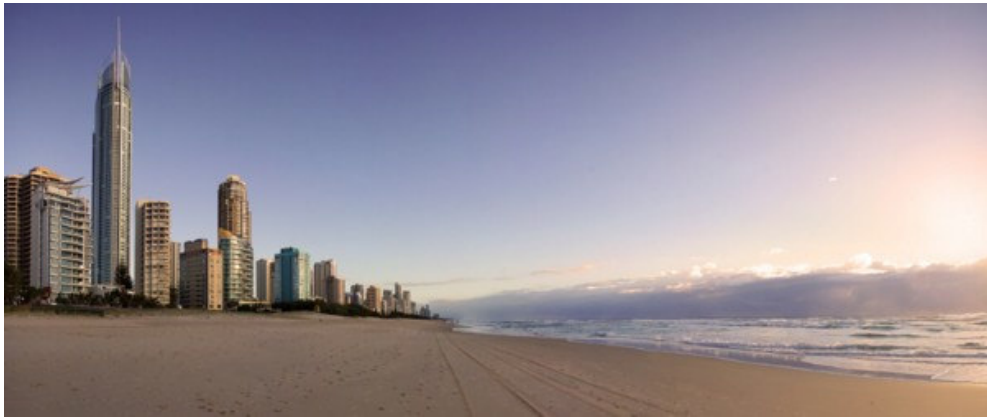


Affordable Holidays on Australia's Gold Coast



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This eBook has been produced and given to you by [Gold Coast Surfboards](http://www.GoldCoastSurfboards.com.au), the Gold Coast's full service surfboard rental company. [Gold Coast Surfboards](http://www.GoldCoastSurfboards.com.au) was the first business on the Gold Coast to be opened, for no reason other than to ensure you have the surfboard you want to surf with, available for your entire Gold Coast holiday.

We are pleased to give this book, FREE of all charges, in the hope it will help you plan your ultimate Gold Coast holiday, no matter what budget you have. We are also quite happy to give to you, absolutely free, the right to give this eBook away to all the people you meet on your travels (or at home - just give it to everyone ☺). That is of course, on the proviso you do not change any of the content within the eBook.

We really hope you find it useful when you next visit us on Australia's Gold Coast, the place we love and are fortunate enough to call home.



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1. Introduction

You are probably aware by now that we are entering a period where cash is going to be a little bit tighter for all of us. With highly volatile economic conditions, its hard to see where we will be in 12 months. Petrol prices and interest rates have been extremely volatile over the last 12 months, the stock market has crashed and the papers report “Global Recession” almost daily. Something has to give.

Often, the annual holiday is the first thing we let go of when our financial situation gets tougher. A holiday is often one big expense. We think skipping it can make the rest of the year a little bit easier to bear. WRONG. Skipping your annual holiday will make the rest of your year much harder to bear. You will get to the end of the year thinking you just survived. And that is all.

You are not here on this earth to survive, you are here to live. You need something to look forward to, to enjoy, to reward yourself with for a year of hard work. You also need some time away to recharge your batteries, for what will be another year of hard work. Your annual holiday is one of the necessities of life. It is not a luxury. In fact, when times get tough, experiences like your holiday become all the more important. This is when you really need them, as this is the time you really need to take the edge off.

That being said, you do not need to spend a million bucks to have a relaxing, invigorating holiday. In this eBook, we will show you how you can find alternative methods of planning your next holiday, that will strip hundreds of dollars off its cost, while ensuring you enjoy precisely the level of relaxation, fun and adventure you need to prepare you for another year.

And to begin, we’d like to offer one piece of advice which is relevant to all aspects of your holiday. Start planning early, find your deals early, book early and pay early. Its simply the best way to ensure you get a great deal and alleviate the cash flow pressures you’ll have when you are holidaying. Let your spending money be spending money!

2. Booking Your Flight

The flight is one of the most expensive elements of any holiday. If you have to fly, you have to pay. With the massive variation in oil prices, it is a little difficult to predict whether air travel will get more expensive or less expensive in the short term, but I think we can all be confident that in the long term, flying will become more expensive.

There are a number of alternatives you can look at, which will make the cost of flying to your destination not as expensive as you think. Here are some of the options we recommend:

2.1. Book in Advance

As a general rule, the closer you are to your departure date, the more the airlines will charge you for your ticket. So be pro-active when planning your holiday. Find a bargain flight early, book and pay for it in advance.

Further, if you give yourself a bit of time in the planning, you can really take advantage of suggestions 2.2 - 2.4 below.

2.2. Loyalty Programs

If you are not a member of an air miles reward program, yet you want frequent quality holidays, you should be. Make sure you are a member of at least 1 frequent flyer rewards program and 1 credit card rewards program. Join them today. If you are a member of one or both, now is the time to transfer your points. Cash them in and get your free flight.

Without being too pedantic about the mathematics of it, using a frequent flyer rewards program means you'll get around 5 flights for the price of 4. (Please don't get out the calculator - you'll just prove my calculation to be hopelessly flawed and I don't want the example to detract from the point) This alone will save you hundreds of dollars over the years. And, it is entirely possible (depending of course how much you spend on your credit card) that by combining it with your credit card rewards programs, you'll never have to pay for a flight again.

2.3. Discount Carriers

If you have to pay for a flight, don't fly full service airlines. Stick to the discount carriers and sign up to all their email newsletters. You'll be amazed at the deals they constantly churn out. Personally, sometimes I find an airline deal so compelling, that I create a holiday out of it that I would never otherwise have taken. They can be that good.

And lets face it, what really do you lose by using the discount carriers. All you really lose is a meal that you may accidentally sleep through, one that you can buy on the discount flight anyway. So here is an idea. Before you book a full service flight, compare the prices of the full service ticket with the same ticket on a discount carrier. Then compare the difference, with the cost of a meal at your favourite restaurant. I'm

sure you'll find it cheaper to go with the discount carrier and have your meal at your favourite restaurant, with all three courses to boot!

2.4. *Flight Comparison Services*

Use a flight comparison service. We have one set up on our website for your convenience. These comparison services will find the cheapest flights currently available for the dates you want to fly. It will take the hassle out of the search and get you the best prices.

Here is the link to our flight comparison service, click through if you are planning your next holiday, we are sure you'll find it useful:

<http://www.goldcoastsurfboards.com.au/flights.htm>



3. The Next Expense - Accommodation

Unless you have family or friends you can stay with, accommodation will probably be your biggest holiday expense. One thing we encourage people to think about on the Gold Coast, is just how much time you'll spend in your place of accommodation. Most people end up in one of the following 2 categories:

- You might be the "Cocktails In The Pool" type of person. In this situation you'll spend much of your summer holiday in the hotel pool, which will have a beautiful bar and very good looking hotel staff who send all the drinks out to you at the pool, waiting on you hand and foot.
- You might be the "See Everything The Gold Coast Has To Offer" type of person. In this situation you will hardly see the hotel. The only thing you'll notice is the pillow as your head hits it, when succumbing to a blissful and exhausted sleep.

Your hotel is a service, not just a room. So tailor your choice in accommodation to the purpose it will serve on your holiday. Obviously spending \$1000 a night on a room is a bit silly if you fall into the second category above. Similarly, slumming it at a caravan park just won't cut it if you are a definite "Cocktails In The Pool" person.

That being said, many alternative options exist with accommodation. Remember too, (particularly on the Gold Coast where there is massive competitive pressure between the providers of accommodation - There are just so many of them here) when times are tough the hotels know people cannot afford expensive holidays, so they discount like crazy, trying to win the reduced custom that comes along. Use this to your advantage.

3.1. Reward Programs

While not as well known as the airlines, many hotel chains and booking services have reward programs. If you are a member of any of these, use your points now. If not, sign up to accumulate points for next time.

When considering which service to sign up to, we definitely recommend one. We have found [HotelClub](#) to have the best reward program and they combine it with an extremely extensive hotel comparison service. Another compelling reason why we recommend them, is their reward points are earned as [HotelClub](#) reward points. This means you can redeem them and use them with any hotel booked through [HotelClub](#), no matter which hotel you earned them with. Obviously with hotel specific reward programs, you are bound to use the points you earn on the hotel chains with whom you earned them. This can limit your choices in the future.

3.2. Hotel Comparison Services.

This is similar to the airline comparison services we went through above. These services contact all the hotels in the region and bring to you their quality classes (Ie. Stars) and room prices. They then display this information for you, neatly and logically, so you can make an informed choice immediately, without trawling through the internet and going to every hotel's website to get the necessary information. They really do take the hassle out of the accommodation search.

We have set up an accommodation search engine for Gold Coast hotels on our website for your convenience. This search engine will find you the best deal for your class of accommodation, inasmuch as the Gold Coast Hotels are offering you today. You can access it here:

<http://www.goldcoastsurfboards.com.au/hotel%20reservations.htm>

On this page, you will find a Hotel search engine for normal bookings and also, a click through button for last minute hotel bookings on the Coast. As per section 3.1 above, these search engines are powered by [HotelClub](#), which we believe are the best in the business.

3.3. Other Alternatives

You do not have to stay in a hotel. They are the most expensive form of accommodation and so many other alternatives exist.

Backpacker hostels are an option always worth considering, especially if you like a "community" experience. We have recommended some of the best on the Gold Coast here: <http://www.goldcoastsurfboards.com.au/gold%20coast%20backpackers.html>

If you like more privacy though, think about caravan parks, holiday apartments or B&Bs. These often provide cheaper alternatives than hotels. Your best bet is often to just do a search on Google to find your cheap accommodation options.



4. While You Are There

4.1. Hiring A Car

To drive or not to drive, that is the question. Our advice, rent a car. Here are some statistics:

- The Gold Coast spans 1402 square kilometres
- The Gold Coast's beaches span 70kms. This is important if you are a surfer. If the swell has any size to it, you want to surf at the southern points. When it gets small, the open northern beachies are best, they are our swell magnets. No matter where you stay on the Gold Coast, if you want to surf the best waves of the day, the chances are you'll need to travel.
- A taxi ride from the airport to Surfers Paradise will cost you around \$40 one way. A return trip costs close to the equivalent of 4 days car hire.
- Apart from Sea World, all the major theme parks are half an hour drive north of Gold Coast airport.

If you really expect to get the most out of your Gold Coast holiday, spare yourself the aggravation and hassle. Book and rent a vehicle. It will open the beaches, the theme parks, the hinterland and mountains to you while you are here.

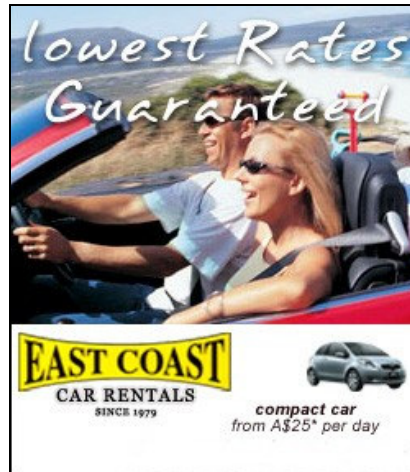
There are many, many car rental organisations which operate on the Gold Coast. In our opinion, one stands out from the others, East Coast Car Rentals. You can read more about them here: http://www.goldcoastsurfboards.com.au/car_rentals.htm along with a booking engine so you can view their prices.

Here are some reasons why we think East Coast Car Rentals are the best on the Gold Coast:

- Their prices are always competitive.
- East Coast Car Rentals are Queensland's largest independent operator with locations servicing the Gold Coast, Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Cairns. Their courtesy shuttles, which provide free collection and return from the major airports in these areas, mean that unlike the national chains, they avoid having to pay large airport rents and so in turn, can afford to pass on big savings to their customers.
- They support the Gold Coast community with initiatives such as sponsorship for Surf Life Saving's Coolangatta Gold event.
- They are open to teaming up with other local Gold Coast businesses, to bring to you, the most competitive deals and prices they possibly can. For example, at the writing of this eBook, all of our clients get an additional 5% off their already competitive prices, when booking through the Gold Coast Surfboards car rental page. (http://www.goldcoastsurfboards.com.au/car_rentals.htm) (This specific offer is valid until the end of February 2009)

So if you are going to rent a car for your next holiday, try our car rental page. There may just be a special deal East Coast Car Rentals are offering Gold Coast Surfboards' clients which you can take advantage of. Here is the link again:

http://www.goldcoastsurfboards.com.au/car_rentals.htm



4.2. You Don't Have To Spend a Cent

Realistically, for those holidaying on a “shoe string”, one of the great things about the Gold Coast are our surf beaches. Once you get here, you can entertain yourself for your whole holiday, without spending a single cent. All you need is some sunscreen, a towel and a pair of bathers. With those 3 items, you can take yourself to the beach and spend your holiday body surfing, swimming (always between the flags) and tanning (be sun smart though ☺).

Away from the beach, there are a myriad of other cheap entertainment opportunities which, with a little bit of forethought and planning, you can take maximum advantage of. From local markets and sporting events, to the semi regular and free music and art festivals which continually draw crowds to Australia's east coast.

If you enjoy the nightlife while on holiday, try the Surf Life Saving Clubs rather than the ritzy clubs and bars. You'll find the drinks are much cheaper, you won't have to pay the \$10 entry fee most bars now charge, you'll still have a great night and you'll help fund the great institution that is Surf Life Saving Australia.

All it takes is a little thought and clever planning and you can still enjoy your annual Gold Coast holiday, even on a shoe string.

4.3. Enjoying The Surf

If you would like a bit more adventure, hit the surf. You can do so easily, without spending too much, with our surfboard hire service. You can access it here:

<http://www.goldcoastsurfboardhire.com.au/>

Most hire shops charge you an arm and a leg to rent a surfboard as they charge you hourly or daily rates. You want to be very careful with this, as hiring a surfboard in this manner will end up costing you more than it does to rent a car. That's correct, our friends at East Coast Car Rentals above, will give you one of their cars for less than many surf shops will give you a surfboard. It's pretty ridiculous. This fact itself was the initial inspiration behind our holiday length surfboard hire service. Our long term rental rates make surfboard hire very affordable over the course of a week, and the longer you hire the board for, the cheaper it gets.

With a full range of surfboards, we cater to every level of competency. So you can be assured that we can help you enjoy one of Australia's greatest natural resources to the fullest extent, its surf beaches. Here is the link again:

<http://www.goldcoastsurfboardhire.com.au/>



5. Getting The Most Out Our Surf Beaches

Yes, we are a surf related business. As such, we really wanted to put a bit of a surfing angle to this eBook, so we have included the following article. This article is one we wrote and published late 2008 to help you prepare for a surfing holiday. It is just a few fitness pointers, specific to getting your body ready for a short period when you'll be surfing a whole lot more than you usually do. We hope you enjoy it:

Free Article: How To Get Fit For Surfing

Author: Damian Papworth.
Published 11 November 2008

I own and run a surf travel company on Australia's Gold Coast. My business basically pulls together all the services offered on the Gold Coast that a travelling surfer needs. We then go the extra step of renting our surfboards to our clients, for the duration of their holiday. The idea is simple, we want to ensure our clients have the surfing holiday of their life, without the hassle of sorting out the logistics when they arrive.

One of the great things about this business is that I deliver the surfboards myself. This gives me the opportunity to have a brief chat with every surfer coming through the Gold Coast using my services. I really enjoy this part of the business as being a surfer myself, I enjoy the contact with people who have a similar passion to mine. Also, it gives me the opportunity to get into the heads of my clients, so I can understand what their expectations are for their surfing holiday and can continually improve my services based on their desires.

"I wish I was a little bit fitter for this holiday", so many of my clients tell me when returning their surfboards. This is the number 1 desire of the travelling surfers who use my services. They want a higher level of surfing fitness for their holidays. It makes sense really. When you go on a surfing trip, you end up surfing 2 - 3 times a day, which will probably equate to 4 - 6 hours a day in the water. This you do consistently over a period of 5 - 10 days. It is a lot of surfing. No matter how much you surf at home, you will be surfing more when on holiday.

So what is the best way to get fit for a big surf holiday while you are busy back at home, with all the pressures and distractions every day living brings? We believe there are 3 things you should do. The first 2 should be part of your long term commitment to personal health and fitness and the last is aimed at giving you a real fitness boost before you go on holiday.

The first thing you need to take care of is your general level of endurance. You need to be fit enough to go hard for 10 - 15 minutes minimum as often this is the minimum paddling requirement for getting through the breakers and out the back. I believe this fitness requirement needs to be a little more specific than "general endurance". I believe you

need to have a base level of "water endurance" or water fitness. Surfers and swimmers have an innate feel for the water. It is very different to exercising on land. It has a different type of co-ordination and efficiency. The fittest runner can be a disaster in the water, burning up all their energy and getting nowhere.

So to cover off this requirement, you should be swimming or surfing at least twice a week, every week of the year. Do not leave it till a month before your holidays, it is impossible to develop water fitness in such a small span of time. If you love surfing, you will love the water. Make it a part of your life. Then, in the months leading up to your holiday, increase you workload by 1 or 2 sessions a week and make your sessions much more intensive. This will give you a little fitness boost pre-arrival.

The second key to surfing fitness is flexibility, balance and core strength. Once again, this is not something you want to leave till the last minute, rather something you want to develop over time as part of your commitment to surfing, health and fitness. Yoga is the answer here. Yoga is so good for surfing fitness, it is almost as if it was invented purely with the surfer in mind. Not only does yoga help you improve your flexibility, balance and core strength, it also re-aligns and re-balances your body back into its natural and healthy position, away from the imbalanced position which surfing causes. For example, even the simple act of paddling requires you to over-arch your back, creating a distortion in the development of your back muscles. Yoga sorts all these types of issues out, as well as conditioning your body. My suggestion, get yourself a surf specific yoga DVD and do it 2 or 3 times a week.

The final thing you can do is a surf specific, functional training program. If you have taken care on the first and second items above, surf specific training is the ideal pre holiday fitness preparation. It should be short, (Ie a fitness program which runs from 4 - 12 weeks) it should gradually increase in intensity over those weeks and it should be designed specifically for the muscles you use in the water. The point with such a training program is to give your surf specific fitness a massive boost prior to arriving on your holiday. You've got your base level of fitness sorted out already by ensuring point 1 and 2 above are part of your lifestyle. This training program recognises though, that there will be a short period of time where you will need a higher level of fitness (Ie. For those long sessions while on holiday) and prepares you specifically with those higher needs in mind. We have reviewed one such program at the following page of our website:

http://www.goldcoastsurfboards.com.au/surfing_fitness.html

This is the exercise program I use when I want to boost my fitness especially for surfing. (I usually do it during the winter months up here ☺)

I hope this helps you prepare for your next surfing trip wherever it may be. We all know training can sometimes be a bit of a drag. Just remember how much more fun those surfing days are when the waves, your skill and your body, all come together at the same time, so you can catch that elusive perfect wave.