

# WALK SMART

## 52 LORD HOWE ISLAND THROUGH THE LENS

A photography course in paradise

## 58 TWO-PERSON TENTS *Ten of the best on the market*

## 64 WALKING CHARITY EVENTS Great walks for great charities

The winner of the 'scale' theme at Pinetrees' photography week. Maidie Coelli, Somersby NSW.

When providing information and opinion on walking gear, we believe it's only fair to provide you, the reader, with the full picture. To properly test a backpack, for instance, requires long-term use in a wide variety of conditions. This provides a proper understanding of its limits, a good assessment of its intended use, and identifies any potential flaws. There aren't enough months in the year, or trails to be walked, to do this for every product, especially when you're talking about a dozen pairs of boots. The key opposite lets you know where you stand.



### STOCK SHOT

This is where we showcase what's new in the market and tell you what the manufacturer claims the product does. Over time we'll try to feature it in a Gear Guide or Track Tested story.



### GEAR GUIDE

An experienced walker has reviewed a wide range of products and conducted limited testing. This is a guide, rather than a subjective test.



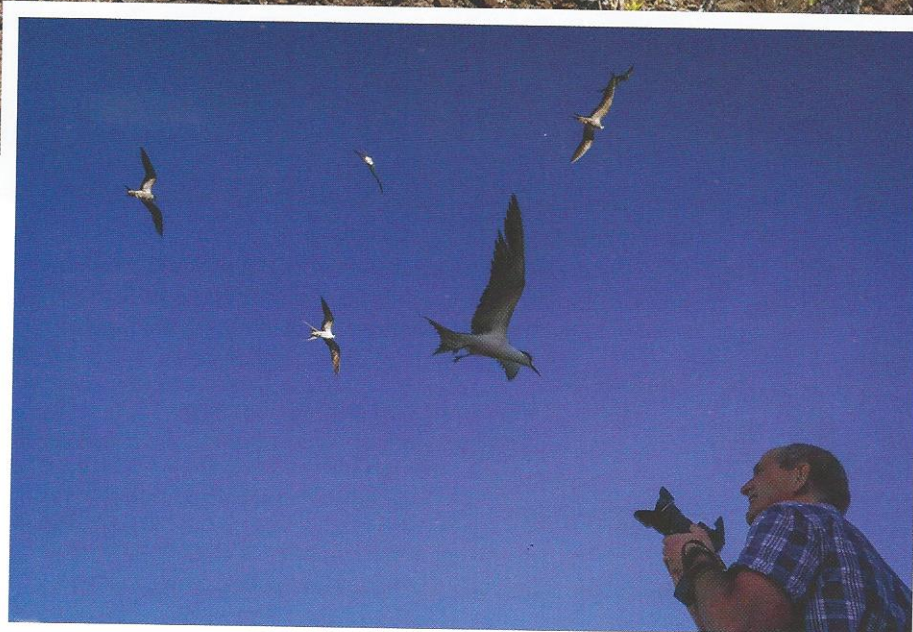
### TRACK TESTED

We have worn it, walked with it, dropped it and sometimes even slept with it, allowing us to provide an independent, fair and balanced assessment of its strengths and weaknesses.



# School's in

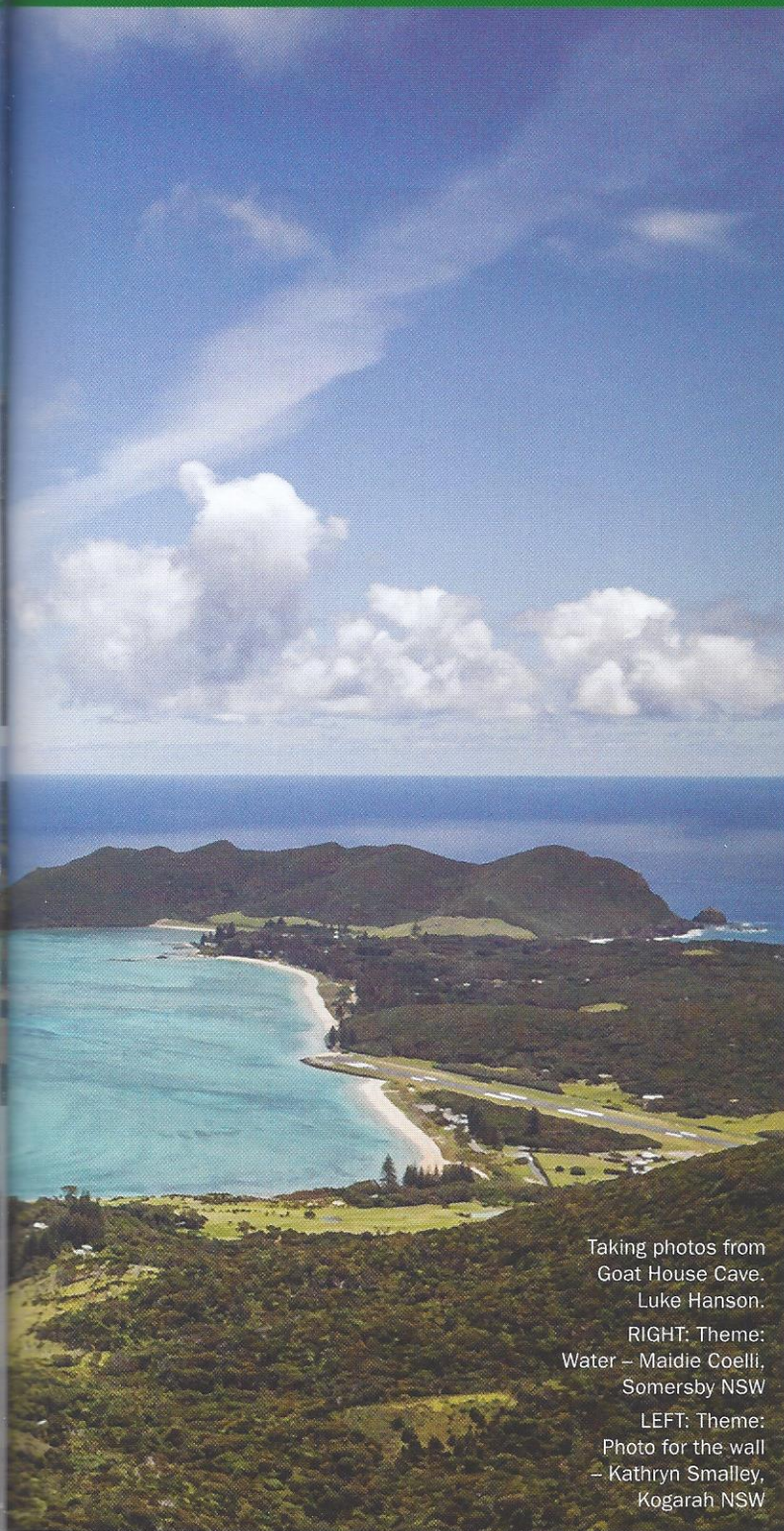
*Great Walks* spends a week on Lord Howe Island learning to take better photos.



**As a travel** writer and editor of *Great Walks* I always take photos on my trips. Part of it is for work and part of it is for fun. I've always loved photography but I always knew my photos had plenty of room for improvement. So when I was invited by Pinetrees Lodge on the magnificent Lord Howe Island to attend their week-long walking and photography week I immediately said yes.

Lord Howe is a part of NSW and a two-hour flight from Sydney. It was made famous by Sir David Attenborough in the





Taking photos from  
Goat House Cave.  
Luke Hanson.

RIGHT: Theme:  
Water – Maidie Coelli,  
Somersby NSW

LEFT: Theme:  
Photo for the wall  
– Kathryn Smalley,  
Kogarah NSW

70's when he came to the island to shoot one of his iconic nature documentary series and declared it "so extraordinary it is almost unbelievable... Few islands, surely, can be so accessible, so remarkable, yet so unspoilt."

Recorded by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site of global natural significance, Lord Howe is teeming with unique bird and marine life, and offers pristine natural beauty. "Add to the landscape two daily sessions of soft morning light and saturated evening light, and you have the

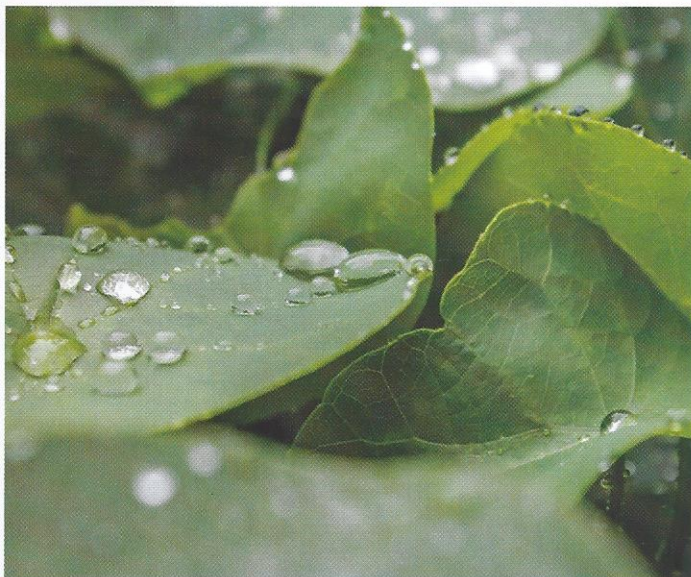
criteria for some exceptional photos," says Pinetrees owner and photography guide Luke Hanson.

In each group of 12 photographers, there are two professional photographers and a local guide. Each morning after breakfast, there's a 30-minute workshop on the technical theme of the day and then guests are given a brief for daily photo competition, although Luke says it's not really competitive. "It's just a way to get guests to concentrate on a technical theme, and have a bit of fun."

## **i PINETREES LODGE**



Lord Howe Island's Pinetrees Lodge is famous for exceptional meals, personalised service, relaxing spa treatments and a stunning beachfront location on the Lord Howe Lagoon. Discover world-class bushwalking, diving, snorkelling, fishing, kayaking and golf, or just relax and rejuvenate on one of Australia's most beautiful islands. In 2014, Pinetrees was voted the 'Best Affordable Resort in Australia' by the readers of Australian Traveller Magazine. The next walking and photography weeks are planned for 2-6 May and 7-11 November 2016. [www.pinetrees.com.au](http://www.pinetrees.com.au)



### **Getting behind the lens**

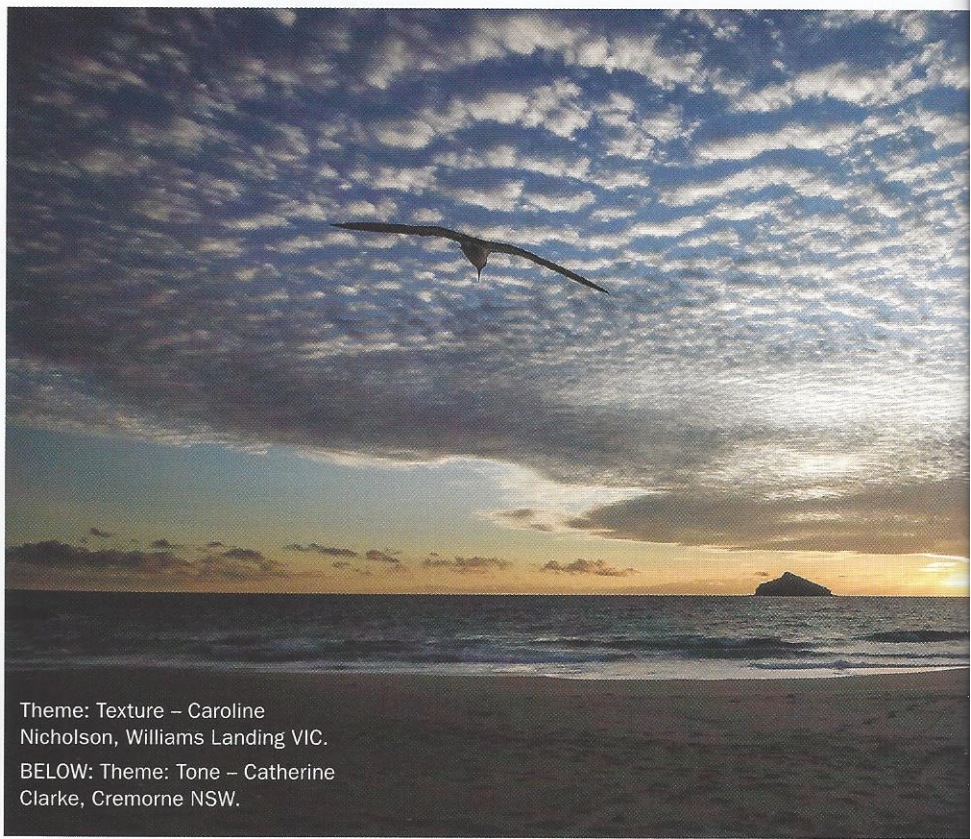
The daily theme could be tonal contrasts, scale and perspective or, in the case of today's assignment, drama, which we're not short of as we climb along the granite face of Mt Lidgbird, one of the island's two mountains. To get there requires an hour-long hike up a series of steps through palm forest under a thick canopy, so there's a certain physicality to the photography week which I like. The walk has its challenges but there are ropes in place for some of the steeper sections. All this provides



plenty of photo opportunities to showcase today's drama theme. Our destination is Goat House Cave half way up Lidgbird. From where we stand Lord Howe looks like some wild, exotic island straight out of an adventure novel. In fact, a big budget Hollywood movie just finished shooting there after producers recognised the island's unique and dramatic setting (even though the movie is set in Mexico!).

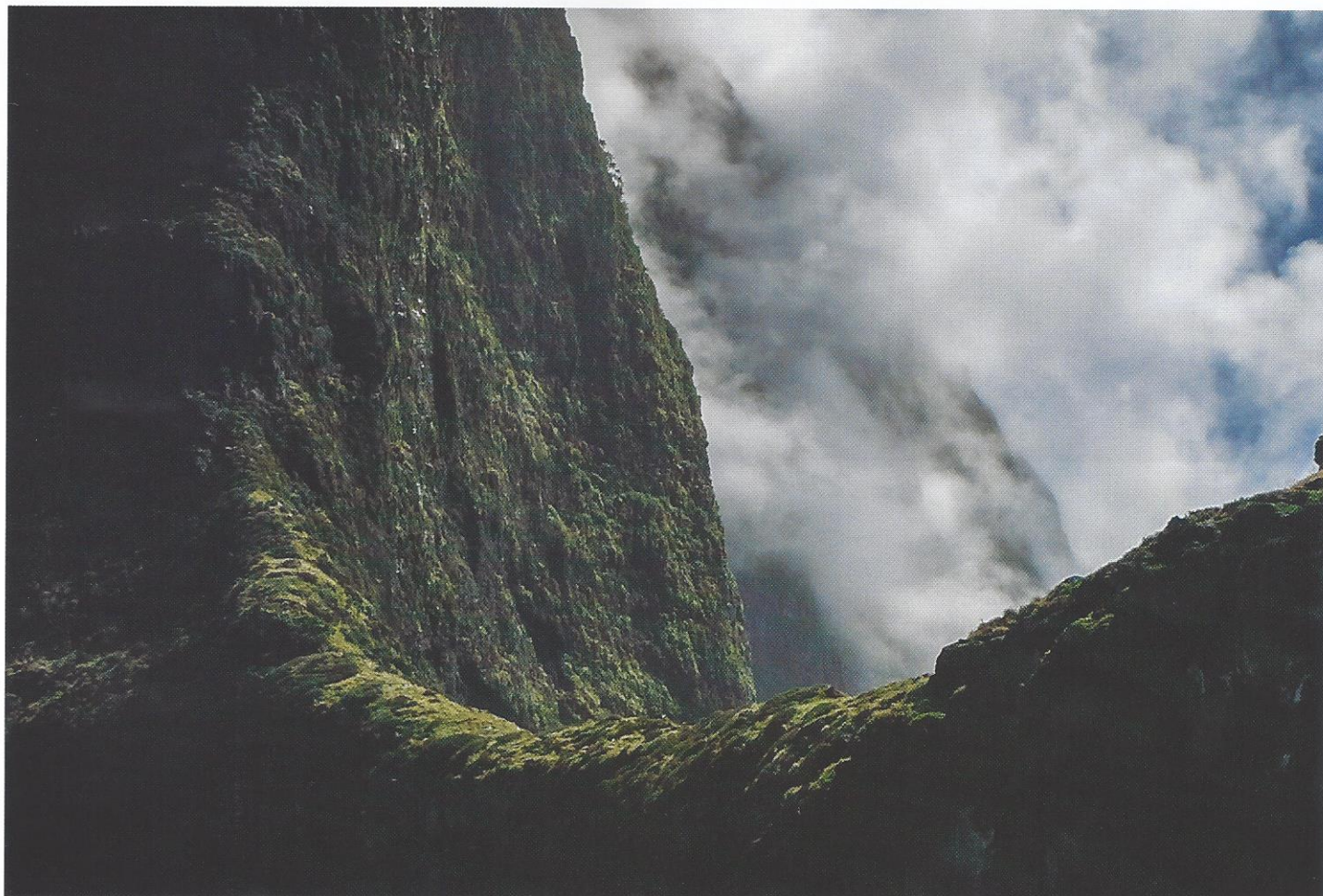
Looking through my lens, I photograph the island under the watchful eye of my three photography mentors Luke, Kenny Lees and Alex De Kieffe. As taught on day one I'm constantly checking my histogram to help me improve each shot (see break out).

You're not allowed to hike to the very top of Lidgbird as it's protected, but you can be guided to the top of the other mountain, Gower. I can safely say this is one of Australia's best day walks but it's not for the faint-hearted as there's a lot of climbing and rope work. There are two only guides licensed to take up Mount Gower and one the companies is Sea to Summit Expeditions (see break out).



Theme: Texture – Caroline Nicholson, Williams Landing VIC.

BELOW: Theme: Tone – Catherine Clarke, Cremorne NSW.





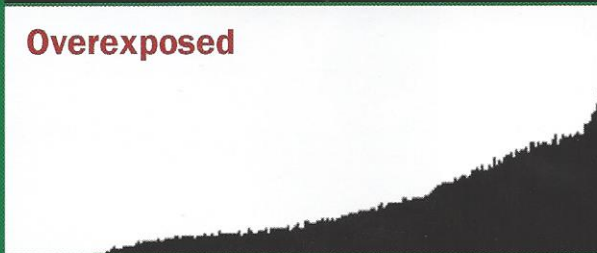


## i HISTO-WHAT?

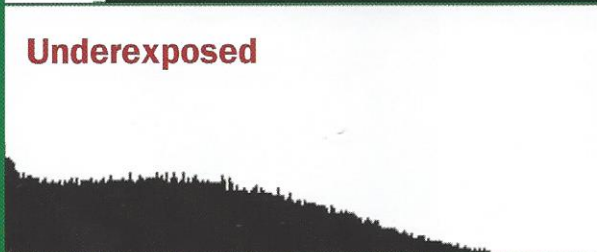
**Normal**



**Overexposed**



**Underexposed**



A histogram is a graph that displays where all of the brightness levels contained in the scene are found, from the darkest to the brightest. "Imagine that each pixel within your camera is like a cup that holds water," explains Alex. "Every pixel or cup, can hold a certain quantity of light or water. The cup will only hold so much water before it overflows, and the pixel can only record a certain amount of light before it is also full. So quite simply, the histogram is a bar chart that has each pixel's quantity of light presented in graphical form." So in theory a scene with a 'normal' distribution of brightness values will produce a histogram that looks like a hill. The edges slope down either side towards black and white, with the majority of tones in the middle.



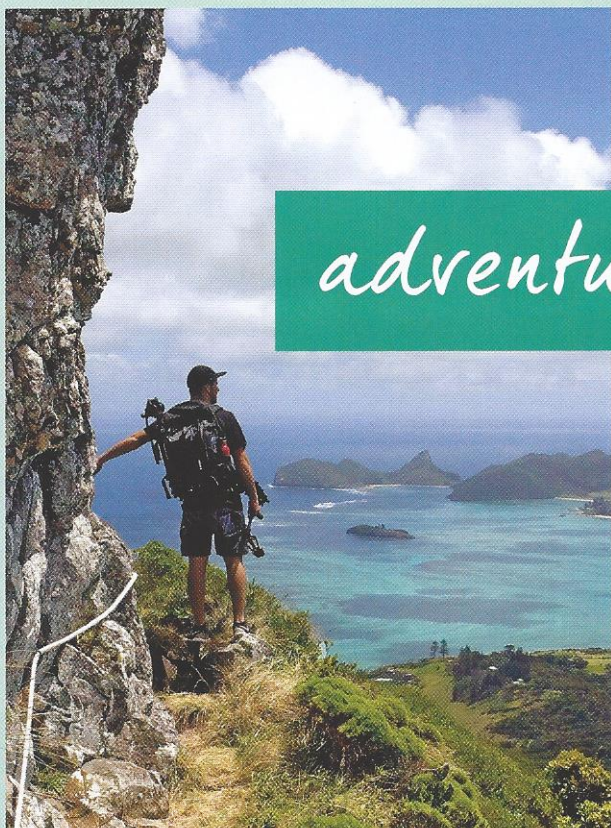
TRAVELLERS' CHOICE AWARD  
TOP 25 HOTELS IN AUSTRALIA

### WINNER

'BEST AFFORDABLE RESORT IN AUSTRALIA'

People's Choice Awards  
Australian Traveller Magazine  
NOVEMBER 2014

## adventure weeks



Pinetrees Lodge on Lord Howe Island is famous for exceptional meals, personalised service and our superb location on Lagoon Beach. Discover world-class diving, snorkelling, fishing, walking, surfing and golf, or just relax and rejuvenate on one of Australia's most beautiful islands. Book for our **Adventure Weeks** in 2016, and enjoy guided walking, snorkelling and kayaking through pristine World Heritage wilderness. Visit once and discover why so many guests return to Pinetrees every year. Please call us on (02) 9262 6585 and quote Great Walks.



lord howe island • another world • close to home

Contact Pinetrees Travel on (02) 9262 6585 or visit [pinetrees.com.au](http://pinetrees.com.au)





### Show & tell

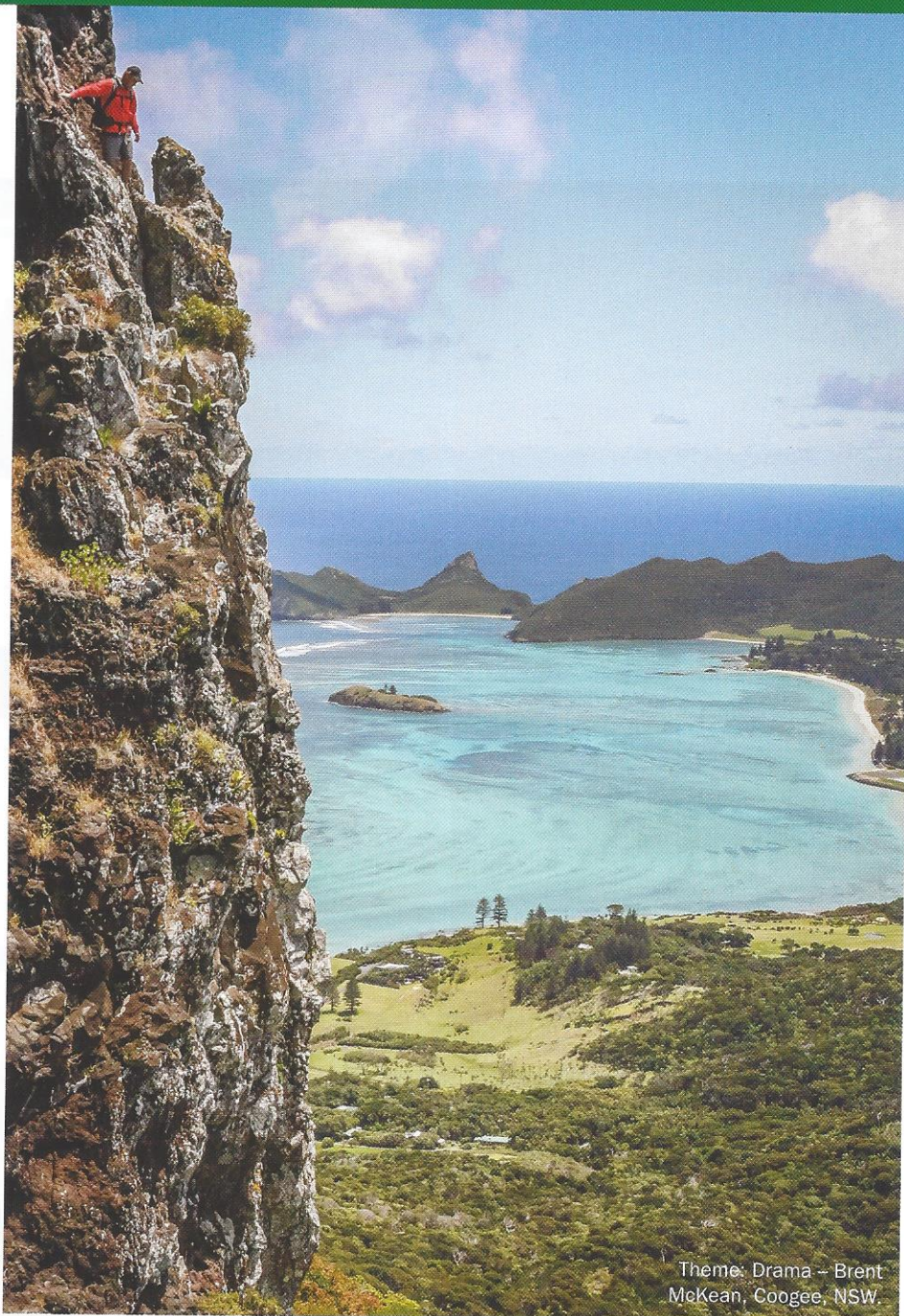
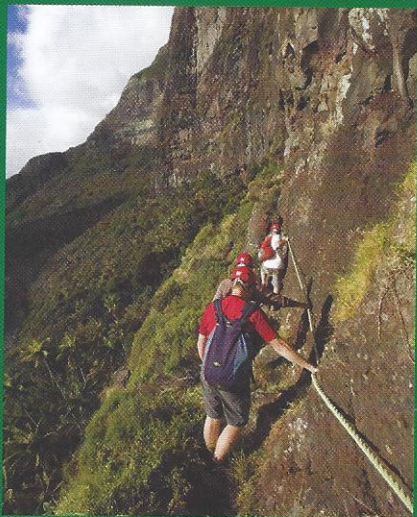
Every night we have a debrief and everyone shows their top two shots of the day. "It's always a revelation for each guest to see how many different perspectives there are from the same location," says Luke.

And it's not just the photography instructors who are impressed by the quality of photos. Everyone sometime during the photography course produces a stunning shot that we all get to admire and congrats that person for their efforts. We all have a sense of pride as our photos are revealed to everyone at the end of each day – including other guests at the resort who are curious to see what we're looking at. There's a bottle of wine for the best photo of the day and guess who won the pinot for best dramatic photo? Thank you very much!

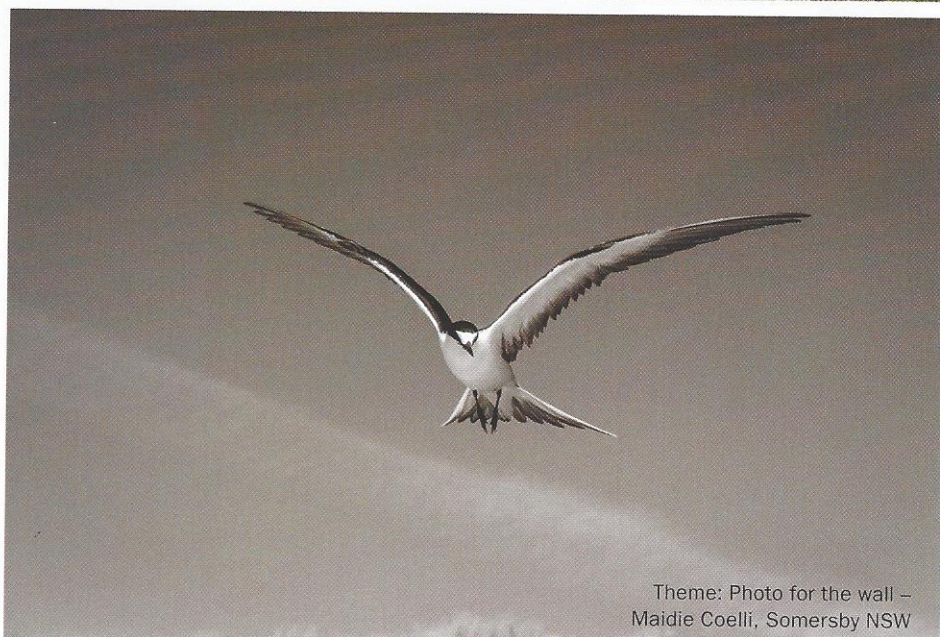
*Great Walks was a guest of Pinetrees Lodge*

### 1 CLIMBING MT GOWER

Enjoy a day with Jack Shick climbing Mt Gower, rated one of Australia's 20 best day walks. Jack is a fifth generation Islander and third generation mountain guide. Experience breathtaking views, see some of the island's rarest plants and bird life. Considered a medium to hard trek, the walk is around 14km return and takes about 8.5 hours, so you need to be in good health and have no knee or back problems. The walks are scheduled for every Monday and Thursday. More info: [www.lordhoweislandtours.net/mount-gower-tours](http://www.lordhoweislandtours.net/mount-gower-tours)



Theme: Drama – Brent McKean, Coogee, NSW.



Theme: Photo for the wall – Maidie Coelli, Somersby NSW