

# A COMPLETE GUIDE ON DISCOVERING SUNSHINE COAST



# ABSTRACT

The Sunshine Coast is a stunning region known for its pristine beaches, lush hinterland, and relaxed coastal charm. This guide offers an overview of the best places to explore, from scenic drives and nature trails to vibrant markets and seaside dining. Whether you're a visitor or a local rediscovering your backyard, this guide helps you experience the true essence of the Sunshine Coast.

# INTRODUCTION

Nestled along Queensland's southeastern coastline, the Sunshine Coast blends natural beauty with a laid-back lifestyle that captures the heart of every traveller. From Noosa's world-class beaches to the tranquil Glass House Mountains, every corner tells a story of adventure and serenity. This complete guide explores must-visit destinations, hidden gems, and local experiences that make the Sunshine Coast one of Australia's most beloved regions in Sippy Downs.

## I. Guide to the Sunshine Coast

**Whether you're seeking action-packed, nature-filled adventures or a relaxing beachside escape, the Sunshine Coast delivers the best of both worlds.**

Stretching for more than 60km (40mi) along the Queensland coast, the Sunshine Coast is as vast as it is varied. White sand beaches and pristine waterways sit alongside lush rainforests and Heritage-listed national parks, with charming historic villages sprinkled throughout. You'll be spoiled for choice with fresh local seafood, unique dining experiences and many wonderful wineries and breweries. Top it off with a subtropical climate and exceptional nature experiences and you've found an ideal year-round destination.





## **II. Things to do on the Sunshine Coast with kids**

**Hang out with amazing animals, discover fun-filled attractions or spend some time getting back to nature. Here are the best things to do on the Sunshine Coast with kids.**

Looking for things to do on the Sunshine Coast with kids? Queensland's Sunshine Coast is a slice of Aussie heaven. It's overflowing with iconic family experiences and local secrets. So whether you're in search of a relaxed beach break, a hinterland escape or a little wildlife action, Sunny Coast has something for you in Sippy Downs.

### **1. Bould Move**

Bould Move is a bouldering centre with an indoor, air-conditioned space to rock climb without ropes, known as bouldering.

Bouldering is ridiculously fun, super engaging and highly addictive.

Bould Move has a dedicated kids wall set up to challenge and build kids climbing skills. There are no session times or need to book. Test your problem-solving skills and climb as a family or watch the kids play from the café, Bould Bean. Kids must be supervised whilst climbing.

Kids can book into half-day workshops during the school holidays to learn the best bouldering techniques.

### **2. Australia Zoo**

Australia Zoo is one of the most interactive wildlife conservation facilities in Australia, if not the world.

The zoo provides ample opportunities to snap selfies with Skippy, cuddle koalas, chat with a cockatoo and sidle up with a snake. Or, spot Robert and Bindi coaxing crocs in the Crocoseum.

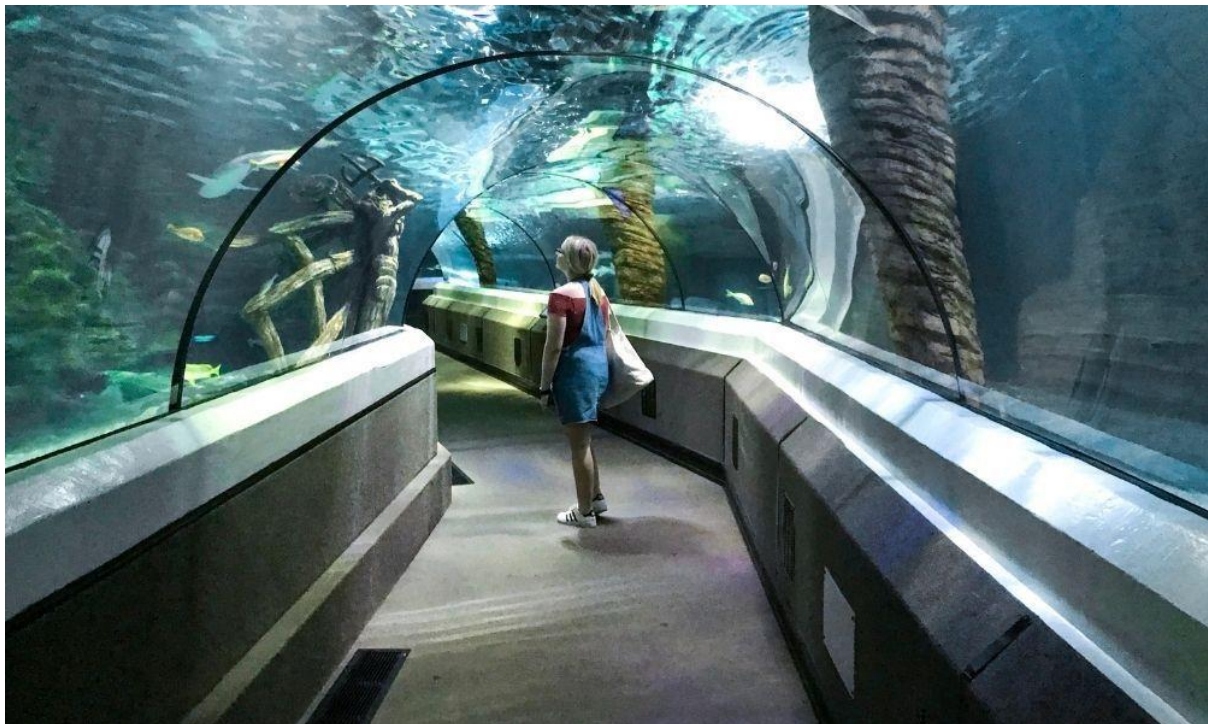
Check out giraffes, rhinos, zebras and cheetahs at the African Savannah, and majestic tigers and red pandas in South-East Asia.

Visit Bindi's Island, where you can explore a three-storey treehouse with sweeping views of Australia Zoo, and see ring-tailed lemurs, giant Aldabran Tortoises, colourful macaws and more! There are also plenty of Australian favourites on display. Guests will have the chance to pat a koala and feed a kangaroo.

During the school holidays kids can participate in the Zookeeper for a Day program, getting hands-on with wildlife to see what it's really like to be a zookeeper.

### 3. SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast

No trip to the Sunshine Coast is complete without visiting SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast. This multi-award-winning, year-long attraction is situated at Mooloolaba Wharf, just moments from the main Esplanade in Sippy Downs



SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast is home to thousands of marine and freshwater animals. These include sharks, crocodiles, seals, turtles, stingrays, tropical fish and more.

Explore 15 fun and interactive animal zones across three levels. The tidal touch pool, seahorse sanctuary, and jellyfish kingdom are fan-favourites. Plus, don't miss the majestic grey nurse sharks in the one-of-a-kind Ocean Tunnel.

Kids over the age of 13 can take part in a Seal Swim. Here, they can get whisker-close to the gorgeous marine mammals while they learn about the conservation issues surrounding them.

The daily sea lion show is held at the poolside auditorium. Rescued fur seals and sea lions perform 'tricks' designed to keep them engaged and stimulated in captivity.

Wander through the awesome shark and ray tunnel. Watch cute fairy penguins on rock slides. Marvel at graceful sea horses, leafy sea dragons and luminescent dancing jellyfish.

#### 4. Kondalilla Falls

Another great thing to do on the Sunshine Coast with Kids is to spend time in nature.

Kondalilla Falls is one of the most beautiful spots on the Sunshine Coast, and the perfect place to indulge in a little bushwalking. There are several trails in the area, but the easy 1.7km Picnic Creek Circuit works best for most families.

First things first – pack your swimmers! Kondalilla is home to peaceful waterholes perfect for a post-hike dip! Take in the lush greenery and finish off with a well-earned picnic.

#### 5. Amaze World – Bellingham Maze

Amaze World is an enchanting secret garden of puzzles, riddles, tricks and turns. This Sunshine Coast hinterland world of wonder features a Lilly Pilly hedge maze, a nature playground, and a water play area. Plus, a new augmented reality treasure hunt experience for visitors to dive into. There's also mini golf and a timber maze.





There's also a further five puzzles and mazes, new augmented reality experiences, and a commercial kitchen and lighting for night-time events on the way. With so much to do, you're sure to get lost in the fun of it all!

## 6. The Big Pineapple

As one of Australia's iconic 'big things', you can't visit the Sunshine Coast without ticking the Big Pineapple off your list. The Big Pineapple boasts iconic, heritage-listed BIG fun. Families can also explore the process of pineapple farming from start to factory. Then, finish the day with a fruit-filled sundae in Sippy Downs.

While you're there, jump aboard the heritage-listed Pineapple Train, departing every half hour, for a journey on the biggest, curviest and steepest climbing track Queensland Railway has to offer.

## 7. TreeTop Challenge ropes course

Enjoy the extreme thrills at the new TreeTop Challenge ropes course. Located at the Big Pineapple the two-kilometre course weaves through lush rainforest. There are a variety of challenges including a 120-metre zipline and barrels of fun.

## 9. Caloundra Lighthouses



For something a bit different, why not take a step back in time and set foot inside a real lighthouse? Caloundra Lighthouses are a heritage-listed pair of lighthouses perched on a ridge overlooking scenic Caloundra. 'Friends of Caloundra Lighthouses' is the enthusiastic and knowledgeable community group that facilitates the open days. Visitors are allowed to climb the lighthouse stairs, look around and step out on the balcony.

## 10. Noosa National Park

Once you've checked out the resident koalas at Australia Zoo, head to Noosa National Park to try your luck at seeing some in their own habitat. This breathtaking coastal setting is renowned for koala sightings. But you're also likely to see lizards, pythons and all kinds of birds.

The park's Coastal Track takes around four hours return and follows the ocean. Keep an eye out for sea turtles, dolphins and whales during their annual migration season from June to November.

Be on the lookout for treasures washed in from Laguna Bay dotting the shoreline. Beachcombing is an essential adventure at Little Cove. Follow it up with a dip at Tea Tree – a perennial favourite beach.



If you haven't visited Noosa National Park before, spend some time with the kids poring over the signboards at the park's entrance to learn about the Kabi Kabi

people, Noosa's Traditional Custodians. A yarnning circle nearby is another opportunity to connect with the park's rich Indigenous culture. You can also learn more about the wildlife that lies here. This includes the koalas that can often be spotted snoozing in the treetops of the fragrant gums.

## 11. Noosa Ferry Ride

Noosa's renowned for its stunning labyrinth of waterways, so experience it with a cute tug-style Noosa Ferry. An all-day pass allows you to hop on and off at your leisure at Noosa Heads, Noosa Sound, Noosaville and Tewantin.

It's a scenic way to see the interior of Noosa, cruising past multi-million-dollar homes and admiring the topography. The kids get to enjoy the thrills of spotting myriad birds and wildlife that call the Noosa River home.

In Noosaville, find what's called the best 'floating fish'n'chips'. Moored on the river, Noosa Boathouse does indeed welcome seafarers to board its floating restaurant, but if you prefer dry land, you can also opt for takeaway and enjoy the catch-of-the-day sitting shoreside instead.

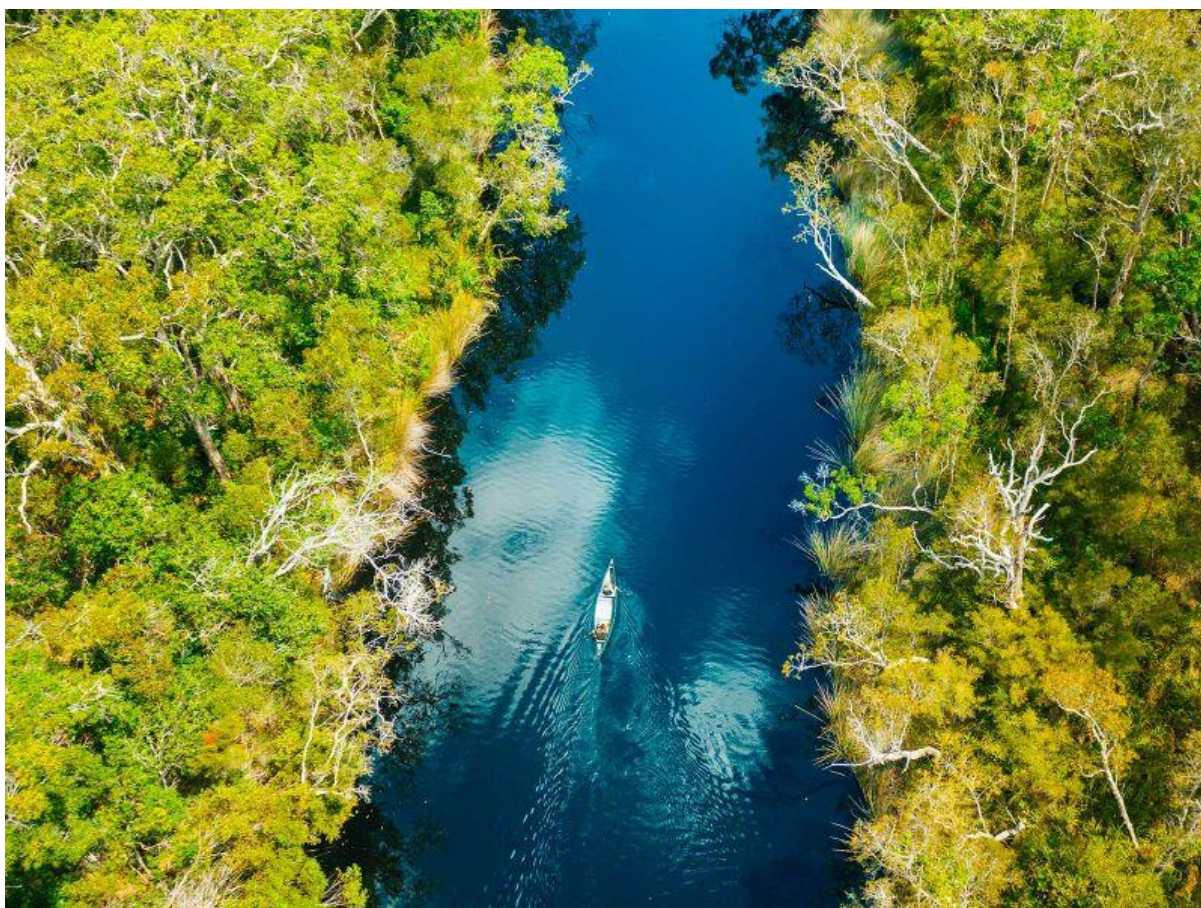
On Friday evenings, families flock to the same spot for a fish'n'chip fiesta complete with live music alongside the waterside playground. It's the perfect way for kids to enjoy an end-of-the-week play.

## 12. Explore the Everglades

For a different side to Noosa, stay at Habitat Noosa Everglades EcoCamp, a 26-hectare National Park wilderness nestled on the edge of Lake Cootharaba.

With a selection of camp sites (powered and unpowered) or glamping- style accommodation – plus Coothara BAR & Bistro and Eco Brewing Company serving 11 beers brewed on-site at the microbrewery – it's luxe camping located within the ethereal gateway to the Noosa Everglades.





It's one of only two everglades in the world (and the only one without alligators), and kids are welcome to join a guided kayak tour with Kanu Kapers through Lake Cootharaba's still, mirror-like waters.

A refreshing dip afterwards in the tea tree-infused waters will do wonders for your skin. There's also a chance to meet the resident giant catfish who will likely give the kids a thrill.

### 13. Double Island off-roading

A visit to Double Island Point on Noosa's North Shore is a chance to take the kids on Australia's longest sand highway.

If you don't have your own 4WD, you can join a private 4WD tour to get fully immersed in this pristine aquatic oasis, visiting Honeymoon Bay, Double Island Point and Great Sandy National Park.

The north shore waters are a haven for bottlenose dolphins, turtles and whales. Sea kayaking tours are a great way to see them.

Double Island Point is also home to Australia's longest wave. So if your family is full of keen surfers, be sure to pack the boards.

A permit is required to drive on the sand, and you'll need to consider tide times as it's a low-tide-only drive for high-clearance 4WDs – but it's a spectacular way to see Noosa's wild side.

## 14. Eat your way through Noosa

There are so many reasons to come to Noosa, but food always polls as a favourite within my hungry family. It's a foodie's paradise, and home to the renowned Noosa Eat & Drink Festival; kids are not overlooked.

There are plenty of places to fuel little tummies that are also kind on the holiday hip pocket. For the cheap and cheerful, Hastings Street Bakery's moreish pies, pastries, cakes and slices can be devoured street-side or spread out on a blanket overlooking Noosa's Main Beach.

Blended Health Bar on Hastings Street is my family's favourite for açai bowls, juices, smoothies and healthy 'nice-cream', which we eat for breakfast – because it's just that good.

## 15. Eumundi Markets

The Eumundi Markets are held on Wednesday and Saturday mornings in Eumundi's main street. The twice-weekly market shines a light on the vibrant local arts and crafts scene. Browse over 250 stalls offering handicrafts, local produce and many other delights.

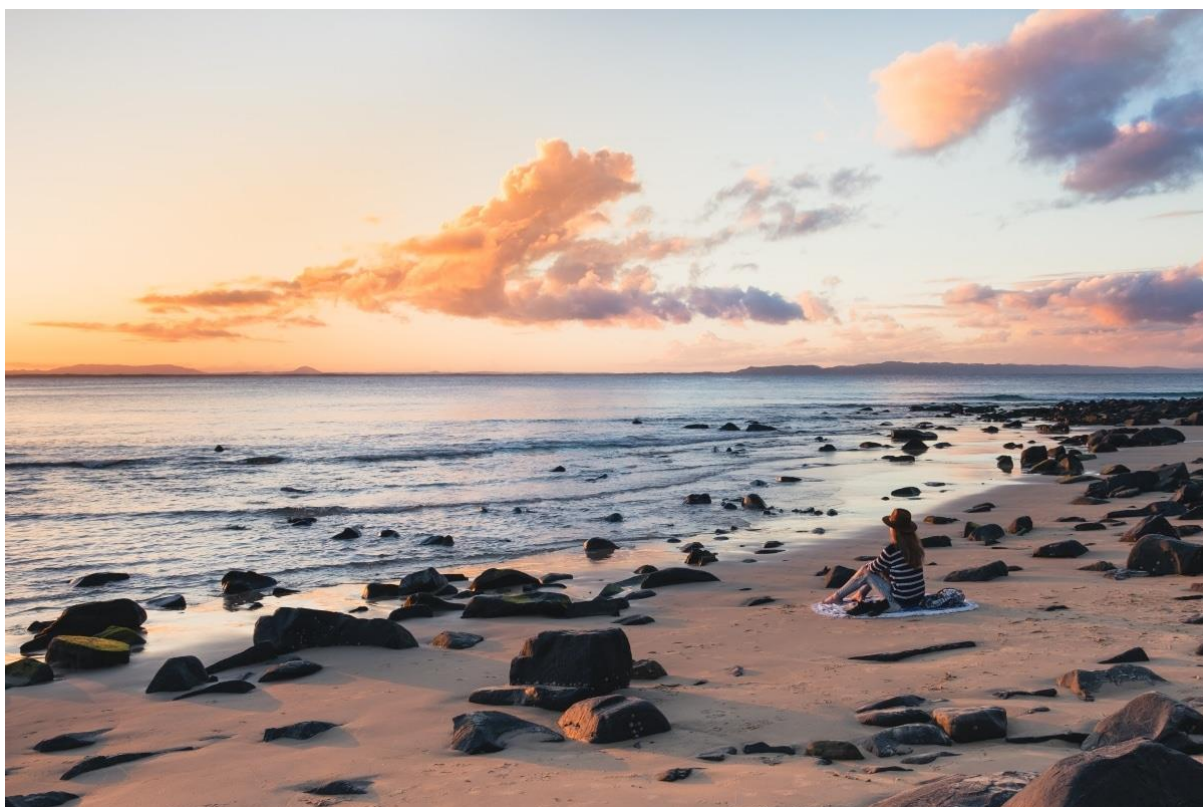
# **III. 10 Awesome Reasons to Live on the Sunshine Coast**

While there are countless amazing reasons to study and live on the Sunshine Coast, here are our top 10.

## Great weather

The Sunshine Coast is so named for a reason – because of its sunny and warm climate! The region has a subtropical climate with mild winters and hot summers.

During the summer months (December to February), temperatures typically range from 20°C to 29°C, with heatwaves sometimes reaching over 30°C (86°F). The summer season is also known for its high levels of humidity and frequent rainfall.



In the winter months (June to August), you can expect temperatures usually from lows of 10°C to highs of 22°C. Despite the cooler weather, the winter season is still mild and comfortable, meaning you can still enjoy a range of outdoor activities.

### A multicultural community

The Sunshine Coast has a diverse population, making it an ideal place for international students to immerse themselves in a multicultural community.

The Sunshine Coast Council even offers a Multicultural Welcome Hub on its website, complete with ample resources to help new arrivals settle in. Here you'll find migrant stories, information on translation and interpretation services, and community groups you can join.

### Quality education

The Sunshine Coast has some of Australia's best academic opportunities, housing the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC) as well as vocational training providers, such as TAFE Queensland.

Named the top Queensland university in the 2022 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, UniSC has been long recognised for its commitment to sustainability and social equity. Additionally, according to the Good Universities Guide 2022/23, the university has 13 five-star ratings across key areas of student satisfaction, including teaching quality, overall experience, learner resources and student support.



Serving communities for 140 years, TAFE Queensland is one of the most renowned training providers in Australia and boasts an 89.9 per cent student satisfaction rate.

## Stunning scenery

Famous for its stunning beaches, lush greenery and picturesque landscapes, there's no shortage of beautiful outdoor sights to see on the Sunshine Coast.

The region houses some of the best beaches in Queensland, Kings Beach in Caloundra, Coolum Beach and Main Beach in Noosa.

While there, don't skip a trip to Noosa National Park. This natural reserve covers 4,000 hectares and features stunning coastal views, lush rainforests and diverse wildlife. Its scenic coastal walks and beautiful beaches make it a hotspot among locals and tourists alike.

Without question, some of the most memorable sites on the Sunshine Coast can be found among the Glasshouse Mountains. Across these 11 peaks, you'll find an array of walking tracks, waterholes, waterfalls and more – each one as breathtaking as the last.

## Incredible food and drink

Whether you're in the mood for fresh seafood, delicious coffee or tasty cocktails, the Sunshine Coast has it all. The region has a thriving food and drink scene, with a wide range of cafés, restaurants, bars and breweries ready for you to explore in Sippy Downs.

As a starting point, check out any of the 25 best restaurants on the Sunshine Coast.

## A hub for the arts

The coast is home to an amazing selection of art facilities along the art gallery trail.

On the trail, you'll find the Caloundra Regional Gallery, the Montville Art Gallery, Ben Messina Photography, Art Nuvo and so many more. Whether you're eager to see paintings, photography or anything in between, you're sure to find what you're looking for along this trail.



## Easy access to major cities

The Sunshine Coast has the easy-going lifestyle that most regional areas are known for – but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy city life while living here.

The coast is a stone's throw from Brisbane and the Gold Coast, both of which offer bustling amenities and a vibrant way of life.

The coast's proximity to these major cities means it's easier for you to explore more of the country during your time here.

## Regional visa opportunities

Because the Sunshine Coast is a part of regional Australia, those who study here could be eligible to apply for certain visas.

For instance, while most international students are eligible for one Temporary Graduate (subclass 485) visa, eligible students who studied at a regional institution can receive a second one under the Post-Study Work stream. This means you could be permitted to stay in Australia for an extra one to two years if you study on the Sunshine Coast.

## Unique landmarks

As an international student, you likely want to explore all the interesting – and eccentric – landmarks Australia has to offer. Lucky for you, you'll find one of the most unique on the Sunshine Coast: the Big Pineapple!

Here you'll find the titular giant pineapple, as well as a TreeTop Adventure course, zoo and souvenir shop. This diverse selection of activities means there's something here for everyone.

### Friendly locals

The locals on the Sunshine Coast are known for their friendly and inclusive nature. As a result, international students will feel comfortable and at home in this community from the moment they arrive.

There are several ways you can engage with these welcoming locals, such as by visiting a nearby community centre or exploring volunteering opportunities on the coast.

## **IV. Sunshine Coast Towns**

The Sunshine Coast is a sprawling region covering part of the north-eastern coast of Australia. As a famous beachside location, the Sunshine Coast has a number of beautiful seaside towns.

From bustling city centres to sleepy beach towns, the Sunshine Coast has a huge range of places to stay which will suit every traveller.

Noosa Heads (commonly referred to as just 'Noosa') is one of the most popular holiday destinations on the Sunshine Coast. With pristine beaches, warm oceans and many natural attractions, Noosa is the perfect location to enjoy a relaxing beachside holiday. Located on the northern border of the Sunshine Coast, Noosa has all the amenities you will need during your holiday including cafes, restaurants, bars, clothing stores, supermarkets, plus a huge range of accommodation options.

Mooloolaba is a popular suburb on the Sunshine Coast, known for its pristine beaches, surfing competitions, wildlife and many scenic attractions. Mooloolaba is also one of the largest suburbs on the Sunshine Coast and has some of the Sunshine Coast's best dining, shopping and golf courses.

Maroochydore lies in the heart of the Sunshine Coast and is a major commercial area of the Sunshine Coast which serves as the perfect launching point for visitors to travel throughout Queensland. With over 200 restaurants, cafes and shops as well as a cinema, pristine beaches and a large range of accommodation options, Maroochydore has everything you will need on your next holiday to the Sunshine Coast.

Between Tin Can Bay and the Pacific Ocean lies Rainbow Beach, a vibrant coastal town named for its multi-coloured sand dunes. Rainbow beach is the perfect launching pad for those with a taste for adventure and who would like to swim with dolphins, explore Fraser Island and see the nearby rainforests.



There are so many Sunshine Coast towns to choose from, so click the links below to explore the range of options before you book!



## Mooloolaba

Mooloolaba is a popular suburb on the Sunshine Coast, known for its pristine beaches, surfing competitions, wildlife and many scenic attractions. Located just 100kms north of Brisbane, Mooloolaba is one of the largest suburbs on the Sunshine Coast and has some of the Sunshine Coast's best dining, shopping and golf courses.



## Noosa Heads

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## Maroochydore

Maroochydore lies in the heart of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. Named 'Maroochy' by locals, Maroochydore is a major commercial area of the Sunshine Coast, which serves as the perfect launching point for visitors to travel throughout Queensland.



## Caloundra

The Sunshine Coast begins at Caloundra, located on the Pacific coast between Currumbundi and Golden Beach. Known for its laid-back community, marvellous beaches and quality accommodation, Caloundra is a popular weekend destination for those who live in Brisbane and other nearby localities.



## Kawana Waters

Kawana Waters is a small district in the Sunshine Coast, situated between Maroochydore and Caloundra, facing the Coral Sea. It's named after the original real estate development name, though the official suburbs encompass Birtinya, Bokarina, Buddina, Minyama, Parrearra, Warana, and Wurtulla.



## Caboolture

Caboolture is a beautiful coastal suburb that serves as the entry point for the Sunshine Coast among many travellers visiting this region.





## Alexandra Headland

Alexandra Headland offers the complete package of surf, sand and sun to visitors of the Sunshine Coast with a beautiful pristine beach right at its doorstep. Located between the popular suburbs of Mooloolaba and Maroochydore, Alexandra Headland is a quaint historic town with many amenities for visitors.



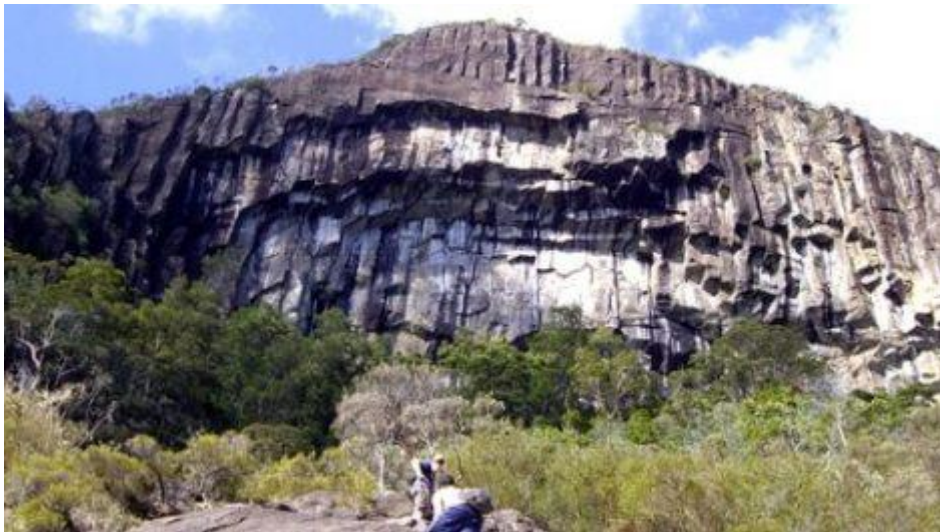
## Gympie

Gympie is a regional city located along the Bruce Highway, just 60kms northwest of Noosa Heads. Known as a historic town due to its goldfield, there are several historic buildings located here.



## Maleny

Maleny is a picture-perfect hinterland town in the Blackall Range, located just 30 minutes drive west of Caloundra. Maleny is popular with weekenders from Brisbane or the coast to see the various specialty stores and...



## Beerwah

Beerwah is a town in the Sunshine Coast hinterland, located just 30 minutes west of the popular beachside city of Caloundra. With many activities and attractions, including Australia Zoo and the Glass House Mountains...



## Eumundi

Eumundi is a historical township located about 20 kilometres west of Noosa Heads and approximately 110 kilometres north of Brisbane. Eumundi is famous for the Eumundi Markets, a premier artisan market held twice weekly...



## Fraser Island

Fraser Island is a famous destination north of the Sunshine Coast, and for a good reason. This World Heritage-listed island is more than 123 kilometres long and 184,000 hectares large, making it the largest sand island...





## Rainbow Beach

Rainbow Beach lies between Tin Can Bay and the Pacific Ocean, a vibrant coastal town named for its multi-coloured sand dunes. Rainbow beach is the perfect launching pad for those with a taste for adventure and who would like to swim with dolphins, explore Fraser Island and see the nearby rainforests.



## Bli Bli

The township of Bli Bli is a popular destination for wetland excursions in Queensland. This township is close to the renowned Maroochy Wetland Sanctuary, home to some of the best swamps and tropical mangroves in...



## Sippy Downs

Sippy Downs is one of the most affordable yet thriving suburbs on the Sunshine Coast. Surrounded by the scenic Mooloolaba River National Park, beautiful botanic gardens and spacious playgrounds, the suburb is known for its tranquil and eco-rich charm. It is home to the University of Sunshine Coast, public and private schools, cafes, shopping precincts and art galleries.

The region has been developing fast and has attracted the settlement of young families and working professionals. The median price for a three-bedroom house is \$830,000, and the weekly rent is \$675, making it a fun-filled suburb. If you are at the end of your tenancy, feel free to reach us. Leave all the stress to your most trusted bond cleaning team in Sippy Downs and streamline your move-out process.

For further information about this suburb, you can explore the link given below :-

<https://www.bondcleaninginsunshinecoast.com.au/sippy-downs/>

## **V. Sunshine Coast Accommodation Bookings**

Once upon a time (in fact not all that long ago) the Sunshine Coast was a secret holiday spot for Brisbane residents who wanted to enjoy quiet weekends away at the beach without the glitz and shabby glamour of the Gold Coast. A lot has changed

since those halcyon days and the Sunshine Coast is now one of Australia's favourite getaway locations for romantic weekends, family holidays and surf safaris.

The region is still much quieter and more peaceful than the Gold Coast (it's still possible to wander around Noosa National Park on a sunny Sunday afternoon without seeing another soul), but once you head out for dinner at a Sunshine Coast restaurant or for a spot of shopping in your favourite boutique, you'll appreciate the fact that the Sunshine Coast has truly come of age as a world-class holiday destination.

Sunshine Coast holiday accommodation is up there with the best, and we've got a whole range of online deals available below. You can also get an airport transfer to where ever you're staying from the Sunshine Coast or Brisbane Airports.

### Alexandra Headland Accommodation



Located on a beautiful spot on what is known as the Sunshine Strip, 'Alex' (as it is known by the locals) is a coastal community situated between Mooloolaba and Maroochydore. The town's laid back atmosphere and inviting beaches is perfect for surfers, swimmers and holiday makers.

### Bribie Island Accommodation



Being the only Queensland island connected to the mainland by bridge, Bribie Island gives visitors the choice of several village style idyllic locations. The sun shines for



most of the year due to the subtropical climate making Bribie Island the perfect holiday escape.

### Caloundra Accommodation



Caloundra is fast becoming recognised as one of Australia's fastest growing holiday destinations. The township is located at the southern end of Queensland's stunning Sunshine Coast. The region stretches from the cool green of the hinterland mountains to the crisp blue and white of the beaches.

### Coolum Accommodation



Coolum provides the perfect seaside escape for a lazy holidays. The area is well known for its surf beaches and its main beach is well patrolled to ensure safe swimming. The resort town is renowned for its quality world-class golf courses and accommodation and is home to a lively cafe and restaurant scene.

### Sunshine Coast Hinterland Accommodation



Escape to the crisp air, stunning views and fascinating towns of the Sunshine Coast Hinterland, including the Glass House Mountains and the small mountain towns of Montville and Maleny. These lush, cooler and fertile lands that lie behind the golden beaches are just a short drive from the coast.

### Golden Beach Accommodation, Caloundra



Golden Beach is protected by Bribie Island and offers clear calm waters for fishing, swimming, boating and watersports such as windsurfing. Beachfront hotel and holiday accommodation is available and the beach is a short drive away from the shopping and dining in Caloundra.

### Kings Beach Accommodation, Caloundra



Located in Caloundra, Kings Beach is a protected stretch of sand surrounded by small hills, allowing the plentiful apartments to be elevated with great views and sea breezes. The beach is patrolled by life savers making it safe and sound all year round.

### Maroochydore Accommodation



While Maroochydore is the major commercial centre of the Sunshine Coast, it still features a refreshing blend of both business and tourism which makes Maroochydore a refreshing seaside town for visitors and residents to enjoy.

### Mooloolaba Accommodation





Mooloolaba sits on a spit of land between an international standard marina on the Mooloolah River and beautiful ocean beaches with great surf too. Visitors can enjoy the intimate restaurants, shopping, sparkling white beaches with patrolled areas for swimming and surfing and walks along the boardwalk.

### Montville Accommodation

### Noosa Heads Accommodation



Noosa Heads is the coastal cosmopolitan town situated on the southern shore of Laguna Bay and on the far western side of Noosa headland. The main street, Hastings Street, is a hive of activity with innumerable places to stay and eat.

### Peregian Beach Accommodation



This coastal strip of pristine open beaches running south of Sunshine Beach to Peregrine Beach is becoming a popular hideaway for holidaymakers and investors. The National Park runs behind the coastal strip with blue waters of Lake Weyba being its focal point.

## **CONCLUSION**

Exploring the Sunshine Coast is more than a journey it's an invitation to slow down, breathe, and connect with nature's finest. With its blend of coastal beauty, cultural richness, and warm hospitality, the region promises an unforgettable experience that lingers long after your visit ends.

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