



## **lifestyle** - it's all about choice... lots of it!



It really doesn't matter whether you're a surfer or a bushwalker; a gourmet or a gardener; whether you're into action and adventure or something a little more serene – the Clarence Valley has it all.

Whether you choose country or coast, tranquil village or vibrant urban centre you're never far from essential services, infrastructure or community support.



### **clarence coast** beachside living at its best

The coastline of the Clarence Valley, north and south of the mighty Clarence River, has some of the most breathtakingly beautiful, unspoiled, unpopulated and unpolluted beaches in the world — 80 kilometres of them!

These beaches are punctuated with pristine rivers and streams, rugged headlands, shimmering lakes, some of the world's finest surf breaks — and many are protected by national parks and reserves. In fact, the Clarence Coast has the longest stretch of uninhabited coastline in New South Wales.

The natural wonders of the Clarence include the World Heritage listed Bundjalung National Park and Iluka Nature Reserve, the Yuraygir National Park and the Solitary Islands Marine Park. They offer picnic and barbeque facilities, camping and holiday accommodation and the opportunity for almost unlimited recreational activity.

The beaches, waterways, lakes and parks of the Clarence Coast are a vast natural playground that are ideal for fishing, snorkelling, surfing, sailing, canoeing, hang-gliding, bushwalking, bird watching, whale watching... or simply relaxing.

Scattered along the coast are tiny fishing hamlets where the only footprints on the beach are probably your own... there's the laid back but lively holiday town of Yamba, with its exciting entertainment, dining and lifestyle options... and there are lots of choices that fall somewhere in between.

Yamba is the Clarence Valley's largest coastal centre. It has a modern commercial marina, cosmopolitan shopping and restaurant

precincts, cinemas, hotels, clubs and resorts, an ocean pool and it's own stunning town beaches.

There are a full range of professional services and many new residential developments.

The legendary beaches and surf breaks of Angourie are only minutes from the heart of Yamba and the tranquillity of Iluka and its World Heritage listed Nature Reserve are just a ferry ride away.

Further down the coast, tiny villages like Brooms Head, Minnie Water and Wooli, offer a life of simplicity, seclusion and serenity – a chance to really relax and unwind.

Up-river and a little away from the beaches, communities like Maclean, Ulmarra, Lawrence and Brushgrove offer the peace and friendliness of village life.



### **city living,** **country style**

Grafton, the "Jacaranda City", is the main service centre for the Clarence Valley.

It is the commercial and professional hub of one of New South Wales' most dynamic and fastest growing regions and it is the heart of the Clarence creative community.

It is also a very beautiful city.

Grafton's broad avenues and boulevards feature some magnificent examples of 19th Century colonial architecture and many of its streets are lined with spectacular purple flowering, jacaranda trees.

It is truly a garden city, with 24 meticulously manicured parks and over 6500 trees – many of them over 100 years old.

Grafton was first settled around 1838 by timber cutters. The dense subtropical forests of the Northern Rivers contained towering cedars. The timber from these giants was so prized that it was known as "red gold" and thousands flocked to the region to make their fortune.



The pioneer settlement grew rapidly and by 1851, town blocks were being sold and the name "Grafton" was official. By 1885, Grafton was proclaimed a city and the wealth generated by the "red gold" allowed the construction of scores of magnificent public buildings and private homes. Many of these structures, including the Cathedral and the infamous Grafton Gaol, are listed by the National Trust.

Historic Schaeffer House now hosts the collections of the Clarence River Historical Society and Prentice House, built in 1880, is home to the Regional Art Gallery and a focal point for much of the region's cultural activity.

Grafton's enthusiastic creative community supports many arts and craft groups and their prolific output can be found throughout the Clarence in dozens of galleries, museums, craft and gift shops.

A number of government agencies have their regional offices in Grafton, Grafton's Airport offers quick metropolitan connections and Grafton Hospital provides medical services for much of the surrounding region.

The City's extensive sporting facilities provide a venue for local and regional sporting events.

Major events like the Grafton Cup Carnival and the annual Bridge to Bridge Ski Race attract national participation and media coverage.

Each Spring, Grafton's Jacaranda Festival brings the community together for a joyful celebration of the City's spectacular purple bloom. The Festival includes a busy program of sporting and cultural events, exhibitions, shows, parties and gala dinners.

Grafton's retail precinct has everything the most ardent shopper could hope for... chic boutiques, bustling department stores and plenty of tempting coffee shops and al fresco eateries.

While it is no longer the City's main highway, the Clarence River and its unusual, double-deck iron bridge are among the City's defining features.

Susan Island, one of more than 100 charted islands in the Clarence, is right in the heart of the City. It was named after the *Susan*, the first ship to navigate the Clarence in 1838. The island is a unique rainforest nature reserve complete with picnic and barbeque facilities and a large colony of fruit bats. It has great significance to the area's original inhabitants, the Gumbaingirr people and is only

accessible by private boat or through excursions run by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

South Grafton, on the southern bank of the Clarence, was originally established as a quite separate township. There were no bridges linking the two settlements until 1932 and the municipalities were only amalgamated in 1956. South Grafton has its own portfolio of historic Victorian buildings and, to this day, retains its own subtly distinctive character.

If you long for the relaxed, down-to-earth simplicity of country living but you also like to be able to walk to your favourite restaurant or take in a movie or a show, then perhaps Grafton is for you.

It really does offer the best of both worlds.



## **clarence country** big river... big country

The Clarence hinterland is big country. The Clarence River and its tributaries – the Coldstream, Mann, Nymboida and Orara Rivers form the largest river system on the NSW North Coast, with a catchment of over 2 million hectares.

The topography varies from fertile river plains and gentle rolling hills right through to rugged mountain ranges and almost impenetrable rainforest. It is traversed by whitewater rapids that carve through mountain gorges and vast, lazy rivers that meander through the plains.

There are World Heritage listed wilderness areas scattered through the Chaelundi, Fortis Creek, Guy Fawkes, Mt Pikapene, Nymboida Ramournie and Washpool National Parks.

High above sea-level, in the primordial wilderness of the Washpool National Park are some of New South Wales' largest undisturbed stands of rainforest.

Much of the Clarence hinterland retains its rustic, early pioneering feel. The graveyards and ruins of gold rush settlements lie crumbling in the grass and beyond the abandoned town of Dalmorton, you can pass through a tunnel hewn from the solid rock by convict labour.

If big skies, big rivers and wide open spaces are your thing, you'll find that Clarence Country is the country of your dreams.



Country or coast, village or vibrant urban centre, making the move to the Clarence has never been easier. Get started today by contacting an agent in your preferred Clarence Valley locality.

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