

## **ITINERARY – WATERVIEW APARTMENTS, PORT MACQUARIE**

There is so much to see and do in the beautiful coastal town of Port Macquarie that it can be difficult to know where to start. We've put together a suggested itinerary to help.

### **Saturday**

For a great family day out, head to one of Australia's finest heritage parks, **Timbertown** in Wauchope. The park has been recreated to resemble a colonial bush town. Be sure to experience the fudge tasting and wine tasting, browse the stalls and check out the bullock demos. The kids will love the heritage playground, the animals and the miniature steam railway. Top off your visit with a Clydesdale Wagon Ride to experience parts of Timbertown that many visitors miss.

There is a delicious lunch menu available at the **Maul & Wedge Restaurant** in Timbertown, but if you've fit all the entertainment into the morning, it can be great to getaway from the hustle and bustle to somewhere more tranquil like the **Blue Poles Gallery and Café**. It located in Byabarra, a town which the locals rightly describe as the most beautiful place on earth. All dishes in the café are made from fresh, local ingredients and the amazing view overlooks the picturesque Thorne River Valley and Quintoc Range.

After lunch and before heading home, meander around the gorgeous gallery at Blue Poles. For the return journey, head via Lorne, and make a stop at the **Kendall Craft Co-Op** at the old railway station along the way.

TIP! If you are fortunate enough to be visiting on the forth Saturday of the month, head to the **Wauchope Hastings Farmers Market** held at Wauchope showground. Even if you don't intend to buy the produce from the 60 quality stores, there are informative cooking displays and the fun, local atmosphere makes for an enjoyable morning.

### **Sunday**

If you are keen for something that will be a hit with the big kids (i.e. 18 years and over) try some wine tasting at the **Cassegrain Wines**. It is very conveniently located on the Princes Highway between the two exits to Port Macquarie. The wines are premium quality and the tasting area is delightfully set up. Try the Chambourcin, a variety not found in many wineries. The stickies are their speciality - the Noble Cuvee and Cassae must be tasted as you imagine sitting on your Waterview balcony with a platter of cheese and a glass in your hand! Delicious! In moderation, of course!

After stocking up on some wines for the rest of your stay, pay a visit to the less well-known **Bago Vineyard**. Not only do they produce some stunning wines, if you happen to visit on the second Sunday of the month, you can enjoy **Jazz in the Vineyards**. Music begins from 11am. Children are welcome and there is plenty of room for them to play on the lawn while you relax with a picnic and some Bago wines.

### **Monday**

Take a 15-minute drive to the award-winning **Billabong Koala and Wildlife Park**. The park opens at 9am and it is good to get there early to grab a coffee at the café before the shows start at 10.30am. Famous for its koala breeding

program, it's one of the few places where you can pat and have your photo taken with a koala. You can also up close and personal with other native marsupials including the very special albino kangaroo. If that's all a bit too soft and cuddly for you, there are also venomous snakes, dangerous crocodiles and other reptiles from pre-historic times.

**Finnian's Irish Tavern** is a good lunch stop. After your meal, take a stroll around the historic **Second Burying Ground** cemetery where nearly 1,500 soldiers, convicts and settlers are buried – the oldest dating back to 1824. See if you can find the oldest grave. You may also wish to take a walk around to visit some of the other places which provide evidence of the convict days and colonial past with these historic buildings, built in the 1800's: **St Thomas' Church, Wesleyan Church, Historic Courthouse, Roto House, Hayward House, Tacking Point Lighthouse** and the **Museum**.

## Tuesday

Fulfil your hunter-gatherer instincts with a day out on the water. Arm yourself with sausages, rolls, salads and a few drinks, as well as sunscreen and a good tie-on hat. Then hire a boat from **Jordan's Boating**. Fishing on the river is a relaxing way to spend a day as well as being a great way of seeing parts of Port Macquarie that you will not get to see by car. You do not need a licence and the boat is equipped with its own BBQ for you to cook your snags and all the fish that you will catch.

## Wednesday

Highly recommended is **Ricardoes Tomatoes & Strawberries**. To get there, head 10 minutes north on the Pacific Highway and take a short detour along Blackman's Point Road. Here you can sample up to five different varieties and pick your own strawberries! There is nothing tastier than a strawberry picked fresh from the plant. Entry is free, so you only pay for what you pick.

This afternoon, head to Kempsey and then follow the Macleay River until it reaches the ocean at South West Rocks. Here you can visit the **Trail Bay Gaol**, built in 1886 from locally quarried pink granite; the gaol has a museum as well as beautifully prepared ruins. The kiosk in the **Arakoon recreation area** off Carrie Street has delicious food at great prices, and gives you a panoramic ocean view.

Only a 10-minute drive further and you will arrive at the delightful **Smokey Cape Lighthouse** perched high on the headland in the beautiful Hat Head National Park. The beaches here are beautiful and the 1.6km return walk between the north and south beaches is worthwhile. Sit a while and you may spot whales or dolphins migrating close to the point.

On the way back, stop and walk through the quaint town of Gladstone. It has historic buildings including the **old Police Station** and the **old Post Office**. The **Gladstone Heritage Hotel** is worth a visit for a quiet ale or as a dinner option with well-presented, tasty meals at reasonable prices.

## Thursday

If you would like a less hectic day, why not try a little shopping in **Port Central** or **Settlement City**, or even some of the boutique shops in town.

In the afternoon, visit one of Port Macquarie's famous beaches. **Town Beach, Flynn's Beach** and **Lighthouse Beach** are the three most popular beaches and

have the advantage of kiosks, cafés, toilets and picnic areas as well as being patrolled by lifeguards from November to March. Town Beach is the closest and is within walking distance, however, on the southern side of Lighthouse Beach is where you'll find camel safaris and, with a permit, 4WD vehicles can drive along the beach. Drive, or if you are feeling energetic you can walk, the 12kms along the coastal road to **Lake Cathie**. The warm shallow waters of the salt lake are ideal for young children and you'll be able to brag that you've seen the biggest bowling ball in the world! Not surprisingly, you will be able to find this treasure out the front of the bowling club. At 2,000kg, it's impressive!

In the evening, join **Port Macquarie Cruise Adventures** for a sunset cruise – a pleasant way to see the canals or Limeburners Nature Reserve. Its BYO drinks and nibbles so make sure you bring an esky full of goodies.

## **Friday**

Enjoy one last day at the beach as you relax before returning to reality.

The natural tidal lagoon at **Shelly Beach** is a great place for those with younger children and also features picnic and toilet facilities. After a swim, head to the **Sea Acres Nature Reserve** which contains one of the largest, least disturbed and most diverse coastal rainforests in NSW. The 1.3km accessible elevated rainforest boardwalk at Sea Acres Rainforest Centre is an inspiring experience. Enjoy the sights, sounds and tranquillity of rare subtropical rainforest.

In the evening, you may like to stroll along the break wall to watch the anglers trying to catch blackfish. Take a box of fish and chips; sit on the rocks to enjoy the sunset and the passing parade of walkers.