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TRENDS

Slayed in the isles

Mauritius and the Maldives are among the hot beach destinations of the moment, according to Bridget McDonald, the director of Cherry Picked Travel. "Once the playgrounds of the rich and famous, these exquisite locations are becoming more accessible and affordable," she said. Cherry Picked has a six-night stay at Tamassa by LUX in Mauritius (pictured), including flights, from \$2689 a person twin share. It has a five-night honeymoon stay at LUX Maldives from \$2345. See cherrypickedtravel.com.au.

CHEFS

Course behaviour

A trio of celebrity chefs is on the menu at the Lake Crackenback Resort and Spa in NSW's Snowy Mountains, over the next few months with a series of five-course dinners. It starts with no-nonsense Colin Fassnidge, the straight-talking Irishman who tells contestants exactly what he thinks of their dishes on the TV show *My Kitchen Rules*. Fassnidge's dinner will be on July 26 and will be followed by Sydney favourite Justin North on August 23 and Canberra icon Ben Willis on September 20. Each dinner, matched with wines, costs \$120 a ticket. Phone (02) 6451 3000.



FOOD

How to be an alley cat

Melbourne's laneways provide a never-ending maze of food and drink choices, many of them unknown. Avid foodies Jonette George and Ethan Jenkins bring it all into perspective in their updated book *Flavours of Melbourne* (Smudge Publishing \$69.99). They have searched through the city's nooks and crannies – upstairs, downstairs and through the complex laneway system – to compile a guide to the best eateries. But this is more than a handsome coffee-table food book, it's also a handy reference for visitors with a bit about Melbourne's history, gorgeous photography that showcases the city's renowned street art (don't miss Hosier Lane) and has maps that can be put to good use.