

Not too big, not too small, these holiday houses from coast to countryside are just right. By **Alexandra Carlton**.



L I K E H O M E

NSW



CLASSIC BEACH BREAK

1. Beach House, Gerroa

Create your own holiday ritual with a morning coffee and avocado toast on the broad Hamptons-style deck of this fresh and airy four-bedroom property (opposite, above and right) on the Gerroa headland, 130 kilometres south of Sydney. Then race to see who can be first downstairs to leap straight into the ocean. Paddleboards, boogie boards and surfboards are provided and owners Greg and Bernadette Cooper can also arrange horse riding on the beach through South Coast Experiences (southcoastexperiences.net.au). Want to wind down after a day of full-throttle excitement? Set up Netflix for the kids while adults pour a glass of local Shoalhaven wine – Cupitts and Cambewarra Estate are the picks – in the outdoor hot tub. beachhousegerroa.com.au

Abbie Melle, Julian Kingma



COUNTRY-MEETS-COASTAL

2. Mango Tree Cottage, Pottsville

Just 25 minutes from Byron Bay, this low-key rural hideaway sits on rich green farmland and sleeps six. Kids under 16 stay free and they'll be up early each day to collect eggs. It's just a short drive to the burgeoning food scene of Brunswick Heads, where they can hunt for tiny houses along the Brunswick Heads Fairy Trail. mangotreecottage.com.au

OCEANFRONT LUXURY

3. Sapphire Seas Beach House, Coffs Harbour

Quarantine any rowdiness into one of the carefully separated living areas of this chic four-bedroom property just five minutes from the centre of Coffs Harbour. Or you can bring the whole family together – it sleeps up to 11 – in the beachfront pool, heated spa or on the sand that's just a few steps away. sapphireseasbeachhouse.com.au

WINE-REGION GETAWAY

4. Casa Dolce, Orange

The NSW Central West (left) is in bloom right now and this quaint three-bedroom cottage just a short walk to Orange's café scene is well placed for you to admire the leafy streetscape on the way. Kids can tire themselves out in the huge enclosed yard and parents will love the breakfast hamper and regional wine on arrival. cottagesinorange.com

CHIC SECLUSION

5. Elouera Farm, Tallong

A fire pit, huge gourmet kitchen and views across Morton National Park make this modern, Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired barn in the Southern Tablelands one of NSW's most desirable rural properties. The kids can befriend the goats and help feed the neighbouring cattle. The four bedrooms comfortably sleep nine and the family dog is also welcome. qantas.com.au/elouera-farm-nsw

VICTORIA

BRING THE EXTENDED CLAN

6. Eagle Wings Rise, The Grampians

There's a trampoline, table tennis, an all-ages golf driving range with practice hole and vast paddocks dotted with emus and kangaroos grazing at dawn and dusk. Set on 20 hectares, this six-bedroom country estate – including three sets of bunk beds, it sleeps up to 14 – may sound like paradise for children but it's equally magical for adults. There's a gourmet kitchen stocked with breakfast provisions, an open fireplace, reverse-cycle air conditioning and easy access to nature walks, wineries and restaurants. The two separate sleeping wings means late-night whispers won't disturb anyone who's fully immersed in the idyllic peace of the countryside.

eaglewingsrise.com.au

FAMILY HIDEAWAY

9. Charleson Farm, Great Ocean Road

If a games room with Xbox, table soccer and table tennis sounds like it would drive everyone crazy with the noise, the walls of this spacious five-bedroom property on 40 hectares of Victoria's Surf Coast are engineered to contain every thump and giggle. With breathe-it-all-in bushland and farm views, a pool and fire pit, this is a getaway you'll re-book for next year before you even leave.

charlesonfarm.com.au

VILLAGE VIBE

10. The Manse on Ebden, Kyneton

Bedrooms, space and amenities might top the list for most families looking for a holiday home – and this renovated five-bedroom retreat ticks those boxes. But nearby distractions are just as crucial and the architect-designed playground inside the Kyneton Botanical Gardens – think rope course, splash zone, cubby houses and ride-on tractors – is one of those rare gems.

flophouse.com.au



WATERFRONT WONDER

7. Gippsland Lakehouse, Paynesville

The three-storey structure of this four-bedroom lakefront home delivers wall-to-wall water views from almost every room. But more importantly for little ones, the entertaining deck on the middle level is wholly enclosed so no-one can wander unaccompanied down to the water (above).

gippslandlakehouse.com.au

A TOUCH OF COOL

8. Cape Cabin, Phillip Island

Five bedrooms furnished with queens, bunks and even child-sized daybeds mean there's a just-right room for every-sized bear and Goldilocks in your extended family. Downstairs there's a kid-friendly rumpus room with beanbags and Netflix and for adults there's Proud Mary coffee, custom-made Soap Club toiletries and a GHD hair straightener.

qantas.com.au/cape-cabin-vic



Hilary Walker

QUEENSLAND

BEACHSIDE INDULGENCE

11. Deluxe on Water, Gold Coast

If the idea of catering for your whole tribe in an unfamiliar kitchen makes you want to cancel your holiday and stay home, a private chef can be arranged at this Broadbeach beauty upon request. And if that extravagance makes you feel a little too much like a Kardashians, at the very least your concierge can arrange for the gourmet fridge to be stocked with everything you need for your stay before you arrive. The house features five bedrooms, four bathrooms, a swimming pool, a cubby house and even a cinema room. And if you need a reason to prod the family out the door, Surfers Paradise is only a 10-minute drive away and the Gold Coast theme parks are just 30 minutes by car.

eliteholidayhomes.com.au



NAUTICAL STYLE

14. Poinciana House, Noosa

The beachy blues and whites of this fresh Sunshine Coast home (above) let you know you're on holiday the second you throw your suitcases down. The fun bunk beds in one room and neat twin beds in another make sure the kids are catered for, whereas the queen and king rooms take care of the adults (it accommodates 10 in total). Keep packing to a minimum – there's a full-sized laundry.

qantas.com.au/poinciana-house-noosa

TROPICAL SECLUSION

12. Coconut Beach House, Cape Tribulation

The airy, open-plan design of this luxury three-bedroom rainforest home just 500 metres from the beach is best suited to a family with teens who don't need too much supervision. But get them to download their entertainment beforehand as it's the wild setting – not the satellite-fed wi-fi – that's the real hero here.

coconutbeachhousecapetrib.com

THE CHARM OF A FARM

13. Eumundi Dairy, Sunshine Coast Hinterland

Two individual properties sit on this sleepy, cattle-flanked hideaway – The Dairy, with its polished concrete floors and wood-fired pizza oven, sleeps eight and its neighbouring Queenslander, The Homestead, sleeps six. One would be enough for a small family or book them both if you want to bring along grandparents and cousins.

eumundidairy.com.au

TASMANIA

APPLE-ISLE FUN

15. The Lodge at Adventure Bay Retreat, Bruny Island

Rugged Bruny Island has an air of *Robinson Crusoe* adventure, perfect for little explorers keen to let their imaginations bound through the bush like a wallaby. Two rooms at this retreat (below) have king-sized beds – one has an ensuite with a forest-facing stone bath – and another room has a double and bunks. There's even a kids' nook and an outdoor playground. Host Jan Glover runs Feast and Fossick Tasmania (feastfossicktasmania.com.au) and can customise a culinary tour for up to 10 at a pace to suit any age, with stops at child-friendly businesses such as Bruny Island Premium Wines (brunyislandwine.com).
hotel.qantas.com.au/adventurebayretreat



BEACHFRONT IDYLL

16. Awesome Beach House, Bicheno

The three decks of this three-bedroom waterfront property (above) mean there's always somewhere that catches the sun and the outdoor shower and bathtub built into the eastern deck mean you can order the kids to stay outside until they've washed off every bit of sand. Book with Bicheno Penguin Tours (bichenopenguin.tours.com.au) to see the town's little penguins waddle back to their homes.
awesomebeachhouse.com.au

SPECTACULAR VIEWS

17. Magnolia House, Launceston

It's a little out of town but the pay-offs of this four-bedroom bolthole are the dramatic views of Ben Lomond Mountain and the walk to Cataract Gorge's kid-friendly swimming pool, chairlift and friendly marsupials and peacocks.
qantas.com.au/magnolia-house-tas

WILDERNESS AT YOUR DOORSTEP

18. USSco House, Strahan

Strahan is the gateway to the untamed beauty of the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park and the West Coast Wilderness Railway – a no-brainer for anyone who's train-obsessed. But the picturesque waterfront hamlet of Strahan is also full of galleries and restaurants that make it a destination in itself. This grand Victorian homestead, which sleeps seven in four bedrooms, is a dream blend of country charm and convenience and has views all the way out to the harbour.
qantas.com.au/ussco-house-tas



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

BRING THE WHOLE GANG

19. Middle River Beach Houses (East and West), Kangaroo Island

It can take some planning but a multi-generational escape with everyone from great-grandma to the tiniest newborn is one of those once-in-a-lifetime affairs that bonds a family in a way nothing else can. The Middle River Beach Houses sleep 16 in two separate lodgings connected by a common laundry. Days can be spent enjoying the natural surrounds and each other's company but with the variety of wildlife on this spectacular island you can take the whole troop to see different animals every day, from birds of prey at the Raptor Domain to the sea-lion colony of Seal Bay. qantas.com.au/middle-river-beach-sa

GOURMET GETAWAY

20. Oak Nest Luxury Retreat, Adelaide Hills

Five bedrooms, a reclaimed timber kitchen and huge 10-seater table (with extra seating at the bench and a highchair available on request) make eating and drinking the centrepiece of this striking and modern home. You can also drive to many of the region's most popular wineries (Golding Wines, Bird in Hand, Howard Vineyard) in less than 15 minutes. theoaknest.com.au



WINE-COUNTRY ESCAPE

21. Mill Cottage, Goolwa

A family-friendly property doesn't have to mean plastic furniture and bright design. This elegant, thoughtfully renovated classic (above and right) on the Fleurieu Peninsula has everything needed for a small group with kids – one room has two single beds; all three bedrooms have TVs with Netflix – but its tasteful neutral palette and upscale amenities (Bose speakers, a Nespresso machine) guarantee adults can enjoy their downtime, too. There are nearby treats for every age group including the historic Cockle Train ride, wineries and restaurants. millestate.com.au



SWEEPING SEA VIEWS

22. Southern Ocean Lookout, Coffin Bay

The owners of this classic two-storey beachside three bedder set on 50 hectares of bushland want visitors to know that there's much more to the region around Port Lincoln than shark-cage diving and tuna. Nearby there are also calm, sheltered beaches (left) for paddling, access to adventurous four-wheel-drive tours and top-notch fishing. Kangaroos, emus and eagles can also be spotted from the house's broad open-air decks. southernoceanlookout.com.au



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

COUNTRYSIDE RETREAT

23. Sophie's Vineyard, Yallingup

Wrapped around a wide green lawn and with a pool that boasts views of the vineyards, this hyper-modern home is divided into two separate wings that sleep up to 12 and are joined by an entertaining space so multiple families can have their own halves of the house or you can usher the kids to one side, adults to the other. Cots and high chairs are provided and there's also a games room and second TV area for when it's time to wind down. Spend a day getting lost and found at Yallingup Maze (yallingupmaze.com.au) and be sure to take advantage of having Margaret River's renowned wine and produce at your doorstep. exclusiveescapes.com.au

ROOM TO MOVE

24. 17 Ningaloo St, Exmouth

The semi-enclosed deck area of this four bedroom abode has sofas to spread out on while keeping an ear out for the kids playing in the garden below. That's if they've got any energy left after hours spent exploring the Coral Coast's many wonders both above and below the water, just a short drive away. qantas.com.au/17-ningaloo-st-wa



SEASIDE ADVENTURES

25. Breaksea, Albany

Sit the crew down for dinner at this 11-person capacity beach house (above) and you'll notice the dining table has been inlaid with a map of what you can see right outside the window; a fascinating way to help the kids learn about local landmarks including historic Breaksea Island and the preserved whaling station at Discovery Bay. Frenchman Bay beach is directly accessible via the stairway from the garden and you're just a 20-minute drive from the centre of Albany. privateproperties.com.au

GATHER A GROUP

26. Koolinda, Broome

This practical and pretty holiday home sleeps 16 people in total so it's ideal when you're holidaying with the entire brood. The breathtaking expanse of Cable Beach (below) is only 10 minutes away and with no immediate neighbours your clan's celebrations won't disturb anyone. koolinda.com.au



Matthew Moyes, Michael Fairbairn

NORTHERN TERRITORY

OUTBACK INNOVATION

27. The Rozak House, Lake Bennett

An architectural masterpiece, the Rozak House lies around an hour's drive south of Darwin. It's entirely off-grid and sustainable and insect screens replace most of the external walls so you feel truly immersed in the landscape. The home is best suited to families with older kids and divided into three pavilions – two for sleeping (it takes up to six) and one for living. The owners encourage you to spend a night or two in a hammock instead of a bed – the most authentic way to sleep through a hot Territory night.

qantas.com.au/rozak-house-nt



EASY WATERFRONT LIVING

28. Drift, Darwin

Five bedrooms, three bathrooms, a pool, lush gardens and a stroll to tacos or Thai dishes from the food trucks at the Nightcliff foreshore (above) make this luxury waterfront villa (left) by the Arafura Sea a full family holiday in one spot. Tiled living spaces keep things cool and the downstairs kids' retreat includes a snooker table and oversized smart TV. On Sundays, wander over to Nightcliff Markets to browse stalls selling clothes, gifts and souvenirs then head back for a sundowner – the home's west-facing position will guarantee a drink at sunset becomes an evening ritual.

qantas.com.au/drift-nightcliff-nt