KID FREE ON THE GOLD COAST

By Tiana Templeman

With its beautiful beaches and laid back holiday vibe, the Gold Coast has long been a favourite for family holidays, but not everyone arrives with a bucket and spade. Couples have discovered the Gold Coast also offers the ultimate romantic escape. Think glamorous accommodation, sophisticated dining, sublime spas and sunset strolls. The Gold Coast really is beautiful one day and perfect the next when you're there with someone special.

Top tables for two

From sunrise to sunset and beyond, the Gold Coast offers something for everyone, especially when it comes to dining. Head to Ristorante Fellini for upmarket Italian cuisine with million dollar views, or make like a local and dine somewhere on Tedder Avenue where everyone comes to see and be seen. Chill on Tedder is consistently busy, serving up seasonal Mod-Oz cuisine and a generous two-course lunch special that's a steal for $56. Shuck offers a dazzling array of fresh and cooked oysters and a lively indoor/outdoor bar area that 'goes off' most afternoons. Moo Moo, a dedicated steak restaurant which also offers plenty to tempt non-carnivores, is especially romantic when the lights are low. Elegant Vanitas is a local favourite for special occasions and features high-end modern Australian cuisine paired with one of the best wine lists on the coast.

No kids allowed

Whether you've got children or not, sometimes it's nice to escape the pitter patter of little feet for a few days. Even the kid-friendly Gold Coast offers some adult-only enclaves. The Watermark Hotel & Spa at Surfers Paradise has one of the only club lounges in the world which doesn't allow entry for under-18s. Enjoy a personalised canapé platter and a glass of wine as well as a leisurely breakfast in the Club Lounge the next morning; everything is covered in the room rate, including valet parking

and a complimentary bottle of Chandon on arrival. Club rooms are located on the highest floors and look very smart indeed thanks to a multi-million dollar makeover. It goes without saying there's strictly no kids allowed up here. Don't forget to use the L'Aqua Day Spa gift certificate included in your package - the treatments are well priced and exceptionally good. It pays to book an appointment in advance as popular times fill up fast.

Kick up your heels

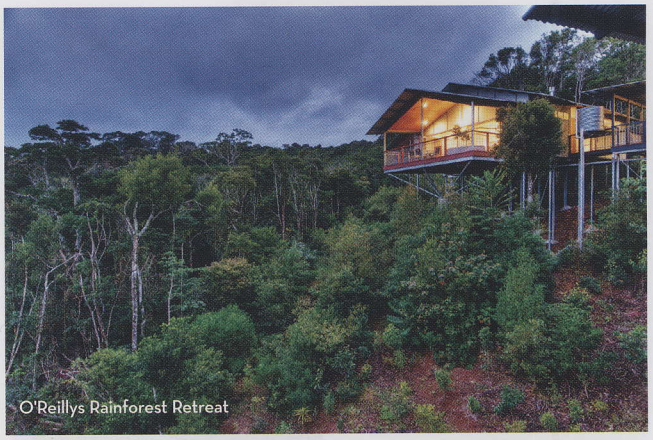
Those in search of a little late-night action will enjoy Jupiters Hotel & Casino, a glittering adult playground that's home to some of the best entertainment on the Coast. Free live music, world-class shows, concerts, comedians, cool DJs – it's all here – and, with more than half a dozen on-site restaurants, you'll never go hungry. Dining ranges from the legendary Food Fantasy buffet and casual cafes to sophisticated Charters Towers which has recently brought back the flamboyant art of gueridon service. Watching prawns or crepe suzette being flamed at your table must be the ultimate 'dinner and show'. Wherever you choose to dine, be sure to drop into the secluded Lobby Bar overlooking the atrium where the people watching is second to none. Locals insist this is one of the best shows in town and it's yours for the price of a drink. With so much to see and do it makes sense to book a room at Jupiters Hotel. Avoid the weekend when rooms are at a premium and stay mid-week instead. You'll save a packet and there's absolutely no difference – except the price. High floor rooms offer breathtaking views over the Pacific Ocean or the rolling green hills of the Gold Coast Hinterland, another favourite hideaway for those in search of romance.

Head for the hills

Less than 30-minutes drive from the bustling coastal strip, towering high-rises give way to sleepy villages, hobby farms, boutique vineyards and National Parks. The Gold Coast Hinterland is spread out over a large area, so the best approach is to let your favourite activities influence your choice of accommodation.

Lovers of the great outdoors will appreciate the natural beauty surrounding O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat, an historic lodge nestled in the heart of Lamington National Park. Skip the traditional guesthouse in favour of a modern self-contained mountain villa with a hot tub on the balcony and jaw-dropping valley views. There's an infinity pool with wilderness views or you can slip off your hiking boots and lose yourself at the Lost World Spa for an hour or two. Daily specials make this a surprisingly affordable indulgence. The Discovery Program available at the lodge is packed with fun nature-based activities for those who prefer not to go it alone.

Those who prefer dining out to dining in may prefer Witches Falls Cottages. Witches Falls National Park is located just across the road and a myriad of antique stores, cute coffee shops and quaint restaurants beckon. Pick up a bottle of local bubbly to enjoy in the spa then relax with a Ripple Chocolate Massage in front of the fire. Not only does this massage smell divine, the warm chocolate acts as a powerful antioxidant which leaves your skin looking great. Enjoying a cosy night in is simple thanks to the attractive private BBQ area attached to each cottage, but with so many dining options just down the road, it's tempting to go out instead.


O'Reillys Rainforest Retreat

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The Watermark Hotel & Spa

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FACTS:

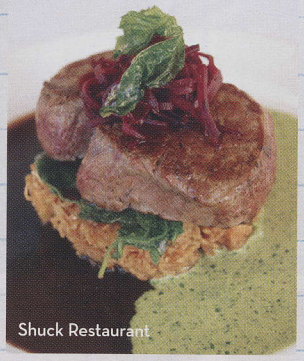
Ristorante Fellini,
www.fellini.com.au

Chill on Tedder,
www.chillontedder.com.au

Shuck Restaurant,
www.shuck.com.au

Vanitas, Palazzo Versace,
www.palazzoversace.com

L'Aqua Day Spa, Level 2,
Watermark Hotel & Spa,
www.aquadayspa.com.au


Shuck Restaurant

Moo Moo,
www.moomoorestaurant.com

Watermark Hotel & Spa,
www.watermarkhotelgoldcoast.com.au

Jupiters Hotel & Casino, www.jupitersgoldcoast.com.au

O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat, www.oreillys.com.au

Witches Falls Cottages,
www.witchesfallscottages.com.au

Ripple Massage – The Day Spa That Comes to You,
www.ripplemassage.com.au

www.VisitGoldCoast.com

Jupiters Hotel

Jupiters Casino

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