



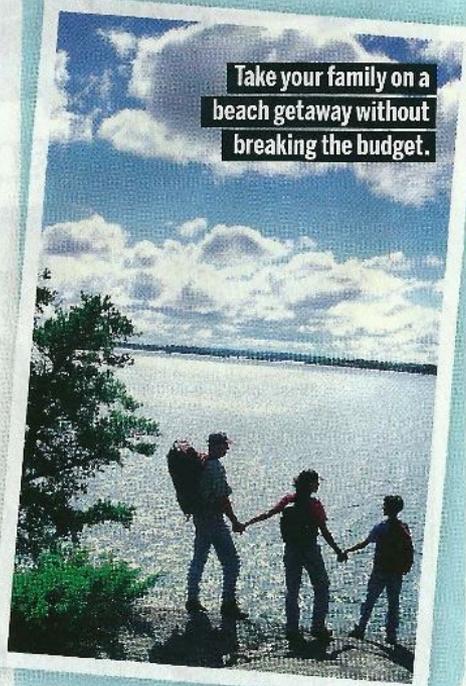
## Ask Catriona

**Q** We're on a tight budget but would still like to take a family holiday. Can you suggest some accommodation options which won't blow the budget?  
*Amrita, Nowra, NSW*

**A** Well, Amrita, what if I told you that you could pack the kids in the car, drive out of town and spend a week at the beach without having to pay for accommodation? Home swapping is back in vogue, and you can take part by simply registering your house online and then negotiating a swap. Check out [www.homeexchange.com.au](http://www.homeexchange.com.au) for more information.

Another alternative is backpacking ... VIP style. VIP Backpackers have some incredible properties around the country at competitive prices and you'll be surprised to find that it's not all dorm rooms and shared bathrooms – many places are ideal for families. Head to [www.vipbackpackers.com](http://www.vipbackpackers.com) to find out all about it.

Bon voyage!



Take your family on a beach getaway without breaking the budget.

### Go online

For Valentine's Day gift ideas, head to ...  
[www.womansday.com.au](http://www.womansday.com.au)



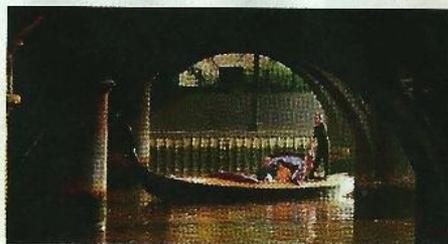
# High romance

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, we discover some romantic experiences to really wow your loved one



## TRUE HEART

No visit to the Whitsundays is complete without a flight over Heart Reef – a coral reef formed naturally in a unique heart shape that's visible only from the air. It's no wonder more than 100 proposals a year take place mid-flight. Hamilton Island Aviation offers 10-minute scenic flights over Heart Reef for \$99 per person. Visit [www.avta.com.au](http://www.avta.com.au)



## THAT'S AMORE

You don't have to travel all the way to Venice for a serenaded ride in an Italian gondola. Venice on the Yarra River offers the experience of a traditional gondola ride, in the heart of Melbourne. Valentine's Day packages cost \$330 for up to four people, and include a one-hour cruise, a bottle of sparkling wine, gift-wrapped chocolates and a single rose. Head to [www.veniceontheyarra.com.au](http://www.veniceontheyarra.com.au)



## UP, UP AND AWAY

Love is in the air ... literally! There are few things more romantic than drifting across the landscape in the oldest form of air transport – the hot-air balloon – clutching a glass of champagne and looking lovingly into your partner's eyes. So much so, that the owner and chief pilot of Balloon Aloft, Graeme Scaife, says there are more than 50 proposals mid-air each year in Sydney and the Hunter Valley alone. Balloon flights are available in all Australian capital cities, with Balloon Aloft offering rides over the spectacular rural landscape of the NSW Hunter Valley and the Gold Coast, as well as Sydney and Canberra. Flights start at \$280 per person. For more information, visit [www.balloonaloft.com.au](http://www.balloonaloft.com.au)

## HOT DEAL!

To celebrate its 30th anniversary, Balloon Aloft is offering *Woman's Day* readers 10 per cent off weekday and weekend flights. To take advantage of this offer, simply mention *Woman's Day* when you make your booking on 1800 028 568.