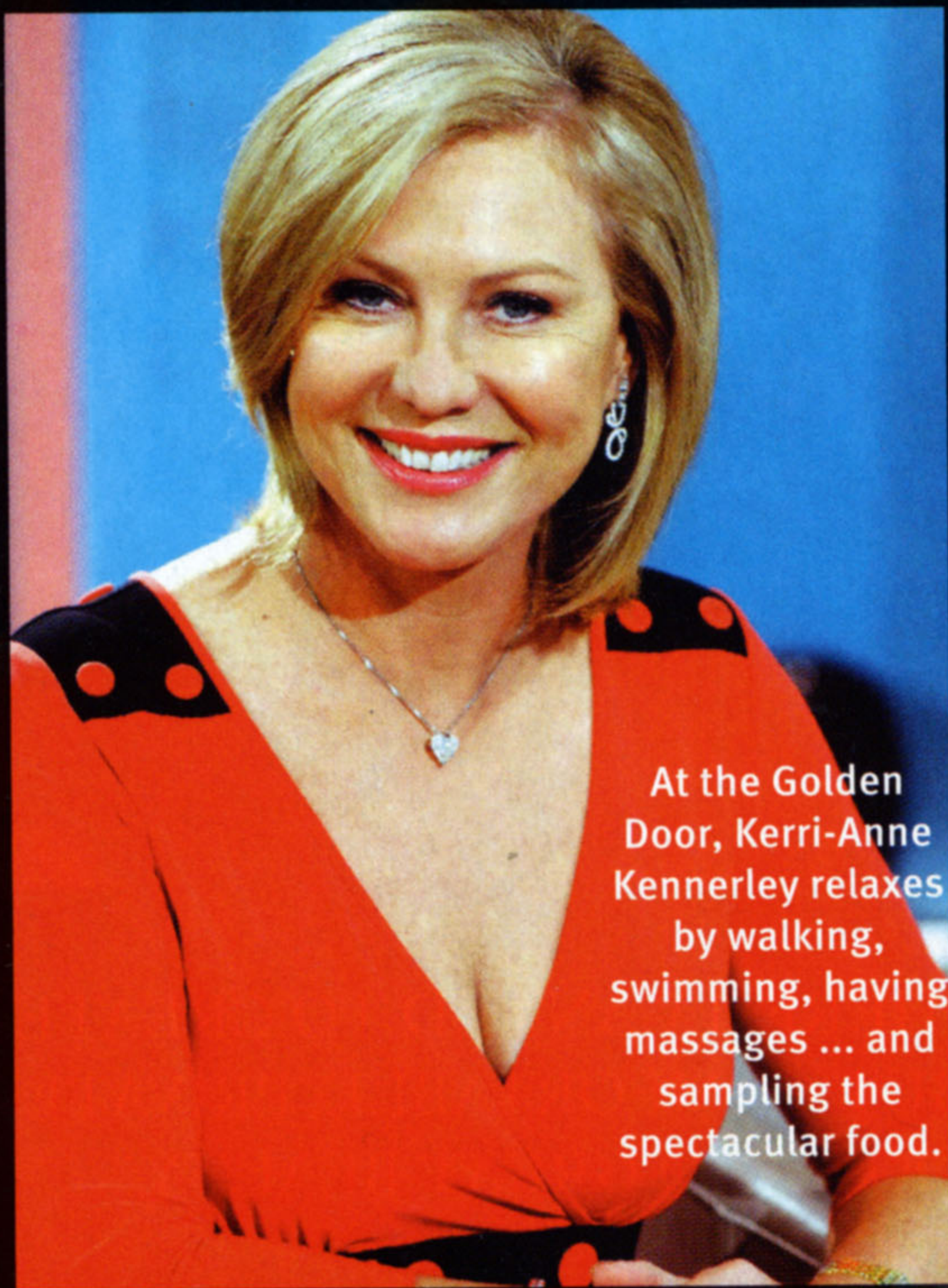




“WITH MY
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— KERRI-ANNE KENNERLEY.



At the Golden Door, Kerri-Anne Kennerley relaxes by walking, swimming, having massages ... and sampling the spectacular food.



Courtesy Nine Network.

In the evening, Olivia often joins the other guests in the main house for a glass of organic wine, followed by dinner with Gregg, a friend of 25 years and the retreat's general manager.

“That would be a perfect day ... That's when I feel totally relaxed and happy.”

■ **Allure:** Three delicious organic meals a day and a flexible approach, which allows guests to detox, de-stress or simply detach themselves from their busy schedules. “This is no boot camp,” says Gregg. “It's about choice. Gaia is still evolving to the needs of our guests.”

■ **Cost:** Gaia has a three-day Renew package (from \$1480), a five-day Refresh package (from \$2310) and a seven-day Restore package (from \$3080). All meals, yoga, tai chi, meditation, stretch and other daily activities are free. Spa treatments, unless otherwise stated, are extra.

■ **Details:** 933 Fernleigh Road, Brooklet, NSW; (02) 6687 1216; www.gaiaretreat.com.au

THE GOLDEN DOOR HEALTH RETREAT – ELYSIA

Hunter Valley, NSW, a two-hour drive from Sydney

Overlooking the vineyards that carpet the floor of the lower Hunter Valley in the shadow of the Brokenback mountain range, The Golden Door is a serious spa with 26

(wet and dry) rooms that offer a huge array of massages, facials, wraps and baths.

Dedicated to the principle that a new you will emerge at the end of your stay, this health retreat has an arsenal of treatments, diets, therapies and exercise programs to get you back in shape quickly. Activities include yoga, tai chi, body balance, tennis, cycling, walking and indoor hockey.

Kerri-Anne Kennerley, host of the top-rating Nine Network's *Mornings with Kerri-Anne*, loves to get totally involved with the rhythm of the place.

“Once I get there, I start the day with a long walk at 7am, do a stretch class at 9am, cardio at 11am, go for another walk at 4pm, swim at 5pm and have a massage at 6pm. And after I leave three-and-a-half days later, I always feel terrific.”

Kerri-Anne says she used to wonder why anyone would pay good money to go to a place where you can't indulge in eating and drinking anything you want.

“I'm that type of girl. I work hard and play hard. So this option didn't make sense.” A visit to The Golden Door converted her. “Now and again, you need to put yourself back on track, get on top of the bad habits and, because I never feel deprived at The Golden Door, I love it. The food is spectacular, I always feel satisfied and, what's better is, I never put on weight there.”

Guests have the opportunity to participate as much, or as little, as they like during their

visit (minimum stay is two days). However, for life-changing results, a five-day program (from \$2100 in a one-bed villa) that aims to equip you with a healthier lifestyle is what's recommended.

But there are rules: consumption of alcohol, tobacco or caffeine is forbidden. Crossing this line will lead to instant banishment. Even so, it must be said The Golden Door menu provides a diet so delicious and satisfying many guests report that any cravings soon subside.

There are dozens of treatments, including an à la carte menu of massages – including Swedish, Taoist chi nei tsang, Polynesian, aromatic, remedial, lymphatic, deep-tissue and pregnancy – as well as reflexology, trigger-point therapy and “non-touch” pranic healing.

Accommodation is impressive, with simple but stylish one-, two- and three-bedroom villas with all the mod cons you would expect in a five-star hotel.

■ **Allure:** Superbly professional and varied treatments, elegant décor, focused but sensitively managed programs. It fulfils the promise on its website to provide an environment where “the focus is on you and your health and wellbeing, 24 hours a day”.

■ **Cost:** Two-night stays are from \$1220 per couple, including meals and activities.

■ **Details:** Thompsons Road, Pokolbin, NSW 2320; tel (02) 1800 212 011; www.goldendoor.com **P**