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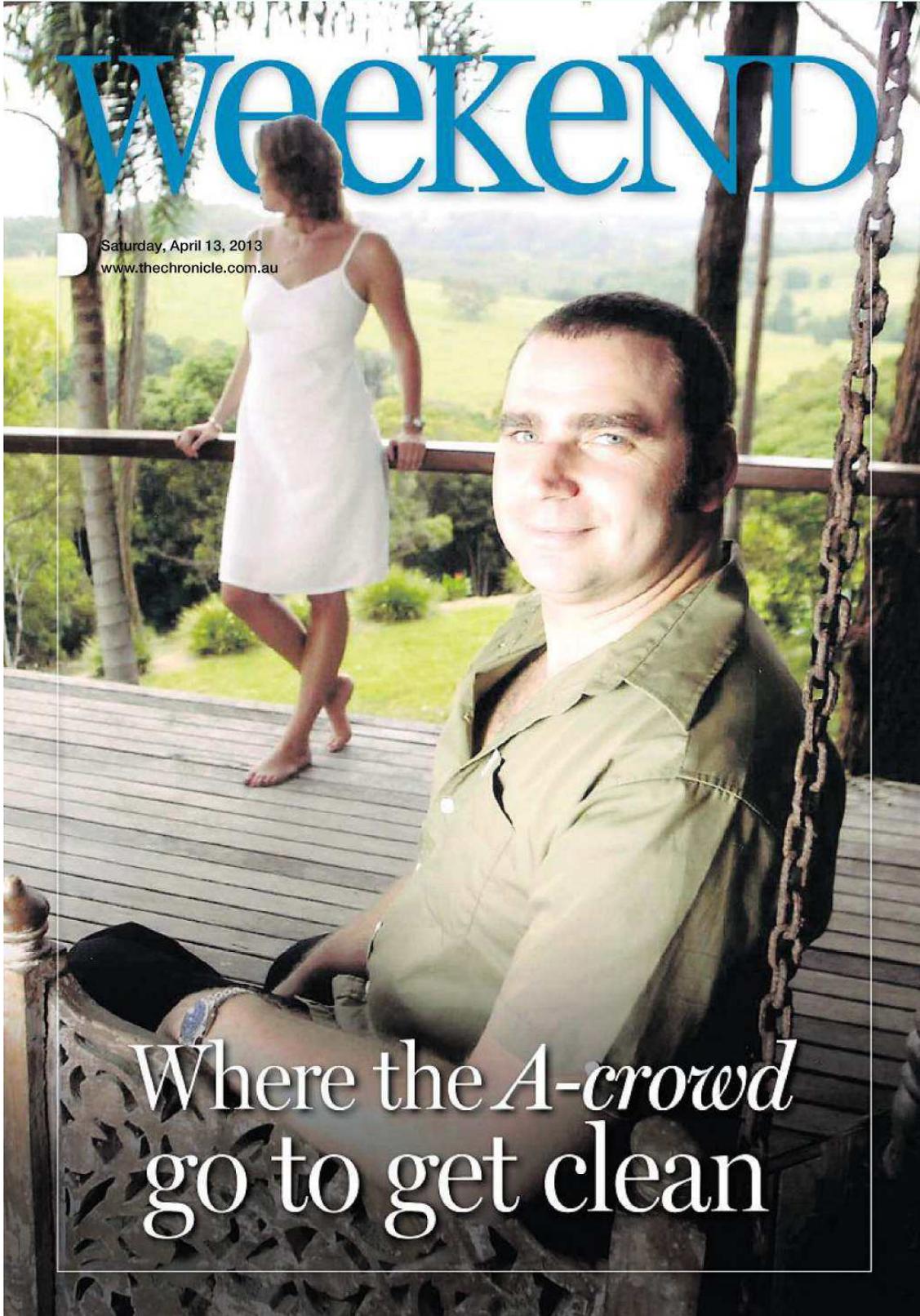
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Where the *A-crowd*
go to get clean



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A-listers getting back on track



Chances are you've never heard about it, but that's the way they like it.

JOHN FARMER explores The Sanctuary, Byron Bay, where celebrities, millionaires, royalty and rock stars go to get clean.

FOR MOST people, a mention of "rehab" invokes images of small, sterile white rooms in large, locked-down facilities where only thin walls separate patients in the throes of battling demons of addiction, abuse and dependence.

Imagine instead a "rehab" set inside million-dollar mansions situated in one of the country's most idyllic coastal communities.

There are no gates, locks or small, white rooms. Clients will never hear, let alone see each other, and the battle against addiction is done in the lap of luxury.

This is The Sanctuary, Byron Bay.

It is a place the A-crowd – millionaires, entrepreneurs, celebrities, rock stars and even royalty – pay upwards of \$28,000 a week to get clean.

Managing director Michael Goldberg, who was chief executive of a highly successful building company during the 1990s, founded The Sanctuary in 2003 after recovering from his own drug addiction.

Today, it is one of the world's most highly regarded drug, alcohol and eating disorder treatment facilities, with a nearly 90% success rate.

Clients come from across the globe (Mr Goldberg says more are international than domestic) to get their lives back on track.

Never are there more than four clients treated at once, and each receives a treatment regime customised to their individual needs.

They stay in one of 40 homes leased by The Sanctuary that open on to Byron Bay's golden beaches or lush rainforests.

Those million-dollar homes become the client's own luxury retreat during their stay.

The staff-client ratio averages about 15:1. Clients can get access to a full-time personal chef, a chauffeur, personal trainer, yoga instructor, meditation expert, massage therapist and naturopathic consultant, as well as medical, nursing and psychiatric personnel.

Food is organic where possible and much of it is grown in The Sanctuary's food forest.

"Our chefs take direction from our naturopath, doctor and nutritionist" Mr Goldberg said.

Four warehouses located on the outskirts of Byron Bay store the "little extras" which clients may need, such as drums, massage tables, art materials, different kinds of pillows and mattresses.

"We need to be ready," Mr Goldberg said.

"If a client says their mattress is too soft it is immediately replaced, not because we want to be luxurious, but because we want people to sleep well."

Despite its high-profile clientele, elaborate settings and specialised team, few are aware of The Sanctuary.

It is not possible to locate it on a GPS or Google Maps.

Ask the people of Byron Bay and few are aware of its existence, let alone where it is located.

Psychologist at The Sanctuary Elizabeth Williams explains this is the way they like it.



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"It's for people who want high confidentiality," she said.

"That's why no one knows where the houses are and no one will ever know who comes to The Sanctuary.

"The people who come here are in positions of power and leadership; or are high-profile in the media.

"Their confidentiality is extremely important to their reputation, their own personal sense of privacy

"The Sanctuary really takes that into account

"We're not a celebrity rehab where everyone

goes and the rehab is delighted to promote it.

"It is a very private, confidential service."

But despite being members of an exclusive A-crowd, Mr Goldberg said clients all have different needs and wants.

He said there was not one type of client that reached out to The Sanctuary.

"A large variety of people come to The Sanctuary, but they all want the

same thing, a place of safety to recover and recuperate with the best possible care" Mr Goldberg said.

"In the end people change their lives.

"They feel cared for and they feel safe to go to the places they have never wanted to go to, and to deal with the issues they have never been able to deal with before".

LUXURY REHAB

The Sanctuary at a glance

- founded in 2003
- costs upwards of \$28,000 a week
- 40 million-dollar homes leased throughout Byron Bay
- staff-to-client ratio of 15:1
- clients get access to personal chef, chauffeur, personal trainer, yoga instructor, etc
- nearly 90% success rate
- never more than four clients treated at once
- treatments for alcoholism, drug addiction, withdrawal, anxiety, depression, pain management, eating disorders
- recently launched an app that gives clients 24-hour access to the full array of services, from clinical plans to therapeutic treatments and what is on the day's lunch menu



We're not a celebrity rehab where everyone goes and the rehab is delighted to promote it. It is a very private, confidential service

— Elizabeth Williams



My vision for The Sanctuary was to create one of those places you dream about going - to feel healed, nurtured, held, and cared for.

— founder Michael Goldberg

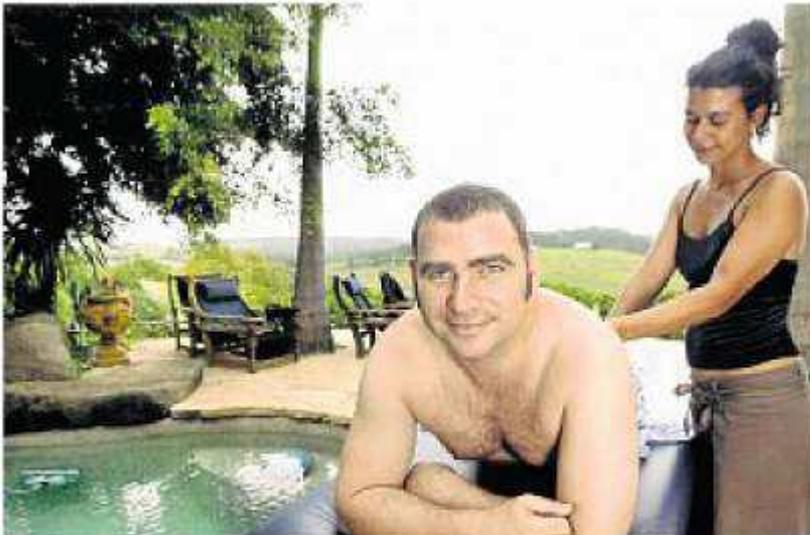


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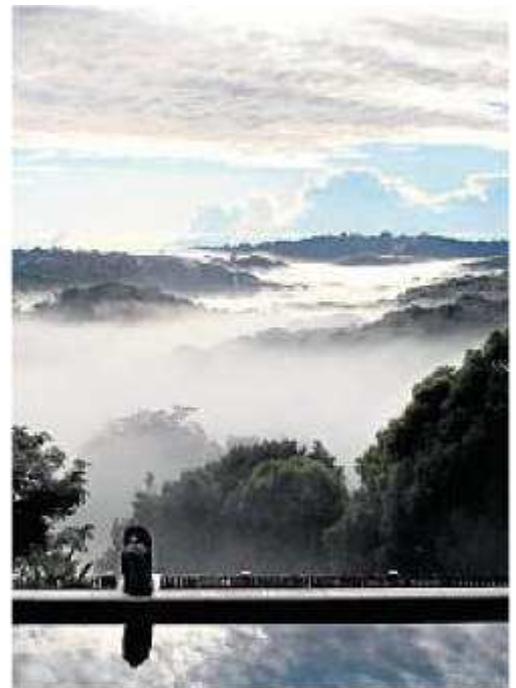


LAP OF LUXURY: One of The Sanctuary's 40 private homes leased for the use of its clients.

PHOTOS: ADAM WARD/CONTRIBUTED



REHAB ESCAPE: The Sanctuary's founder and managing director, Michael Goldberg, with therapist Tamara Green.



IDYLLIC SETTING: Byron Bay provides the backdrop for The Sanctuary's rehab program.



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RELAXING THERAPY:
The Sanctuary's Consta
teaching yoga on the
beach with a client.