

ARCHITECTURAL ODE TO FREEDOM

Nestled near the Byron Bay in Australia, SUN RANCH is an exceptional estate where architecture, nature, and design effortlessly converge in a unique and harmonious balance. Inspired by the iconic CALIFORNIAN RANCHES OF THE 1970S, this tranquil oasis exudes an atmosphere of understated luxury and timeless charm. This is far from your typical hotel experience; instead, it is a METICULOUSLY CURATED RETREAT where every detail tells its own unique story.





In the rolling, unspoiled hinterland of Byron Bay—an area renowned for its breathtaking landscapes and artistic spirit—lies a place that refuses to be defined by convention. Sun Ranch, a sprawling estate covering an impressive 55 hectares, is a playful, nostalgic yet forward-thinking interpretation of the 1970s Californian ranch aesthetic. Here, architecture, interior design, and nature seamlessly blend into an environment that is both relaxed and profoundly striking. What sets Sun Ranch apart is not only its meticulously thought-out design and its harmonious integration with the surrounding landscape but also the creative minds behind this innovative concept. This masterpiece was brought to life through the shared vision of a close-



knit collective of old friends from the creative and hospitality industries. Together, they have crafted the ultimate holiday destination and event space—a place that transcends the ordinary, ignites the imagination, and leaves a lasting impression on everyone who steps through its gates. From the carefully curated interiors to the impressive event spaces scattered across the estate and the inventive, one-of-a-kind culinary experiences, Sun Ranch is a tribute to visionary creativity, collaboration, and above all, boldness. ‘We have created a place that we hope will not only enchant but also inspire our guests,’ says Jamie Blakey, one of the visionaries behind Sun Ranch. ‘From the moment you enter through the gates, you feel that you’ve arrived somewhere

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truly unique—perhaps even magical. From unexpected design elements to the variety of experiences across the ranch, we hope you leave feeling empowered, as though you can take on the world.

DESIGN THAT PUSHES BOUNDARIES

The estate boasts an exquisite guest lodge featuring five meticulously designed suites within the striking and atmospheric Rambler Longhouse. Additionally, six Sun Ranch Barns, each with two bedrooms, seamlessly blend into the natural surroundings. The interiors pay homage to a bygone era without veering into nostalgia or antiquity. Californian ranch influences from the 1970s are effortlessly intertwined with refined Spanish accents, natural materials, and

a warm, earthy colour palette directly inspired by the surrounding landscape. The result is a serene yet inviting atmosphere where warmth, texture, and artisanal craftsmanship take centre stage. Picture beautifully weathered timber, handcrafted terracotta tiles, woven textiles, and sculptural fireplaces—all contributing to the estate's authentic charm. Every element within these spaces has been deliberately chosen by the founders, creating a narrative that unfolds through carefully selected vintage furniture, handcrafted ceramic vases by local artisans, and curated artworks that balance raw simplicity with intricate detailing. 'The spaces we have designed here at Sun Ranch challenge traditional conventions,' explains Julia Ashwood, another key visionary behind the estate. 'Luxurious finishes are paired with unexpected interiors, meticulously curated from vintage finds and artistic treasures sourced from all over the world. We weren't afraid to experiment with bold colours and expansive spaces, and this has resulted in something truly extraordinary.' Sun Ranch is a haven of style, authenticity, and refinement, where every detail contributes to an atmosphere of effortless luxury.

The expansive estate has been carefully designed to ensure that architecture and landscape flow seamlessly together, creating a dialogue between built and natural environments. Beyond its accommodation for up to 34 guests in The Rambler Longhouse and Sun Ranch Barns, the estate offers

an extensive range of exclusive facilities, each thoughtfully designed to encourage relaxation, adventure, and refined indulgence. For those seeking tranquillity, The Pool Club is an iconic 25-metre hilltop swimming pool, complete with elegant dining and lounging areas—perfect for unwinding on a warm day. At the highest point of the property lies Stoney Ridge, a magical spot featuring imposing rock formations and a firepit, ideal for meditation, intimate conversations, or lively celebrations under a vast, star-filled sky.

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Meanwhile, The Badminton Club provides a sprawling grass court where both recreational players and devoted gin and tonic enthusiasts gather in the afternoon sun—a perfect setting for leisurely afternoons, whether spent in playful competition or laid-back relaxation. Every carefully crafted detail—from the charming wooden sauna floating innovatively on the water to the intimate, hidden Whiskey Lounge—has been deliberately designed to strike a balance between relaxation and playfulness, luxury and approachability.

A MASTERPIECE OF COLLABORATION

Every element of Sun Ranch tells a story of collaboration, bringing together a collective of artistic minds to create a masterpiece of design, innovation, and creative expression. For this ambitious project, Jamie Blakey and Julia Ashwood took the creative lead, working in partnership with the forward-thinking architecture and construction firm Balanced Earth, also based in Byron Bay. This talented team understands that true innovation comes from daring to be different, pushing boundaries,

and challenging architectural norms. Inspired by their shared travels and deep appreciation for aesthetics, they have imbued Sun Ranch with a one-of-a-kind identity that is simply unmatched. This 'hotel of good times', as they fondly describe it, is bursting with colour, joy, and luxurious details. It invites guests to immerse themselves in a

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uniquely playful experience—one they will never forget, whether it's an intimate gathering, an unforgettable wedding, or an exclusive corporate retreat. This philosophy extends seamlessly into the culinary offering, where Sun Ranch effortlessly surpasses expectations. Everything revolves around freshness, local ingredients, and sustainability. The estate and its surrounding farms provide an abundance of organic produce, ensuring that every dish is a delightful tribute to the region's rich and diverse flavours.





From open-air feasts to pop-up dinners featuring rotating guest chefs, Sun Ranch takes guests on an extraordinary culinary journey from morning till night, concluding with cosy evenings by the fire. Lastly, sustainability is also at the heart of the Sun Ranch ethos. The six barns operate completely off-grid, generating their own electricity and water, while the guest lodge runs on solar energy and battery storage. The estate is ingeniously supplied with water through rainwater harvesting and natural filtration systems. Additionally, as part of the Sun Ranch Regeneration Program, more than 10,000 native plants and trees have recently been planted to restore local biodiversity and secure a sustainable future.

THE ESTATE BOAST, SIX SUN RANCH BARNs, EACH WITH TWO BEDROOMS, SEAMLESSLY BLEND INTO THE NATURAL SURROUNDINGS

A CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM
 Whether you're exploring the rolling hills on horseback, unwinding in the luxurious stone-lined swimming pool, or simply sipping a cocktail as the setting sun paints the sky in hues of gold and pink, Sun Ranch welcomes you with open arms. It is a destination that defies categorisation; it is a hotel, a work of art, a gathering place, and an experience all at once. Here, the boundaries between indoors and outdoors, luxury and simplicity, past and future blur effortlessly. Sun Ranch is not merely a place—it is a feeling, a memory in the making. We cannot wait to visit this extraordinary estate ourselves! 🌿 (Text: Nathalie Van Laer)

Photography by David Chaffield



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