



TWEED TOURISM

TELEVISION STORY OPPORTUNITIES

Discover Australia's 'newest' travel destination ... amidst one of our most ancient landscapes

Spurred on by the advent of luxury resorts at Salt Village and Casuarina Beach, and rejuvenated by a new generation of sea-changers and tree-changers, the Tweed region in Northern NSW is slowly emerging as a totally 'new' travel destination.

Whilst the focus is firmly fixed on the natural environment of World Heritage listed rainforests, unspoilt countryside and uncrowded beaches – all formed by the ancient Mt Warning shield volcano – the new activities and attractions now available in the region offer a very different holiday experience.

In the following pages, we have highlighted some of the people and places that are part of the Tweed story ...

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**For further information –
TWEED TOURISM
1800 674 414
www.tweedtourism.com.au**

See [Facts & Figures](#) section for more detailed information re location, distances from major cities and air access. Individual operator contact details are listed with each story outline.

GETAWAYS ... WITH A DIFFERENCE

CAMP TAILWAGGERS

The Tweed region now boasts Australia's very first purpose-built holiday, training and conference centre ... for dogs! Camp Tailwaggers includes self-contained cabins where dogs are welcome in, on or under the beds. There's a fenced dam where dogs can go for a dip, an enclosed exercise yard and 5kms of walking tracks through the rainforest. They even offer a dog-sitting service if you want to head off exploring the region. The conference facility includes an indoor training centre and grassed rings for obedience and agility work where they run dog training camps with international presenters two or three times a year.

Operator Details:

Operator - Camp Tailwaggers and Coolangatta Pet Motel
Contact - Anne or Tony Bulke
Address - Carool Road, Carool
Phone - 07-55 909 682
Email - dog@coolangattapetmotel.com
Website - www.coolangattapetmotel.com

A B&B FIT FOR A KING ... OR QUEEN

Just outside the art and craft village of Uki in the Tweed Valley, three local artists have hand-built a 14th century Italian renaissance castle from rocks and mud-bricks. It comes complete with a soaring Great Room, sculptured courtyard gardens and various quirky features. Guests are accommodated in the Earl's Chamber, the Lady's Chamber (featuring stained glass and church windows) or the Knight's Chamber. You can also participate in art classes with Robert Tondonai and Robert Pope, cooking classes with Irene Brown or book in for a medieval banquet in Lord Tondonai's Hall.

Operator Details:

Operator - Castle on the Hill B&B
Contact - Irene Brown
Address - 90 Bonny Doon Road, Uki
Phone - 02-6679 5442
Email - Irene@castleonhill.com
Website - www.castleonhill.com

RELAX IN A FLOATING SPA

The Tweed River is just perfect for houseboating but Boyds Bay Houseboats offer something a little different with their luxury deck-top heated spa. Feel the tension fade away as you lie back in the spa with a glass of champagne and float along through a passing panorama of canefields, rainforests and Mt Warning. The historic riverside village of Tumbulgum is a popular houseboating destination where you can tuck into a traditional pub lunch at the 1887 hotel and wander through the art galleries, craft stores and historic cemetery.

Operator Details:

Operator - Boyds Bay Houseboats
Contact - Michelle Day
Address - Tweed Marina, River Terrace, Tweed Heads
Phone - 1800 468 732 / 07-5599 1436 / 0412 878 400

Email - sales@goldcoasthouseboats.com
Website - www.goldcoasthouseboats.com

A GETAWAY FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Jules Lewin and Maggie Wilkins-Russell have renovated and converted an old Queenslander in the centre of Uki into a guesthouse specifically designed for people with a disability. They tell me it is the only one of its kind in Australia – i.e. that has been specifically designed as such, rather than just offering wheelchair accessibility. In addition to ramps, special bathrooms, low tables, wide halls and doorways, etc, they have a solar-powered electronic liftchair so people can get themselves in and out of the pool, Braille and large print signage everywhere, etc. etc. They only opened in December 06 and already have some amazing stories about some of the people who have stayed there – i.e. first holiday some people have had in 15 years, etc. etc.

Jules and Maggie also have interesting backgrounds. Jules has a permanent disability as a result of a crushing injury to her leg several years ago and walks with crutches. Prior to moving to Uki, she was a lecturer in medical science (athophysiology and pharmacology) at Sydney University and has been honoured with Awards for Excellence in both nursing and tertiary education. Maggie was a teacher and principal of a large primary school for many years and has a degree in musicology. For the past 15 years, she has conducted music workshops in Australia and New Zealand and was the director of a number of choirs around Sydney – including the Sydney University Choir, which is how she and Jules met.

Operator Details:

Operator - Uki Guesthouse
Contact - Jules Lewin or Maggie Wilkins-Russell
Address - Kyogle Road, Uki
Phone - 02-6679 5777
Email - info@ukiguesthouse.com.au
Website - www.ukiguesthouse.com.au

DISCOVER YOUR INNER CAVEMAN

At Amazing Wollumbin Palms Retreat, you can really get away from it all, hibernating in your very own luxuriously appointed cave, built into a hillside and looking straight up at Mt Warning. Otherwise known as Altwood Lodge, the cave cabin has been crafted in rock, stone and huge timber slabs, to create a bedroom, lounge/dining area, kitchen and bathroom. Amidst the luxury appointments, quirky features have been included such as a pull-down basin salvaged from an old railway sleeper carriage, a three-dimensional shower and a gold-fish bowl in the toilet cistern.

Altwood Lodge is one of three fantastical cabins hidden away at Amazing Wollumbin Palms Retreat. Just down the dirt road but well out of sight is the Sir Joseph Banks Lodge – a 12-sided cabin reminiscent of a Mongolian yurt but beautifully fitted out with a hand-made timber bed, pot-belly stove and a spa out on the verandah surrounded by the rainforest. And overlooking the property's lily-shrouded lake is the King's Lodge, built in two sections around Javanese joglos (internal canopies, for want of a better description!) which were bought from an Indonesian palace and reconstructed piece by piece.

Operator Details:

Operator - Amazing Wollumbin Palms Retreat
Contact - Phil and Casey Russell
Address - Mt Warning Road, Mt Warning
Phone - 02-6679 5063
Email - info@wollumbinpalms.com.au
Website - www.wollumbinpalms.com.au

PENTHOUSE IN THE RAINFOREST

For the ultimate luxury escape, stay in a rainforest penthouse at Crystal Creek Rainforest Retreat. Two of their cabins have been built on the hillside so that the living, dining and sleeping area is level with the rainforest canopy. Three uninterrupted walls of glass effectively bring the outside indoors or you can sit out on the wide timber verandah and chat to the birds as you enjoy your morning coffee.

The 250-acre property tucked into the base of Springbrook Mountain features several luxury cabins, all with big double spa baths. A favourite pastime for guests is to laze in the hammocks strung over Crystal Creek and the owners are often asked to set up special romantic sunset picnics in the rainforest.

Operator Details:

Operator - Crystal Creek Rainforest Retreat
Contact - Mark & Bronny van Renen
Address - Brookers Road, Crystal Creek via Murwillumbah
Phone - 02-6679 1591
Email - crrr@optusnet.com.au
Website - www.crrr.com.au

CITY STYLE IN A BUSH SETTING

EcOasis features your choice of six architecturally designed rainforest chalets offering absolute privacy and complete seclusion. The two-storey eco-timber and glass chalets are beautifully furnished in a ultra-contemporary style, each with a gourmet kitchen and expansive cantilevered doors that take full advantage of the rainforest views.

Operator Details:

Operator - EcOasis
Contact - Jill Wadsworth
Address - 55 Tateywan Street, Uki
Phone - 02-6679 5959
Email - nature@ecoasis.com.au
Website - www.ecoasis.com.au

FIVE-STAR RESORTS DON'T GET ANY MORE EXCLUSIVE THAN THIS!

Limpinwood Lodge is one of the Tweed Valley's newest luxury hideaways, with the three chalets opening in 2007. Each features a cosy log fire for winter and a spa out on the timber deck looking out towards the lush landscaped gardens. They offer all the trimmings you would expect in a five-star resort (including in-room massages) without the crowds

Operator Details:

Operator - Limpinwood Lodge
Contact - Robert & Robyn Rowney
Address - 531 Zara Road, Limpinwood
Phone - 02-6679 3805
Website - www.limpinwoodlodge.com.au

BEACH HOLIDAY ON A BUDGET

Whilst the Tweed's new luxury retreats get plenty of attention, you can still find budget beach accommodation on the Tweed Coast.

The Hideaway is located right on Cabarita Beach, with accommodation available in very nicely appointed self-contained motel units or a couple of spacious two-room family suites.

Prices for the oceanfront rooms start from just \$131 per night Monday-Thursday or \$148 on weekends (min two night stay). For two people, that's just \$65.60/\$74 per person.

The family room, sleeping up to six people, starts from \$197 per night during the week which works out at less than \$33 per person!

This would be a great property to feature as part of a budget holiday special – one of the Tweed's best-kept secrets. We also have a number of other well-priced accommodation options along the Coast, including the cabins in our beachfront caravan parks which represent excellent value.

Operator Details:

Operator - The Hideaway
Contact - Chris & Maria Gregory
Address - 21 Cypress Crescent, Cabarita
Phone - 02-6676 1444
Website - www.cababeach.com.au

ACTION & ADVENTURE

UNDERWATER BUSHWALKING

This is a walk on the wildside with a difference: A guided scuba dive along the Tweed River. Unlike your regular bushwalk where wildlife sightings are few and fleeting, you'll see marine life in abundance on this scuba safari – dolphins, turtles, rays, octopus, moray eels and fish by the hundreds. This could also be done at night when the underwater inhabitants of the river are even more active and the phosphorus puts on a spectacular light show. Underwater lights would be required for filming (which also slightly dim the effects of the phosphorus, unfortunately) but I think we can source these locally if the crew don't have easy access to suppliers. Alternatively, the daytime experience is still an excellent option.

This particular operator could also take the crew out diving with grey nurse sharks off the Tweed Coast out at the "9-mile" where they gather during the winter months. Sightings can't be guaranteed but the sharks are usually there most of the time from mid-July onwards.

Operator Details:

Operator - Kirra Dive
Contact - Tim
Address - 133 Wharf Street, Tweed Heads
Phone - 07-5536 6622
Email - frontdesk@kirradive.com
Website - www.kirradive.com

SURFING SAFARI

The Northern NSW coastline is the traditional birthplace of the Aussie surfing legend and Australia's current world champions, Mick Fanning and Stephanie Gilmore. ... so where better to learn to surf like a pro? Local surf schools offer group lessons for beginners, private lessons for experienced surfers, school programs and coaching.

Operator Details:

Operator - New Tweed Coast Adventures
Contact - Anthony Pope
Address - The Boathouse at Salt Village, Pointbreak Circuit, South Kingscliff
Phone - 02-6674 1039
Website - www.tweedcoastadventures.com.au

WHALE WATCHING: UP CLOSE & VERY PERSONAL!

Tweed operators offer a very different brand of whale watching to what you will find anywhere else along the east coast ... getting up close and very personal in your choice of a 10-man zodiac (inflatable runabout) or an 11-man dive boat. The curious humpbacks regularly pop up right next to the boat – almost within touching distance – and it's a breath-taking experience when some of them ride the gentle swells, heading straight for you. The whale watching season runs uninterrupted from early June to late November, with daily sightings usually fairly close to Cook Island and the shoreline. The 3-4 hour whale watching adventure finishes with a riverside barbeque or brunch at the Sheoak Shack in Fingal– a laid-back surfie-style café featuring shell mobiles and some sling seats made from driftwood and fishing nets.

New Operator! In 2008, the Tweed welcomed a new whale watching operator offering excursions for larger groups in their 45-pax vessel. The new boat still offers the same 'up close and personal' experience where you'll pretty much have the whales all to yourself.

Operator Details:

Operator - Tweed Snorkelling & Whale Watching Adventures (zodiac)
 Contact - John & Leah Van Blanken
 Address - Boats depart from Fingal Public Wharf on the Tweed River
 Phone - 0410 659 034
 Email - snorkel5@bigpond.net.au
 Website - www.tweedoceanadventures.com.au

Operator - Fingal Dive Charters (dive boat)
 Contact - Mal Hennessey
 Address - Fingal Road, Fingal Head
 Phone - 0418 711 659
 Email - fingalcharters@ozbizweb.com

Operator - Aquatic Blue Charters (45-pax)
 Contact - Carol & Tony Hunt
 Address - Boats depart from the private wharf at Tweed Coolangatta Bowls Club, Sorley Street, South Tweed
 Phone - 07-5599 4104 or 0448 822 303
 Email - info@aquaticbluecharters.com.au
 Website - www.aquaticbluecharters.com.au

SNORKEL WITH TURTLES & LEOPARD SHARKS

Located approximate 600m offshore from Fingal Head, the Cook Island Aquatic Reserve is one of the best-kept secrets along the east coast – home to a large permanent colony of green and loggerhead turtles, and the docile leopard sharks who visit during the summer months. The abundance of marine life also includes bull rays, spotted eagle rays, giant gropers, wobbiegongs and the occasional grey nurse shark, with rock caves and coral gardens adding to the area's underwater charms. A number of operators take divers out to the reserve, while Fingal Dive Charters and Tweed Snorkelling and Whale Watching Adventures offer regular cruises for snorkellers of all levels.

Operator Details:

Operator - Fingal Dive Charters (dive boat)
 Contact - Mal Hennessey
 Address - Fingal Road, Fingal Head
 Phone - 0418 711 659
 Email - fingalcharters@ozbizweb.com

KAYAKING ON CUDGEN CREEK

Winding through the Tweed Coast wetlands, Cudgen Creek is an important habitat for a wide variety of bird and marine species. The best way to access this wilderness area is on a guided kayak tour where you might also catch a glimpse of the local river dolphins. For a slightly different angle, we could arrange one of the local indigenous guides to accompany you and, perhaps, incorporate some of the sites of Aboriginal significance.

Operator Details:

Operator - New Tweed Coast Adventures
Address - The Boathouse at Salt Village, Pointbreak Circuit, South Kingscliff
Phone - 02-6674 1039
Website - www.tweedcoastadventures.com.au

New Operator: Local Aboriginal guide, Kyle Slabb, now offers a unique Indigi-adventure experience, combining a kayaking experience with visits to local Aboriginal sites and hands-on indigenous cultural experiences. Try your hand at spearing fish and making baskets, visit the ancient 'women's birthing island' and learn more about the rich heritage of the Bundjalung nation.

Operator Details:

Operator - Kyle Slabb
Phone - (07) 5523-2119 or 0413 075 812
Email - slabb01@bigpond.com

BUSHWALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE ANCIENTS

Discover the ancient secrets and dreamtime stories of the Fingal peninsular with local Aboriginal guide, Ernie Williams.

Operator Details:

Operator - Saltwater Life
Contact - Ernie Williams
Phone - 0431 536 786
Email - ernie@saltwaterlife.com.au
Website - www.saltwaterlife.com.au

DEEP SEA FISHING CHARTERS

The cross-over of tropical, sub-tropical and temperate waters off the Tweed Coast adds up to a huge variety of big game fish. A number of operators offer deep sea fishing charters that head out from the Tweed Marina to the offshore reefs in search of billfish, cobia, mackerel, mahi mahi, tuna, pearl perch, snapper, mullaway and parrot fish. They cater for groups of up to 12 or more, as well as individuals. Operators supply all the necessary bait and tackle, and the required fishing permits.

Operator Details:

Operator - Seamaster Fishing Charters (there are also several others)
Contact - Peter Bolic
Address - River Terrace, Tweed Heads
Phone - 07-5524 8849 or 0415 593 901
Email - seamaster@bigpond.com
Website - www.seamasterfishingcharters.com

FLY FISHING FOR AUSTRALIAN BASS

Deep in the Tweed Valley, Clarrie Hall Dam is a favourite (and very beautiful) location for bass fly fishing. It's stocked every year with over 20,000 fingerlings so the chances of getting a nibble are always good. There are no fly fishing operators, as such, but we would be happy to organize a

local fisherman to take you out on the dam and perhaps show you some other good fishing spots along the Tweed River.

Contact Details:

Central contact - Tweed Tourism
 Contact - Karen Ransome
 Phone - 07-5538 7379 / 0431 958 726
 Email - kransome@technet2000.com.au

A LITTLE LOCAL FISHING KNOWLEDGE

River and estuary fishing is obviously a major pastime right along the Tweed River. We would be happy to set you up with local fishermen and crabbers who can take you out to their favourite spots, to talk about what you can catch, etc. and maybe even throw in a few of their own recipes.

Contact Details:

Central contact - Tweed Tourism
 Contact - Karen Ransome
 Phone - 07-5538 7379 / 0431 958 726
 Email - kransome@technet2000.com.au

UNIQUE TOURS & ATTRACTIONS ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

Crystal Creek Miniatures is home to an amazing collection of pint-sized animals, including horses, cows, donkeys and more. Even the family dogs are pocket-sized Chihuahuas. In addition to being a working animal stud, they have an entertaining hour-long tour on the valley tractor train and you can finish up by sampling local Down on the Farm beef at the Verandah Café.

Operator Details:

Operator - Crystal Creek Miniatures
 Contact - Carolyn Tebbutt
 Address - Cnr Numinbah Rd & Upper Crystal Creek Rd, Crystal Creek (via Murwillumbah)
 Phone - 02-6679 1532
 Email - tours@minianimals.net
 Website - www.minianimals.net

CATCH YOUR OWN SEAFOOD PLATTER

Operated by Lee and Robert Eyre of Perfectour (see also Birds Bay Oyster Farm), Catch-a-Crab Cruises are one of the most popular – and awarded – attractions in the Tweed region.

The daily cruises depart from Birds Bay Oyster Farm on the Tweed River and travel through the small islets and wetlands of the Terranora Inlet, giving passengers the chance to get ‘hands on’ as the boat stops to feed wild pelicans, pulls up on a sandbar so everyone can have a go at pumping for yabbies and then cruises past the crab pots to haul in the day’s catch. An informative presentation on the local spanner and mudcrabs, and some leisurely time dangling the fishing rods over the side complete the three hour cruise.

Returning to the Birds Bay Oyster Farm, passengers can dine on their catch with a succulent crab platter and sample the locally grown oysters.

Catch a Crab also run educational cruises for school groups and have won numerous awards, including Tourism NSW’s Award of Distinction and have been inducted into Northern Rivers Tourism’s Hall of Fame.

Operator Details:

Operator - Catch a Crab Cruises
Contact - Lee Eyre
Address - Birds Bay Drive, West Tweed heads
Phone - 07-5599 9972
Email - info@perfectour.com
Website - www.catchacrab.com.au

LUXURY BARBEQUE BOATS

A very different way to plan a picnic in the Tweed is to hire out one of the luxury barbeque pontoons available from Neptune's Pleasure Pontoons. The boats are equipped with an onboard barbeque, CD stereo system, full length canopy top, fish finder and even an on-board toilet. If you don't trust your luck with a rod and reel, you can always stock up on fresh prawns from the trawler, oysters from the Kennedy Drive farmers and local fish from the co-op before you head out. Alternatively, the operators will do full catering. A great way to spend a day out with friends.

Operator Details:

Operator - Neptunes Pleasure Pontoons
Contact - Noel & Liana Wynne
Address - Tweed Marina, River Terrace, Tweed Heads
Phone - 0402 55 11 44
Email - info@neptunespleasurepontoons.com.au
Website - www.neptunespleasurepontoons.com.au

CRUISE THROUGH THE RAINFOREST

The only one of its kind in the region, Tweed Endeavour Cruises takes you by boat through the rainforests of Stotts Island and past the Tweed's sprawling canefields to the historic riverport of Tumbulgum.

Stop along the way to feed the wild birds of prey and keep a close eye out for friendly river dolphins as you learn more about the region from Captain Bill's commentary. After browsing through the art galleries, craft shops and historical country pub at Tumbulgum, you'll enjoy a seafood feast onboard as you travel back to the Tweed.

Tweed Endeavour Cruises also offer a unique Fishmarket Cruise which stops for a behind-the-scenes tour of the largest seafood export factory on the Tweed and a Crab Catching Cruise where you can try yabby pumping, fishing, bird feeding and, of course, crab catching.

Operator Details:

Operator - Tweed Endeavour Cruises
Contact - Sonya or Scott
Address - Tweed Marina, River Terrace, Tweed Heads
Phone - 07-5536 8800
Email - info@goldcoastcruising.com
Website - www.goldcoastcruising.com

FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD

FROM THE GARDEN TO THE TABLE

At Mavis Kitchen, you can see how fresh the food is – from your table on the verandah of this beautiful old Queenslander, you look straight out at the salad, veggie and herb garden where they grow their own organic produce for the restaurant.

Depending on what is ripe for the picking each morning, chefs Charlie Ebell and Sandi Allaway design a new blackboard menu every day, highlighting the lush flavours with simple yet elegant country-style recipes.

The house itself has an interesting history: Until very recently, it was one of the Gold Coast's most upmarket restaurants – the Harley Street Brasserie at Labrador. When developers bought the property, owners Peter Clarke and Charlie moved the old Queenslander lock, stock and barrel to their 25-acre hideaway at the base of Mt Warning in the Tweed Valley.

They also offer accommodation in the property's former dairy and an old shed, both of which have been converted into contemporary-style self-contained cabins. Interesting features include:

A bedroom in what was once the creamery

An open section of roof in the bathroom to create an 'outdoor' shower.

The property is a showcase of environmental sustainability with neatly labeled worm farms and compost heaps to provide natural fertilizers for the garden, free range chickens to supply the breakfast eggs and a dam to provide water.

Operator Details:

Operator - Mavis's Kitchen and Cabins at Mt Warning
Contact - Peter Clarke
Address - 64 Mt Warning Road, Mt Warning (near Uki –10 mins from Murwillumbah)
Phone - 02-6679 5664
Email - home@maviseskitchen.com.au
Website - www.maviseskitchen.com.au

TROPICAL TREATS

Celebrating its 25th birthday in 2008, Tropical Fruit World and Research Park would have to be the world's healthiest theme park - comprising the largest range of rare and tropical fruit in the world. More than 500 varieties are grown on the 65-hectare plantation, with some of the more quirky varieties including chocolate pudding fruit, lemon meringue pie fruit, chewing gum fruit, champagne fruit and ice-cream bean. It's also a great place to introduce kids to tasty exotics such as jak fruit, babacos, papayas, longans and the giant avocados.

Owner Bob Brinsmead bought the property in 1972, gradually planting out the rolling hills with varieties gathered from all over the world. Prior to this, part of the land was used as by the Department of Agriculture as a research station, where their experimental plot included avocados, lychees, mangoes and macadamia nuts long before most Australians had even heard of these 'new' fruits. It was, in fact, the first place in NSW to grow and market avocados.

Opening to the public in 1973 as Avocadoland, Tropical Fruit World has evolved over the years as a popular family fun park with riverboat cruise, miniature railway, adventure playground and fauna park.

Behind the scenes, a team of horticulturalists conduct significant research, developing methods to optimise the growth of tropical and exotic fruits that are not native to the region. They are also

developing advanced cultivation methods for some of the Asian fruits which are now appearing in Australian supermarkets, such as durian and dragon fruit, as well as supplying commercially to local restaurants.

Operator Details:

Operator - Tropical Fruit World
 Contact - Kelly Patterson or Aymon Gow
 Address - Duranbah Road, Duranbah
 Phone - 02-6677 7222
 Email - info@tropicalfruitworld.com.au
 Website - www.tropicalfruitworld.com.au

OYSTERS DON'T COME ANY FRESHER THAN THIS!

Commercial oyster farming is an important industry in the Tweed region, with the leases predominantly located along the banks of the Tweed River and in the Terranora Inlet. The local variety is based on the Sydney rock oyster stock but – like wine – the flavour and colour of oysters will vary depending on where they are grown.

A number of co-ops along the highway and Kennedy Drive, west of Tweed Heads, sell locally-grown oysters but Lee and Robert Eyre have taken it one step further by opening their own Oyster Bar where people can come in and sample freshly shucked oysters, either grown locally in their nearby leases when they are harvesting or from suppliers at other times of the year.

At the Birds Bay Oyster Farm right on the banks of the river, you can see how the oysters are brought in from the 'beds' on 'trays' before being harvested and shucked. Their lunch menu features Birds Bay oysters Kilpatrick, mornay and *au naturale*, as well as live mudcrabs and spanner crabs caught by local fishermen who also supply Lee and Robert's very popular Catch-a-Crab cruises.

They also showcase the freshwater Akoya pearls which are also grown here in small quantities with a small gift shop featuring locally-designed Akoya pearl jewellery.

Operator Details:

Operator - Birds Bay Oyster Farm
 Contact - Lee Eyre
 Address - Birds Bay Drive, West Tweed Heads
 Phone - 07-5599 9972
 Email - info@perfectour.com
 Website - www.catchacrab.com.au/perfectour

TOUR THE LOCAL FISH MARKETS

We have a number of larger co-ops that will take visitors behind-the-scenes to find out more about the local seafood industry – what species are caught in the area, how to correctly fillet fish, how they are prepared, how they are packaged for the local and export markets, etc. Markwell's Deep Sea Fishery at Chinderah conducts tours of their riverfront seafood facility as part of select group cruises offered by Tweed Endeavour Cruises, while the family-operated Mennitti's Seafood, just near the Tweed Marina in River Terrace, Tweed Heads, will take people behind the scenes on request.

Contact Details:

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 Email - kransome@technet2000.com.au

DRIVE-BY SEAFOOD BANQUET

Following the 'food trail' is a great way to get out and explore the countryside. In Tweed Heads, however, you can put an ice-filled esky in the boot and stock up on a seafood banquet:

- Get off to an early morning start and meet the prawn trawlers at the Tweed marina where you can buy fresh off the back of the boat;
- Drive along the riverbank to Birds Bay and hop on the Catch-a-Crab cruise. The boat stops at sandbars and everyone gets off to go pumping for yabbies. Further along the river, you pull in the pots for a haul of mudcrabs and then throw a line off the side to catch a few silver bream;
- Driving back towards Tweed Heads, you can buy fresh oysters from one of the co-ops whose harvest comes from the oyster beds in the river;
- Back at Tweed Marina, you can hire out a luxury pontoon and set off to find a deserted river beach where you can barbeque the day's catch on board.

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TWEED SEAFOOD RECIPES

Any of our Tweed water- and fishing-focussed stories could be supplemented with a cooking demonstration and/or recipes incorporating locally caught seafood, such as mudcrabs, oysters, prawn, snapper, mahi mahi and any of the other deep sea varieties. To add a little interest, we could set the cooking demonstration up in a location such as on the crab-catching cruise boat, a wharf-side barbeque or the barbeque pontoon. We could also ask the chef to include some unique fruits grown only in this region, such as the native fingerlime which is like lemon-flavoured caviar and is supplied to some of Sydney's leading restaurants, such as Tetsuya's. We have a number of leading 'celebrity' chefs in the region that you may like to include in a segment such as this, including:

- Steve Snow from Fins at Salt
- Greg Pieper from Bamboo Restaurant at Santai and Sandbar + Grill at Casuarina
- Michael Jenkins from Peppers

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TASTE THE TWEED

In the past decade or so, a number of the traditional banana plantations and dairy farms of the Tweed Valley have been converted to niche produce and native bush tucker, much of which is unique to the region. Through Tweed Tourism's Taste the Tweed project, these growers are being encouraged to set up farmgate operations where visitors can learn more about these different fruits and flavours. We could organize a Taste the Tweed trail incorporating visits to some or all of the following:

- Tropical Fruit World – where they grow over 500 varieties of exotic and tropical fruits including chocolate pudding fruit, jak fruit, giant avocados and cactus fruit. This is a well-established tourism operation with tractor farm tours which stop at several spots so you can wander into the orchards and harvest your own fruit. Their Operations Manager, Aymon Gow, would be great on TV – he knows everything about all these weird fruits which he rips off the trees and

hacks into with massive big knives as you drive through the property. (I like to call him the 'Steve Irwin of Fruit' ... although he's not quite as OTT as the Croc Hunter was!)

- Madura Tea – This is the only whole Australian-owned fine tea producer. Factory tours are available, starting out in the plantation and moving through the entire production process to the drying rooms, shredding machines and packaging sections.
- Banana Cabana Bush Tucker Garden – Buck Buchanan is a typical Tweed bushie who has found a market for his native fingerlimes in some of Australia's finest restaurants. Native fingerlimes are grown only in this region – their pulp is the consistency of caviar and has a fresh citrus flavour that is extremely popular with Japanese and Asian chefs. Buck also grows the very alien-looking tentacled Buddha's Hand fruit which originates from the foothills of the Himalayas. His roadside stall at Chillingham is famous for his chocolate-coated frozen bananas and 'yowie droppings' (dried bananas!) Buck is another good talent for the TV cameras – don't expect him to be wearing shoes or a clean shirt and he's about as dry as his yowie droppings!!
- Soul Chocolates – The Sunday afternoon treat at Flutterbies Café in Tyalgum village is "Liquid Gold" – a warming winter beverage made from pure hand-made chocolate. It is made by a lovely local lady who also makes awesome chocolate truffles and gluten-free, wheat-free, everything-except-the-calories-free chocolate cookies.
- New Govardhana Hare Krishna Farm – This is one of only three Hare Krishna Farms in Australia where they grow much of the produce for the Hare Krishna restaurants in the cities. They welcome visitors and, on a Sunday evening from 6pm, put on a massive vegetarian community banquet which sometimes attracts up to 200 people. All they charge for this is a gold coin donation. The guy who originally bought this property 30 years ago and set it up as a Hare Krishna community is living here again after 15 years away and would be another good on-air talent.
- Gelateria Vernazza – The Italian owners of this tiny ice-cream shop in Salt Village moved here from the Cinque Terra village of Vernazza – and brought their authentic family gelati recipe with them. People have been known to drive down from the Gold Coast just to get one of their ice-creams.

The locations above are positioned along a loop drive starting at Salt Village and going right out through the Valley via some stunning ancient volcanic landscapes. The drive could therefore finish at one of a number of contemporary fine dining restaurants in Salt Village where our top chefs are developing a new brand of 'Tweed cuisine' by incorporating many of the local flavours sampled along the route.

Contact Details:

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TOURING / DRIVE ROUTES

NEW TOURING ROUTE: THE RAINFOREST WAY

The Rainforest Way is a new series of scenic driving routes connecting the 14 World Heritage-listed National Parks of northern NSW and southeast Queensland. Two of the most spectacular loops in the series focus on the Tweed region:

Tweed Range Scenic Drive – 90km / 4 hours driving

Via Murwillumbah to Lillian Rock – Mebbin National Park – Border Ranges National Park – Wiangaree – Kyogle

This loop takes you out along the western rim of the Tweed Caldera with spectacular views across the largest shield volcano in the southern hemisphere to the central core of Mt Warning. Filming opportunities and activities along this route include:

- Antarctic Beech forests near Bar Mountain Picnic Area in Mebbin NP
- Caldera and Mt Warning views from Blackbutts Picnic Area in Mebbin NP
- The Pinnacle Lookout – a narrow finger of land 919m high (easily reached via a short walk through lichen-covered rainforest) in Border Ranges NP
- Bushwalking tracks through palm forests and red cedars in Border Ranges NP
- Camping at Sheepstation Creek or Forest Tops in Border Ranges NP
- Village life in Wiangaree and Kyogle

Mt Warning View Circuit – 95km / 4 hours driving

Murwillumbah – Uki – Byrill Creek – Tyalgum – Chillingham

This loop circumnavigates Mt Warning, offering a cross-section of rainforest scenery, caldera mountain views and villages. Filming opportunities and activities along this route include:

- World Heritage Rainforest Centre at Murwillumbah where you can highlight the area's geographical history using the excellent visual displays here
- Murwillumbah's historic main street, al fresco cafes and the Tweed River Regional Art Museum which recently won a Northern NSW architectural award
- Mt Warning bushwalk through palm forests along the 200m Lyrebird Track (a much easier option than the summit climb)
- Uki – a quaint art and craft village on the Tweed River banks. The old Butter Factory here has been converted into artist studios, workshops and galleries
- 450m bushwalk through a stand of giant figs at Cutters Camp in Mebbin NP
- Tyalgum Village – quaint café and gift shop; town hall hosts a major classical music festival in September
- Chillingham Village – bush tucker farm growing exotic and native fruits; roadside fruit and veg stall where you can try 'yowie droppings' (dried bananas!); old Butcher Shop Art Gallery, soap factory, etc.

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AND THE JUST PLAIN ODD ...

THE WORLD'S 'SEXIEST' UNIVERSITY COURSE

With its world class surfing beaches and our thriving surfing industry, Southern Cross University decided that their Tweed campus was the ideal place to introduce Australia's first degree in surfing.

Developed in conjunction with Surfing Australia, the Diploma of Sport Management (Surfing Studies) was voted one of the 'sexiest' university courses in the world by FHM Magazine. It is a one-year full-time business management course, specifically designed to prepare graduates for careers in the international surfing industry, offering a balance of theory and practical experience.

The course was introduced in 2004 and graduates are now employed in the management of surfboard manufacturing companies, surf accessories and clothing manufacturing, wholesale and retail sales of surf products, surf tourism and in the organisation of surf events and surf schools.

Operator Details:

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FACTS & FIGURES

- Location:** Northeast NSW from the Queensland/NSW border (adjacent to the Gold Coast) south to Pottsville/Wooyung and west to the Border Ranges
- Distances:** 105kms from Brisbane (1 hour drive)
835kms from Sydney (11 hours 30 minutes drive)
- Airport Access:**
- Gold Coast Airport
Domestic: Virgin Blue, Jetstar
International: Air Asia X, Air New Zealand, Pacific Blue, Tiger Airways
- Ballina Byron Airport
Domestic: Virgin Blue, Regional Express, Jetstar
- Lismore Regional Airport
Domestic: Regional Express
- Key regions:**
- Tweed Coast**
A string of unspoilt coastal villages stretching along 35kms of ocean beaches from Fingal Head to Wooyung and incorporating the new multi-million dollar developments at Salt/Casuarina and Kingscliff's trendy 'eat street'.
- Tweed Valley**
Nestled in the ancient caldera of the Mt Warning volcano, the Valley is fringed with World Heritage rainforests and offers lush growing conditions for a wide range of regional produce.
- Tweed Heads**
One of Australia's favourite family holiday destinations, renowned for its award-winning restaurants, beachfront accommodation, boutique shopping and clubs.
- Contact:** **TWEED TOURISM**
www.tweedtourism.com.au
1800 674 414