GOLD COAST
WANDERLUST GUIDE
Once labelled the ‘glitter strip’ the Gold Coast is bursting with young go-getters and creative entrepreneurs opening eateries and establishments to rival the big cities.

This sunny Queensland destination stretching from Tweed Heads to Paradise Point is totally underrated. The beaches are world class; the dining and entertainment options are aplenty, while all the while retaining its relaxed beachside vibe.

Steer clear of the commercial tourist traps which once haunted this area and venture to the places a little off the beaten track, from the crystal clear ocean and white sandy beaches to the lush green hinterland complete with waterfalls and wineries, to cafés and charming retro nooks.

A huge thanks to Marissa Bowden and Sarah Schoeller of The Village Markets for their local knowledge and help bringing this guide together!

Cover image: A vintage Holden, one of QT Gold Coast’s permanent residents.
GOLD COAST AUSTRALIA - THE VISTA

IMAGE BY MATT RABBIDGE
**EAT**

**Raw Energy, Greenmount Beach**
Come straight off the beach and order the macadamia and lentil burger on their rye bun, or try one of the salads. Servings are generous and delicious.

**Tupe Aloha, Kirra**
Hawaii meets Mexico meets retro. Go for a cocktail and bite to eat at this kitschy but cool establishment.
https://www.instagram.com/tupe_aloha/

**My Gelato, Kirra**
Authentic gelato, owned and operated by Italian export, Davide and family.

**Garden of Eden, Coolangatta**
Delicious organic food, tea and coffee as well as a health food store. The vegan salads are a must.
http://www.gardenofeden.net.au/coolangatta

**Elephant Rock Café, Currumbin**
Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, this institution is a long standing favourite for its stylish but relaxed dining experience. Romantic for a dinner date and the views at lunch are pretty hard to beat. Hands down best dish, Elephant Rock Oysters with tempura, wakame salad and wasabi mayonnaise. Sit upstairs and take in the views.

**The Salt Mill, Currumbin**
Best way to start the day. These guys make an allstar coffee to go with a selection of fresh pastries and the best chocolate granola you’ll ever taste.
https://www.instagram.com/the_salt_mill/

**The Sound Lounge, Currumbin**
A surprising little music venue within Currumbin RSL plays host to some of the best touring and local artists
Tugun Fruit and Flowers, Tugun
A humble little fruit and flower store with the best (& biggest) Acai bowls on the Coast.

Pablo Pablo Latin Eatery, Palm Beach
Spanish tapas restaurant and bar.

Hendrixx, Palm Beach
Open for both brekkie and lunch, nice healthy options.

Barefoot Barista, Palm Beach
Great for good coffee and a healthy brekkie menu - zucchini fitters on cauliflower salad are the pick!

The Collective, Palm Beach
Brand spankin’ new dining precinct that everyone seems to be talking about. A number of restaurants and a rooftop bar to enjoy. Best to head along and what all the fuss is about!

Govinda’s, Burleigh Heads
Vegan eats. We love the kefta and beetroot or the tofu and sweet potato salads.
http://govindas.net.au/

Helen’s Heavenly Bulk Foods, Burleigh Heads
Great for picking up your healthy snacks, supplements, kombucha, smoothies and juices.
https://helensheavenlybulkfoods.com/

Justin Lane, Burleigh Heads
Go for the best pizza on the Coast and the bustling atmosphere. Service is hit or miss but the pizza definitely makes it worth the visit.

The Fish House
There’s no getting around it, this upscale beachfront seafood restaurant is pricey, but it serves up some of the best dishes on the Gold Coast. Our pick, the Patagonian Toothfish.
EAT

Commune, Burleigh Heads
We love this place for their salads, relaxed atmosphere and friendly hospitality. Play ping pong while you wait. Also home to Meat Free Mondays.
https://www.facebook.com/Commune-188007077908652/

Social Brew, Burleigh Heads
This café gets points for their friendly and unpretentious staff, delicious healthy menu and guilt-free treats. We love the self-serve sparkling water on tap, a nice touch.
https://www.instagram.com/socialbrewburleigh/

The Pocket, Burleigh Heads
Our picks, the Haloumi Pocket or Falafel Plate. Get it to takeaway and enjoy on Burleigh Headland watching the sun set.

The Village Markets, Burleigh Heads
Food trucks and food stalls from around the globe, sit on a Mexican blanket under the trees and listen to live music. We love Mama Wonton, a Mexican salad from Zicatela or anything from Smoothjuice.
http://www.thevilagemarkets.co/

Zula’s, Burleigh Heads
A hidden gem in the laneway off busy James Street, this long standing GC favourite serves up killer cocktails and food from around the world using organic, local and free range produce. Try their famous Jamaican Goat Curry.
http://www.zullazbarburleigh.com/

Ze Pickle, Burleigh Heads
Go for a cocktail or boutique beer in this alfresco dining space and stay for dinner if you are feeling a little naughty - it’s home of the famous donut burger. We love the sweet potato fries.
http://www.zepickle.com/

Jimmy Wha’s - Burleigh Heads
If words like brisket, lemongrass, ginger and chilli get your taste buds attention then this Vietnamese eat house is your spot.

Rick Shores, Burleigh Heads
When it comes to restaurant vistas this one has it all. Be tempted silly with a locally sourced pan-Asian menu and cocktails to boot, overlooking Pacific Ocean waves. The bug rolls are a must!

Harry’s Steakhouse, Burleigh Heads
Their slogan, Beef, beers and banter say’s it all - a meat lover’s paradise in a chic monochrome setting.

Paddock Bakery, Burleigh Heads
A stylish setting complete with white picket fence, vegetable gardens, weatherboard façade and indoor-outdoor dining, this place has fast become an institution on the Gold Coast. Grab some wood-fired sourdough or stay for brekkie or lunch or both. The outdoor garden setting is great for families.
http://www.paddockbakery.com/

Hide n Seek, Miami
If you love your coffee brewed to perfection and served with a warm smile, go and see Mark and Rosie at Hide n Seek. The in-house baked eats and homemade granola are delicious.
https://www.instagram.com/hidenseekespresso/

Greenhouse Factory Restaurant and Bar, Miami
Modern vegetarian and vegan goodness.

Bam Bam Bakehouse, Mermaid Beach
This crew (who also own Paddock Bakery) definitely know a thing or two about fitting out a café. We love the Nasi Goreng.
https://www.bambambakehouse.com/

The Cambus Wallace, Nobby Beach
This dimly lit whiskey bar is our pick for pre or post dinner drinks. Go early or you may have to wait. Owned by a bunch of style savvy local lads.

Mexicali, Nobby Beach
We love this place for a margarita or two and tasty Mexican eats in a relaxed atmosphere. Sit at the bar or on the front deck for the best vibe.
https://www.instagram.com/mexicaligc/
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IMAGE: QT HOTEL LAURA GOODALL
EAT

**Hellenika, Nobby Beach**
A higher price point but if you’re looking for a full belly and great quality food, this Greek eatery is it. Enjoy the slow cooked lamb and order the zucchini chips. Probably one of the best meals you will find on the Gold Coast.

**Etsu Isakaya, Mermaid Beach**
Look for the big barn doors and enter into a modern Japanese restaurant with a killer fit out. Make sure you book as this place is definitely popular, and rightly so. Hard to choose, but our picks are the Yuzu & Elderflower Gimlet cocktail and the salmon and kingfish tatake.

**Easy Street Diner, Mermaid Beach**
An American style hangout. Sit in a booth and enjoy Stone & Wood on tap, great tunes. Our fave dish, the Pork Belly PO Burger.

**Mandala Organic Arts Cafe, Mermaid Beach**
Organic pizza’s, live music and pro-biotic bar. We love the relaxed casual vibe and the food is good. Open for brunch and dinner. Check their website for upcoming gigs.

**Bonita Bonita and BonBon Bar, Mermaid Beach**
Modern Mexican taqueria and bar with a sweet interior, good food and even better sangria.

**Hachi Japanese, Palm Beach & Nobby Beach**
A humble Japanese eatery with well priced food, great for casual dining or takeaway. Best dish, the Agedashi Tofu.

**Miss Margarita, Broadbeach**
The sister to our favourite Byron Bay haunt. We go for the margaritas but the eats are equally as good.

**Elk, Broadbeach**
A well designed industrial style fit out with a great breakfast and lunch menu.
[https://www.instagram.com/elkespresso/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/elkespresso/?hl=en)

**Cha Cha, Broadbeach**
An institution. A long standing Japanese eatery on the Coast for a non-fussy, BYO, well priced dinner. Our pick, the chilli prawns.
[https://www.facebook.com/chachabroadbeach/](https://www.facebook.com/chachabroadbeach/)

**Garden Kitchen & Bar, Jupiters Broadbeach**
Fresh, uncomplicated food in a spacious, family friendly setting.

**Cardamom Pod, Broadbeach**
All the good things – vegan, veggo, raw, gluten free. Delicious food and a colourful, yet stylish setting.
[https://www.instagram.com/cardamompodbroadbeach/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/cardamompodbroadbeach/?hl=en)

**Bazaar Marketplace Restaurant, QT Gold Coast**
Take a trip to food heaven! Your very own food market to pick & choose from breakfast, lunch or dinner (QT actually have their very own seafood trawler! Doesn’t get fresher than that!)
[@qtgoldcoast](http://twitter.com/)

**Blendlove, Southport**
Worth a drive to try their delicious raw and wholefood menu. Try the Veggie Burger – toasted gluten free quinoa bun, hummus, smashed avocado, sprots, sweet potato, eggplants, tamari, field mushroom, beetroot sauce, aioli, rocket, red cabbage, red onion. YUM.
[https://www.instagram.com/blendlove/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/blendlove/?hl=en)

**Percy’s Corner, Southport**
Located in the Gold Coasts original ambulance building, which also hosts the Gold Coasts co-working facility, this charming café serves up the best brew. We love anything with their haloumi and avocado.
[https://www.instagram.com/percys_corner/](https://www.instagram.com/percys_corner/)

**Daark Espresso, Chirn Park**
Bringing coffee goodness to the Northern end of the Gold Coast. You will find weekly rotating single origin coffees, the infamous B & E roll, fresh juices and raw treats.
[https://www.instagram.com/daarkespresso/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/daarkespresso/?hl=en)

**Yuzu Lounge, Southport**
Run by a local family, Yuzu Lounge produces super fresh sashimi, a killer soba noodle salad and the best bento boxes. Cheap and delicious.
[https://www.instagram.com/yuzulounge/](https://www.instagram.com/yuzulounge/)
QT GOLD COAST

Fun & playful are two words which immediately spring to mind when entering QT Gold Coast.

Every detail in the hotel is eclectic! From the vibrant colours and zaney blend of 1960's retro Aussie surf vibes to the American pop culture references, staff uniforms and free soda on arrival...

Elements which make QT stand out include;

SpaQ - with a range of tempting treatments catered to both men and women

The Rooms - King size beds, custom furniture and your choice of either ocean or mountain views!

Bazaar Marketplace Restaurant - Take a trip to food heaven! Your very own food market to pick & choose from breakfast, lunch or dinner (QT actually have their very own seafood trawler! Doesn’t get fresher than that!)

The Pool Bar - From fresh coconuts to funky poolside cocktails this retro surf themed bar was our favourite!

Things to keep in mind - QT also host creative and curious QTea High Tea’s, hugely popular for their mind-boggling menu and again (of course) the instagram factor.

BOOK HERE (and use the discount code VIST17)
OTHER STAYS

La Costa Motel, Bilinga

Halcyon House, Cabarita

Currumbin House, Currumbin

Burleigh Heads:
a number of holiday accommodation options, at all price points

Camping?
Try Tallebudgera Creek Tourist Park, Burleigh Beach Tourist Park or Ocean Beach Tourist Park in Miami.

Try Stayz or Air B’n’B for a number of private holiday rentals across the coast. Be sure to keep the coast’s hinterland in mind too! Mount Tambourine is amazing for a night or two.
THE VILLAGE MARKETS

Held on the first and third Sunday of every month at Burleigh Heads State School, this creative hub for emerging entrepreneurs (the likes of Peony Swimwear, F+H Jewellery, Grace Bijoux, Children of the Tribe and Kivari have all traded there) plays host to 100+ incredible boutique market stalls in fashion, vintage, art and lifestyle, as well as street food, live tunes and a monthly pre-loved designer and vintage Rack Sale.

Affectionately known as TVM, this place is the go-to destination for good vibes of a Sunday morning on the Gold Coast.

This is not your average market, follow their Instagram @thevillagemarkets and you will soon see why.

www.thevillagemarkets.co
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SHOP CONT.

The Borrowed Nursery, Mermaid Beach
A beautiful warehouse space, filled with incredible plants and pots. Shared with our good pals, homewares queens, Dos Ombre.

James Street, Burleigh Heads
The go-to shopping hub for the best stores including Bikini & Me, The Village Stores, Anuk, emte, A Little Birdie Told Me for labels such as Tacoola Bikini, Dragonfly for kids, Sean Scott Gallery (for Valley Eyewear, Assembly Label and more).

The Freedom State, Burleigh Heads
Our pick for labels such as SPELL, Amlilia, Arnhem and Fallen Broken Street.

The Strand, Coolangatta
Newly refurbished, shops include Stock & Supply and Moelleux.

For the bigger shopping centres, try Robina Town Centre and the newly refurbished Pacific Fair.
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YOGA

Gold Coast Yoga Centre, Palm Beach
http://www.goldcoastyogacentre.com/

Essence Of Living, Mermaid Beach

InSan Yoga, Broadbeach – By appointment, for experienced yogis.
http://insanyoga.com/

Ritual yoga and pilates, Palm Beach

BEAUTY/MASSAGE

Edwards and Co, Budds Beach
(Formerly Follow Studio) These ladies, led by the lovely Jo, are the best in the biz!
https://followhairstudio.com/

White Stone Massage, Burleigh Heads
We love the remedial massage.

Lotus Beauty Lounge, Broadbeach
See Lee, she’s the threading guru.

Raw Beauty, Tweed Heads
For the best facials and body treatments. All natural and chemical free.
http://rawbeauty.net.au/

SpaQ , QT Gold Coast
A range of tempting treatments catered to both men and women, go on, treat yourself!
http://www.qthotelsandresorts.com/gold-coast/spaq/
CURRUMBIN BEACH
Nestled in amongst the lush green hills, Currumbin is heaven on earth. With a relaxed village feel you won’t want to leave. Try The Salt Mill for an Acai bowl and your morning coffee then head to The Alley for a bit of beach time (or escape to the creek if the wind is on-shore). Swing by Elephant Rock Café for lunch (our pick – the wakame oysters and calamari salad), climb Elephant Rock to take in the views and finish with a cold beer at Currumbin Surf Life Saving Club.

FINGAL
Head just south of the border to Dreamtime Beach at Fingal. Explore the rockpools and take a dip, you’ll feel like you’re in an island paradise. Climb the hill to checkout Fingal Lighthouse and then head to the The Sheoak Shack for a barefoot margarita or two and the crispy Vietnamese Tofu salad, amongst the sea inspired décor. This place also has live music on weekends.
http://www.sheoakshack.com/Welcome.html

BURLEIGH HEADLAND
After strolling the shops at James Street, stock up on olives and picnic treats at Golosi Food Emporium, ride a bike along The Esplanade then head to Burleigh Headland to watch the sunset on the grassy hill, a beautiful vantage point. If you’re feeling in the mood, head to Justin’s Rooftop Bar for a nightcap.

TALLEBUDGERA CREEK
You may have seen the photos, this place is a tropical paradise tucked into the side of a national park. Hire a paddleboard and swim all day in the crystal clear turquoise water, you wont want to leave. Take a picnic, or grab a bite and the new pop up cafe by Paddock Bakery.

RAINBOW BAY
The walk from Kirra to Duranbah is dreamy, with views of the whole coastline. Grab a coffee at Little Mahli and head to Snapper Rocks to check the surf and spend the morning at Rainbow Bay (a great spot to learn to surf, if you’re keen to try!). Crystal clear water and plenty of BBQ's in the park for an early dinner.
https://www.instagram.com/little_mali/

THE NATURAL ARCH
Go chasing waterfalls, take a hike through the rainforest hinterland and don’t miss the natural swimming holes at Springbrook Natural Arch. Check out the wineries via Mount Tambourine for a cheeseboard and to taste the local drop.
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FLYING THERE
Daily flights from Sydney and Melbourne to Gold Coast Airport, Coolangatta.

TIPS
Visit our friends at The Craft Parlour in Palm Beach for regular creative workshops such as hand lettering to macramé and shibori. Rach is a little hippie goddess and creates such a warm and inviting vibe. 
https://www.instagram.com/the_craft_parlour/

Flannery’s organic super market or Wrays for the health conscious grocery shopper.
http://flannerys.com.au

Miami Organic Market is held at Miami State High School each Sunday morning.
http://gcorganicmarket.com/

Local farmers markets are held at Palm Beach, Currumbin and Burleigh Heads State School and the Gold Coast Arts Centre on Saturdays.
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VISTA
Like many cities, there is always peacefulness amongst the chaos, a way to escape and to flow... we hope this guide helps you to discover just that.

Take your time, relax by the perpetual sea and discover all the gold amongst the stone and sand. Anchor up for a few days and explore this thriving mini metropolis with its heart in health and wellness.
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