

# Ultimate Guide To Gold Coast Living



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# Abstract

Living in Gold Coast, Australia, offers a vibrant blend of coastal beauty, urban convenience, and an active lifestyle. Renowned for its stunning beaches, including Surfers Paradise, the city is a haven for water sports and outdoor activities. Gold Coast boasts a warm climate, a thriving cultural scene, and world-class dining and entertainment options. Families enjoy excellent schools and parks, while professionals benefit from a growing economy. The hinterland offers lush rainforests and serene retreats for nature enthusiasts. With a relaxed atmosphere, diverse communities, and modern amenities, Gold Coast perfectly combines the charm of beachside living with urban sophistication.

Gold Coast offers a dynamic lifestyle that combines the best of natural beauty, urban sophistication, and a thriving community. Known for its stunning coastline, including famous beaches like Surfers Paradise and Burleigh Heads, the Gold Coast is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, surfers, and those who enjoy the sun-drenched lifestyle. Its subtropical climate ensures year-round pleasant weather, perfect for beach outings, hiking, or exploring the lush hinterland.

Beyond its natural appeal, the Gold Coast is a hub of entertainment and culture. From vibrant nightlife and world-class dining to theme parks like Dreamworld and Sea World, there's always something happening. The city also boasts a strong arts scene, with regular festivals, galleries, and performances enriching the cultural fabric.

For families, the Gold Coast offers a wide range of high-quality schools, parks, and community facilities, creating an ideal environment for raising children. Professionals benefit from a growing economy supported by industries such as tourism, education, health care, and construction. The city's robust infrastructure includes efficient public transport, modern health care services, and easy access to Brisbane and other major cities.

Nature lovers can retreat to the Gold Coast Hinterland, home to rainforests, waterfalls, and national parks like Lamington and Springbrook. These serene landscapes provide a perfect escape from urban life, offering opportunities for camping, bushwalking, and wildlife spotting.

The Gold Coast's diverse population contributes to its friendly and inclusive community. Whether you're looking for a peaceful seaside retreat, a vibrant social scene, or career growth in a flourishing economy, the Gold Coast offers it all. It's a city where life feels like a perpetual holiday, blending relaxation and opportunity into a lifestyle that's as appealing as the views it's famous for.

## **Gold Coast Climate**

The Gold Coast enjoys a subtropical climate, making it a year-round paradise for residents and visitors alike. The weather is characterized by warm, humid summers and mild, dry winters, offering plenty of sunshine throughout the year.

During summer (December to February), temperatures typically range from 20°C to 29°C (68°F to 84°F), with occasional tropical storms that provide brief relief from the heat. These months are perfect for beach days, water sports, and enjoying the city's vibrant outdoor lifestyle.

Winter (June to August) is mild and pleasant, with temperatures averaging between 10°C to 21°C (50°F to 70°F). It's a great time for exploring the hinterland, hiking, or enjoying the city's many attractions without the summer crowds. Rainfall is minimal during these months, making outdoor activities even more appealing.

Spring and autumn offer a balanced mix of warmth and coolness, ideal for festivals, picnics, and leisurely strolls. These transitional seasons are particularly loved for their clear skies and comfortable temperatures.

The consistent sunshine, averaging over 300 days annually, is a defining feature of Gold Coast weather. This climate supports an active, outdoor lifestyle and enhances the city's reputation as a top destination for those seeking a perfect balance of relaxation and adventure.

## 1. Introduction



Welcome to the Ultimate Guide to Gold Coast Living, your comprehensive resource for embracing life in one of Australia's most iconic destinations. Whether you're a resident, a newcomer, or considering a move, this guide covers everything you need to know about the Gold Coast. From its pristine beaches and vibrant nightlife to family-friendly neighborhoods and thriving business opportunities, the city offers an unparalleled lifestyle. Explore its world-class dining, outdoor adventures, cultural events, and hidden gems. With insider tips and practical advice, this guide will help you make the most of living in the Gold Coast, Australia's coastal paradise.

## 2. Reasons to live and study on the Gold Coast

The Gold Coast, just one hour south of Brisbane, is renowned for its warm climate throughout the year and beautiful white sandy beaches. The Gold Coast has a vibrant dining scene and nightlife, friendly and relaxing neighbourhoods, and is the 'theme park capital of Australia'.

The Gold Coast is Australia's sixth-largest city with strong economic growth, world-class educational institutions, and career opportunities. What was once a city driven solely by the tourism industry, the Gold Coast now has a diverse range of industries to support its economy

The Gold Coast is one of the top 100 best student cities to live in\*, the 26th top sporting city in the world\*\*, and the most biologically diverse city in Australia.

Here are the top 8 reasons to live and study on the Gold Coast:

### **1. Sunny weather**

Gold Coast has more than 300 days of sunshine per year with hot summers and mild winters, so you will have plenty of opportunities to swim, surf, and play outdoors. It's the perfect playground for watersports, seaside strolls, and hiking through nature.

Fun fact - the Gold Coast has 9 times more waterways than Venice, Italy (over 600km of waterways) with 260km of canals that can be navigated by boat, jet ski or paddle board.

### **2. Lower cost of living**

As it is a regional city, the cost of living in the Gold Coast is lower compared to capital cities and it's easy to get around with a great network of buses, trains, and trams (G:Link) that is convenient and reliable. They cover many routes and students can get a 50% discount on the ticket price with Translink.

You can use the cost-of-living calculator to help you budget your expenses.

### **3. Friendly and diverse community**

The Gold Coast is a diverse and multicultural place to live. Nearly 1 in 3 residents are born overseas and 14% of residents speak a language other than English at home. You will have many opportunities to make friends with people from all over the world and learn new perspectives.

The Gold Coast has an extensive list of cultural events and festivals held annually such as Multicultural Queensland month in August. In Chinatown located in Southport, street markets run on the first Saturday of each month.

### **4. Business and employment opportunities**

Gold Coast's economy is worth over \$40 billion and is expected to grow more than 3% per year over the next 5 years<sup>^</sup>. The Gold Coast is fast becoming a business hub with a low unemployment rate of 2.7% (March 2023).

Before the COVID pandemic, the Gold Coast relied heavily on hospitality and tourism was its main export. Now, the city's top exports include sustainable manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade, health care, mining, finance and education.

The Gold Coast Student Jobs is an initiative of Study Gold Coast and connects students and graduates to hundreds of opportunities across a range of industries. Study Gold Coast also provides online career tools, organise Careers Festivals, Recruitment Events, and their Student Hub can help you with your job search. The Mayor's Student Ambassador Program also gives you the opportunity to strengthen your professional skills and engage with the local community.

If your goal is to run your own business, the Gold Coast is the place to be. The number of start-ups is rapidly growing with 1 in 5 workers on the Gold Coast now working for themselves. The Gold Coast has plenty of support services to help entrepreneurs build their businesses such as the Gold Coast Innovation Hub and YP Gold Coast.



## **5. Beautiful beaches**

The Gold Coast's white sandy beaches stretch along 57km of Australia's coastline and are great spots for sunbaking, water sports, and recreational activities. Popular beaches include:

Snapper Rocks – famous for surfing.

Currumbin Alley – gentle water, popular with families.

Tallebudgera – sparkling creek framed by Burleigh Heads National Park and Palm Beach.

Burleigh – good for sunbaking, swimming, and lookout points.

Broadbeach – sunbaking, volleyball courts, dining and shopping nearby.

Surfers Paradise – great waves and white sands.

## **6. Hinterland - National parks and rainforests**

Just a short drive from the city centre is Gold's Coast's green hinterland - 'the green behind the gold' - where you will find rainforests, mountains, waterfalls, and abundant wildlife. There are stretches of hiking trails with varying levels of difficulty you can take to admire its natural beauty

The Gold Coast has amazing national parks each with its own unique features. Admire the glow worm cave in Tambourine Mountain, relax under waterfalls in Springbrook National Park, or birdwatch in Lamington National Park.

Get up to close to Australian wildlife at the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary (home to Australia's largest living collection of native animals). The Gold Coast is the most biologically diverse city in Australia, home to more than 1,300 animal species and 1,730 species of native plants.

## **7. Exciting events calendar**

With Gold Coast being the second-most populous city in Queensland and one of the biggest tourist destinations in the world means the city has many exciting events to offer. From live music events and art exhibitions to food festivals and major sporting events. Experience a day of thrills and laughs at any of the large 5 theme parks.

Visit Home of the Arts (HOTA) where you will experience art, cinema, music and comedy. HOTA recently went under a huge renovation and now has a \$46 million gallery with an outdoor stage, two cinemas, a rooftop bar, and an adventure trail.

## 3. Guide to Living Expenses in Gold Coast, Queensland

Before arriving in Queensland, it's important to understand and prepare for your expenses while living and studying here. This includes accommodation, transport, food, and more.

It's a good idea to work out a budget to understand and track your spending over the course of your studies. Useful information on budgeting as well as a budget calculator are available on the Australian Government's Money Smart website

If you have a student visa, you may be able to work up to 48 hours in a fortnight while your course is in session, and unlimited hours during scheduled course breaks. If you are a Masters by research or PhD student, you may be able to work full time.

### **Cost of living factors to consider**

See below for some of the costs to consider when living in Queensland.

#### **Accommodation**

There are a variety of accommodation options available to students across Queensland, including :

On-campus student accommodation

Homestays

Residential colleges

Sharehouses

Private rentals

Prices can vary depending on the location, availability and type of accommodation. Usually, the average price of accommodation ranges from AUD \$150 - \$600 per week depending on the type of accommodation you choose.

Don't forget to budget for utilities such as electricity, gas, water and internet bills, which are usually between AUD \$100 - \$200 per month.

#### **Transport**

Queensland has a variety of transportation options available to students.

All eligible full-time university, vocational education and training or other post-secondary students in Queensland can apply to receive concession fares to help with the cost of public transport. This includes buses, trains and ferries. Information on concession fares for students is available on the Translink website.

Cycling, E-scooters and walking are also cheap and convenient transport options. Bike paths and lanes are available to use across Queensland cities and towns.



If you choose to purchase a car, you'll need to familiarise yourself with Queensland road rules. The Queensland Government also provides information on obtaining a Queensland license and road safety.

### **Food**

Depending on individual preferences and eating habits, students can expect to spend between AUD \$60 - \$150 per week on groceries. Supermarkets offer a wide variety of fresh produce and products, including gluten-free and vegan options, and international foods. Queensland's most common and widely available supermarkets are Coles, Woolworths, and IGA, as well as other smaller stores.

Eating out in Queensland can be a great way to discover new foods and try 'Australian' dishes such as chicken parmigiana, meat pies or lamingtons! Our restaurants are numerous and diverse, offering dishes from all over the world – thanks to Queensland's vibrant and multicultural communities. Average meal prices range from AUD \$15 – \$40.

### **Health Insurance**

As an international student, you are required to have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC).

It covers any doctor's appointments, hospital treatments or prescription medications that you may require while living in Queensland. Depending on the level of cover you require, costs can range from AUD \$500 – \$4,000 per year.

### **Study materials**

As part of your studies, you may be required to purchase study materials such as textbooks, equipment, calculators or uniforms for work placements. If you need to work with children or other vulnerable people during your placements, you may also need to have a Working with Children Check (Blue Card). Costs can vary from AUD \$100 - \$1,500 per year depending on your course.

You can purchase some materials second-hand via student portal forums or on-campus notice boards.

### **Entertainment and leisure**

Queensland's buzzing entertainment and leisure scene has something for everyone – live music concerts, museum and art exhibitions, night markets, sporting events, theatre performances, you name it.

International students can expect to spend roughly AUD \$50 - \$200 per month on entertainment and leisure activities. Check out Tourism and Events Queensland for up-to-date information on events happening in your area.

### **Personal expenses**

It's important to budget for personal expenses each month, such as clothing, toiletries, haircuts and hobbies.

Based on your habits and interests, you can expect to spend between AUD \$50 - \$300 per month on personal expenses.

A popular money-saving hack in Queensland is shopping at second-hand clothing shops like Vinnies and Salvos.

## **4. Gold Coast Suburb Guide**

Hugging a dazzling stretch of sand backed by lush hinterland, Australia's famous Gold Coast offers a unique neighbourhood base for every type of visitor.

Packed your swimsuit? The Gold Coast's 57km (37mi) shoreline offers some of Australia's best beaches for surfing, all lined with buzzy shopping and dining precincts. Just 30 minutes inland, you'll land in ancient hinterland rainforest, a place where wellness retreats and wineries sit side by side. Here are the key areas to explore while you're here.

### **Central Gold Coast**

#### **Where: Surfers Paradise, Broadbeach**

In the lively Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach neighbourhoods, skyscrapers overlook the sand, creating a dramatic skyline. This area is particularly well-known for its alfresco bars and restaurants where you can make the most of the city's famous sunshine. Join the active locals on a walk along beachfront promenades dotted with street art and trendy cafés.

### **Northern beaches**

#### **Where: Southport, Main Beach**

North of Surfers Paradise, the glamorous Main Beach neighbourhood is adorned with exclusive designer hotels, a yacht-studded marina, and malls with designer boutiques aplenty. Combined with increasingly hip Southport, on the western shores of Broadwater, it's also your family's best base for the Coast's iconic theme parks, just to the north

### **Burleigh area**

#### **Where: Miami, Burleigh Heads, Palm Beach**

The neighbouring suburbs of Miami, Burleigh and Palm Beach exude laid-back seaside living, boasting hip bars, boutiques and breweries, with views of the Surfers Paradise skyline to the north. Burleigh's



headland also has deep spiritual significance to its traditional Aboriginal owners, the Yugambeh people, who run the excellent Jellurgal Aboriginal Cultural Centre at its base.



### **Southern beaches**

**Where: Coolangatta, Currumbin**

The southern beaches are a gorgeous place where crashing waves meet powdery beaches. Most visitors come to these seaside suburbs to surf or laze on the sand, with the gleaming towers of Surfers Paradise proving a great photo backdrop at sunset. The region is buzzing with trendy bars and restaurants as well as a chance to see some local wildlife.

The best hotels and places to stay on the Gold Coast

### **Gold Coast hinterland**

**Where: Lamington National Park, Mt Tamborine, Tallebudgera Valley, Springbrook National Park, Numinbah Valley**

You only need to drive 30 minutes from the beach to reach the verdant string of neighbourhoods known as the Gold Coast hinterland, home to a staggering stretch of UNESCO World Heritage-listed rainforest. Wild valleys, waterfalls and mountain peaks characterise the region, with forward-thinking culinary offerings set among walking trails and wellness resorts.

### **Bundall**

Nestled just behind Southport, Bundall 4217 is one of the most thriving suburbs of Gold Coast, Queensland. The Home Of The Arts, the City Council Chambers, Gold Coast Turf Club and Evendale Parklands are some of its major attractions across the city. The suburb is best known for its beautiful manmade canals, and that's why it is home to exclusive waterfront million-dollar properties. You can explore various other housing options ranging from spacious homes to townhouses and low-rise buildings. The median house price in Bundall 4217 is \$1,505,000, and the average rent or the same is around \$825 PW.

### **Bundall: An Ideal Hub for Businesses**

With its convenient accessibility, high-end infrastructure facilities and strategic position, Bundall 4217 is considered as a perfect business hub. The suburb allows easy access to arterial roads and highways connecting to Gold Coast and other major locations in Queensland. The best part is its proximity to commercial centres and top-notch amenities, creating a business-friendly environment for entrepreneurs. Bundall offers a diverse range of commercial spaces, ranging from commercial buildings to retail shops, warehouses, to office complexes, with flexible options.

### **Enjoy High-end Amenities in Bundall**

Bustling with a vibrant atmosphere and unbeatable energy, Bundall 4217 has become a perfect suburb of Gold Coast for youngsters and working professionals. It offers modern-age shopping centres, culinary delights, an art scene, stylish cafes, designer boutiques, clubs, and other entertainment hubs. It actually covers a large area, including Sorrento, which is an upmarket area of Gold Coast. There are lots of retail shops, furniture and homeware stores close to the residential area.

## **5. Gold Coast Public Health**

Breadcrumb

Home

Our services

### **Public Health**

Our unit provides environmental and public health services to improve health outcomes for the Gold Coast community.

We aim to promote health, minimise the spread of disease and prevent illness through communicable disease control, environmental health, and free immunisation services.

Our team includes epidemiologists and data officers, public health medical officers and nurses, environmental health officers, an immunisation team, health promotion officers and business support staff.

We partner with Gold Coast Primary Health Network, City of Gold Coast and Scenic Rim Councils, Universities, Queensland Government agencies and various non-government organisations.

### **Communicable disease control**

Our unit is responsible for the management of communicable diseases in the community.

### **Environmental health hazards**

We undertake health risk assessments and advise agencies and the public on environmental health hazards in our community.

### **Public Health Research and Training**

We regularly conduct research and training activities to stay up to date with best practice and ensure the continual safety of the Gold Coast community.



### **Epidemiology and data**

We investigate how, when, and why diseases occur in the Gold Coast community.

### **Food safety and standards**

We enforce regulations to ensure food is safe for eating and meets labelling, advertising and compositional requirements and standards.

### **Health promotion**

We deliver health promotion and disease prevention programs focusing on keeping people healthy.

### **Immunisation coordination**

We coordinate the delivery of national and state immunisation programs with more than 300 vaccine service providers. Our unit also provides free school immunisation clinics and free community immunisation clinics.

### **Medicines and poisons**

We enforce legislation to minimise harm from medicines and poisons, as well as providing advice and issuing permits.

### **Public health incident management**

The Public Health Unit contributes to a multi-agency response during disasters and events.

### **Tobacco regulation**

Tobacco laws in Queensland include smoking and vaping bans for indoor and outdoor public places, restrictions on advertising, display and promotion of tobacco products.

## **Water quality and fluoridation**

We partner with other agencies to respond to public health risks arising from water quality (potable and recycled) and fluoridation.

# **6. Things I Wish I'd Known Before Moving to The Gold Coast**

Hindsight can be a wonderful thing, particularly when working out the best advice to offer new international students coming to the Gold Coast

With expert insights from Bond University students, Charlotte Gibbs and Iris Pham, these are the top 10 things you'll wish you knew before moving to the Gold Coast.

## **1. Bring a hat!**

Gold Coast is located in the state of Queensland – known as the Sunshine State – and for good reason! The Gold Coast enjoys around 300 sunny days per year and in summer temperatures can reach well over 30 degrees.

Because of its subtropical climate, winter months don't get very cold compared to other parts of Australia, meaning you can be outside all year round!

Charlotte Gibbs, a Biomedical Science student at Bond University says you can even swim at the beach in winter – but you might not see any locals doing it.

"I still swim most days in winter here, and I am more often than not the only one in the ocean in the mornings!"

So, make sure you pack your swimsuit (or cossies/togs, as they're known in Queensland!), a hat, polarised sunglasses, and stock up on sunscreen when you arrive.

## **2. Get active**

The Gold Coast's great weather means locals love to be outside and enjoy the outdoors. From swimming, surfing, cycling and hiking, you are spoilt for choice with options to exercise in the sunshine.

Iris Pham, a Master of Clinical Psychology student at Bond University, said when she moved to the Gold Coast she was surprised by the amount of people exercising.

"I noticed that a lot of the locals wake up at 6 a.m. to run when the sun rises and enjoy their day with a cup of coffee. I was shocked by this lifestyle shift, and strive to cultivate this practice in my daily life!"

Want to start your day the Gold Coast way? Anywhere along the Gold Coast Oceanway is perfect.

## **3. Be prepared to swim**

The Gold Coast is home to more than 70 km of pristine beaches, so you'll want to make the most of them.

When she first moved to the Gold Coast, Iris was hesitant to swim in the ocean.



“I wish I was brave enough to go for a swim in the ocean when I first moved here! I was initially very afraid of the waves and refused to swim for the first few years. But overall, it’s extremely safe and fun to swim in the sea.”

As well as swimming, you can enjoy a range of watersports on the Gold Coast, including snorkelling and surfing. If you’ve never experienced Australian beaches before, make sure you understand how to stay safe, and enrol in an adult swim class, if you want to improve your water skills.

#### **4. Make the most of nature and meet some local wildlife**

Not only does the Gold Coast have picturesque beaches, but it’s also home to beautiful rainforests, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.

On Mt Tamborine, you can walk amongst the trees on the Tamborine Forest Skywalk. You can visit waterfalls, camp and hike through the Burleigh Head National Park or Springbrook National Park. For wildlife lovers, you can cuddle koalas at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary.

#### **5. Embrace the diverse and welcoming community**

Did you know that nearly one in three residents of the Gold Coast were born overseas? With such a wonderfully diverse community, you’ll find plenty of multicultural events and activities happening throughout the year, including the Gold Coast Multicultural Festival in September and Multicultural Queensland Month in August.

Charlotte wants new students to know just how welcoming the community is.

“The student community is such a vibrant and valuable aspect of the Gold Coast and as students we have to look out for each other – the friendly Gold Coast community makes this easy to do.”

## **6. There are free social clubs**

Thanks to the inclusive community, you can find almost any club or society on the Gold Coast – whatever your interest!

As well as clubs and societies offered by your education provider, look out for free social clubs like the Gold Coast Run Co. They can be a great way to make friends when you first arrive.

## **7. Explore the north and the south**

The Gold Coast is a collection of small suburbs stretching from Coomera in the north to Tweed Heads in the south. Along this coastline (about a 45-minute drive) you'll find different suburbs with their own unique vibes, communities and lifestyles.

In Surfers Paradise you'll find nightclubs, bars and entertainment venues of all kinds, while in Coolangatta you'll find a laidback surf-town with peaceful beaches.

Iris says she wishes she explored more when she arrived.

"The northern and southern end of the Coast have such different vibes!"

## **8. There are music festivals all year round**

The Gold Coast hosts world-class musical acts throughout the year at a range of festivals and events.

Artists like Post Malone will perform at this year's annual Spilt Milk festival. Or, for art, immersive performances, food and live music you can check out the BLEACH\* Festival.

South of the Gold Coast in Byron Bay, Australia's biggest music festival, Splendour in the Grass, is held every year.

## **9. You'll want to support the local sports teams**

As the host of the 2018 Commonwealth Games, the Gold Coast is now home to incredible sporting venues you can visit.

There's nothing like the atmosphere the fans create at games, so make sure to go and support the Gold Coast Titans in the NRL or the Gold Coast Suns in the AFL when they're playing on the Gold Coast.

## **10. Transport is super easy (and discounted for students!)**

The Gold Coast is well connected by an efficient public transport system. As an international student, it's essential to know before you arrive that you are able to access discounted fares. Make sure to get your student card as soon as you can upon arrival so you can take advantage of cheaper ticket prices (and many other exclusive student discounts!)

# **7. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the Ultimate Guide to Gold Coast Living highlights why this vibrant coastal city is one of Australia's most desirable places to live. With its stunning beaches, thriving cultural scene, and endless opportunities for outdoor adventures, the Gold Coast offers something for everyone. Whether you're drawn to the relaxed beachside lifestyle, family-friendly communities, or exciting entertainment options, this city perfectly balances leisure and modern living. Embrace the Gold Coast's unique blend of natural beauty and urban sophistication, and let it inspire your next chapter. Make the most of every moment in this stunning destination you'll be proud to call home.

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