

Yamba

From Coastal Calm to Hinterland Havens 4 days, 3 nights

Yamba > Iluka > Maclean > Lawrence > Grafton > Yamba

Target audience: 2 adults and 2 children - Family

Day 1:

Yamba on Yaegl Country

Welcome to Yamba and welcome to paradise! On arrival check in to the Blue Dolphin Holiday Resort where the fun can begin.

After you settled in walk to town and head to Yamba's Main Beach, time to chill and relax and enjoy this kid-friendly sheltered beach and its iconic Ocean pool. There is a great café here, The Kiosk, which is way fancier than just chips on the beach. Think acai bowls, healthy smoothies, and smashed avocado on toast. The kids will love having food options quite literally ON the beach.

After a morning of sandcastle building and jumping waves, grab a takeaway lunch and head to the Blue pools in Angourie. Pop down a picnic blanket and enjoy the serenity as you surround yourself with the old rock quarry.

Fun fact: Legend has it, the pools were formed totally by mistake when a freshwater spring was disturbed in the quarry, transforming it into an aquatic haven. The kids will love exploring the pools, the braver will jump from the rock wall, or while the littlies explore the rockpools with the many sea creatures that inhabit them.

Head back for a siesta at the Blue Dolphin Holiday Resort and enjoy the kids-friendly facilities it offers, such as kids' pools, kids' game areas, and a new scooter track.

In the afternoon grab a few bikes from the resort and head into town, taking in the views from the bike-friendly Yamba break wall (where the Clarence River flows into the ocean). You may spot dolphins here that frequently visit the river mouth and follow the trawlers for their afternoon tea. There's a life!

Head over to the famous Lighthouse and enjoy panoramic views over the ocean.

Time for dinner? Enjoy a lovely meal at Sassafras, a large family-friendly Pizza restaurant near the main street. It'll be hard to choose between their famous Yamba Prawn pizza or pasta dishes made from locally sourced produce, but please do yourself a favour and get the rat baits as you peruse the menu, freshly baked bread balls with a selection of homemade butters... Yum!

On your way home to the Blue Dolphin you will pass Yamba Icecreamery where you'll find a huge selection of homemade ice creams and sorbets made from local produce. It would be rude not to right? Just save room for some Ferrero Rocher flavour for us, please.

Day 2

Iluka on Yaegl Country

The best (and most fun) way to reach Iluka is by ferry from Yamba. A scenic 45-minute passenger ferry ride will take you across the Clarence River in style. If you choose to go on a Sunday, don't

forget your dancing shoes, as the Sunday Cruise offers live music from one of many local bands/artists. And no, its not karaoke so put your microphone away!

Bring the kid's scooters along and enjoy a 25-minute stroll/scooter along the river to the charming seaside town of Iluka. There happens to be an awesome playground on the river along the way, which will be a great stop for the kids to run around on the way to town.

Grab a coffee in downtown Iluka, while here stroll the quaint shops and discover Iluka Emporium – An eclectic art space featuring distinctive local art, upcycled objects, books, and collectibles.

After an energising coffee and morning tea from Freshwater kitchen located in town head over to the incredibly peaceful Iluka Nature Reserve & Bundjalung National Park (stop at the local bakery in town to stock up on some lunch supplies for the hike) – immerse yourself in a 1.5 hour return walk through an ancient forest which just happens to be one of the oldest established forest in the region. The kids will enjoy looking out for all wildlife, listening for the bird calls, and finding interesting tree branches that twine around each other.

At the halfway point, you reach Iluka Bluff to catch the spectacular 360-degree views out over the coast and inland forest. Unpack your picnic lunch and enjoy rest time, either on the grassy headlands or right on the beach before ending back the way you came.

Once back in Yamba (after returning on the ferry), head to Yamba Bowlo for some mini golf, ten pin or to watch the kids attempt the climbing wall. Or if golf is your thing, head over to Yamba Golf club for some dinner and your chance to claim glory on their brand new virtual golf simulator.

A short walk home to the Blue Dolphin where you'll spend the night preparing for another fun packed day tomorrow.

Day 3

Maclean on Yaegl Country

While Yamba has everything you need for an action filled holiday, the Clarence Valley has lots of great towns you'll want to explore while you're here. So today we're heading out and about. A 30-minute drive out of Yamba will take you to the Scottish inspired town of Maclean. Notice all the Tartan-Painted Power Poles? Pick up a map from the Scottish Shop and try and find your Scottish name and tartan. Don't worry if you don't have Scottish Heritage, just adopt the tartan you like best and Scottish name for the day.

While you're in town, head on up to the Maclean Lookout for spectacular views of the Clarence Valley. Look over the valley from the viewing platform and spot The Pinnacle, a unique rock formation surrounded by subtropical rainforest, and an important Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Site. In fact, Maclean lookout, or The Giant Serpent, is the number 1 stop on the Lower Clarence Aboriginal Tourism Site Drive, the first project of its kind in Australia. You can learn the importance of Aboriginal Culture and 13 Yaegl significant sites from Maclean to Yamba.

Do you smell that roasted coffee? Follow your nose and find Botero where coffee roasters perform their weekly ritual of perfecting the best possible coffee combination in-house. Enjoy outdoor seating with an adjacent playground or perhaps the kids will love the Lego room. Quite literally a room full of white Lego.

Lawrence on Yagel County

From Maclean drive across the McFarlane Bridge onto Woodford Island to head to Bluff Point Ferry. Fun Fact (in case the kids are keeping track) Woodford Island is the largest island in NSW.

Take the famous Bluff Point Ferry, known fondly as the Lawrence Ferry, which will carry you calmly across the Clarence River to Lawrence. In true country town style, there is no timetable and no fees, and the ferry operates 24/7. What an adventure. Fun Fact #581: there are only 11 car ferries left in NSW!

Head down to the local playground complete with bike tracks and flying fox, you may have to drag the kids away eventually to get a move on. Try to bribe them with ice cream from the General store across the road. It may just work.

Grafton on Bundjalung country

From Lawrence drive Tourist Drive 22 which follows the river all the way to Grafton. Pop down to the Regional Gallery of Grafton and get inspired by world class exhibitions – grab lunch at the stunning courtyard at Rubony's café at the Gallery or take part in one of the many workshops that are held here, especially during school holidays.

After lunch stroll down to Grafton's main street and admire the historic buildings, it's like walking back in time. You may have to answer some interesting questions from the kids on what each building is so make sure you pick up the Grafton Heritage Trail brochure from the Visitor Information Centre at the Regional Gallery while you're there.

If it's raining and someone (usually dad) forgot his umbrella again, just catch a family movie at the Saraton Theatre instead. This theatre dates back to 1925 and is simply stunning. The kids will love the old charm feel and a movie with a choc top of course. This theatre is licensed, so mum and dad can grab a drink while here too.

As you head back to Yamba, just imagine the fresh prawns you can pick up from the local Fishos for a quiet evening in the holiday park, peeling prawns and taking in one of the famous Yamba sunsets. What a perfect end to a fun-filled day.

Day 4

Yamba on Yaegl Country

If there is one phrase you'll hear a lot around here, it's "You're on Yamba Time". The giant clock on Coldstream Street, the one outside Wobbly Chook Brewery doesn't even work and is for decoration only, time stands still quite literally. You are on Yamba Time now which basically means you have the freedom to take your time, take it all in, and take each moment at a time.

When your biggest decision today will be which beach to take the kids to. Whiting, where the river is calm and perfect for paddle boarding or little legs who don't like waves. Turners, where you'll find surfers and body boarders putting on a show for people walking the break wall. Pippi, where you can take the dog to the South, or catch waves in the North. Or maybe even Convent, a lesser-known hidden beach, the local's favourite where you're pretty much always protected from the wind, enjoy shade from the Pandanus trees, and can find a nice quiet spot to relax. Wherever you end up, take some snacks because the kids will need the energy after all the swimming and shell searching.

Learn about Yamba's history and take a tour of Yamba Museum, where the kids are on the hunt for hidden mice (no actual mice were harmed in the making of this quirky treasure hunt).

As you walk through town, check out the boutique shops and popular cafes where you can decide if it's time for morning tea, brunch, lunch, afternoon tea, or all combined! You're on Yamba time remember!

The newly upgraded skate park, complete with a huge clover bowl, is the key attraction for kids under the age of 80. From behind your hands, you can watch as the kids take on the half pipes and other obstacles that test their fear and your patience!

Let the day come to an end by catching yet another spectacular sunset in this perfect little town, creating family memories for years to come. We'll see you again soon just like so many other families generation after generation. Yamba is home now.