



# Sapphire Coast

*With its forests, lush pastures and a coastline sculpted into a succession of wonders by the sea, the Sapphire Coast is a place for all seasons.*



## MUST SEE AND DO

Discover food, wine and art along the Tathra–Bermagui road, one of the most spectacular drives on the coast.

Take a whale-watch tour out of Eden.

Explore the Pambula Wetlands in Pambula and spot a golden bell frog, a reintroduced species.

In the coastal villages from Bermagui to Eden you can enjoy fish and chips on the waterfront.

Make your boomerang come back at the Umbarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre, or learn how to paint in ochre.

### Photographs

above left to right: Underwater world; Camel Rock, Wallaga Lake National Park, Bermagui (Turtle Pictures); Tathra Wharf (Adam Taylor); Fishpen, Merimbula  
far right: Brown Mountain

## Family matters

Set in a valley at the junction of the Bega and Brogo rivers and surrounded by rich dairy country, Bega is a handsome, historic town with a proud tradition of cheese making.

The Bega Cheese Heritage Centre, housed in a faithful reproduction of the original factory, tells the story of the cheese-manufacturing process and the company's growth.

Tathra is another family favourite, with its wide and wonderful surf beach and its historic sea wharf, a popular fishing platform and the only one of its kind remaining on the east coast.

To the north of Tathra is Mimoso Rocks National Park, a 17-km strip of coast where crashing waves have carved out sea caves from the cliffs and left towering rock stacks, created by ancient lava flows, stranded in the sea.

Merimbula is a popular holiday spot, spread out on forested hills around the mouth of the Merimbula River, which forms Merimbula Lake at the back of town. Visitors are drawn here by majestic beaches and a variety of water sports.

Main Beach is 5 km long, while Short Point and Tura Beach are set among coastal heaths. Merimbula is often twinned with the historic village of Pambula, just a few kilometres south.

## Eden's killer whales

In the 1920s, Eden became famous for its killer whales. Led by one known as 'Old Tom', the pod would alert local whalers when humpback and southern right whales were in the vicinity,

and then the whalers and killer whales would unite to herd their victims into the shallow waters of Twofold Bay.

Eden's Killer Whale Museum, at the corner of Imlay and Cocora streets, has a fascinating display of boats, whaling gear, photographs and nautical apparatus. Most absorbing of all is the skeleton of Old Tom.

## Nature's bounty

Close to Bermagui, Wallaga Lake is one of the largest coastal lakes in NSW. It's an area of outstanding natural beauty with special significance for the local Aboriginal people.

The Umbarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre, located at the lake, documents the history and culture of the local Yuin people, and traditional implements, including spears and boomerangs, are made in the adjoining workshop. The centre also conducts guided 4WD tours to significant local sites such as Gulaga (Mt Dromedary).

Ben Boyd National Park is a sensational tract of wild coast, beaches, wildflower meadows and eucalypt woodland that extends north and south of Eden. The coast, with its fantastic arches, cliffs and caves, is particularly dramatic.

The most striking built feature of the park is Boyd's Tower, located at the extreme end of the promontory in the south of Twofold Bay and named after the founder of nearby Boydtown. Built from Pyrmont sandstone, quarried in Sydney, it was originally used as a whaling lookout.



## Active pursuits

Tucked into the jaws of Twofold Bay, Eden was the site of Australia's first mainland whaling station. Today, humpback whales cruise past the town on their annual migration, as do minke whales and occasionally blue whales, but these days they're hunted with cameras instead of harpoons.

Whales are increasing in numbers with each passing year, and when a whale enters Twofold Bay, a siren sounds from the museum.

Whale-watching cruises operate between late September and late November when whales, – some with calves – come into Twofold Bay to feed. Sperm and killer whales can be seen further out to sea near the continental shelf. Year-round, you can take a cruise around the bay to see the resident bottlenose dolphins, seals and penguins.

The Sapphire Coast is known for its great golf courses. Among the favourites is Tura Beach Country Club, a coastal 18-hole course designed by Peter Thomson that offers a mixture of links-style terrain and hills, with six par-5 holes.

Curved around the sandy sweep of Horseshoe Bay, Bermagui is a small town with a big reputation for fishing. The continental shelf is just 20 km offshore – the point closest to the Australian mainland – which means exceptional deep-sea fishing. Fishing enthusiasts are attracted by the thrill of landing yellowfin tuna and black marlin.

Markets abound in the Sapphire Coast. At regular markets in Candelo, Bermagui, Bega, Merimbula, Pambula, Wyndham and Eden, you can buy the freshest local produce and seafood as well as homemade and handmade delights.

## Tranquil escapes


Wonboyn Lake, 30 km south of Eden, is one of the most secluded spots on the coast. Adjacent to the Nadgee Croajingolong Wilderness Area, Wonboyn makes an ideal retreat. Here pristine forests give way to unspoilt beaches with rolling surf, and the many coastal walking tracks lead to magnificent vistas, beautiful conservation areas and tranquil lake systems.

Wonboyn Lake itself winds a 10-km course before reaching the sea at Disaster Bay. Best discovered by boat, the lake has plenty of magnificent picnic spots. It also provides some of the area's best fishing locations. The backwaters of the lake are dotted with oyster leases, so when eating out on the Sapphire Coast, be sure to savour some of the lake's tastiest bounty – you won't taste finer.

## Where to stay

Over the past few years, some very plush accommodation has become available along the Sapphire Coast. Set in prime locations along the coast and in majestic forests are peaceful nature-based accommodation and luxury apartments and almost everything in between.

When touring the area, you can choose from converted historic homes and inns, purpose-built B&Bs and boutique resorts, guesthouses and hotels with everything you need to enjoy the magic that is the Sapphire Coast. There are also self-contained cottages, caravan parks and well serviced camping areas suitable for tents and caravans.

 For more information, contact the Sapphire Coast Visitor Information Centre, telephone: 1800 150 457, or visit our website: [www.sapphirecoast.com.au](http://www.sapphirecoast.com.au)

