

The Gold Coast & Surfers Paradise

The Gold Coast refers to the 75 kilometre stretch of golden sandy beaches, starting in Queensland's south eastern corner, at the border town of Coolangatta. The Gold Coast is Australia's version of Las Vegas, attracting visitors who want to party, have fun, and be seen at all the coolest beaches and bars! It is a city of sun, raging surf, a well-developed high-rise skyline, sparkling waterway and canal system, glitzy tourist attractions, theme parks, and a pumping nightlife. The Gold Coast has a population of 422,000 people, which grows daily as more and more people move to this vibrant corner of QLD.

The Gold Coast airport, based at Coolangatta, is serviced by Qantas, Virgin Blue and Jetstar. The Gold Coast Tourist Shuttle operates door-to-door transfers from Coolangatta airport to most types of Gold Coast accommodation. Regular shuttles run from the train stations down to Surfers and beyond.

The Gold Coast is Queensland's most popular tourism location and has over 13,000 guest rooms available. Accommodation options range from budget backpacker hostels to luxurious 5 star resorts and hotels. The most common style of accommodation on the Gold Coast is 3 and 4 star self-contained apartments.

Sights & Attractions

Some of the Gold Coast's most popular attractions include its famous beaches (especially Surfers Paradise beach), forested Burleigh Heads National Park, Currumbin Sanctuary, Fleays Wildlife Park, Australian Outback Spectacular, the Q1 Building, the Gold Coast Art Gallery, and theme parks such as Sea World, Dreamworld, Warner Brothers. Movie World, WhiteWater World, and Wet'n'Wild Water World.

The Gold Coast has kilometres of stunning coastline with internationally renowned surf beaches including famous Surfers Paradise, Broadbeach, South Stradbroke Island, Coolangatta, The Spit, Main Beach, Mermaid Beach, Palm Beach, Nobby Beach, Miami, Burleigh Beach, Burleigh Heads, Tallebudgera Beach, Curruminbin Beach, Tugun, Bilinga, Kirra, Greenmount, Rainbow Bay, Snapper Rocks and Froggies Beach. Although often thought of as part of the Gold Coast, Duranbah beach (one of the world's best known surfing breaks) is actually across the New South Wales state border in the Tweed shire.

You will also find some lovely beaches along the Gold Coast's 860 kilometres of tidal waterways. Popular inland beaches include Paradise Point, Southport, Budds Beach, Santa Barbara, Marine Stadium, Currumbin Alley, Tallebudgera Estuary, Jacobs Well, Jabiru Island, Boykambil, Harley Park Labrador and Evandale Lake.

Surfers Paradise, the Gold Coast's most famous and arguably most beautiful beach, is also known as the main hub in Australia for all-night

drinking, partying, and dancing. Take a stroll along Cavill Avenue, right in the heart of Surfers Paradise, with its long strip of shops, cafes, restaurants, bars, and nightclubs, active day and night. It has character despite being a little tacky!

The Gold Coast is also renowned for its scantily clad "Meter Maids", who dispense coins into the parking meters along Surfers Paradise to help visitors avoid tickets being issued for expired parking. In tiny gold bikinis these tanned beauties are a very popular part of the culture in this tourist friendly and glamorous city!

For spectacular views visit the Q1 building, the world's highest residential building standing at a massive 322.5 metres high. Towering above the skyline of Surfers Paradise it offers fantastic views of the area on a clear day, from Brisbane to Byron Bay, from its observation deck (on level 77).

History

As early as 1884, the Gold Coast region had gained a reputation for being an ideal holiday destination with its beautiful beaches and warm climate. In the 1920s James Cavill built the iconic Surfers Paradise Hotel and the town, previously called Elston, was renamed after the hotel to attract more tourists. The development boom of the 1950's saw the surrounding area become known as the Gold Coast.

The Gold Coast is always busy during summer but it gets absolutely full during "Schoolies Week" (mid-November to mid-December), the Billabong Pro surfing competition (February), the IndyCar series (early October) and the Christmas and New Year Holidays (end December and all January).

Climate

With its sunny subtropical climate the Gold Coast rarely experiences temperatures below 20 (Degrees Celsius). November to December and April to May is the wetter, hotter, and more humid part of the year, while the real wet season (mostly affecting the coastal areas further north) is between January and March. This is also the season for the cyclones that occasionally frequent this coastline. Summer sees daily temperatures of approximately 28 °C.

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