

Shoaly Bliss

by Lachlan Y.

You have been seriously missing out if you have never visited **Shoal Bay**, within the **Port Stephens** region renowned for its natural beauty. The locals call the area 'Shoaly'.

Shoal Bay is an idyllic destination, with its powder-white sands and crystal-clear waters. It is a haven for sun-seekers, nature enthusiasts, boaties, and those yearning an escape with all the conveniences you could ever need on your doorstep.



Beans are roasted in the premises at 'The Café' for that fresh coffee experience.



Consider paddling your feet at Zenith Beach after descending Mt Tomaree

At one end of Shoal Bay beach there are two houses which rightly boast some of the best views in the whole area. These 3-bedroom townhouses will make you the envy of your friends. Sleeping up to 6 guests, you will spend most of your day on the large balcony overlooking the tranquil bay, keeping an eye out for the dolphins cruising by. The most impressive thing about these quality, head-turning, townhouses is that API owns them and so API members get to enjoy them at simply unbeatable rates. Hop onto the website and look up '**Tidemark**' and I am sure you will agree.

Turning left and walking just 150 metres along the beach will bring you to '**Aussie Bob's Fish & Chips**' for a super fresh and crisp meal to eat on the beach or balcony. With GF options available as well as burgers, good and naughty food groups are all covered.

Cross the road and you will arrive at the **Country Club**. Good beer, great wine, entertainment, views over the bay and woodfired pizzas are a favourite for some. On the other hand, you may prefer something from the extensive menu. You must plan at least one meal here. There are several other dining options in this facility, so you will not go hungry.

A few steps further along and you arrive at the **Shoal Bay piazza**. Relax with a massage or indulge one morning with a coffee made from inhouse roasted beans and order the Big Breakie Burger (GF/O) from the intuitively titled **'The Café'**. The menu is available on its website, cafeshoaly.com. Be prepared to wait as the service is not hurried. The brioche bun with bacon, fried egg, hashbrown, cheese and hollandaise sauce is so rich you are unlikely to need any lunch. I have been known to eat one while on the seat overlooking the pier and trying (unsuccessfully) not to let the egg run down to my elbow! It's indescribably yum!

The **IGA** is conveniently located here. So is a news agent. Sunnies, swimmers and beach side knickknacks to remind you of your holiday are all here as well.

“ There is no need to rush around the world when the best of it is all here in Shoaly. ”

There is no need to rush off around the world for your holiday as **Gianis Italian, Mod Thai** and **Atmos' Greek restaurant** are just a few metres further along and bursting with flavour and you avoid the jet lag. (Did I mention the French design style of the restaurant in the Country Club?) Shoaly is truly cosmopolitan - a posh phrase meaning *'bloody good mate'*!



Atmos brings modern Greek and Mediterranean flavours to Shoaly.

To burn off all this consumption, turn right from Tidemark and join up to the recently reconstructed **Tomaree Coastal Walk** and ascend to the summit of **Mount Tomaree**. 360-degree views await you, from which you might see whales during the season. Remember to look up and not just at your feet as you make the ascent, because there are Koalas in the trees. I like to go reasonably early in the morning while it is still cool, but another thought is to wear your boardies and have a dip in the sea at Zenith beach. The full walk is 27 Km, finishing at **Birubi Point in Anna Bay**. Check out www.nationalpparks.nsw.gov.au for shorter options along the track ranging from 2-4 hours.



Tomaree Coastal Walk inspires you to seek just a bit more and a bit more...

There is so much to do and so many things to experience in this area, for all age groups, that it is no wonder API members love Tidemark all year round. So, relax on the balcony, cold glass in hand and a snack in front of you. Breathe in the fresh air with a hint of salt that lets you know you are beside the sea. Look out over the glistening sea and remind yourself this is one of the reasons why you are an API member. Australia really is the lucky country. **API**

Image credits: National Parks NSW, Atmos, The Café

New holiday unit available in Huskisson - see website for details!

Check out the facilities and book your API holiday online at www.apilifestyle.com.au or call us on 1300 653 322.