

Q Interesting places to stay in Tassie?

A story about HOBART

A NEW HOTEL IS COMBINING THE PAST WITH MODERN LUXURY

I'm sure I'm not the only one who has always loved history but found history lessons back in high school a real bore! I mean, no offence to my former teachers, but if you ask me, learning about the past should be fun.

That's precisely the ethos at Hobart's MACq 01 Hotel, where I spent three days learning about Hobart's rich history, all while eating and drinking at some of our country's finest – and did I mention living in luxury?



MACq 01 is a unique 'storytelling' hotel.



A tour guide will teach you the local history.

WHAT'S IN A STORY?

MACq 01 is Australia's first storytelling hotel. What does that mean, you ask? Well, for starters it means that every aspect of the hotel, set on Hunter Street's Ocean Pier and

with uninterrupted water views, links back to the area's incredible past. Everything from the design of the rooms to the art on the walls forms part of the storytelling experience, with guests given the chance to learn about the history of Hobart organically during their stay.

Each of the 114 luxury rooms at MACq 01 are named after a different character – all central to the story of Tasmania. From explorers to artists, to pub owners and convicts, no two stories are the same. I had the pleasure of learning about

some of these colourful characters thanks to MACq 01 storyteller Lucy, who runs a variety of free tours for guests who want to learn more about how the hotel came to be. She told me that each of these characters falls under one of five traits, which has then been used to inform differences in room design.

I stayed in the room dedicated to Francis Simpkinson De Wesselow, who was one of Tasmania's finest landscape painters.



Whisk yourself away to Evolve Spirits Bar.

EAT (AND DRINK) UP!

Hobart is fast becoming the foodie capital of Australia, and MACq 01 is no exception to the rule. I was treated to a host of delicious local produce and seafood at the hotel's Old Wharf Restaurant, but in my opinion, where this place really shines is the bars. Open to guests

and non-guests alike, I enjoyed a personalised cocktail in The Story Bar, while in Evolve Spirits Bar, voted Australia's top hotel bar in 2021, I enjoyed the most informative whisky tasting experience I've ever done (and yes, I've done a few!) and stayed for a few more drinks, too. All in the name of a good story, right?!



Soak up the stunning views over Hobart.



Sample local seafood at the Old Wharf Restaurant.

Lucy tells me that Francis – and my room – fall under the 'Curious and Creative' category, with

lightness and free-form shapes throughout the room used to reflect his innovative spirit.

The tours don't just stick to the hotel either, with daily guided walks around the local area on offer for guests who want to learn more about the place they're calling home for the night. For those who'd rather indulge and relax without thinking too hard, there are subtle nods to the history behind the hotel throughout – with viewfinders in every room and iPads hidden in old books.

MAKE A WEEKEND OF IT!

While Tassie hasn't traditionally been considered a weekend, Hobart is fast becoming a hotspot for quick visits, and with good reason. With flights from Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide all taking under two hours, and the city itself being easily walkable, it's the perfect getaway for those looking for great bars, excellent food and a small city bursting at the seams with culture and cool.



NEW IDEA'S ERIN HOLOHAN

My Hobart TOP FIVE

1 Mona: Australia's most famous art gallery is open from Friday to Monday. Bookings are a must! If art that challenges you is your thing, this place is a dream come true, and the ferry ride there is spectacular. mona.net.au

2 Farm Gate Market: Open every Sunday from 8.30am, this foodie heaven has fresh produce, great food and coffee and live music taking over inner-city Bathurst Street. farmgatemarket.com.au

3 Sonny: If the lines out the front of this small bar/restaurant are anything to go by, it's definitely Hobart's coolest spot. The vibe, the wine and the food are all to die for. sonny.com.au

4 In the Hanging Garden: A live music and cultural precinct that feels like walking into a greenhouse – one filled with street food and craft beer. inthehanginggarden.com.au

5 Tom McHugo's Hotel Hobart: One of the best gastro pubs I've been to, in the centre of the city! Instagram [@tmchugos](https://www.instagram.com/tmchugos)