

Work yourself
into a fash frenzy
in balmy Brisbane

WEEKEND IN BRISBANE

IT MAY take a back seat to Sydney and Melbourne as a destination for weekend wanderers, but this laid-back city is just as much an epicentre of food, fashion and culture.

With its edgy bars, great cafes, exclusive boutiques, subtropical weather (yes, even in the middle of winter) and burgeoning creative arts scene, it's not hard to see why hipsters are flocking to Brisbane in droves.

FOR RESTING YOUR HEAD IN STYLE

Smack-bang in the centre of town, the Sofitel Brisbane Central is luxe accommodation at its best. Treat yourself to High Tea (you'll eat like a queen, trust us) and a trip to Stephanies Spa Retreat (Nicole Richie had a manicure there). Be sure to check out the Valentino exhibition package. www.sofitelbrisbane.com.au

FOR DELISH COCKTAILS

Sip on any number of concoctions from The Bowery's impressive cocktail menu, while tapping your peep-toes to a live jazz band. We couldn't get enough of the espresso martini. www.thebowery.com.au

FOR SOME SERIOUS R&R

A favourite among locals, the Outshine wellness spa in Fortitude Valley is the perfect place to kick back and indulge. The best part? You can mix and match treatments to suit your skincare needs. www.outshine.com.au

FOR SHOPPING UP A STORM

James Street in Fortitude Valley is a designer shopping mecca. Think sass & bide, Easton Pearson and, the crown jewel, Frocksop's very first store. Prepare to pay excess baggage...

FOR RELAXED FINE DINING

Celebrity chef Ben O'Donoghue's new eatery, South Bank Surf Club, offers a laidback vibe and top-notch seafood. Our tip? Don't pass up the delicious chilli mussels.

www.southbanksurfclub.com.au

FOR SENSORY INDULGENCE

Pick up some of France's finest perfumes and skincare at the exquisite Libertine Parfumerie, where you can also enjoy a fragrance masterclass over a glass of champagne.

www.libertineparfumerie.com.au



VERY VALENTINO

Showing exclusively at Brisbane's Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA), this retrospective exhibition is a fashion lover's paradise.

An amazing 100 haute couture looks are on display, ranging from Valentino Garavani's very first collection in 1959 to the A/W 09-10 collection by his successors, Maria Grazia Chiuri and Pier Paolo Piccioli.

Valentino's designs have been coveted by A-listers for decades and you can get up-close-and-personal with gowns worn by Julia Roberts, Cate Blanchett, Nicole Kidman and Elizabeth Taylor – even Jackie O's wedding dress is on show. Most of the dreamy creations were originally shown at the famed Les Arts Décoratifs museum in Paris in 2008.

Take it from us: this breathtaking celebration of Valentino's timeless approach to design is not to be missed.

VALENTINO, RETROSPECTIVE: PAST/PRESENT/FUTURE

is showing at the Gallery of Modern Art, Stanley Place, South Bank, Brisbane, until November 14.

More: www.qag.qld.gov.au
or call (07) 3840 7303

Feast on seafood at South Bank Surf Club (far left) and rest your head at the Sofitel (left); a look from the Valentino A/W 09-10 collection (right)



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