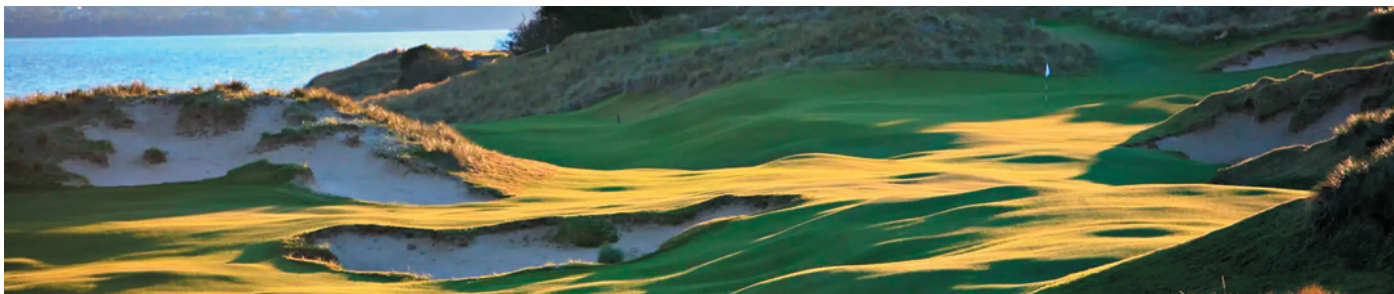


Driving Big Bertha

by Mat, D



Wish you were here at Woolgoolga Golf Club?

There was not a lot of room in the Prado for the suitcases. The golf clubs were loaded in the back and then the 'soft' suitcases were carefully positioned on top. Finally, Big Bertha was nestled in between our two lovely ladies who had taken up the rear seats so they could chat more easily.

Long time friend, John and I took turns at driving. The miles just drifted past on cruise control as the roads are so good now and the company was even better.

The excuse for the trip was a golfing odyssey in the beautiful mid-north coast of NSW. It was an opportunity to test our skills on new courses, enjoy the fresh country air and tell tall tales. We have enjoyed these odysseys in other towns before, but this was the first time we were to be joined by Big Bertha. I could not wait to get my hands on her. The anticipation was killing me.

It is a couple of years since we last stayed at **API's Aqua Villa holiday homes** in sunny Coffs Harbour. Like a good wine, Aqua Villa just gets better and better. More about that later. We checked in with the very friendly managers Kathy and Eddy who made us feel very welcome. After depositing our bags, and sliding the beer, Riesling, and cheese into the fridge, we headed out to Mutton Bird Island to watch the whales passing and then had a relaxing afternoon by the pool.

Coffs Harbour Golf Club has a fabulous set up. Not only are the fairways lush, but there are also picturesque water traps. With 27 championship holes, there are so many possible routes that it never seems crowded. It feels like a walk in the country when the fairways are lined by tall trees and this course is no exception.

The club house is on a rise, so the views are magical. The **Lakes Restaurant** is everything a good Golf Club restaurant should be. Great food and drinks selections at fair prices.



Comfortable townhouses surround the pool at Aqua Villa

I was almost trembling when I set up on the first Tee. I gently caressed Big Bertha and then she swung through the air smoothly and hit a cracker of a shot. The kids and my wife had given me a Big Bertha driver just the week before, for a birthday ending in '0'. What a gift! I wanted to leave the golf course and head straight to a driving range as I could then get in more hits with my new toy – but I settled for grinning from ear to ear all the way around the course.

“Find your own excuse to visit the mid north coast and stay at Aqua Villa.”

The following day had us drive 11 km south to Sawtell. **Sawtell Golf Club** is an amazingly beautiful, 18-hole championship course. If you are a keen golfer, put this one on your bucket list. It caters for all abilities.



The course at Sawtell will leave you feeling refreshed.

The next day the ladies closely examined all the shops and cafes in **Bellingen**, which is a delightful country town just 30-35 minutes from Aqua Villa. Meanwhile John, Big Bertha and I swung our way around the Bellingen golf course while admiring the extensive views of the mountains, before meeting up with the ladies for a sumptuous snack at the **Hyde Café** in the township.



Bonville golf course has to be one of the most magnificent you will ever see.

Woolgoolga golf course at Safety Beach kept us on our toes. The first nine holes are a bit tight, but the oblivious wildlife and views are worth it.

The last event on the odyssey was to **Bonville**. Magnificent setting, luxurious fairways and greens. A bit challenging and a bit pricier, but what a place. You have got to try it.

Our API membership was put to good use, saving a couple of hundred dollars by staying at Aqua Villa, where the BBQ is big enough for 2 families to cook at the same time. We loved the leather lounges and soaking in the pool they overlook. We saved plenty of money on the diesel as we have a very convenient API Fuelcard. We purchased beer, wine and groceries at **Park Beach Plaza** – which was just 3 minutes' walk from our townhouse – using the eGift cards from API. I find the Nike Roshe 2 golf shoes suit me and with 10% off at **Rebel Sport** I am laughing. You have got to be nuts not to take advantage of the savings. **API**

Image credits: Golf Pass, Golf Australia

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