

## Into the wild **Sydney**

Preface Food stylist and author Donna Hay seeks joy and adventure in an enticing 'last meal' to savour.

Writer Carli Ratcliff

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"Food has always been important to me. Profile When I was a child I'd spend holidays with my grandparents. We'd be in the vegetable garden in the morning and in the afternoon we'd pod peas or string the beans together. I am the youngest of three girls, which was great because as the youngest you get to do adventurous things above your age.

I'd like my last meal to be theatrical; it needs to be about much more than the food. I'd want it to be an adventure and a long one; a lunch to ensure that we'd have plenty of time. So I'd start with a flight in a seaplane. I'd pile my two sons and my friends in. The planes dock at Rose Bay in Sydney and fly across the harbour and the city, along the coastline. The flight takes you over sea cliffs and past beaches to a spot called Berowra Waters, nestled in the bush.

The restaurant is legendary. It is only accessible by water. It has been the starting ground for nearly every great Sydney chef; they've all cooked here. Brian Geraghty is the current chef and owner, with his partner Victoria who runs the floor. He's young and his menu is exciting with lots of intriguing, delicious, pretty courses, beautifully plated. It is the perfect How to get there menu for a long, lingering lunch.

I love the isolation here. The water, a wall of bush in front of you; it's incredibly peaceful. That said, the fact that it's so isolated means we could make plenty of noise and be as badly behaved as we

Sydneysider, magazine editor, food stylist and television presenter Donna Hav's cookbooks have sold more than 4.5 million copies worldwide and have been translated into nine languages. Hay's knack for creating visually appealing dishes and sumptuous-but-simple recipes has inspired a new generation of chefs and food editors around the world.

## Venue

Set in bush land by the Hawkesbury River - a tributary of Svdnev Harbour - the Berowra Waters Inn was built in the 1920s before being revamped by the Pritzker Prize winning Australian architect Glenn Murcutt in the 1970s. The restaurant can only be accessed by seaplane, boat or the restaurant's private ferry. The pilgrimage has become a popular one since acclaimed chef and owner Brian Geraghty took over in 2012. berowrawatersinn.com

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- beetroot sorbet 08 Confit ocean trout Service with a smile A goanna lizard keeps an eve on the diners

Rice pudding

11 Readying for service

Arriving by seaplane

Glenn Murcutt-designed

Berowra Waters Inn

'Cheesecake' with

02 Donna Hay

Plating up

Riverside dining

The day's menu Dining room





Recipe	smoke essence. Bring to the boil.
Ocean trout, smoked milk, dashi and wild rice Serves 10 Ingredients 1kg ocean trout fillet, pin	Once boiled add mixture to tray and leave to set in a fridge Once set, add to blender and mix until smooth.
boned and skinned 500g salt 400g sugar 2 star anise 1 tsp coriander seeds 1 ttr milk 20g wakame (edible seaweed) 5 fresh shiso leaves 5 lemons	For lemon purée, thinly slice lemons and place in a pan of cold water. Bring to the boil. Once boiled, strain and place back into a cold pot of water and reboil. Repeat five times.
20g dashi powder (Japanese cooking stock) 1ltr olive oil 10g agar agar	Add lemons to a blender and blitz with the icing sugar.
Smoke essence 50ml mirin (rice wine) 300g icing sugar 50g wild rice The method	Add 150ml of oil and wild rice to a tall pan. Bake in oven for abou 30 seconds at 190C until cooked then pound lightly in a pestle and mortar.
<ul> <li>For fish, cut fillet into 100g portions.</li> <li>Toast and crush coriander seeds and star anise. Add salt</li> </ul>	Bring the dashi powder and 500ml of water to the boil and then strain through a coffee filter.
and sugar to the mix. Cover the fish with the salt-sugar-spice mixture and leave	<ul> <li>Soak the wakame in the mirin.</li> <li>To finish, add milk to</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>for 1 hour. Rinse and pat dry.</li> <li>Poach the fish in 850ml of oil for 8 minutes at 60C. Remove and leave to cool.</li> <li>In a separate pot, add milk, agar agar, and four drops of</li> </ul>	To initial, add mink to serving bowl and top with the trout. Spoon over the crushed rice and garnish with lemon purée, wakame and shiso leaves. Add dashi broth and serve.
At I	













Tasting plates: scallops, corn and foie gras; truffle and kipfler tortellini: trout. dashi and smoked milk: duck. grapes and parsnip; beef, onions and tarragon; beetroot and goat's cheese. To finish:

Menu

rice pudding.

To drink:

To eat:

Champagne: non-vintage Gosset Excellence Brut from Ay. Dessert wine: non-vintage Jacoulot Ratafia de Bouraoane, Buraundy A glass of sparkling water.

liked. I'm quite sure all of my friends would jump off the jetty into the water.

It is hard to believe that the magazine [called Donna Hay] is 10 years old. I never really had a full-time job until we started it. I was freelancing, creating about 30 pages of food a month for Marie Claire, as well as cookbooks. It wasn't glamorous. I spent years figuring out ways to make food look great, from stopping a pea from wrinkling to fluffing ice cream in an ice cream van for so long that my nose froze. Those little challenges gave me the discipline I needed. I didn't know, until then, that I could be precise, that I had enough attention to detail to look through 700 ice cream cones to find the perfect one.

When I was in my early twenties I went to Paris for the first time. Every day I'd go out for lunch and in the evening I'd have just a crêpe. I'd watch the crêpe vendors fold them. Some rolled the crêpe, some folded it into a square, others made the crêpe a triangle. I had my epiphany there: I needed to find ways to make familiar ingredients look different on a plate.

I looked elsewhere to find ways to do that. Working with editors with different motivations helped. Jane Roarty, fashion and style editor on Marie Claire in those days, would encourage me to research what was happening in fashion, to be inspired by colours and textures. That was long before food was about fashion.

I started using colour: blue – because most food is brown - and white, because I love the freshness of it. Lots of white, lots of light and just great ingredients on a plate with minimal props. It became my style.

Often when I travel people tell me that my books somehow reflect Australia. I think that is the light. Last winter I was promoting my book in Europe and I didn't see the sun for nine days. I wondered why I was feeling odd. In Australia we never go for nine days without seeing the sun." — (M)