



# Surfers Paradise & the Gold Coast

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ BSKT Cafe (p317)
- ➔ Borough Barista (p320)
- ➔ Cafe dbar (p322)

## Best Places to Stay

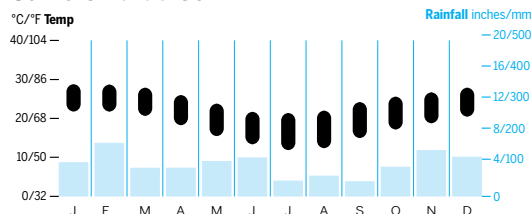
- ➔ La Costa Motel (p321)
- ➔ Binna Burra Mountain Lodge (p323)
- ➔ Olympus Apartments (p315)

## Why Go?

Boasting 52km of golden beaches, 300 sunny days and millions of visitors each year, the Gold Coast serves up a steamy cocktail of sun, surf, sand and activity. This is one of the best places to learn to surf in Australia, so grab a longboard while you're here. Behind Surfers Paradise's famous beach is a shimmering strip of high-rise apartments, restaurants, bars, clubs and theme parks, where the fun can suck you into a dizzying vortex and spit you back out, happy but exhausted. The hype settles as you head south: Broadbeach is sandy and chic; Burleigh Heads has seaside charms; and Coolangatta is known for its laid-back surfer vibe. Don't miss the Gold Coast's lush subtropical hinterland – including Lamington and Springbrook National Parks – whose delights include rainforest walks, spectacular waterfalls, sweeping views and private mountain retreats.

## When to Go

### Surfers Paradise



**Dec–Feb** Sunshine, higher temperatures, and busy beaches.

**Jun–Aug** The Australian winter brings tourists from chillier climes chasing the sun.

**Nov–Dec** School-leavers (schoolies) swarm into Surfers Paradise to party. (You've been warned.)



## Surfers Paradise & the Gold Coast Highlights

**1** Getting up early to surf the point break at **Burleigh Heads** (p319).

**2** Bushwalking through craggy gorges and rainforests in **Lamington National Park** (p323).

**3** Beating a retreat from the crowds to a *loooong* stretch of golden sand on **South Stradbroke Island** (p320).

**4** Taking in the view at the aptly named Best of All Lookout in **Springbrook National Park** (p324).

**5** Testing your nerve (and your digestive system) on the roller coasters at the Gold Coast's **theme parks** (p316).

**6** Drinking, dancing and watching the sun come up over the beach at **Surfers Paradise** (p313).