing tours and coach travel. For more details, phone Flight Centre on 131 600 or see flightcentre.com.au.



> BLOW THE BUDGET

EMERALD Valley Villa is a private, eco-friendly estate in the Byron Bay hinterland. It runs on green power, has a helicopter landing pad, a Hollywood guest list and private springwater lake. The concierge shows guests to the outdoor spa, indoor steam room and massage rooms. The villa sleeps eight, has a state-of-the-art kitchen, broadband wireless internet, four bedrooms, marble bathrooms, a jacuzzi and views. It's a 40-minute drive from either Coolangatta airport or Ballina airport. The high-season fee is normally from \$2000 a night but during next year's low season (April to November) it's available from \$1000 a night. See emeraldvalleyvilla.com.

CRUISE

EMINENT historian Professor Geoffrey Blainey will host lectures during a 16-day Singapore-to-Sydney Silver Whisper cruise, departing December 4 and arriving in Sydney on December 20. All-inclusive, cruise-only fares start from \$US8706 per person (\$13,060) for double occupancy, including taxes. Meanwhile, former British ambassador Richard Tallboys will host lectures aboard Silver Whisper's 14-day Auckland-to-Sydney cruise departing January 4, 2009, and the 18-day Sydney-to-Hong Kong voyage departing January 18. Phone 9255 0600 or 1300 306 872, or see silversea.com.

