

Australia's Waiting

SO WHY ARE YOU?



Australia. You could write a book about it. We did. The following pages are designed to give you a glimpse of the variety and adventure that's waiting for you; a tantalising taste of the wonders Down Under — and there are plenty of them. From the glitter of harborside Sydney to majestic Outback destinations like Uluru (Ayers Rock); from the breathtaking Great Barrier Reef to simply meeting the locals in an out-of-the-way bush pub, an Australian holiday is one you'll never forget. Australia is easy to get to, easy to travel around, easy to make yourself understood in (we speak the same language — well almost), easy on the eye and easy on the pocket. At the same time, it's like nothing you've ever seen or experienced before. It's a land as ageless as the moon or as modern as tomorrow. The choice is yours. This guide is a round-up of the sights and experiences awaiting you. It's also a list of practical information. So study it, dream on it, but wait no longer. Come Down Under and say G'day to your southern cousins. It's time to make the dream come true.



*S*ongs for
*S*ongs of
*L*ove

**March 10th
7pm**

Triad Theater
158 W. 72nd St.
(212) 362-2590

\$20 plus 2 drink minimum
Reservations Suggested!

Featuring Kim Blackmore, Leslie Collins, Joe Cereillo, Steve Geyer, Dana
Arish, Miguel Pereira, Ron Ramsay, Francesca Scarpa, JB Wing & Toni Zaffa
Producer and Director, Miguel Pereira
Musical Director, David Brunetti

100% of the profits will be donated to Songs of Love

For further information about Songs of Love
Visit www.songsoflove.org





In Hunter Valley Wine Country, Special Events and activities just keep coming. Wollombi's enchanting Folk Festival, the Broke Village Fair, The Brokenback Wine

Trail Weekend Affair, Carols in the Vineyards at Peppers Guest House, and so much more.



WHAT'S ON

Every quarter, *On the Hop in the Hunter* details the seasonal events and activities in Wine Country and other Hunter destinations. It is available free of charge from the Wine Country Visitor Centre along with a comprehensive list of day-to-day activities or *On The Hop in the Hunter* can be sent direct to your home for an annual subscription of \$10.



Phone (02) 4990 4477. Fax: (02) 4991 4518.
Email: <info@winecountry.com.au>



FRANK ZAFFA...

TONI ZAFFA talks about her past, present and future - from Highland dancing and musicals to potentially conquering the planet with her heartfelt of blues...

Rising star in the R&B scene, **Toni Zaffa**, is sensational. Her talents as a singer and performer are attracting some big names in the blues scene to share the stage with her - this just adds up to an overall blues-powered night out.

Musicians in the Toni Zaffa band are **Paul Demarco** and/or **Ralph Francis** (drums), **Phil Grove** (keyboards), **Rory McKibbin** (guitar) and **Tim Partridge** (bass). With this sort of support a killer evening is virtually guaranteed. Zaffa is supposedly new to the blues scene, even though she has a history of performing that goes back quite a way, but we'll let her tell the tale...

"I started in musicals in Queensland about 14 years ago. I started singing when I was ten, and I dabbled a while, and then in my early 20s I got into musicals and theatre productions.

"I also was into dancing - jazz ballet, tap and even a bit of Highland dancing, but don't say

anything about that, though (*sorry - couldn't help it!*). I love doing theatre as well, but it has to have music with it. What's attracted me to the live R&B circuit is that I get a lot of energy from the people, and that's basically what I work off - I get my adrenalin from the crowd.

"I had a blues band called **The Blues Nile** about ten years ago and that was short-lived. It had some of the guys out of the **King Bees**, **Nick Churkin** and **Harvey Fisk**. After that I went out of music for some time, and then picked it up about five years ago on a professional level. Five years ago I went into training with professor **Phillip Spawm** - he taught **Renee Geyer** and many other people, so I've been with him now for a while. Since he's taken me under his wing I've progressed from three-part harmony work. I've done a lot of front work, but I hadn't done harmony work, like back-up. At one stage **Marcia Hines** asked me to do *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and I auditioned but didn't get it because I didn't know how to do the harmonies. That set me on a path to work with other vocalists so I could get my ears tuned into harmonies, which led me to joining a band with two other girls called **Beehive Or Else** for a few years - they're still going.

"From there I went into some ten-piece bands that played mostly covers - I like the sound of brass, so we used to do **Aretha Franklin** and similar stuff. In my heart, though, I knew I wanted to get back into the blues. I'd been singing *Honky Tonk Women* since I was ten. I was always interested in that black sound for years, so I knew that this was all just preparation for me. I was then asked to do some back-ups for **Ian Moss** at an outdoor concert, and that was exciting.

"After **Ian Moss** I went out on my own - the **Toni Zaffa Band**. I had to do this because I felt like a

bird with its wings clipped. It seemed like more of a performance when I was doing the other stuff, like I was acting. Now, it's coming from my heart. When I sing the blues it's who I am - I'm alive and being myself, that's what means a lot to me. In the last six or seven months it's just taken off, I've been working with great players, I'm doing the material that I want to do, which means I love singing it.

"I also have a new manager in **Neil Mumme**, who has been really good, and he has launched me at **Johnno's Blues Bar** in Cairns about six months ago. That's been the best thing he ever did, because it's just rolled on from there. My next goal is to write material for an album which we're hoping to release at the end of the year, and from there to tour worldwide."

Your voice has been likened to **Etta James**, and you even seem to have a very similar stage presence to her. She must have been a big influence on you. Also, your confidence in performing verifies what you said earlier about doing the music you love - being 'from the heart'.

"There's a saying that the easiest thing to be is yourself, and that is what most of us fight against. People wear masks - all of us, including

'People wear masks - all of us, including myself. That's why I think I'm doing well now, because the mask is off'

myself. That's why I think I'm doing well now, because the mask is off and I'm just being myself, and people like that. And **Etta** has been a huge influence on me - her and **Anne Teagles**, with **Aretha** and **Tina Turner**."

What's your favourite record?

"**Etta James'** last one, *The Right Time*. It's the



Toni Zaffa: one from the heart

best she's ever done, every track is great.

The best R&B concert you've seen?

"It would have to be **James Brown** at the **Horvern**. Very funky."

Very funky indeed, and so is **Toni Zaffa**, so remember Saturday 17 July at the **Birkenhead Point Tavern**. Also on the bill is the **Shane Pacey Band**, **Tim Gaze** and **Josh Clayton-Smith**. Big Night.



● Toni Zaffa . . . "I was tired of getting on stage at one in the morning to sing in a smoky room."

Toni fights back for the big break

A FORMER Coolum girl has finally scored her big break in the hit musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Toni Zaffa nearly gave the showbusiness game away 15 years ago, but has now found herself on stage with the likes of Deni Hines.

Toni, one of few Australians in a majority New Zealander cast, plays one of three "soul sisters" who are on stage throughout the entire musical.

"It's wonderful. It's better than I had ever imagined," she said.

Toni said she had known

since the age of 10 that she wanted a career on stage, but gave away serious performing 15 years ago. She travelled, sold cars and worked as a maitre d' among other things before getting serious about performing six years ago.

Stints fronting several Sydney bands followed, then a solo career in which she toured with the likes of Spy v Spy and Renee Geyer, before she decided upon a career change.

"I was tired of getting on stage at one in the morning to sing in a smoky room and thought I would rather be per-

forming to a captive audience who weren't drunk, and live a healthy lifestyle," she said.

Toni, a former Nambour High student, settled in to eight months of drama studies before scoring the *Jesus Christ Superstar* role.

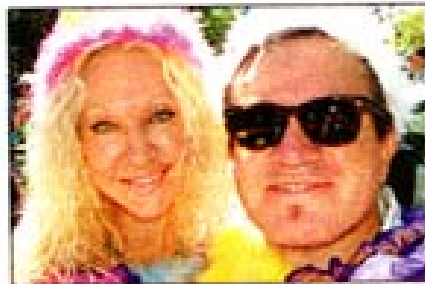
The audition was her eighth. She was originally chosen as a chorus member but quickly shifted into a bigger role.

Toni, whose parents, Andrew and Dulcie, still live at Coolum, will return to Brisbane for a three-week season starting on December 4.

Fans Flock to Hear Queen of the Noosa Jazz Festival Toni Zaffa From Coolum to New York

Coolum-born Toni now lives in New York City but loves to return home to visit and perform with her unforgettable, rich and velvety voice casting a spell every time she sings.

She has a multi-octave range and her jazz interpretations have been likened to Carmen McRae and Aretha Franklin. She has written and recorded for INXS and Tina Turner and performs throughout the USA from LA to New Orleans and New York. You may have caught her in the Australian national tour of Jesus Christ Superstar, where she played the Soul Sister.



ROYALTY: Noosa Jazz Festival King and Queen Toni Zaffa and George Washingmachine.