



# The Gold Coast

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## Best Places to Eat

- Rick Shores (p118)
- Bstow (p119)
- Harry's Steak Bistro (p118)
- Glenelg Public House (p116)
- BSKT Cafe (p116)

## Best Places to Sleep

- La Costa Motel (p121)
- Burleigh Break (p117)
- Island (p111)
- Sheraton Grand Mirage Resort (p113)
- QT (p111)

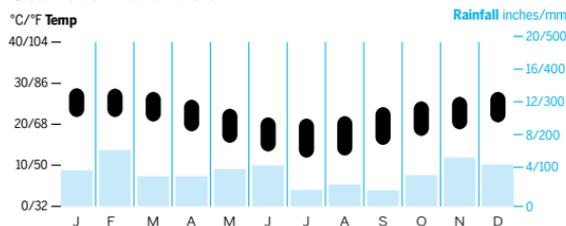
## Why Go?

Built for pleasure and remaining a place utterly dedicated to sun, surf and the body beautiful, this strip of coast is possibly Australia's most iconic holiday destination. Its shimmering high-rises can, when glimpsed from afar, appear like a make-believe city, and its reputation for tackiness is occasionally deserved. But this is far outstripped by a booming, youthful spirit and startling physical beauty: some 52km of pristine sand and countless epic surf breaks, heartbreakingly hazy sunsets, blissful water temperatures and 300 sunny days a year.

While Surfers Paradise's malls and mega-clubs let the party-hard kids have their fun, the other neighbourhoods have a distinct charm of their own. Main Beach and Broadbeach corner coastal chic; Burleigh Heads, Mermaid and Palm Beach have a retro charm and booming culinary scene; while Coolangatta pleases with its pro-surfer vibe. Not to be overlooked is the lush, misty subtropical rainforest of the hinterland.

## When to Go

### Surfers Paradise



**Dec–Feb** Sun-shine, high temperatures and busy beaches.

**Jun–Aug** Winter brings tourists from cooler climes, chasing the sun and still-swimmable water.

**Oct & Nov** Perfect weather, lower prices; time your visit to miss Schoolies week.



## The Gold Coast Highlights

- 1 Point Danger** (p120) Braving a dawn surf at this legendary break.
- 2 Burleigh Heads** (p116) Eating your way around the young, fun and creative culinary scene.
- 3 Lamington National Park** (p123) Bushwalking through craggy gorges and densely canopied rainforests.
- 4 Balter** (p120) Talking beer and breaks with surfing legends at Currumbin's fabulous brewery.
- 5 South Stradbroke Island** (p118) Retreating from the crowds to a long stretch of sand.
- 6 Springbrook National Park** (p123) Taking in the view at the aptly named Best of All Lookout.
- 7 Burleigh Social** (p118) Grabbing a 6am macadamia-milk latte before a soft-sand beach run to Miami.
- 8 Theme parks** (p115) Testing your nerve (and your digestive system) on the Gold Coast's roller coasters.
- 9 Surfers Paradise** (p109) Drinking, dancing and watching the sun come up at the beach.