

THE LEGENDARY PACIFIC COAST NATURE TRAIL

4-DAY NATURE TRAIL ITINERARY

Get amongst nature on The Legendary Pacific Coast.

THE STUNNING ARRAY OF NATIONAL PARKS is a major drawcard of the route. From rainforests hiding rare and endangered species of flora and fauna to the surreal golden dunes of Sahara-like beauty, there's something for everyone. Take a walk through the forest canopy and under majestic waterfalls, ponder the history and culture of sacred Aboriginal sites, then trek to lookouts for unforgettable views.

REWARD YOURSELF after all that walking with a delectable dinner and a few glasses of wine at the many world-class vineyards.

ROAM through the markets and antique stores of the historic country towns that dot the landscape.

GET WET or hook some lunch from the rivers snaking into the interior of the country. Hire a boat, pop on some skis or just paddle around in a canoe.

DAY 1 Sydney to Central Coast and Hunter Valley

Explore the Central Coast hinterland's national parks, rural resorts and themed attractions. Marvel at Dharug National Park's multi-coloured sandstone landscape, Wyrabalong – home to the region's last significant coastal rainforest, or the mighty 12,000 hectare Brisbane Waters National Park.

Further inland the Hunter Valley wine country beckons with more than 120 wineries, amazing food, cooking classes, hot air ballooning, helicopter and jet rides, golf, walking and cycling tours. Travel further inland to Barrington Tops National Park carved out of an ancient volcano and rising from near sea level to over 1,500m. In the lower valleys there are World Heritage-listed subtropical rainforests. On the plateau, subalpine woodland sees snow in winter. Most of the area is declared wilderness however it is accessible even to those with limited mobility with an excellent track network from short to steep overnight treks. Only a short distance from Newcastle is Blue Gum Hills National Park near Minmi. It's an ideal location to enjoy a picnic or barbecue, nearby there's a themed playground reflecting the area's history and an adventure park to keep the kids entertained.

DAY 2 Hunter Valley to Port Macquarie

The Mid North Coast NSW is one of the largest and most popular tourist regions in NSW. Stretching from Port Stephens in the south to Coffs Coast in the north it offers up the delights of majestic rivers, national parks dense with history and awesome wildlife. In Port Stephens immerse yourself in the excitement of sand boarding a massive dune. Enjoy winery and brewery tours or dine at a new fish farm where patrons view, catch and consume the fish of the day. Stay overnight at Samurai Beach Resort – a truly unique Australian nature resort with advanced eco-accreditation in easy walking distance to the famous Samurai Beach – or choose to continue on to the Great Lakes. Farmstays and horseriding are other popular choices with bird watching and nature photography tours. Take in great views of the Booti Booti and Willingat National Parks. Trek to a lookout tower on Cape Hawke or visit Myall Lakes

National Park – home to The Grandis, a 76m high Flooded Gum, one of the tallest trees in the state.

Do the Manning naturally. Flying foxes star at Wingham Brush. "The Brush" is one of the most significant maternity sites in NSW for the Grey Headed Flying Fox and home to as many as 10,000 of these fascinating creatures. Nearby Brimbin Nature Reserve on the banks of the Dawson River and Tommy Owens Creek is a tranquil waterside escape and home to endangered species of eucalypt. Ellenborough Falls, the second longest single drop waterfall in the southern hemisphere, is a scenic drive through timbered country linking Taree to Port Macquarie.

Port Macquarie is well practised at delivering adrenalin pumping adventure either skydiving over the town, micro flying from scenic lookouts, horseriding, scooting the river in powerboats, riding a wave in a canoe or windsurfing and sailing the surf and rivers. Visit the Koala Hospital, picnic among kangaroos at Kylie's Hut or stroll the Sea Acres rainforest boardwalk.

DAY 3 Port Macquarie to Lismore

Watch eagles soar, whales romp and kookaburras at the Smoky Cape Lighthouse near South West Rocks. Camp in the Arakoon Recreation area close to historic Trial Bay Gaol, relax on river houseboats on the mighty Macleay or enjoy an eagle's view from the Yarrahappini Lookout.

In Nambucca visit the Valley of Mists – a working bush tucker farm and expansive wetlands only accessible by guided canoe rides. Bongil Bongil National Park located between Sawtell and Mylestom, south of Coffs Harbour features unspoilt beaches, littoral and swamp rainforests, wetlands and mangroves. There are 165 species recorded including many endangered species. No visit to Coffs Harbour is complete without a visit to Muttonbird Island, a sacred and very significant site to the local Gumbaynggirr Aboriginal people. As is Dorrigo, nestled on an escarpment 1,000m above sea level. On the east side of the town the plateau drops into the World Heritage Rainforests of Dorrigo National Park where a stroll on the Skywalk above the canopy is a must!

Travelling north the Pacific Highway meets the stately market town of Grafton noted

for its jacaranda festival and the majestic Clarence River that hosts major dragonboat, sail, skiing and powerboat events.

On the way to Yamba is the Yuraygir National Park, the longest stretch of coastal national park in NSW. Lismore and the surrounding hills are alive with creativity, and there are quite possibly more actors, artisans and performers per capita than anywhere else in the country.

Many of the region's World Heritage listed rainforests and national parks are within easy reach of Lismore. Lush rainforests shroud the hills of the Border Ranges and Nightcap National Park, where waterfalls cascade into mountain pools and streams. There is even a rainforest in the city centre.

DAY 4 Lismore to Gold Coast

Bangalow is the only intact Federation village on Australia's east coast – a vibrant but relaxed location for antiques and arts, markets and festivals, great eating and a base from which to explore Broadwater National Park and Cape Byron Headland. Murwillumbah beneath the awe-inspiring Mt Warning surrounded by five World Heritage National Parks and a countryside of green hills, gentle flowing rivers punctuated with pockets of sugar cane, banana plantations, hobby farms and small village communities. Border Ranges National Park, a World Heritage listed rainforest park adjoins Lamington National Park in Queensland. The Gold Coast Hinterland is a patchwork of rural plantations, vineyards, farmland and livestock estates on the way to more than 100,000 hectares of national parks and reserves, networked with miles of enchanting bushwalking trails.



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