

Savouring the SOUTH COAST

Just because you've left behind the bright lights and culinary kudos of the big city doesn't mean you need to sacrifice your taste buds. **THE SOUTH COAST** has plenty of shining culinary stars – from bakers to butchers, fine dining to farm fresh, here's our guide for hungry and thirsty travelers.

Tuross Heads

There's nothing more satisfying than a well-earned meal and an afternoon of kayaking on Tuross Lake is definitely one way to work up an appetite. Hire a kayak and paddle right to your plate. Hop out at the Tuross Boat Shed Café and grab fish and chips or drift downstream to Red Box Pizza for a few slices to go. On the same riverfront strip is The Pickled Octopus where chef Greg Ferguson serves up a famous salt and pepper squid with homemade sweet chilli sauce.



Riverside moments

What do you get when you put a Melbourne chef in a South Coast kitchen? A moreish melting pot and one hell of a view. Peter Compton cut his teeth at Circa The Prince and The Courthouse in Melbourne before settling into The River Moruya, a sleek cottage on the banks of the Moruya river. He's brought cutting edge cuisine to the coast, with a commitment to seasonal, local produce. Two courses for \$38 or three for \$42 is tempting enough for a long lunch – sit in or outside and look across the lake to Deua National Park. Locals love the smoked eel and pork belly salad. If you're in town for the monthly producers' dinner, it's a great night where you get to chat to the people who grew your food while you eat it.



Best of Berry

This small town just south of Kiama has become something of a Mecca for wandering foodies. The Berry Donut Van is hailed far and wide for its piping hot balls of doughy cinnamon goodness. Six for \$5 is a bargain and washed down with a cold shake or a coffee, they're perfect for a pit stop pick-me-up.

Don't fill up though – the Berry Sourdough Bakery and Café is just as famous for its baked goods. Housed in a heritage-listed produce store from the 1890s, the rows of crusty breads and delicate pastries are enough to make your mouth water. A glance at the menu from chefs John Evans and Drew Fisher will have your stomach rumbling. The Café serves breakfast, lunch and dinner, showcasing local produce and providores in dishes like pink roasted lamb, pumpkin puree and truffle honey dressing (\$34).

If you're short on time, wander over to their brand new, bite-sized premises on Queen St and grab a lamb and pine nut sausage roll to go. You'll still be able to buy all your favourites like mini flourless orange cakes but keep an eye out for special treats from the new kitchen.

If you're thirsty, head to Justin Lill Wines where Justin Lill has a reputation for his quirky tasting notes and wandering palate. Local drops including Coolangatta Estate's award-winning Semillon are on show.

If you're staying in the area but keen to explore beyond Berry, hop on a Foodscape Tour. Jacqueline Weiley runs day tours from Berry to outlying regions, introducing you to local jam and preserve makers and boutique wineries. Plans are also underway for new itineraries and hands on days. Coming up is an "Olive Farmer for a Day", with a "tree to plate" focus so you can pick your olives and eat them too.



On the road

Not so long ago Shellharbour locals used to travel north for a yum cha fix. Thanks to Jasabelle Restaurant and Lounge, they're now staying put. Rob and Haidee Chen introduced Sunday yum cha to the town last year and it's been a huge success. "We still get so many first-time Yum Cha diners... our aim is to spread the word so that people in the area have the chance to experience and experiment with the concept," says Rob, who sees a lot of Illawarra customers embracing "Asian tapas". Drop by if you've got some spare time on Sunday for Phoenix Claws or Sesame Jelly fish.

Wine and dine

You can't go past a trip to Griff and Rosie's underground barrel "cave" at Cuppitt's Vineyard and Kitchen. This is where the winemaking from their estate and NSW grown-grapes takes place. Stop for a short tasting or linger longer over a glass or two at the onsite restaurant. The outlook over the rolling Budawang Ranges isn't bad either. Rosie's commitment to slow food is shown off by Englishman Russell Chin's elegantly rustic dishes.



Details

Jasabelle Restaurant and Lounge

Upstairs, Shop 3, 13 Addison St, Shellharbour Village 02 4297 8998
www.jasabelle.com.au

Berry Donut Van

Queen St (Princes Highway), Berry 02 4464 3030

Berry Sourdough Bakery & Cafe

23 Prince Alfred St, Berry 02 4464 1617
New premises: Shop 2/109 Queen St
www.berrysourdoughcafe.com.au

Justin Lill Wines

112a Queen St, Berry 02 4464 1052
www.berry.org.au/justin-lill-wines

Food Scape Tours

1300 502 100
www.foodscapetours.com.au

Cuppitt's Vineyard and Kitchen

58 Washburton Rd, Ulladulla 02 4455 7888
www.cuppittwines.com.au

The River Restaurant

16 Church St, Moruya 02 4474 5505
www.rivermoruya.com.au

St Isidore

89 Croobyar Rd, Milton 02 4455 7261
www.stisidore.com.au

The Tuross Boat Shed Café

93 Trafalgar Rd, Tuross Head 02 4473 8127
www.turossboatshed.com.au

Red Pizza

93 Trafalgar Rd, Tuross Head 02 4473 8537

Pickled Octopus

93D Trafalgar Rd, Tuross Head 02 44736084

Bodella Dairy Shed

52 Princes Highway, Bodalla 02 4473 5555
www.bodelladairyshed.com.au

Wheelers Oysters

62 Arthur Kaine Drive, Pambula 02 6495 6330
www.wheelersoysters.com.au

Eden Smokehouse

Unit 9, 18-20 Weecoon St, Eden 02 6496 2331 See www.edensmokehouse.com.au for stockists



Bodalla dairy days

Just half an hour from the famous ABC Tilba Cheese Factory, this historic village also has cheese making in its blood. Since the 1870s, boutique cheesemongers have called Bodalla home. At Bodalla Dairy Shed flavoured soft cheeses like lemon myrtle, sweet chilli, bush tomato and pepper berry are made out the back and served up in salads in a retro-style milk bar setting. Try the super thick milkshakes, a slice of the famous Dairy Shed cheesecake or Devonshire Tea with fresh whipped cream – all

made with milk straight from the local cows. The grain-fed beef burgers are local too. Check out the cheese making classes if you've got time or if you're in town late, there are guest rooms on site.

Sapphire Coast

See where the seafood comes from with an oyster tour at Wheelers Oysters. Tucked into the banks of Merimbula Lake for the past 100 years, this family-owned farm produces some of the areas best Sydney Rock Oysters. Try the slippery suckers served almost any style at the Restaurant on site or pick your favourites to take home.

At Eden Smokehouse, Stan Soroka's smoked Atlantic Salmon, Ocean and Rainbow trout take a long time to cure but are sold in minutes. The award winning smoked whole eel flies off the shelves of specialty food stores in the area and the smoked salmon pate isn't there for long either. If you miss out, look for it in Sydney Thomas Dux stores. But while you're in town, wander down to the wharf where you can pick up the wares straight from the factory's small storefront.



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