

A Complete Guide to Mooloolaba, Sunshine Coast

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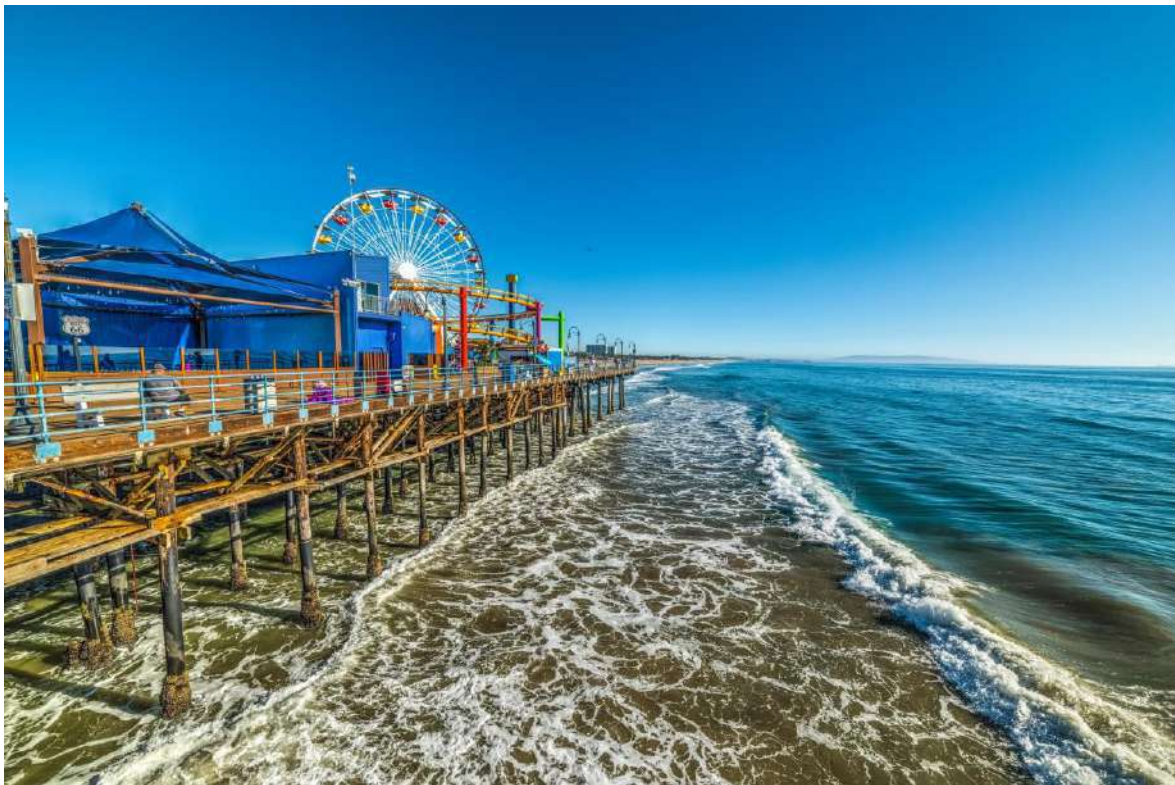
Abstract

This guide offers a comprehensive overview of Mooloolaba, a stunning coastal destination on the Sunshine Coast. Whether you're planning a short getaway or considering a longer stay, this guide covers everything you need to know. From must-see attractions and local dining spots to outdoor activities and family-friendly experiences, we've got you covered. Discover the best places to stay, explore the area's natural beauty, and get insights into local resources that can enhance your visit. Whether you're a first-time visitor or a regular, this guide will help you make the most of your time in Mooloolaba.

Getting Started

Welcome to your ultimate guide to Mooloolaba, located on the beautiful Sunshine Coast. Whether you're planning a relaxing holiday or looking for the best local experiences, this guide will provide you with all the essential information. We'll take you through the top attractions, dining spots, outdoor activities, and accommodation options that make Mooloolaba a favorite destination for locals and visitors alike. Start by exploring what makes this place unique, then dive into the best activities and experiences it has to offer. With this guide in hand, you're ready to enjoy everything Mooloolaba has to offer.

What Are the Must See Attractions in the Sunshine Coast?



With its central location, sweeping coastal views and bustling Esplanade, it's easy to see why Mooloolaba is adored by travellers and locals alike. From dining along the glittering waterfront at The Wharf to filling your itinerary with family fun attractions, Mooloolaba's here to dial the holiday vibes right up to eleven.

Did you know? The Mooloolaba Foreshore is undergoing an exciting facelift that's set to make your future holidays even MORE spectacular. Think new gorgeous picnic spots in the shaded beachfront parkland, easy beach access with an all-abilities ramp, and a stunning ocean viewing deck to soak up the sights. Find out more about the project [here](#).

For now, it's time to fill your days by exploring the 1km+ of open beach, taking blissful ocean dips between the flags, dining at all your favourite restaurants along the Esplanade, and more. Come with us and discover Mooloolaba!

Salty waterway adventures

Explore the labyrinth of canals and waterways with Mooloolaba Canal Cruise, relax in luxurious comfort aboard Coastal Cruises Mooloolaba, or discover the region's First Nations culture with Saltwater Eco Tours. For something with an extra kick of adrenaline, experience the magic of swimming with the whales alongside the crews at Sunreef Mooloolaba and The Pressure Project. Be sure to also add a stop at SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast to your list for a glimpse into our underwater kingdom.

Trawler to table feasts

Mooloolaba is one of the busiest fishing ports on Australia's eastern seaboard, so it goes without saying... you'll want to try the seafood here. In the early morning, fleets of trawlers bring in tonnes of Mooloolaba prawns, swordfish, crabs, lobsters and export-grade tuna ready to eat, and the local restaurants take full advantage. Head to Spero for authentic Greek street food, fill up on modern Asian eats at Rice Boi, and taste the Sunshine Coast's best local produce (read: mouth-watering seafood) at Pier 33.

Fun in and out of the water

Whether you're diving beneath the waves or strolling alongside them, Mooloolaba brings a bucketload of beachside bliss to the party. First up, get your heart rate pumping with a brisk walk or cycle to the Mooloolaba Spit, where plenty of stunning spots to cool off await. Later on, keep the ocean views coming along the Esplanade as you wander through the array of boutique stores, before settling back with a well-earned sunset cocktail at The Wharf Mooloolaba.

Family friendly adventures

While it's tempting to spend the whole day at the beach, you won't want to miss the rest of the family-fun on offer at Mooloolaba. Your first stop? SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast, before taking a tour on the Aquaduck Sunshine Coast, where kids can play

captain and steer the Aquaduck across the river. There's also plenty of beachside playgrounds to let the kids blow off some steam.

What Are the Top Dining and Cafe Spots in the Area?



While recognised for its waves and beautiful beaches, the Sunshine Coast boasts a food scene that is fast gaining ground. From Caloundra to Cooloola, the famed coastal stretch is home to a flourishing cafe culture, as well as some of the state's most recognised fine dining restaurants.

The coastal region has ample offerings in the casual category too, of course – the Surf Life Saving Clubs here are legendary for both their beer selection and beachside views. Microbreweries and coffee roasters are also on the rise, courtesy of an increasingly food-focused population.

Noosa restaurants and cafes

It's the resort town of Noosa that boasts the best reputation when it comes to edible experiences. Still a favourite for surfers eager to enjoy the district's swell, the beachside town now also welcomes foodies in their droves. While the Sunshine Coast has grown exponentially over the years and with it the food options available, Noosa remains the heart of its dining scene with Hastings Street its epicentre. For breakfast, check out Bistro C on the beachfront or the contemporary space of Cafe Le Monde on Hastings Street which is also a top choice for lunch, dinner and late night drinks. When those lunchtime (or dinnertime) hunger pangs hit, Bang Bang with its Pan-Asian fare, the multi-award-winning Miss Money Penny's and Sails, a

stone's throw from the beach with consciously-sourced Modern Australian cuisine and panoramic views, are all excellent choices.

For inventive cocktails and a celebration of Asian cuisine with emphasis on shared meals in a casual yet stylish dining space, Sum Yung Guys is the Noosa restaurant you've been looking for. Open for both lunch and dinner, it has an inimitable atmosphere that makes it essential to book well ahead if you're to avoid disappointment. If an impressive beer list that pairs perfectly with the menu is on your list of must-haves when scouring the plentiful contenders for the best restaurants in Noosa, head to O-Ren in Sunshine Beach and dine in style under the lantern-filled ceiling.

Boasting a locally-sourced menu, spiced with flavours from across the globe and a stunning fitout, Alba offers one of the most acclaimed dining experiences in Noosa, while classic Italian joint Bombetta in Noosa Junction with its extensive menu provides a stylish dining experience well worth lingering over. And as no visit to Noosa would be complete without experiencing the fresh seafood that the region offers in abundance, Noosa Boathouse, the three-level bistro and bar with their emphasis on fresh local seafood and Bistro C with a slew of mouthwatering fish and seafood dishes are all top candidates.

Mooloolaba restaurants and cafes

Asian-fusion eats, spectacular views and fun vibes all contribute to the popularity of Rice Boi, one of the top picks for modern dining experiences among the plethora of Mooloolaba restaurants you'll have to pick from when holidaying in this major Sunshine Coast drawcard. Fish on Parkyn is the place to dine if you're set on dining on sustainably and wild-caught local fish, while Pier 33 has become a famed Mooloolaba institution among locals and travellers alike with its stunning Hamptons vibes, impeccable seafood and sustainably sourced local produce.

If you have your heart set on grabbing some fresh seafood to cook at your digs or eat while looking out over the beach, head to Mooloolaba Fish Market, the largest seafood retailer on the Sunshine Coast. Alternatively, take your pick of the extensive seafood selection on display and eat it right there as you watch the boats traverse the Mooloolah River.

Caloundra restaurants and cafes

You'll find a wealth of dining options lined along the Esplanade and Bulcock Street off Bulcock Beach but as Caloundra's food scene is booming, to put it mildly, you'll be rewarded for your explorations. Hello Harry's has become quite a famed local institution with its American-style fare and outstanding views while Raw + Rice is well-known for its fresh poke bowls and focus on nourishing and sustainable food. Tides Waterfront Dining on the Esplanade is the place to be for excellent waterfront views and modern Australian cuisine with vegetarian and vegan options available to

ensure everyone's catered for, while for breakfast at any time of the day, White Picket Fence hits the spot with its all day brunch menu.

Coolum restaurants and cafes

While still quiet and sleepy in comparison to its northerly and southerly neighbours, Coolum boasts an impressive restaurant and cafe selection, ensuring you'll have plenty of choices to make while holidaying along this stunning stretch of Sunshine Coast coastline. With their focus on raw and organic food (including gluten and dairy-free options), New Earth Cafe is the place to get your day off to a healthy start, plus they've got a friendly approach to canine customers so you can bring your four-legged mate along too!

Tucked away behind the main drag on Heathfield Road, Compound is renowned for serving up the best coffees on the Sunshine Coast and for selling second-hand surf gear at great prices. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, Canteen Kitchen & Bar is a lovely beachside eatery sitting opposite the beach that sources the best local seafood and produce to create an eclectic fusion of dishes in a relaxed atmosphere.

Maroochydore restaurants and cafes

With plenty of family-friendly offerings and a breezy attitude to dogs dining out, Maroochydore's restaurant scene leans firmly to the casual and relaxed. For Asian fare, head to Namory Eatery with their smorgasbord of flavours from across South East Asia or dedicated Thai restaurant Pum's Kitchen. For pub grub with ocean views, Maroochydore Surf Life Saving Club is a safe bet for even the fussiest of eaters and there's more restaurant offerings in neighbouring Cotton Tree.

For breakfast, The Milk Bar Coffee Co is the place to head for toasties, coffee, juice, chai and kombucha while Murray's Cafe offers a 'dog menu' and cool coastal breezes. And there are more than a few options for nights out in Maroochydore, with the Piano Bar, Solbar and The Rooftop Bar & Garden offering a diversity of gigs and shows, and open-air and clandestine drinking venues.

What Local Resources Can Help with Your Stay?



When visiting the Sunshine Coast, knowing where to find local resources can make your stay much more comfortable and convenient. Whether you're here for a short holiday or a longer stay, a range of services, guides, and local facilities are available to help you make the most of your time in this beautiful region. From practical information to insider tips, local resources can enhance your experience and ensure that everything goes smoothly during your visit.

Tourism and Visitor Information Centers

One of the first resources you'll want to utilize is the local tourism and visitor information centers. Located at key points around the Sunshine Coast, these centers are a valuable hub for travelers. You'll find brochures, maps, and friendly staff who can offer advice on everything from sightseeing to current events. These centers often provide up-to-date details on public transportation, attractions, and special promotions, helping you plan your itinerary with ease.

The Sunshine Coast Visitor Information Centre in particular, located in the heart of the region, is a great place to start. They offer a range of services including booking tours, recommending activities, and providing you with all the resources you need to explore the area comfortably.

Housing options in a crisis

If you need emergency housing or are at risk of becoming homeless, call the Homeless Hotline on 1800 474 753.

Homelessness can happen to anyone, here's who to contact for help.

Homeless Hotline

The Homeless hotline is a Queensland Government phone referral service. When you call, you'll receive information and contact details for:

- temporary accommodation and shelters
- meals and showers
- counselling and mental health support.

Phone 1800 474 753

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

About the Homeless Hotline

Housing Service Centre

Our Housing Service Centres (HSC) can help connect you to services for emergency accommodation and help you apply for long-term housing.

When you visit a HSC, our staff will assess your situation and find the best way forward.

This may include help with:

- financial assistance
- finding a place to rent
- public or community housing
- referrals to other services for emergency accommodation and support if you need it.

Contact your nearest Housing Service Centre.

Ask Izzy online directory

Ask Izzy is an online directory that lists support services for people in need.

It's free and anonymous and can be accessed on your phone, even if you don't have data.

Listings include:

- emergency housing for singles, couples and families experiencing homelessness.
- shelters for people experiencing domestic and family violence.

- emergency housing for veterans and people with mental health needs.

Food, healthcare and daily needs help

Ask Izzy also provides listings for

- food and meals
- showers and clothing
- doctors, dentists and health professionals.

Note: Ask Izzy lists both government and non-government services.

By utilizing these local resources, you can enhance your stay on the Sunshine Coast and ensure that you're well-equipped to enjoy everything this stunning region has to offer. From accommodation and transport to insider tips and local events, these resources are your gateway to making the most of your time in the area.

During your visit, it's helpful to know about the various resources available in the area to make your stay more enjoyable. Whether you're looking for local services, tips for navigating the area, or insights into the community, there are many useful guides and websites to explore. For example, you can find information on services in the area that can assist with various needs while staying on the Sunshine Coast.

Must Visit: <https://www.bondcleaninginsunshinecoast.com.au/mooloolaba/>

How Can You Explore the Natural Beauty and Outdoor Activities Nearby?



The Sunshine Coast is a haven for nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts, offering an abundance of natural beauty and outdoor activities to suit every taste. From pristine beaches and lush rainforests to rolling hinterland hills and peaceful national parks, there's no shortage of ways to experience the great outdoors. Whether you're looking for an adrenaline rush, a peaceful walk, or a scenic adventure, this region has it all.

Walking on the Sunshine Coast

Sunshine Coast offers some of the most famous walks in Australia. From the Noosa Headlands to the Glass House Mountains, it has it all. Our guide is a great way to discover our iconic landmarks but also our lesser known but equally impressive walks. There are over 120 walks of varying skill levels and distance, including multiday hikes.

Mountain Biking on the Sunshine Coast

Imagine the thrill and fun of exploring over 60 dynamic mountain bike trails. There are crazy curves for adrenalin junkies and easy loops for all the family. As part of Adventure Sunshine Coast there are eleven trails solely for mountain bikers. Discover half hour to full day options, easy through to difficult rides, and lakeside to mountain fire trails.

Canoeing

There are over 20 waterways to explore on the Sunshine Coast from the comfort and exertion of your canoe, sea or flat-water kayak. This includes one-hour paddles with young children on small and safe lakes, such as Dunethin, through to the 30-kilometre Maroochy River canoe trail or circumnavigation of Old Woman Island off the coast of Mudjimba.

Other Adventures on the Sunshine Coast

For adventure lovers there are other things you can do on the Sunshine Coast including: rock climbing, abseiling, canyoning, coaststeering, paragliding, hang-gliding, bird watching, koala and kangaroo spotting and more. These adventures will be progressively added to Adventure Sunshine Coast. The coast also has organised events, rides and facilities.

Cycling and Outdoor Sports

For an active outdoor experience, the Sunshine Coast offers a number of cycling trails, including the scenic Coastal Pathway that stretches from Caloundra to Noosa. This pathway runs along the coastline, giving cyclists stunning views of beaches, parks, and natural landscapes as they ride. It's also perfect for walking or jogging, making it an excellent choice for anyone who enjoys being active outdoors.

If you're an adventurer seeking more intense outdoor experiences, consider exploring the Sunshine Coast's many options for rock climbing, abseiling, and

kayaking. Whether you're in the Glass House Mountains, the Noosa Everglades, or the Mary River, you'll find plenty of outdoor sports activities to keep your adrenaline pumping.

What Family Friendly Activities Are Available for Visitors?



The Sunshine Coast is a fantastic destination for families, offering a wide range of activities that cater to visitors of all ages. Whether you're traveling with toddlers, teenagers, or multi-generational groups, the region boasts a variety of attractions and experiences that are both fun and educational. From exciting wildlife encounters to relaxing beach days, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Here's a look at some of the best family-friendly activities you can enjoy during your visit.

Beach Days and Water Activities

The joys of being a parent can sometimes be a little, ah, overshadowed, when the kids are expressing their sheer boredom and you've exhausted your allocation of trips to the playground.

Lucky for you, the Sunshine Coast/Gubbi Gubbi land has no shortage of different ways to entertain the kids. The Urban List team have done the hard yards and compiled 13 best things to do with kids on the Sunshine Coast in 2024.

The Sunshine Coast is home to some of the most beautiful beaches in Australia, making it the perfect place to spend a day with the family by the water. Mooloolaba Beach, with its gentle waves and shallow waters, is ideal for families with young

children. You can spend hours building sandcastles, paddling in the shallows, or simply relaxing under the sun.

Sea Life Aquarium

Mooloolaba

If your little one is particularly interested in the unique wonders of the underwater world, take a trip to Sea Life. You can buy a general admission ticket or treat the family to an aquatic animal experience. There are in-water penguin encounters, shark dives and seal experiences, which are as cute as they sound. You can even go the extra mile and book a sleepover in the aquarium, where you can 'Sleep Under Sharks'.

If that wasn't enough already, Sea Life has just launched 'Seahorse Kingdom', a captivating new exhibit with more than 100 seahorses to admire and multiple interactives for guests to enjoy. The Atlantis-themed exhibit is one of the largest seahorse exhibits in Australia and showcases a huge variety of species. Don't leave without a walk-through of the Ocean Tunnel— it's nothing short of remarkable.

Australia Zoo

No animal experience on the Sunshine Coast is complete without a trip to the world-famous Australia Zoo, where crocs rule. You can make a day of exploring the wonders of the zoo or you can book in for an extra special encounter with lemurs, red pandas, wombats, meerkats, dingos and even rhinos.

White Ridge Farm

Get ready to feed, pat and cosy up to the furry and feathered inhabitants at the unforgettable farm adventure that is White Ridge Farm. Meet the llamas, alpacas, horses, camels, cows, miniature goats, rabbits, chickens, ducks...the list goes on.

In between the pats, the kids can explore the adventure and toddler playgrounds, putt-putt golf, take a tractor ride or do a fossil dig. White Ridge Farm is open from Wednesday to Sunday, from 9am to 3pm, so it's perfect for a mid-week adventure.

Maleny Botanic Gardens and Bird World

The Maleny Botanic Gardens and Bird World offer an animal experience like no other. The Farm Friends shed is home to Mediterranean miniature micro donkeys (try saying that fast three times), miniature goats and more fluffy creatures.

Venture into the Bird World aviaries and get up close and personal with over 600 native and exotic birds. With parrots that talk almost as much as the kids, Maleny Botanic Garden and Bird World is an experience you won't forget.

Indoor Things to Do with Kids on The Sunshine Coast

The Station is the Sunshine Coast's vibrant new family entertainment precinct, not only injecting fresh life into the former NightQuarter site in Birtinya but also creating a new space for little ones to let loose.

The family-friendly entertainment hub is open six days a week (with undercover areas for those rainy days) and stars a skate park Alley, a scooter and skate retail shop, an epic live entertainment concert venue, and a thriving food truck precinct where you can fuel up post-skate. For littlies, Alleys is our pick—it's perfect for everything from first steps on a skateboard to those wanting one-on-one sessions.

The Station is also currently hosting a plethora of school holiday activities in collaboration with local art legends Glitter & Goop, where kids can get hands on and creative in an inclusive environment. Glow in the dark slime, tie-dye pillowcases, and magical dragon gardens are all on the cards—secure your spot here.

Glitter & Goop

Speaking of Glitter & Goop, it would be remiss of us not include them in their own right. Describing themselves as "a creative, inclusive safe space for all ages and abilities", we dig them and so will your little ones. Kids' workshops, after school classes, candle making, parties, private events and adult workshops are just a taste of what Glitter & Goop does.

You'll see the talented team popping up at various venues and events around the Sunny Coast but you can visit them instore Tuesday to Saturday or keep up to date with their regularly changing workshops via their Instagram. Glow in the dark slime, anyone?

The Big Boing

Stretch those legs, Mum and Dad because The Big Boing isn't just for the kids. This indoor trampoline centre boasts over 50 interconnected trampolines, a Ninja course, trampoline walls and areas designed for even the smallest tot.

Each session runs for 60 minutes and trust us, it's a surefire way to wear out the kids and give yourself a peaceful afternoon. Book online to secure a spot.

Where Are the Best Places to Stay for a Comfortable Coastal Experience?



When I think of Queensland as a holiday destination, it's the Sunshine Coast that comes to mind first. It's almost as though some divine travel deity decided to craft a little pocket of coastline to have everything you would want for a warm relaxing getaway.

From Caloundra in the south, to Noosa in the north, the large towns along the Sunshine Coast offer plenty of beaches for swimming or surfing (or just sitting, while you eat and drink). And, as tourist hubs, they all offer plenty of other activities if you want a bit of adventure or exploration.

Where to stay on the Sunshine Coast

Choosing where to stay on the Sunshine Coast is one of the first things you will need to work out. The good news is that there isn't really a bad option.

Each area of the Sunshine Coast has a good range of accommodation to suit any budget and style of travel. Unless there is a specific hotel or resort you're interested in, you should be able to find something in any area.

So, then it becomes about what kind of trip you want. If you are planning to focus on the beach and the water, then the coast makes sense. Caloundra or Mooloolaba are good for more relaxed or family coastal holidays. Noosa is also great, but it tends to be a bit more upmarket and can get quite busy.

Consider the Sunshine Coast hinterland if you are interested in doing a bit of exploring. Places like Montville put you right amongst the nature, as well as easy access to incredible dining options.

And you could also base yourself in Maroochydore or even Nambour, both of which put you in the middle of it all, so you can drive to different parts of the coast each day to explore a variety of areas.

Beachfront Resorts and Apartments

If your dream vacation involves waking up to the sound of waves and being just a stone's throw from the beach, the Sunshine Coast has plenty of beachfront resorts and apartments. Areas like Mooloolaba, Noosa, and Caloundra offer a range of oceanfront options that provide stunning views and easy access to the beach.

For a luxurious experience, Oceans Mooloolaba offers spacious, modern apartments right on the beachfront. The property features a rooftop pool, spa, and BBQ area, making it perfect for families or couples looking for relaxation with a view.

Alternatively, Noosa Heads offers upscale resorts like Peppers Noosa Resort & Villas, known for its tranquil setting amidst rainforest, beautiful beach access, and high-end amenities.

Family Friendly Holiday Parks and Cabins

For families or those looking for more budget-conscious accommodation, holiday parks and cabins offer the perfect balance of comfort and convenience. Many of these parks are located close to major attractions, beaches, and parks, offering an affordable yet comfortable base for your stay.

Budget-Friendly and Hostels

For travelers on a budget, the Sunshine Coast also offers a range of affordable accommodations, from backpacker hostels to budget hotels. The YHA Noosa Heads is a great option for those looking to stay near the beach without breaking the bank. Offering a range of dormitory-style rooms and private rooms, it's perfect for solo travelers, couples, or small groups. Additionally, The Sunshine Coast Motor Lodge in Maroochydore provides simple and affordable motel-style accommodation with easy access to local attractions.

Unique Stays

For something a little different, you can choose from a variety of unique stays available on the Sunshine Coast. From luxury glamping sites to houseboats and eco-lodges, there are plenty of options for travelers seeking a memorable experience.

The Beach Retreat in Coolumb Beach offers a more boutique style of glamping, combining comfort with nature. Alternatively, staying on a houseboat at Noosa River offers a completely unique experience where you can enjoy stunning waterfront views while sleeping on the water.

Conclusion

Mooloolaba on the Sunshine Coast is a vibrant destination that offers a perfect mix of stunning beaches, outdoor adventures, and cultural experiences for all types of travelers. Whether you're looking to relax by the ocean, explore local wildlife, or enjoy delicious food at top dining spots, Mooloolaba has something for everyone. With its family-friendly atmosphere, luxurious resorts, and budget-friendly accommodations, it's an ideal place for a memorable getaway. By using the information in this guide, you can easily plan a seamless and enjoyable trip, ensuring that you experience all the natural beauty and exciting activities that Mooloolaba has to offer.

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