



Welcome to the **Ballina Coast & Hinterland**

Jingi Wahla - welcome - to the Ballina Coast & Hinterland, the traditional Nyangbul Country of the Bundjalung Nation.

Framed by 32km of coastline and stretching into world heritage-listed rainforests and rolling hinterland, Ballina offers a landscape shaped by water, nature and a laid-back coastal rhythm. This itinerary is designed for travellers seeking nature-based experiences and a slower coastal escape.

Over four days, experience a journey that moves seamlessly between coast and hinterland, traversing clifftop headlands, swimming in calm coastal waters, discovering waterfalls and rainforest walks, and enjoying the region's vibrant local produce and village life. This itinerary has been designed to showcase the diversity of the Ballina Coast & Hinterland at a relaxed, achievable pace.

Settle into your stay at Flat Rock Tent Park, where coastal bushland meets the ocean and direct access to both Flat Rock Beach and the Coastal Recreation Path places you at the heart of the region's natural beauty.



DAY ONE

North Wall

Ballina Exploration

Travel Distance 11.5km

Morning | Coastal Recreation Path

Ease into Ballina life the way locals do – on foot, with salt in the air and no particular hurry. Today is all about settling into Ballina’s rhythm which is slow, scenic and by the water. Spend the morning getting to know Ballina’s coastal landscape and stretching your legs on the **Coastal Recreation Path**. The Coastal Recreation Path traces the coastline from Ballina CBD to Lennox Head, weaving through subtropical rainforest and elevated clifftops. While the full trail is a day-long experience, opt for a shorter section from **Sharpes Beach**, past **Boulder Beach Headland** and on to **Pat Morton Lookout**. Allow 1.5–2 hours return to comfortably enjoy this 3km section at a relaxed pace, with time for photo stops and coastal views.



Sharpes Beach

Afternoon | Bike Ride & Ballina CBD

After a relaxed morning on foot, it is time to switch to two wheels. Leave the car at the campsite and jump on the bikes (hire a cruiser or e-bike from Ballina Byron Bike Hire if you haven’t brought your own) and make your first stop **Shelly Beach Café** or the **Belle General**. Both of these cafes are located at Shelly Beach and are known for their beach front locations, fresh meals, smoothies, great coffee.



Ballina

After refuelling, continue south, hugging the coastline past the **Ballina Lighthouse** and along scenic North Wall into the CBD, a cruisy 20-minute ride with uninterrupted water views. Spend the afternoon exploring Ballina’s CBD, where the main street runs alongside the Richmond River. Allow a few hours to browse unique stores, relaxed cafés or for those who enjoy a good find, Ballina is affectionately known as the op shop capital so enjoy a good treasure hunt on the **op shop trail** around the CBD. Add a cultural touch with a visit to the **Ballina Naval & Maritime Museum** or pop into the **Northern Rivers Community Gallery** which showcases fascinating exhibits and local artworks.

Evening | Dinner and Tent Park

On your ride back to the campground, stop in at the popular **Shaws Bay Hotel**, or ‘The Shawsy’ to locals. Perfectly positioned along the route, it’s an easy place to pull up and unwind. Sample a craft beer, enjoy a relaxed meal and take in views over Shaws Bay under twinkling fairy lights. With regular live music and entertainment, it’s the ideal way to end the day before a short 10-minute ride back to **Flat Rock Tent Park** for a restful night.



Shaws Bay Hotel



DAY TWO



Killen Falls

Lennox Head & Natural Wonders

Travel Distance 42km

Morning | Lennox Head and Lake Ainsworth

Cruise down to **Flat Rock Beach** to watch a stunning sunrise over the most easterly point of Ballina. For those keen to start the day actively, Flat Rock offers both a well-loved right-hand surf break and a more challenging left. Alternatively, take it slow with a morning stroll along Sharpes Beach.

A short 10-minute coastal drive brings you into **Lennox Head**, where a laid-back beach vibe and a strong café scene set the tone for the morning for breakfast or brunch. Ease into the morning at Papaya, Shelter or Williams Street, all who serve up fresh, locally driven menus just steps from Seven Mile Beach. Just minutes away, **Lake Ainsworth** offers a completely different kind of swim. Surrounded by tea trees, its tannin-rich freshwater is calm, unique and deeply relaxing. Allow at least an hour here as alternating between the lake and the ocean opposite is a refreshing experience.



Lake Ainsworth

Afternoon | Zentvelds Coffee Farm, Newrybar & Killen Falls

Continue 17-minutes inland along Broken Head Road to **Zentvelds Coffee Farm and Roastery**, a family-owned business focused on regenerative farming. Slow down with a true crop-to-cup experience, with the beans grown, processed and roasted on the farm. For a deeper insight, consider booking a farm tour with Zentvelds in advance which runs for just over an hour.

Newrybar is a heritage village known for its artisan stores and relaxed pace just a short 5-minute drive from the coffee farm. Its heritage buildings and village charm make it an ideal place to slow down, browse and enjoy a light lunch.

Heading 13-minutes south along Friday Hut Road, tucked within ancient rainforest, **Killen Falls** is one of the region's most rewarding short walks. Enjoy a brief bushwalk leading to a viewing platform, offering an impressive vantage point of the falls. Allow an additional 40-minutes to extend your walk to the base of the falls where you can explore the intriguing cave hidden behind the cascading falls. A hinterland highlight and worth taking the extra time.



Zentvelds Coffee Farm

Evening | Beachfront Picnic & Flat Rock Tent Park

A scenic 15-minute drive returns you to Lennox Head, where it's time to pick up a relaxed beachfront dinner from **Quattro** or **Lennox Pizza** and enjoy overlooking the beach with **Pat Morton Headland** as your backdrop. As the sun drops, finish with a classic coastal ritual – an ice cream from **Lennox Gelato** on the beachfront. A short 10-minute drive returns you to Flat Rock Tent Park for another night of camping bliss, surrounded by nature's tranquillity



Pat Morton Lookout



DAY THREE



Victoria Park Nature Reserve, Alstonville

Slow Hinterland Discovery

Travel Distance 60km

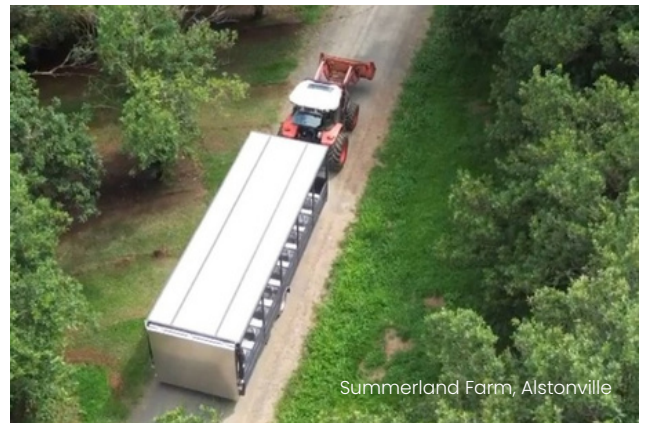
Morning | Alstonville Village & Summerland Farm

Leaving the coast behind, head inland towards Alstonville. On the way, make a quick stop at Ballina’s iconic **Big Prawn** – one of Australia’s famous ‘Big Things’ and a much-loved local icon. Head 15-minutes along the Bruxner Highway and spend the morning wandering **Alstonville**’s charming village centre, where homeware stores, heritage streetscapes and a growing food scene invite you to slow down. Settle in for brunch at **Buckley’s Chance** or enjoy a relaxed pub experience at the **Federal Hotel**. A must-visit is **Home**, a beautifully curated space inspired by traditional grocers of a time when life and food were simple. Showcasing high-quality homemade and homegrown goods, it is a feast for your eyes and it will be hard to leave without a sweet treat for your journey.



Federal Hotel, Alstonville

Continue 10-minutes along Wardell Road to **Summerland Farm**, a macadamia and avocado working farm. Allow at least an hour to explore, including a guided Farm Tractor Tour through the orchards, offering insight into the farm’s practices and story.



Summerland Farm, Alstonville

Afternoon | Victoria Park & Wardell

For those with an interest in antiques, a short five-minute detour leads to **Bottom of the Harbour Antiques**, an ardent collection of nautical collectibles.

Discover the natural wonders of **Victoria Park Nature Reserve**, a sanctuary for the last remnants of the Big Scrub Rainforest that once blanketed the area. Allow around 20-minutes to stroll the short boardwalk and immerse yourself in the tranquillity of the rainforest. If you’re quiet, you may spot the local pademelons and unique bird life. If visiting in early September, the fireflies are wonderful on nightfall.

Continue south along Tourist Drive 28 for a further 14-minutes and end the afternoon in **Wardell**, a riverside village where life slows to the rhythm of the Richmond River. Wardell is known for its landmark lift span bridge and its famous pies. Take your pick of pie flavours from the **Wardell Café and Takeaway** and wander down to the riverside jetty to enjoy the view. It’s also a great spot to drop a line and try your luck fishing.



Wardell Bridge

Evening | Ferry and waterfront dining

Follow the river past sugar cane farms for another 14-minutes to the **Burns Point Vehicle Ferry** where a short but memorable five-minute crossing brings you back to Ballina. Return to your campsite to unwind and refresh, then settle in for a relaxed Italian dinner at **Capiche Restaurant** overlooking Lighthouse Beach. Spend the evening watching the sky shift through colour over the ocean with a glass of wine.



DAY FOUR

Shaws Bay, East Ballina

Slow Coastal Send-Off

Travel Distance 10km

Morning | North Wall Walk & Shaws Bay Exploration

Today is intentionally unhurried - take your time and enjoy Ballina at your own pace. Ease into your final day with a slow coastal morning along **North Wall**, a relaxed 20-minute stroll. Spot dolphins between the breakwalls and watch the trawlers returning home with their fresh catch.

For a deeper connection to place, allow an additional 40-minutes and follow the **Water Stories & Soundtrail**, guided by Bundjalung Elder Uncle Ricky Cook. Beginning at the Marine Rescue Tower and finishing at Pioneer Memorial Park, this trail offers insight into the region's history alongside beautiful water views.

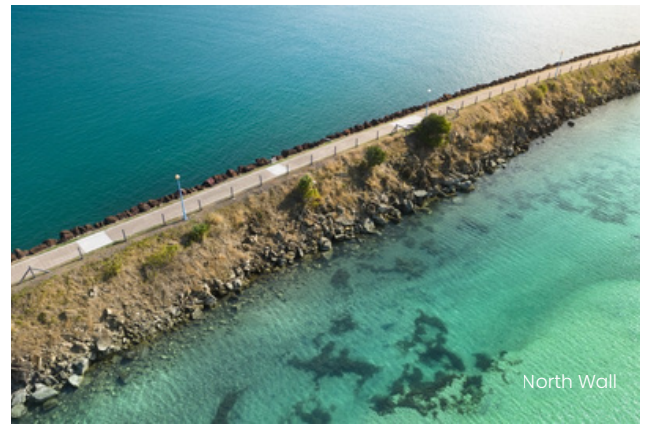
No need to travel anywhere, spend the late morning on the water at **Shaws Bay**, where calm tidal conditions make it ideal for a swim, paddle or simply drifting the morning away. Hire a stand-up paddleboard or kayak from Ballina Surf and explore the 3.1km bay at your own pace. Keep an eye out for jumping mullet, eastern cod and other marine life that call the bay home.

Afternoon | Whale Watching Tour & river dining

If visiting between April to October, round out your stay on one of Ballina's signature experiences, a **whale watching cruise** with Out of the Blue Adventures. Departing four times daily from **Lance Ferris Wharf** and only 5-minutes from Shaws Bay, this late afternoon cruise is guided by a knowledgeable marine biologist, offering in-depth insight into the region's rich marine life.

Located just steps from the wharf, **Wharf Bar & Restaurant** is the perfect place to unwind after your cruise. Enjoy wood-fired pizzas, local beer tastings and sweeping river views as you take a final moment to soak it all in - the salt air, slow days and easy coastal rhythm that makes Ballina hard to leave

Depart Ballina - and start planning your return



North Wall



Out of the Blue Adventures



Wharf Bar & Restaurant