

Your piece of paradise on the NSW South Coast

Discover a world of natural attractions in Eurobodalla

Autumn is the perfect time to explore the stunning Eurobodalla hinterland and coastline that includes Batemans Bay, Moruya, Narooma and the two Tilbas.

Some of the best ways to explore the region are on its pristine waterways, by river cruise, canoe, boat or walking the length of a sparkling, uncrowded beach. Go snorkelling or diving to discover an underworld of marine life from colourful fish and stingrays, to blue groppers and sea sponges. You can go kayaking on the open sea or on the placid waters of a lake where the sound of your oar splashing is the only distraction.

Secluded Montague Island, just 9km off the coast at Narooma, is a haven for marine and animal life. Take a tour of the island to see the Australian and New Zealand fur seals, little penguins, peregrine falcons and other birds that inhabit the island. You can even stay overnight in the historic Head Keepers Quarters.

Cycling, or touring by car, along the back roads is relaxing as well as fun with no traffic headaches, plenty of fresh country air and places to stop for a break. You'll discover country villages sprinkled along the coast and in the beautiful hinterland, each with their own character and appeal. In the historic gold-mining town of Mogo, you'll be amazed to find snow



Above: Tuross Head

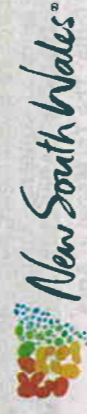
leopards, Sumatran tigers and rare white lions at Mogo Zoo. In Central Tilba you'll discover traditional craftsmen at work, next to contemporary art and design works.

Immerse yourself in the natural attractions of Eurobodalla during autumn and you'll find your own piece of paradise.

For more information go to visitsnw.com/southcoast

Don't miss

- Gliding across Durras Lake at sunset in a kayak
- Freshly-shucked oysters from the pristine waters of the Clyde or Tuross rivers
- Snorkelling at Mystery Bay to see colourful sponges and fish
- A lunchtime cruise along the Clyde River from Batemans Bay to Nelligen
- Beautiful glass works, ceramics and paintings at the Forest Gallery near Murrumbidgee National Park
- Spectacular views of the coastal lakes from Mt Dromedary near Central Tilba



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south coast



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NSW South Coast

Grand Pacific Drive

Shoalhaven

A breathtaking coastal trip that snakes from Royal National Park to the waters of the Shoalhaven
pages 4-7

Eurobodalla

The appeal of this hinterland goes far beyond the purest of sandy beaches and lushly-covered coastal headlands
pages 8-10

Sapphire Coast

For beautiful turquoise water and sheer relaxation, along with a tempting catch of the day, this stretch of coast is the place to be
pages 11-13

Another pristine jewel in the South Coast crown that thrives on dishing out plenty of serenity and a few mouthwatering seafood pies pages 14-15



New South Wales

visitnsw.com/southcoast

An initiative of Tourism NSW on behalf of the NSW Government

Cover picture: Nathan Edwards



Give into temptation

Head to the NSW South Coast and discover the true magic that the area has to offer, writes **Mike Smith**

IT HAS the highest sea cliff on the Australian east coast and one of the whitest sand beaches in the world, yet its appeal is more far-reaching than the surf, sun and sand. From small seaside towns with rustic pubs and cosy cafes that also serve fish'n'chips, to a hinterland of national parks filled with wildlife and walking trails, the NSW South Coast has a magical mix of attractions and adventures.

Freshly shucked oysters, country markets with fresh produce, wineries and, for nature lovers, whale and dolphin-spotting cruises, also help to turn a South Coast holiday into an amazing experience.

With so much variety and unspoiled beauty on show, it's understandable there's such a vast range of appealing names: Pretty Beach, Swanhaven, Mystery Bay, to name just a few.

The Grand Pacific Drive and serpent-like Sea Cliff Bridge provide a breathtaking start to the journey, the drive from Wollongong to Nowra the perfect entree to a feast of coastal adventures.

Dairy cows may no longer graze in big numbers on

the lushly covered headlands but characteristics of bygone days, sprinkled with contemporary elements, make the journey through Shoalhaven – and such appealing holiday spots as Jervis Bay, Sussex Inlet, Ulladulla and Bawley Point – one that will tempt you to return again and again.

Head further south to Eurobodalla, and there are the intriguing villages of Mogo, a re-creation of the original 19th century gold rush town and home to a zoo with rare white lions as "residents", and Tilba Tilba with all but one building built in the 1890s.

With a scattering of secret coves, estuaries and quiet fishing and surfing spots, the Sapphire Coast is the final jewel in the South Coast crown. The old-world beauty of Eden (pictured) marks the end of your trip and yet just the beginning when it comes to a world of activities and adventures for all.

Much can be said about a coastline filled with deserted beaches and beautiful scenery but it is probably best if you make the trip to discover the magic yourselves. ■



Sydney's best escape route



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EUROBODALLA COAST

Magnificent catch

The South Coast has great fishing, kayaking, wildlife, beauty spots and more; writes **Samantha Williams**

WHEN chat centres on "the greatest catch and the best fishing spots discovered in all their years", this pair of youngsters talk like two old salts. Together, Mitchell and Brendon collectively have 11 years of fishing experience and they say the South Coast offers enthusiasts the best value for money and time.

Amazingly, the two holidaymakers from Griffith (pictured on front cover) are only nine and 11 years old. "This is the best place to fish in Australia, by far," Mitchell says with much authority.

"It's awesome. I've been fishing here since I was three months old and you always catch something."

Sitting on the banks of Durras Lake, north of Batemans Bay, the two cast out their lines at sunset, filling in the time by talking about their latest catches.

"Just the other day I got 17 mullet. You can't get any better than that," Mitchell says.



"Well, I got 18," Brendon quickly chips in. "I don't know anywhere else you can do that," he adds. "There is nothing you can't catch here, if you can think of any fish you like to eat then you surely will catch it."

Their praise of the Eurobodalla region, which stretches from South Durras and the Murrumbidgee National Park in the north to historic Tilba Tilba in the south, comes out loud and clear as a message to the thousands of Australian fishing enthusiasts.

Translated as the land of many waters, Eurobodalla is certainly a good catch.

Batemans Marine Park may be a reserve, gazetted to protect the ecosystem, but tourism operators claim there are still plenty of fishing spots, even if the local fishermen say otherwise.

However, as is the case with other areas along the South Coast, fishing is not the only drawcard as there is a scattering of unspoiled beaches, plenty of fresh seafood to buy from the co-operatives and wildlife to keep nature lovers happy. It is also home to cheese that is renowned around the world.

As we fly to the South Coast from Sydney the turquoise colours of the water present postcard perfect images. With a mix of bright white sandy beaches and lush green mountains, the shades of blues and green immediately catch our eye.

Soon after arriving at Moruya, we are tempted to walk across the road and change into our swimming costumes for a dip in the inviting waters. And it wouldn't go astray to carry a fishing rod, like the two youngsters from Griffith.

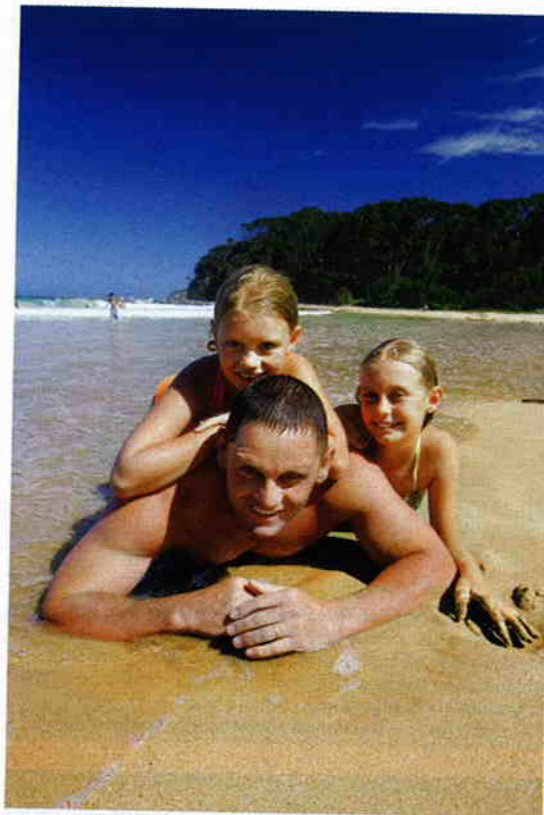
We also find an invigorating way to experience the area is in a kayak, especially on an evening paddle >>



Great outdoors: (clockwise from far left) surf's up at North Batemans Bay; Carmen Sep enjoys the beach at Mystery Bay, near Narooma; the nature lover's delights of Montague Island with Mount Dromedary standing guard in the distance; kayaking on Durras Lake
Pictures: Mark Evans/Eurobodalla Coast Tourism/Nathan Edwards



EUROBODALLA COAST



Family fun: (clockwise from top) Will Brown and daughters Emily and Anna cool off at Malua Bay; the colourful architecture of Tilba Tilba; taking a stroll at Eurobodalla
Pictures: Nathan Edwards/Mark Evans/Eurobodalla Coast Tourism

we ♥ our...

fish'n'chips

O'Briens Boatshed
Trafalgar Rd,
Tuross Head

Voted 2008 best fish and chips in NSW, O'Briens lies on the shore of Tuross Lake where you can dangle your feet in the water, hire a tinnie or go fishing.



Innes Boatshed

Clyde St, Batemans Bay
A truly memorable experience run by the same family for about 30 years. You can sit on the banks of the river and watch the stingrays, but watch out for the fish hungry pelicans.

Pickled Octopus Seafood Cafe
Trafalgar Rd, Tuross Head

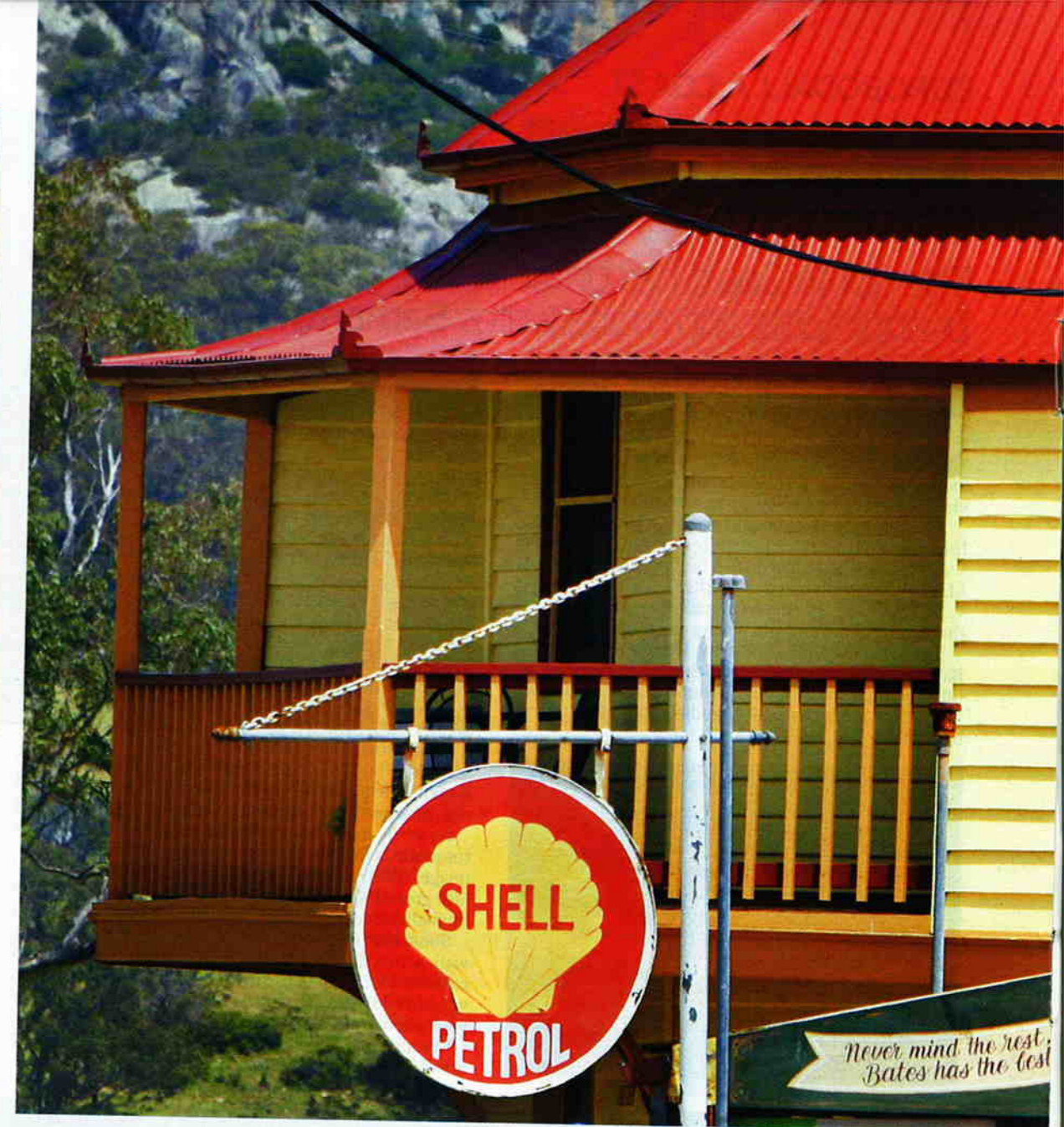
Watch the chef cook your fish on the deck barbecue that overlooks the lake. It's a classy way to get your fish and chips.

Taylor Bros

Riverside Drive, Narooma
Grab a takeaway seafood box and sit in the garden overlooking the Wagonga Inlet or dine on the deck. If there are any leftovers greedy seagulls and pelicans would be happy to help.

Quarterdeck Cafe

Riverside Drive, Narooma
A quirky experience where you are served by Hawaiian shirt-wearing owner Chris Scroggy. With its laminated tables, the cafe resembles something out of a 1950s sitcom.



with Carolyn Morey and Phil MacDonnell from Bay and Beyond Sea Kayak Tours on Durras Lake.

The extensive waterways, which were originally explored by indigenous locals more than 250 years ago, feature kilometres of river suitable for all types of kayaking, beginner or advanced. Glimpses of pristine spots not normally accessible are also explored.

"Keep your hips loose and head centre so you don't fall in," Carolyn advises before we climb into the boat.

"You could get lucky and catch dinner because a mullet might jump in your lap," she adds.

She wasn't wrong. The fish jumped out so close to us that we got wet. Stingrays fluttered across the top of the surface, jellyfish floated by and schools of fish darted in and out of the seagrass beds.

Halfway through the trip, kayakers gather with Carolyn to sample a cuppa, juice and home-cooked muffins as we soak up the atmosphere.

The return trip to shore was mostly in the dark, a little different from conventional daytime kayaking outings. Each stroke looked like fairy dust as particles on the surface glowed.

One of the joys of holidaying in Eurobodalla is that nature goes hand-in-hand with the beauty of the sea, and you will find it at your very front door.

Stay at beachfront EcoPoint Murramarang Resort, for example, and families are visited daily by kangaroos from the neighbouring national park.

Even though the retreat caters for up to 900 guests in its villas and campsite, you feel as if you're the only one there, apart from the kangaroos, of course.

And for a meal, there's the pizza bar, buffet of



barbecued delights and, not to be missed, the a la carte Flat Rock Brasserie where chefs Matt Hanlon and Andrew Eddowes cook up a storm.

Stay in Narooma at the hilltop Whale Motor Inn and you can enjoy a spectacular setting overlooking the turquoise waters of an area free of crowds.

A Eurobodalla experience wouldn't be complete without a 9km boat trip from Narooma to Montague Island, where visitors sit in awe watching the majestic humpback whales on their migratory path.

From September to November, these beautiful creatures pass the coast in growing waves and are regularly seen on boating tours, their acrobatic displays keeping the cameras snapping.

On the island we are given a different wildlife experience, complete with the wafting odour of the

hundreds of sunbathing seals. The Australian and New Zealand fur seals aren't the shy and retiring types either, posing for pictures as they laze by the water's edge preening themselves. They are also found sitting on half submerged rocks, playing king of the castle and pushing off invaders.

By night, penguins are seen waddling up to the rocks towards their nests, where one nesting box was said to have "an aerial and window".

If the beach was the prime reason to holiday in this neck of the woods, there were plenty – 83, to be precise – all within the Batemans Marine Park.

Locals Wil and Trish Brown recommend McKenzies Beach, an ideal family destination, which is sheltered from winds by the dramatic headlands.

They say it is one of the many treasures on the South Coast, and it is difficult to disagree.

"It's got good weather, water and fishing," Trish says. "What more could you want?"

"There is so much to do here that we not only live here but we holiday on the South Coast."

After all the touring, the stomach signalled time for lunch. And there wouldn't be a better spot for a feed than among the rolling hills in the historic township of Tilba Tilba where farmers Erica and Nic Dibden produce specially hand-made South Coast cheese.

Between raising six children, milking 350 dairy cows twice a day and running a boutique factory at Bodalla, there hasn't been much time for anything else for the Dibdens. However, their passion for cheese and the South Coast was second to none.



"People come here to kick back and enjoy nature as well as the cheese, we wouldn't live anywhere else," says Erica.

Number 16 on the Eurobodalla Tourism's "101 things to bring out your better nature" list, was to say "g'day" to the white lions at the Mogo Zoo.

Privately owned by Sally Padey, the zoo is 10km south of Batemans Bay in the picturesque and historic gold mining village of Mogo.

To Sally, it's not really a zoo but more like her backyard – with more than 150 animals, including rare and exotic species, as pets.

Visitors can get up close and experience a day in the life of a zoo-keeper by feeding red pandas Frodo and Sam as well as African serval cats with their long ears.

Sally lives just 10m from the hand-reared white lions Mafuta and Numbi.

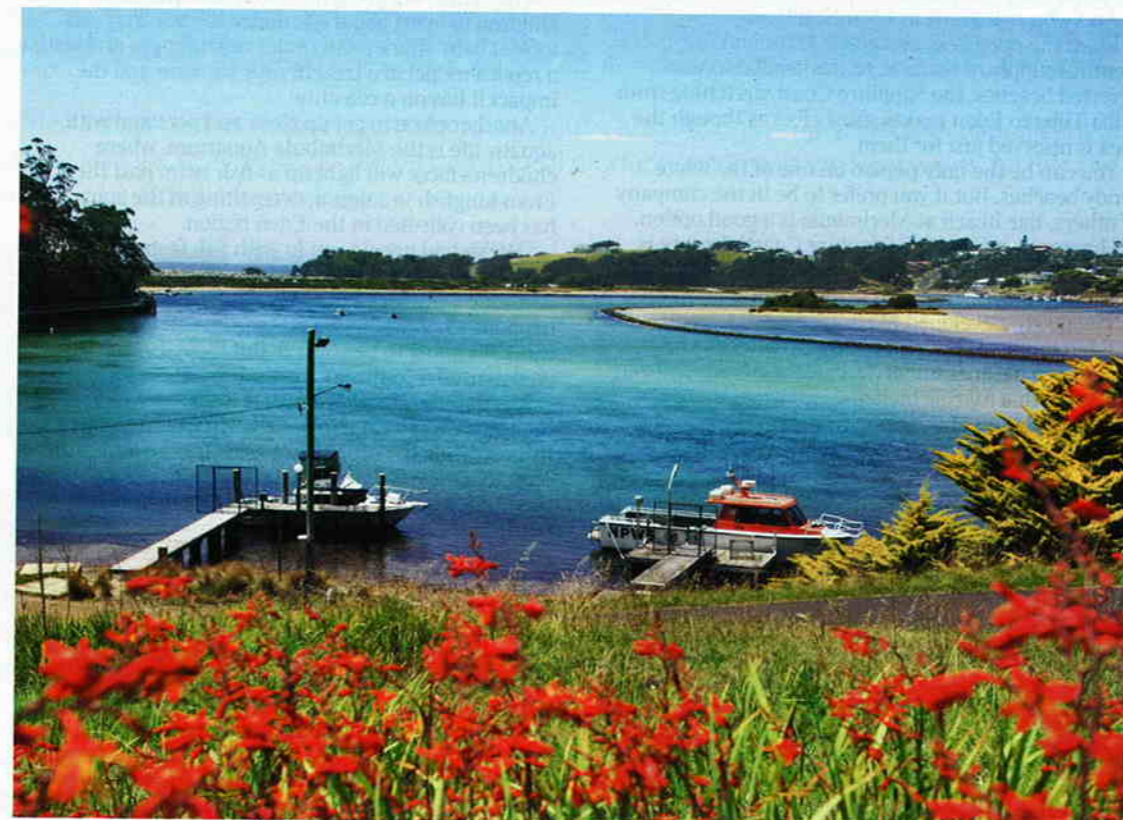
"I love every one of these animals," Sally says. "They are like part of the family."

Wherever we visit, we feel very much at home on this stretch of the South Coast. Locals give us the sense that we are included in the South Coast family.

It is a part of coastal Australia that in many ways is very much underestimated.

When you consider the number of beaches, variety of tours, the abundance of fresh seafood and general beauty of the region, it is hard to pass up a holiday on the Eurobodalla coast.

Just chat to keen fishermen Mitchell and Brendon. They will convince you there is no other place to take a break. ■



we ♥ our...

coffee

The Muffin Shop
Pacific St, Mossy Point
Set in a leafy backdrop, a popular weekend haunt for coffee drinkers to sit outdoors. Fittingly, it sells tantalising muffins.



Art Cafe, Air Raid Tavern

Vulcan St, Moruya
An old pub converted into a cafe much liked by local cyclists. There are booths, window stools or community tables, with a scattering of newspapers for a leisurely coffee break.

Sydney Street Cafe

Sydney St, Princes Highway, Mogo
A casual bar with a beautiful courtyard, this old building, which has been home to many restaurants over the years, has funky decor and an interesting menu of treats to match.

Monet's Cafe

Orient St, Batemans Bay
Lonely Planet calls it Batemans Bay's best-kept secret. It is a tiny cafe with a French influence, from the coffee to the cuisine.

Casey's Cafe

Wagonga St, Narooma
Dine on light simple dishes while enjoying the ocean scenery, a popular meeting spot for locals with friendly staff.

Water's edge: (clockwise from far left) cycling along the wharf at Narooma; pelicans join a cruise at Wagong Inlet near Narooma; the clear waters of Tuross Lake; a pygmy marmoset mum with her babies at Mogo Zoo; the turquoise-coloured waters of Narooma
Pictures: Mark Evans/David Matthews/Nathan Edwards

