

**Justine Tyerman** masquerades as a celebrity . . . for a weekend.

**M**OST OF us will never have our names in bright lights and be mobbed by hordes of adoring fans, but there's no harm in pretending . . . and thanks to a clever Aussie entrepreneur who has the keys to some of the most opulent private homes, super-yachts and jets in Australia, New Zealand and Europe, you can at least masquerade as an A-lister.

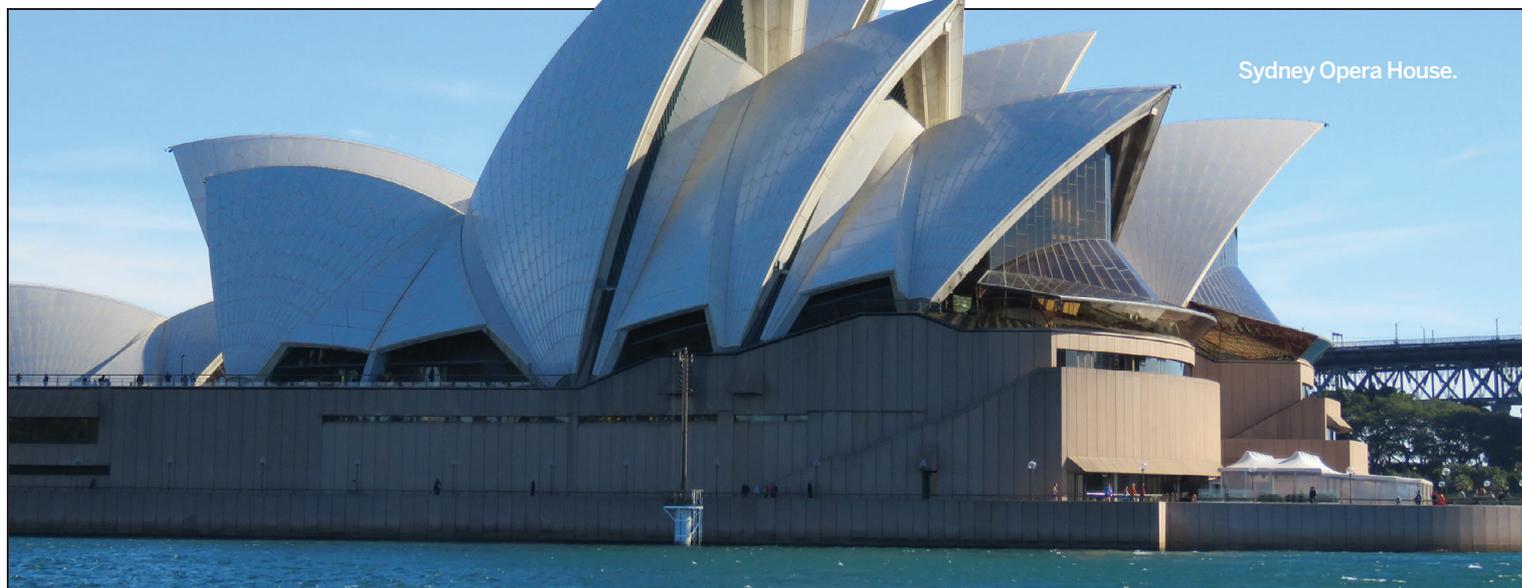
Luxe Houses chief executive Jessica Kirkpatrick, who has welcomed many a celebrity to the prestigious rental properties she manages, says in recent years she has seen the emergence of the domestic and international luxury traveller seeking bespoke accommodation.

"Our Luxe Houses portfolio provides these discerning travellers with an elite experience in some of the world's most exclusive private houses," says the businesswoman who founded Luxe Houses in 2011.

"It's where stars, black-book celebrities and well-to-do expats call first to seek out outstanding accommodation. Ronan Keating, Gerard Butler and Ashley Hart are among our guests."

And so can you be. There is a substantial fee involved in this play-acting scenario but for a special holiday or celebration, it's worth throwing caution to wind. If you gather up a group of like-minded pretenders to share the cost, it is not out of the question to spend a few days at a multi-million dollar private villa like the ultra-luxurious waterfront Wharf Birchgrove in Sydney.

Sequestered in a quiet street in the exclusive suburb of Birchgrove, The Wharf Birchgrove comes with bespoke VIP concierge services to rival the most star-studded of hotels, all included in the price.



Sydney Opera House.



**LUXURY:** The MV Birchgrove bathroom (boat).

■ **The Wharf Birchgrove:** [luxehouses.com.au/holiday-house/the-wharf-birchgrove](http://luxehouses.com.au/holiday-house/the-wharf-birchgrove)  
 ■ **Getting there:** Air New Zealand flies direct to Sydney from Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Queenstown. [airnewzealand.co.nz](http://airnewzealand.co.nz)  
 ■ **JUCY Rentals** assisted with transport: [jucy.co.nz](http://jucy.co.nz)  
 ■ **All reservations with Luxe Houses include airport transfers, personal greeting and Dom Perignon champagne on arrival, house-keeping, Appelles bath and spa products and access to the VIP Luxe concierge. Available at an additional cost are private charter jets, helicopter transfers, drivers, bespoke spa treatments, nannies, guides, personal trainers and anything else to help make your stay flawless.** [www.luxehouses.com](http://www.luxehouses.com)

## Living the HIGH LIFE

On arrival, guests are collected from the airport and welcomed by a concierge with Dom Perignon champagne; an in-house butler is at your disposal for up to six hours a day; and a celebrity chef is on hand for gourmet entertaining. Located directly above the largest private wharf in Sydney, all 70m of it, the sumptuous, elegantly-appointed two-level home has spectacular views of that rather famous bridge and the ferries and ships that ply the harbour waters.

Moored a few paces along the historic wharf is the 50ft MV Birchgrove, a Windy Triton Sports Cruiser, which holds the distinction of being the first luxury charter yacht in Australia with IPS (Inboard Propulsion System) drives. The captain whisked us away on a two-hour sunset cruise under the harbour bridge and past the Opera House . . . and he poured the Moët too.

Housekeeping and turn-down services are also included along with indulgent Appelles spa products and bespoke Cocolux candles. I was slightly alarmed at how easily I slipped into the lifestyle. It was bliss.

Blending discreetly into the landscape, The Wharf Birchgrove is almost invisible from the water. Privacy-conscious celebrities can lounge in the heated infinity pool,



**INSIDE:** The MV Birchgrove bedroom (boat) and formal lounge at Wharf Birchgrove (luxury house).

secure in the knowledge they are unseen. Guests have included international CEOs, film and music industry VIPs, and a Middle Eastern prince.

Another advantage of staying at The Wharf Birchgrove is the close proximity to the city. Only



**GUEST:** The regal downstairs guestroom at Wharf Birchgrove (luxury house).

3.7km from the CBD and with several ferry terminals nearby, the place has ease of access to Sydney's commercial, retail and entertainment zones without the hustle-bustle of a downtown hotel location.

The boutique, café, restaurant and village-vibe culture is thriving in Birchgrove and neighbouring Balmain so we didn't need to venture far.

The 580sq metre Wharf Birchgrove has three bedrooms, four bathrooms, two kitchens, two dining areas, two lounges, a private internal lift, two secure parking spaces and all the services a hotel provides.

If you've always fancied living like an A-lister with a concierge, butler, chef and superyacht at your beck and call, have a chat with Luxe Houses. Life is short . . . spoil yourself once in a while.