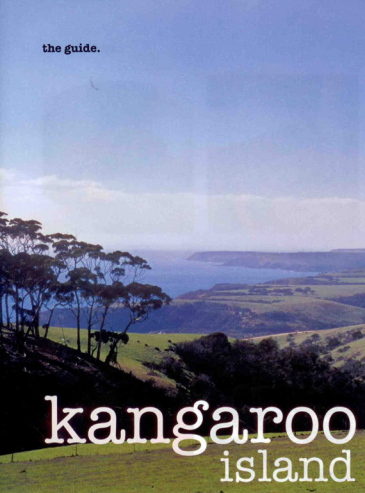


the guide.



Smoked salmon stack at Kangaroo Island Wilderness Retreat. Clockwise from left: the view towards Snelling Beach; Peter Davis of Island Beehive; peticans at Kingscote; the Cape du Couedic Lighthouse at Flinders Chase National Park; Sunset Winery's cheese plate; king crab at Fergusons; Fish at Penneshaw; Clifford's Honey Farm produce.

kangaroo island



Wildlife is the main attraction on Kangaroo Island, but as Caroline McConnachie discovers, this unspoilt isle off the coast of South Australia is also home to a growing food scene.

WORDS CAROLINE MCCONNACHIE PHOTOGRAPHY CATHERINE SUTHERLAND

Until recently, outsiders were a rarity on Kangaroo Island, a beautiful oasis in the chilly seas off South Australia. Without distractions, locals spent their days tending pastures or languidly casting out a line.

Their quiet dream didn't last. Inquisitive mainlanders, packing their sunscreen, began to set sail for this oceanic outpost, as did international tourists keen on encounters with cute hopping creatures. And what they saw inspired more to come.

Remoteness and a protective instinct have kept the isle pristine and its bounty exceptional. It has been a Ligurian bee sanctuary since the 1880s; the terrain is fox free, so chickens roam at large; the coastline is unspoiled, making it perfect for shellfish, seafood and boogie boards; and wildlife appears in numbers unseen on the continent – so watch out when driving!

Lately the focus has turned towards eating out, as evident in the smorgasbord of

new food projects the Island boasts. Think farm cafes, seafood-and-sashimi nights and vineyards. And, while some are admittedly on a steep-ish learning curve, many come with much experience.

The locals were thrilled to win best Australian food region in the *Vogue Entertaining+Travel* 2007 Produce Awards. It will no doubt spur them on to achieve even greater things, making this an exciting place to watch.