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## 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

### Photographer

Terence Chin

"Food has always been important to me. 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 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



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## Profile

Sydneysider, magazine editor, food stylist and television presenter Donna Hay'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 Sydney 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](http://berowrawatersinn.com)

## How to get there

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+61 (0)2 9388 1978  
[seaplanes.com.au](http://seaplanes.com.au)



- 01 Arriving by seaplane
- 02 Donna Hay
- 03 Plating up
- 04 Riverside dining
- 05 Glenn Murcutt-designed Berowra Waters Inn
- 06 Rice pudding
- 07 'Cheesecake' with beetroot sorbet
- 08 Confit ocean trout
- 09 Service with a smile
- 10 A goanna lizard keeps an eye on the diners
- 11 Ready for service
- 12 The day's menu
- 13 Dining room



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## Recipe

### Ocean trout, smoked milk, dashi and wild rice

Serves 10

#### Ingredients

1kg ocean trout fillet, pin boned and skinned  
500g salt  
400g sugar  
2 star anise  
1 tsp coriander seeds  
1ltr milk  
20g wakame (edible seaweed)  
5 fresh shiso leaves  
5 lemons  
20g dashi powder (Japanese cooking stock)  
1ltr olive oil  
10g agar agar  
Smoke essence  
50ml mirin (rice wine)  
300g icing sugar  
50g wild rice

#### The method

- 1 For fish, cut fillet into 100g portions.
- 2 Toast and crush coriander seeds and star anise. Add salt and sugar to the mix. Cover the fish with the salt-sugar-spice mixture and leave for 1 hour. Rinse and pat dry.
- 3 Poach the fish in 850ml of oil for 8 minutes at 60C. Remove and leave to cool.
- 4 In a separate pot, add milk, agar agar, and four drops of

smoke essence. Bring to the boil.

- 5 Once boiled add mixture to tray and leave to set in a fridge. Once set, add to blender and mix until smooth.

- 6 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.

- 7 Add lemons to a blender and blitz with the icing sugar.

- 8 Add 150ml of oil and wild rice to a tall pan. Bake in oven for about 30 seconds at 190C until cooked then pound lightly in a pestle and mortar.

- 9 Bring the dashi powder and 500ml of water to the boil and then strain through a coffee filter.

- 10 Soak the wakame in the mirin.

- 11 To finish, add milk 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.



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## Menu

### To eat:

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: rice pudding.

### To drink:

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



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