

History lesson

The Henry Jones Art Hotel is right at the centre of the action on the Hobart waterfront

Story ROSE INNES



Visiting the Henry Jones Art Hotel in the heart of Hobart is like reading a love letter to the history, culture and beauty of Tasmania.

The hotel, with its innovative design, has been created from a row of former warehouses of the IXL jam empire, owned by Sir Henry Jones, dating from the early 19th century and featuring grand beams of rough-hewn timber and hand-cut stone walls.

Part of the state's story is told through the hundreds of beautiful artworks on the walls of this intimate art hotel, the first-of-its-kind in Tasmania, but they are not the only gorgeous thing about it.

The boutique hotel, with no two rooms the same, sits right on the Hobart

waterfront, and guests who choose to book a Deluxe Spa Harbour View Room will wake up to the dreamy view of crystal blue water and the boats moored at its edges, so picturesque that the window view is like an artwork in itself.

A complimentary art history tour through the hotel is offered to guests who are able to sip on a glass of Champagne as they are walked through the line-up of works including prestigious paintings by John Glover – a successful British artist who started a new life in Tasmania in the 1830s – as well as those of professional and emerging artists.

Despite the hotel's 56 rooms and suites, restaurants and bar, it has an intimate feel.

From cosy fires, to being able to meet some of the artists visiting in person, to

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cocktails that literally catch fire and melt in your mouth from the drinks specialists at the hotel's IXL Long Bar, guests are made to feel right at home.

The hotel – celebrating its 20th birthday this year – seems much more than a “hotel” because while there's no doubt its five star rating is well-deserved,

the property is simply so much more than what the term suggests.

The Henry Jones has been created in one of Tasmania's most significant industrial heritage sites, with its own all-day cafe Jam Packed, a restaurant and bar.

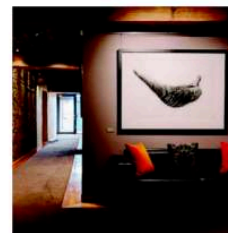
Described as a tourist attraction in its own right, the hotel's Landscape Restaurant and Grill, which takes its name from John Glover's paintings that capture life in 19th-century Tasmania, has a menu that showcases the work of the asado grill, including steak from almost all Tasmanian producers that is exceptional.

The eye fillet is stunning and leaves a smooth yet smoky flavour with every bite.

The restaurant has a varied selection of sides to complement the beef including duck fat pink eye potatoes with rosemary



Hobart's waterfront at twilight; Henry Jones Art Hotel has been created from a row of former IXL jam warehouses dating from the early 19th century; artworks adorn the walls; and the intimate interiors feature rough-hewn beams and innovative design.



and garlic that team perfectly with the sauces, including a highly recommended peppercorn and cognac or the cabernet jus.

After my visit to the restaurant I found myself asking if I had ever had real steak before this experience.

With the meat cooked over the coals of the wood-fired grill and with customer service like no other this restaurant is really in a class of its own.

But if steak isn't your thing, the menu also has a gorgeous selection of seafood.

And if you want to take a step outside the hotel, many of the key attractions in the Tasmanian capital are in walking distance, including Henry Jones's sister hotel Macq OI.

This innovative hotel has a fossil

collection that includes a full-sized cave bear and an archway as you walk in to simulate the feeling of getting on and off a ship.

It's an ode to the history of Tasmania, or Van Diemen's Land, the first European name for Tasmania given by Dutch explorer Abel Tasman in the 1640s.

The Macq OI Hotel is where guests meet from both hotels to begin the Hidden Hobart Experience, which walks you through the development of the old wharf and new wharf through the years and delves into the truly fascinating history of the area.

Tourists are even provided with retro viewfinders to compare what specific scenes looked like from between 35 and 150 years earlier to what they look like

BOOK IT NOW

Henry Jones Art Hotel
25 Hunter St, Hobart, Tasmania
Rooms from \$290 a night
Henry Jones Art and History Tour: free for guests, \$20 for the public.
Landscape Restaurant Bar and Grill
Hidden Hobart experience: free for guests, \$20 for the public.
18 Hunter St, Hobart
thehenryjones.com.au

now, with engaging storytellers filling in the facts on how they got there.

Taking visitors from the hotel, across the Hobart harbour to St David's Park, the

tour finishes at Salamanca Place which holds famous markets on Saturdays, but if they are not on, fear not.

You can visit the shops that line the historic street, the plethora of eateries in the area, or even visit the famous Jackman & McRoss bakery to purchase the must-try Tasmanian delicacy: the scallop pie and have a picnic at St David's Park nearby.

Staying at the Henry Jones is perfect for first-time Hobart visitors, families, couples, art lovers – the hotel is also near the ferry terminal to Mona art gallery – and history buffs as well as those who are returning looking for a relaxing getaway.

It really does have something for everyone. ■

The writer was a guest of the operators