

#TravelGoals 2017: Food, drink and nightlife pilgrimages for the GQ man

Where to get it up in Thailand (no, not that)

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GUSSY UP FOR DINNER IN AUSTRALIA



Modern Australian cuisine is known for its diversity: born as a result of the continent's multicultural immigrant population. "But the real focus is on celebrating produce," says celebrity chef and restaurateur Sarah Todd, who runs Antares in Goa. "You'll see this in Attica in Melbourne, a three-hatted restaurant (between one to three Chef Hats are awarded to outstanding restaurants in Australia), where one of the courses is half a piece of cabbage, slow-cooked and served with a duck confit jus. It's to die for. At Saint Crispin, also a hatted restaurant in Melbourne, order the Western Plains pork jowl and fillet, white pudding, zucchini flower and mustard.

In Sydney at **Chiswick**, former MasterChef judge Matt Moran serves lamb, which his family raises on their farm, with vegetables grown in his on-site kitchen garden." The best part: it's all beautifully plated, without being fussy, with earthy, unexpected flavours to tease your palate.

GET FED UP IN SRI LANKA



Last September, I married my girlfriend in a villa in Mirissa, surrounded by a small group of friends and family who'd flown in from across the world. Many of them were chefs who'd worked in the kitchens of Michelin-starred restaurants in America. Which meant the culinary stakes were high. And Sri Lanka didn't disappoint.

In Colombo, try the fluffy rice hoppers served up by most street vendors, and sample the fiery curries at Ministry of Crab. If you want to avoid tourist attractions completely, get a reservation at Nihonbashi for the freshest sushi in town. For a laid-back candlelit dinner, book a table at the sexy Gallery Café.

From the capital, we made our way down south to Galle and Mirissa, for sunshine and more seafood. Grab lunch at the Cloisenberg Hotel, a heritage structure built in the 1860s, followed by a drink by its infinity pool at Luna Terrace, which overlooks the UNESCO heritage-listed Galle Fort and Rumassala Mountain. While I'm usually not a fan of buffets, The Cloisenberg blew our minds with its array of sambals and curries. The seafood and produce in Mirissa were exceptional. We had a fully equipped (depending on who you asked) kitchen and extra hands on deck. After scouring the market for fresh produce the day before, my friends and I were able to source beautiful crabs, fish and squid directly from the docks and prepare them for our wedding dinner that night. If you don't feel like rigging an open fire grill and using palm leaves as a cooking tool, you can always go to any of the beachside restaurants and enjoy the fresh catch of the day.

Your next stop is the Amba Estate farmstay, outside Ella. Here, you can learn how to harvest the tea that used to be served at Noma, before it closed last year. Tea not your thing? Drive down to Kandy for juicy burgers at Licensed to Grill, which only comes to life at night, at George E De Silva Park in the City Centre. Breakfast the next day should be on the patio of the OZO Hotel. Watch your food though – I had a monkey with impeccable taste steal a doughnut from my plate.