

Lobster Tales – PUBLICITY ARTICLES

HIGHLIGHTS Television

★★★ **Lobster Tales** at 6 pm on the ABC.

“Most of us are only likely to have a close encounter with a lobster at the dinner table. For the people featured in this documentary, it’s a different kettle of crayfish. They are the harvesters, the exporters and gastronomes who are simply crazy about crustaceans and this is their story.” ***Sunday Herald Guide, Sydney 3/12/01***

“More than a delicacy. **This endearing program lets us meet these strange creatures** – and the stranger people who live by and for them.”

Sunday Telegraph TV Guide 3/12/00

CRAZE FOR CRAYS

“The great achievement of **Lobster Tales**, a delightfully oddball WA-made documentary on the **lucrative local crayfish industry (ABC, Sunday, 6pm)**, is that the crusty, red-skinned creatures above and below the sea are imbued with equal amounts of personality.

Director Celia Tait (working from a witty, well-researched script by Sarah Rossetti) **strikes such a lovely balance between the lobsters and fishermen that it’s more like a well-wrought tragi-comedy than a traditional nature doco**, with our sympathy swinging between the hunters and the hunted.

So strange are the fishermen, many of whom are millionaires who forgo the creature comforts while living and working on the tiny, inhospitable Abrolhos Islands during the eighth-month season, and so human are the lobsters (we see them giving birth, loving, fighting, leaving home) it’s a pity that this very amusing role reversal was not pushed just a little harder.

Nonetheless, after watching this strikingly photographed, jauntily scored documentary about some most lovably eccentric West Australians you won’t look at crayfish – or crayfishermen – the same way again.”

Mark Naglazas – The West Australian Today 1/12/01

EXTRA-TRICKY BUSINESS

“On a remote group of coral islands off the Perth coast an eclectic group of fishermen are proving old habits really do die hard,

On one island live the Danes, on another the Italians and on another the Australians – and each group is determined to keep their cultural ties to their respective homelands strong. The Danes have built themselves a sauna where, despite it being about 40 degrees outside, they like to sit and beat themselves about with eucalyptus branches. They would, of course, prefer to use birch branches, but these are a bit hard to come by in this part of the world.

The Italians, equally determined to keep up their cultural traditions, have built a church wherein you might think they all pray to God to get them off this horrible island and back to the land of La Dolce Vita.

And then we have the Australian fishermen who, not to be outdone, have built a pub, wherein they all get very drunk and brag about the size of their crayfish.

All three groups of fishermen feature in *Lobster Tales*, an ABC documentary that will change the way you look at these delicious crustaceans forever. Every summer hundreds of

thousands of lobsters march across the ocean floor for no apparent reason apart from, perhaps, that for the rest of the year they live under rocks in appallingly crowded conditions and probably just feel like a bit of fresh air. When they finally get where they're going, it's time for a little romance – lobster style, an unbelievable tricky business. For a lobster to mate successfully, not only must he somehow get his soft underbelly against a female's soft underbelly without taking someone's eye out, he mustn't be too rough. Now when you're whole body is one spiky shell with great ruddy claws protruding from it, this isn't easy, **but as you'll see in this fascinating documentary, they give it a bloody good go.**"

Sunday Mail, Brisbane 3/12/00

"Even for non-lobster-lovers, this quirky feature provides plenty of interest, especially since it was filmed mostly in WA. Beginning with the Blessing of the Fleet at Fremantle, a day marking the opening of the cray season, it is filled with a clutch of fisherfolk who muse on the puzzling behaviour of lobsters, the reasons why they hunt these feeler-waving crustaceans for seven and a half months each year, the crayfish hunter's lifestyle and other deep subjects. Among the absorbing footage is a look at the very basic settlements on the Abrolhos Islands (which one fisherman describes as "a dump"), the tale of a church built by the Italian community on one of the islands and a lone violinist, but the highlight is the **underwater photography by Leighton de Barros which is up-close and stunning.** It includes crayfish on their long migratory marches, crays mating, live crays being exported, crays being devoured, and sharks turning down the chance of a crayfish dinner in favour of the bait used to attract crays. Dare we say, catch it?"

CYCLOPS The West Magazine, The West Australian Newspaper 2/12/00