



## The Australians

Kerry Soorley, 50, and Carl Edwards, 50, from Tweed Heads, New South Wales

**THEIR TOUR** Sure, they take panoramic videos of the inside of a grocery store, but Aussie—and new grandma—Kerry, and her New Zealand-born partner, Carl, are not your typical wide-eyed tourists. They prefer hostels to hotels, ride the subway with aplomb and snicker at “fanny packs” (in Australia, that term refers to vagina lips). Still, before we even make it to their first pick—the top of tourist staple No. 1, the **Empire State Building**—Carl breaks a cardinal New York rule: Never photograph security checkpoints. A few minutes and a confiscated camera later, and Carl is thwarted again (“You aren’t going to hang over the edge like you did at the Grand Canyon, are you?” asks Kerry. “You can’t,” says Carl, sadly).

The Gray Line tour bus down to **Ground Zero** isn’t much better. Our guide points out such classic landmarks as “a sculpture of a large button and large needle, right here, right now!” before demanding a tip. If only he were as funny as Carl: At the *Charging Bull* stature, he photographs it from the rear, where photo ops are less obstructed and more idiosyncratic (“I think you should just grab his testicles,” he tells Kerry).

We venture further uptown for some veg-friendly snacking at the overpriced but very tasty **Soy Luck Club** (115 Greenwich Ave between Jane and W 12th Sts, 212-229-9191), and then to **Daffy’s** (50 Broadway at Exchange Pl, 212-422-4477), where Kerry finds the men’s shorts not short enough, but Carl happily “shop[s] like a woman” until I leave.

**TONY’S TOUR** When I meet up with them the next day, Kerry and Carl have already had their first of countless cups of coffee—it’s apparently three times more expensive in Australia. So I’m sure they’re ready for the **Museum of Sex** (233 Fifth Ave at 27th St, 212-689-6337). Initially baffled and a little embarrassed by the extremely graphic exhibits (“What does *smushed* mean?” asks Carl in front of a bug-crush-fetish display. “It must be some Jewish word”), they eventually take it all in stride (“Amputee wanna-bes!” crows Kerry. “I’ve heard about those!”). By the final gallery, two



hours later, Carl is merrily strapping Kerry to a flogging post, over the firm objections of the security guard.

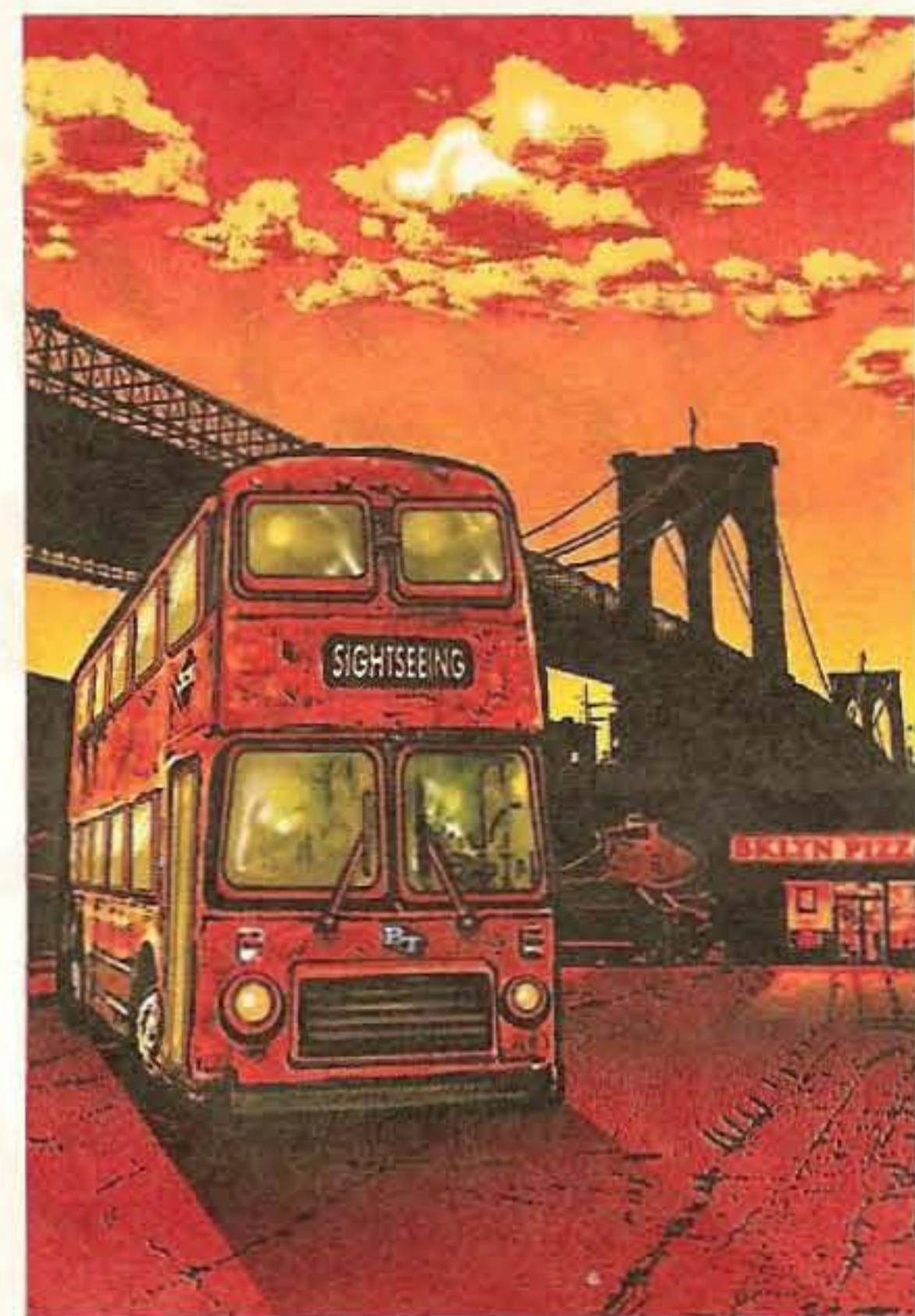
All the smut has worked up quite an appetite in us, so we ride the B train to the end of the line. At Brighton Beach, we lunch at **Cafe Glechik** (3159 Coney Island Ave at Brighton 10th St, Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, 718-616-0766), a Russian-Ukrainian diner where everything, from the green borscht to their knockout specialty, *vareniki*, is exquisite.

We walk it off along the boardwalk a few blocks away, stopping as we stroll to cheer on some excellent handball players equally skilled at trash-talking (in Russian) and to watch the sun sink over ghostly Astroland, beautiful in its weathered ruin.

Back in Manhattan we while away an hour at **L’Arte Del Gelato** (75 Seventh Ave at 15th St, 212-924-0803), where, if you have Kerry’s cojones and ask, they will translate the names of the 24 delicious flavors for you (we particularly like *pera* and *zucca*). Then on to the intimate **Barrow Street Theatre** (27 Barrow St at Bleecker St, 212-243-6262), where we catch *Gone Missing*, a charming set of vignettes—some musical—about loss.

Jet lag has caught up with Carl, who drifts off a little during the play—so we make speakeasy **Little Branch** (20 Seventh Ave at 12th St, 212-929-4360) our last stop of the night. All three of us are enchanted by the sleek, candlelit ambience, and live piano and drums make Kerry “feel like a flapper.” Maybe it’s the not-unpleasant medicinal smell in the air, but two drinks in, Kerry gestures to Carl with her steel swizzle stick. “Looks like a bit like one of those medical instruments from the museum today, eh, hon?” I take my cue, and bid them farewell. —Nicole Dixon

225,000  
Australians  
will visit NYC  
this year



## Straight into Brooklyn

Tourists visit the outer borough—and stay there

Once, tourists in Brooklyn were mostly people who needed better directions, Windsor Terrace resident Tom Botti recalls. “Usually it was someone who got confused on the subway and wanted help getting back to Manhattan.”

Now visitors are coming to Brooklyn on purpose. Botti is a guide with City Sights NY, which runs six bus tours into Brooklyn each day. Gray Line New York Sightseeing also has a hop-on, hop-off line of buses dedicated to the borough (with stops at the Botanic Garden and Fulton Mall).

“It’s a more real and culturally interesting part of the city,” says Miguel Garcia, who’s visiting the borough from Madrid. Another guest, Pat O’Brien of New Orleans, says he was a Brooklyn Dodgers fan when he was growing up in the 1950s.

The burgeoning interest has led to a spike in hotel construction. When the New York Marriott Brooklyn opened in 1998, it was the borough’s first new hotel in 68 years. Since then, Brooklyn has gained another 600 or so hotel rooms, and 2,000 more are on the way. “About once a week someone on one of the tours will say they plan to check out of their hotel in Manhattan and stay in Brooklyn instead,” Botti says. “They’re absolutely charmed by the place, and they figure they can save a few bucks to boot.” —Scot Meyer

For two more sets of tourists—including German shoppers and a Swedish mom and daughter—go to [timeoutnewyork.com/touristissue](http://timeoutnewyork.com/touristissue). And for a roundup of walking tours, see *Around Town*.