

Sights of the South Coast

There's something for everyone to enjoy on this stunning stretch of the New South Wales coast

Story and photography by ROGER ALLNUT

ARE you old enough to remember milkshakes made at your local milk bar – the ones made with milk and ice cream ladled out of metal containers and the mixture (whatever flavour you chose) buzzed up in another metal canister? At Bodalla Dairy Shed, at Bodalla on the south coast of New South Wales, all the “pieces” are there to make the perfect milkshake. And these are popular with people of all ages.

Bodalla, between Moruya and Narooma, is synonymous with milk products and cheese, even though the old cheese factory closed down some years ago. However, a small producer called

South Coast Cheese still has an outlet at Bodalla and its range, including tart vintage, creamy blue and a range of specialty cheeses, is excellent.

In recent years Bodalla has had something of a renaissance, with new enterprises opening to attract passing travellers. Bodalla Dairy Shed serves excellent, innovative light meals during the day with a special pizza night on Fridays. The Bakery bakes its own bread in a huge wood-fired oven, a tradition started in 1870. The Postmaster's Gallery has some interesting pieces. Surprisingly there is a Mexican Restaurant with a great reputation, its décor

features lots of surfboards, and at the bowling club there is a good Chinese restaurant.

Bodalla has been settled for 150 years, with some families being in the area for generations. Names like Mort and Brice feature on memorials inside the lovely All Saints Anglican Church. The church was designed by Edmund Blackett, who also designed St Andrew's in Sydney and St Saviour's in Goulburn. After the foundation stone was laid in 1880, the building was not completed until 1901.

A sealed road leads down to the coast at Potato Point, a small settle-



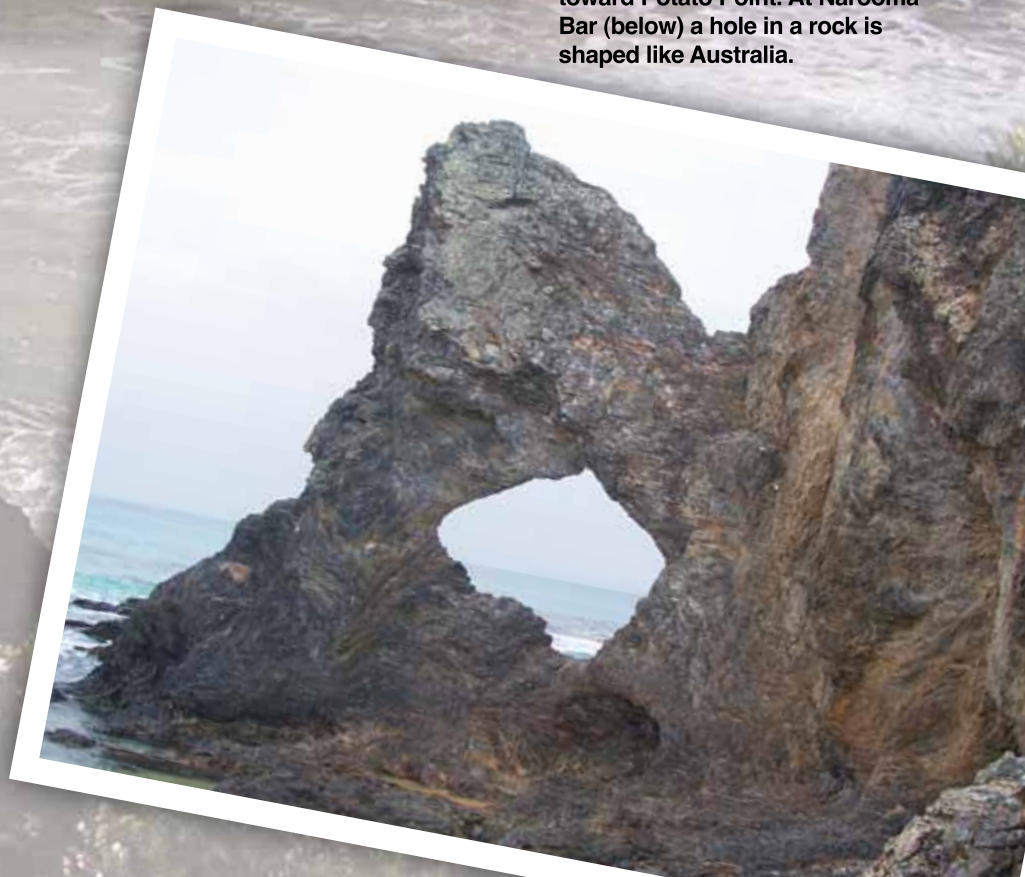
Piccaninnie Beach, looking toward Potato Point. At Narooma Bar (below) a hole in a rock is shaped like Australia.

ment overlooking the ocean. It is next to Eurobodalla National Park, which includes a number of pleasant walking trails through the bush. From the headlands you can often spot whales during the migrating season from August to November.

North from Potato Point is a long stretch of beach leading to Tuross Head, which can be reached now the entrance to the Tuross River has closed. You are likely to have the beach all to yourself except during the busy summer school holiday period.

Inland from Bodalla, roads (some only suitable for four-wheel-drive vehicles) lead through rolling dairy country to old settlements like Nerrigundah, once a gold mining location that is gradually being reclaimed by the bush.

About six kilometres north of Bodalla on the Princes Highway are lovely ▶





Wagonga Princess waits for passengers.

▶ Trunkatabella Gardens and Nursery with water features, garden pottery, and landscaping supplies. The six hectares of gardens lovingly developed by Richard and Isabel include an extensive rainforest section, two rose gardens, a perfumed garden, native areas and ferns. A duck pond, frogs' hollow and enchanted forest provide points of interest and excitement for children.

The bustling town of Narooma, about 18km south of Bodalla, is beautifully situated with access to the Pacific Ocean and also to the more peaceful waters of Wagonga Inlet. Timber and fishing industries have had a long association with the town but for many visitors a major attraction is spectacular Montague Island, which can be visited on organised tours. From August to November the annual migration of whales attracts sightseers who hope to catch a


look at these giants of the ocean. With increasing numbers of whales each year, sightings are just about guaranteed.

A more tranquil experience is the cruise on the inlet on the *Wagonga Princess* with Charlie Bettini, a fourth generation local who relates highlights of the town's history, his love of the countryside and the fishing opportunities in the area – as well as a succession of corny jokes.

There are lovely walks along the coastline, views over the often treacherous Narooma Bar, which provides access to the sea, and golfers can indulge in a round on the spectacular cliff-side course (one famous hole requires a shot between two headlands).

The walking paths continue all along the inlet, including a boardwalk at Mill Bay over the clear waters of the inlet. Don't miss the fresh fish at the co-op next to the bridge that carries the highway across the inlet. Built in 1931, the bridge has an opening span that can be operated by one person.

South of Narooma, just off the highway, are the picturesque towns of Central Tilba and Tilba Tilba. The quaint main street of Central Tilba is lined by an assortment of shops selling various artifacts and produce, including antiques, retro clothing, leather goods, woodwork, old-style lollies, cheese and ice creams.

A feature of Tilba Tilba is Foxglove Spire Gardens, a tranquil, romantic cottage garden with rose covered arbours, woodlands and secluded flower-filled areas. A good place for a reviving snack is Love at First Bite café next door to the gardens. 

The boardwalk at Mill Bay, Narooma. There are many walking paths along the inlet.



FACT FILE

Bodalla is in the Eurobodalla region of the NSW south coast, about 270km from Sydney, 150km from Canberra and 765km from Melbourne. The area has a large number of camping and caravan parks, as well as a range of other accommodations.

Activities include beach and bush walking, fishing, boating, golf, whale watching, horse riding, cycling and bird watching. There is also access to a number of national parks.

For more details contact Eurobodalla Coast Tourism on 1800 802 528 or visit www.eurobodalla.com.au

Our map is from Hema's Road Atlas, (07) 3340 0000.

