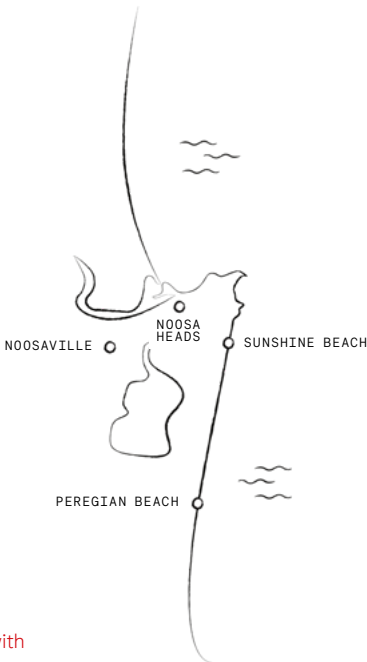




BEST OF

Noosa

The beach may be this town's star player but **Alexandra Carlton** reckons that the food scene is set to become its biggest drawcard.



Nowhere mixes laid-back with luxury quite like Noosa, which conjures both nostalgic summer holidays and romantic, upscale honeymoons. But in recent years the town, a two-hour drive north of Brisbane on Queensland's Sunshine Coast, has made a name for itself as one of the country's most exciting food destinations.

As you'd expect from a seaside spot the seafood is outstanding, from reef fish to prawns to Moreton Bay bugs. Local beef, pastured in the lush hinterland, is also some of the best you'll find anywhere. And the rich soil means fruit and vegetables, like the famous Noosa Reds tomatoes, explode with flavour. So next time you're in Noosa be sure to pack three things: swimmers, sunscreen and your biggest appetite.

Noosa's popular Main Beach (opposite) faces north, offering protection from large swells.

FOR BREAKFAST

VanillaFood

2/10 Lanyana Way, Noosa Junction

Creamy ceramics, pale wooden furniture and native flowers make visiting VanillaFood's flagship café feel like you've stepped into an Instagram story. And the produce from local suppliers like Voodoo bacon, Rawganix eggs and Tanglewood organic sourdough ensure everything also tastes as good as it looks.

📍 vanillafood.com.au

FOR FISH AND CHIPS

Noosa Boathouse

194 Gympie Terrace, Noosaville

If you don't eat fish and chips on the sand while shooing away seagulls, are you even on holiday? The elegant Noosa Boathouse is primarily a sit-down restaurant and cocktail bar on the river but it's their takeaway window that brings crowds flocking like they're seagulls themselves.

📍 noosaboathouse.com.au

FOR VIEWS

Season

25 Hastings Street, Noosa Heads

There's no shortage of breezy, all-about-the-outlook venues along Main Beach and Season is a classic. Of course, even classics need a refresh from time to time; last year's renovation brought a new bar and open floor plan to maximise views. The menu is a mod Oz medley leaning towards the tropical – think coconut-braised short ribs with tamarind.

📍 seasonrestaurant.com.au

FOR SHARE PLATES

Light Years

1 Sunshine Beach Road,

Noosa Heads

With equally colourful outposts in Burleigh Heads and Byron Bay, the Noosa arm of this trio of Asian eateries is a riot of pink neon and vibrant greenery. It's also a gourmand's paradise; the fried cauliflower with a umami bomb of "strange" sauce and a hit of herbs and toasted coconut must be, hands-down, one of the greatest vegan dishes served in Australia.

📍 lightyearsasiandiner.com.au

FOR COFFEE

Clandestino Coffee

59 Rene Street, Noosaville

Inside the cavernous warehouse of Belmondo's Organic Markets in Noosaville's industrial district lies Clandestino Coffee, a temple of worship to the mighty bean. The Taylor brothers have coffee in their blood – at their family's café, "I used to need to stand on a milk crate to steam the milk," says Jaxon, who now supplies to cafés all over the region. Stop in for their house blend or take a course in creating latte art.

📍 clandestino.com.au

FOR LATE-NIGHT BITES

Village Bicycle

6/16 Sunshine Beach Road,

Noosa Heads

The Black Keys and the White Stripes pump through the sound system, brash street-art murals adorn the beer garden and on the menu are burgers, tacos,



Planning a weekend in Noosa? For ideas on where to stay, visit qantas.com/travelinsider.



buffalo wings and cocktails that are barrel-aged on site. In short, this divey and lively bar in Noosa Heads is the place to wind things up after a big night out.

villagebicyclenoosa.com

FOR SPICE

Sum Yung Guys

8/46 Duke Street, Sunshine Beach

If you only have the time or the means to do one big blow-out Noosa meal, make it at this Asian-inspired spot and order as many dishes as you can possibly eat. Co-owned by *Masterchef*'s 2016 runner-up, Matty Sinclair, this is balanced and brilliant cooking. Even the cocktails, like the fresh and herby Spice of Life, tap dance over the palate.

sumyunguys.com.au

FOR LOCAL BEER

Land & Sea

19 Venture Drive, Noosaville

Noosa's first craft beer brewery is a magnet for brew nerds who want to be steered from malt to

hops on a guided tour but where Land & Sea really shines is as the perfect spot for a family-friendly day out. Their complimentary shuttle bus will pick you up from town so you can laze through an afternoon sipping their ales and lagers, along with top-shelf burgers or poke bowls.

landandseabrewery.com

FOR DINNER

Locale

62 Hastings Street, Noosa Heads

Traditional tourist spots like Noosa's Hastings Street can be hit-or-miss with food but this Italian diner at the more sedate end of the strip is a firm hit. Chef Andy Davies's menu is very local, with vegetables and honey sourced from their farm in the hinterland. The restaurant's design celebrates the region, too, with floor-to-ceiling windows angled to frame an instantly recognisable Noosa symbol: the stilted roots of the surrounding pandanus trees.

localenoosa.com.au

Land & Sea brewery; filter coffee, piccolo and espresso from Clandestino (below)

BEYOND FOOD...

From July to October, skipper Andrew Burt from Noosa Wave Boating Adventures (noosawave.com.au) gives a new twist on the traditional whale-watching tour with the chance to swim with the gentle giants – you can get in the water alongside curious humpbacks as they make their way along the coast. Out of whale season, the company also offers snorkelling trips around the Sunshine Coast shoreline, where you might spot turtles, dolphins or rays.



GETTING THERE QantasLink flies to the Sunshine Coast from Sydney. qantas.com

