



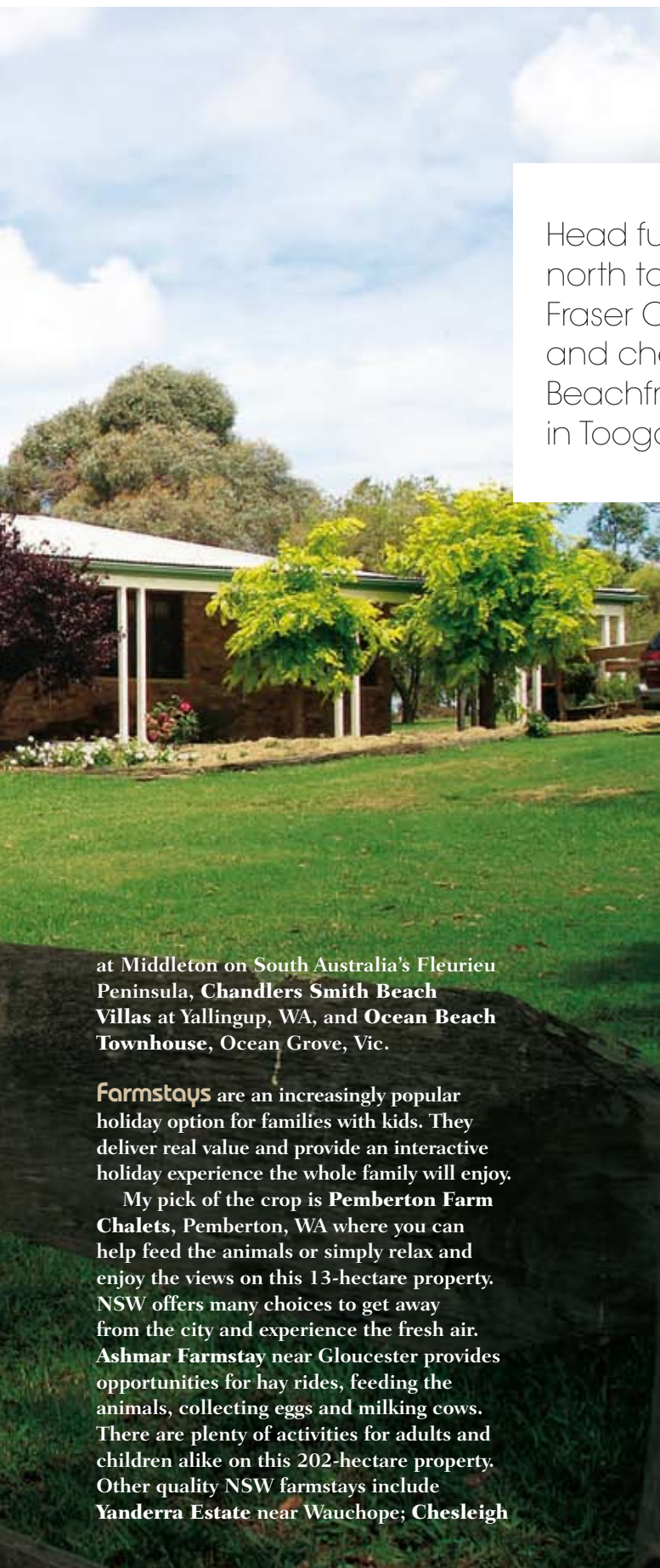
Good to Getaway

If anyone knows where to find a great holiday house or B&B then it's **Penny Young**, CEO and founder of *www.takeabreak.com.au*. Here are her top picks from across the country, from five popular accommodation categories.

Beach holidays are part of the Australian culture, long walks on the beach, the sound of the waves lapping at night and most of all staying somewhere you can just pick up your towel and go.

Queensland and the NSW North Coast are popular beach holiday destinations. **Noosa Beachfront Home** on Queensland's Sunshine Coast provides easy beach access (across the road from Castaways Beach) and also has fabulous views, as well as being pet-friendly. Head further north to the Fraser Coast and check out **Beachfront Rest** in Toogoom. Stroll to the beach, restaurants and golf course in the quiet New South Wales South Coast seaside town of Mollymook from **A Mollymook Beach Seaview**. If you are heading north then **Wakki Beach Absolute Beachfront Villa** at Scotts Head is well worth a visit.

My other top tips are **Beach Huts B&B**



Head further north to the Fraser Coast and check out Beachfront Rest in Toogoom



Left: Brunkerville

Below: Pike River Woolshed

Bottom: Red Paws of Lorne

at Middleton on South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula, **Chandlers Smith Beach Villas** at Yallingup, WA, and **Ocean Beach Townhouse**, Ocean Grove, Vic.

Farmstays are an increasingly popular holiday option for families with kids. They deliver real value and provide an interactive holiday experience the whole family will enjoy.

My pick of the crop is **Pemberton Farm Chalets**, Pemberton, WA where you can help feed the animals or simply relax and enjoy the views on this 13-hectare property. NSW offers many choices to get away from the city and experience the fresh air. **Ashmar Farmstay** near Gloucester provides opportunities for hay rides, feeding the animals, collecting eggs and milking cows. There are plenty of activities for adults and children alike on this 202-hectare property. Other quality NSW farmstays include **Yanderra Estate** near Wauchope; **Chesleigh**



Below: One Beach townhouse



Homestead near Sofala, and **Mowbray Park Farm Holidays** near Picton. Victoria also has a lot to offer, starting with the **Fauna Australia Wildlife Retreat** at Lavers Hill. Or, if you want to combine your farmstay with a beach holiday, then check out **Boggabri Farmstay** in Victoria's South Gippsland area.

Holiday houses are a great alternative to hotels and resorts, providing self-catering facilities that enable you to stretch your budget further without having to compromise on quality.

Noosabreeze Villa, Noosa, is perfectly positioned on the hill between Hastings Street and Noosa Junction providing easy access to beaches, boutiques and shopping. It is air-conditioned, has a fully equipped kitchen, barbecue facilities and a heated outdoor hot tub. As a bonus it's pet-friendly so Fido can join you too.

Explore Victoria's Phillip Island using **Driftwood on the Rocks** in

Cowes as a base. Comfortably sleeping seven, this well-equipped property has a fully fenced backyard, providing privacy, safety for children and accommodation for the family pet. Additional facilities include the spa, tennis and pool tables, barbecue and sandpit, swing/slide for the children. The bonus is Red Rocks Beach, just 400 metres walk through a lovely bush path, exciting for the kids and pets. Other holiday houses of note include **Grass Trees House** at South West Rocks, **Abbiente House**, Byron Bay Hinterlands, and historic **Lochinver** in Victoria.

Pet-friendly holiday places are in high demand. At **Red Paws** of Lorne, Great Ocean Road, Victoria, not only is your beloved pooch provided with a dog bed and linen, but a

welcome pack of doggie treats, towels and toys awaits them on check in. And when the parents leave for dinner there is, of course, pet minding. Enjoy the company of friendly and beautiful malamute Nikki and still be close to the city at **Grevillea Lodge B&B**, Macgregor, ACT, where well-behaved pets are welcome indoors too. Going rural? Head to **Russellee B&B** near Tumut in the NSW Snowies, a kennel and yard are provided for your pooch with well-behaved pets allowed inside. Other pet-friendly recommendations include **Coronation Cottage** in Tassie and **Paperbark Cottage** in WA.

Group accommodation is sometimes hard to find, however TakeABreak's group accommodation category lists properties that cater for 10 or more people at one time, whether you're looking for a weekend getaway with friends or a holiday retreat for multiple families. **The Country House** at Brunkerville sleeps up to 12 people, with three fireplaces for the winter and a swimming pool for the summer. You just can't go past this place as a base for the Hunter Valley and just one hour from Wahrenonga. Or, if you want to head north with a larger group try **Chiltern Lodge** at Old Bar. For something a little bit different enjoy the rustic charm of old tram and train carriages at **Last Stop Ambledown Brook Tram**, Hall in Capital Country, which sleeps up to 14 in five bedrooms and five bathrooms.

Sleeping 10 in four bedrooms is **Pike River Woolshed**, in the South Australian Riverlands. This property is great to get out and active with a group, fishing, boating, swimming or kayaking. I also recommend **The Westbury Gingerbread Cottages**, Deloraine, Tasmania, with five fully self-contained, completely separate cottages surrounding a communal barbecue area and **The Noble Grape Guesthouse** in Cowaramup, WA.

TakeABreak.com.au is the only independent online travel site specialising in boutique accommodation in Australia. Over 11,000 hotels, B&Bs and guesthouses are listed on the site complete with in-depth information and guest reviews. The properties are easily searched via experience – pet, family, seniors, gay and lesbian-friendly and geography. The booking process is quick and simple with a Best Deal guarantee to ensure guests are receiving the cheapest price for that stay. ■