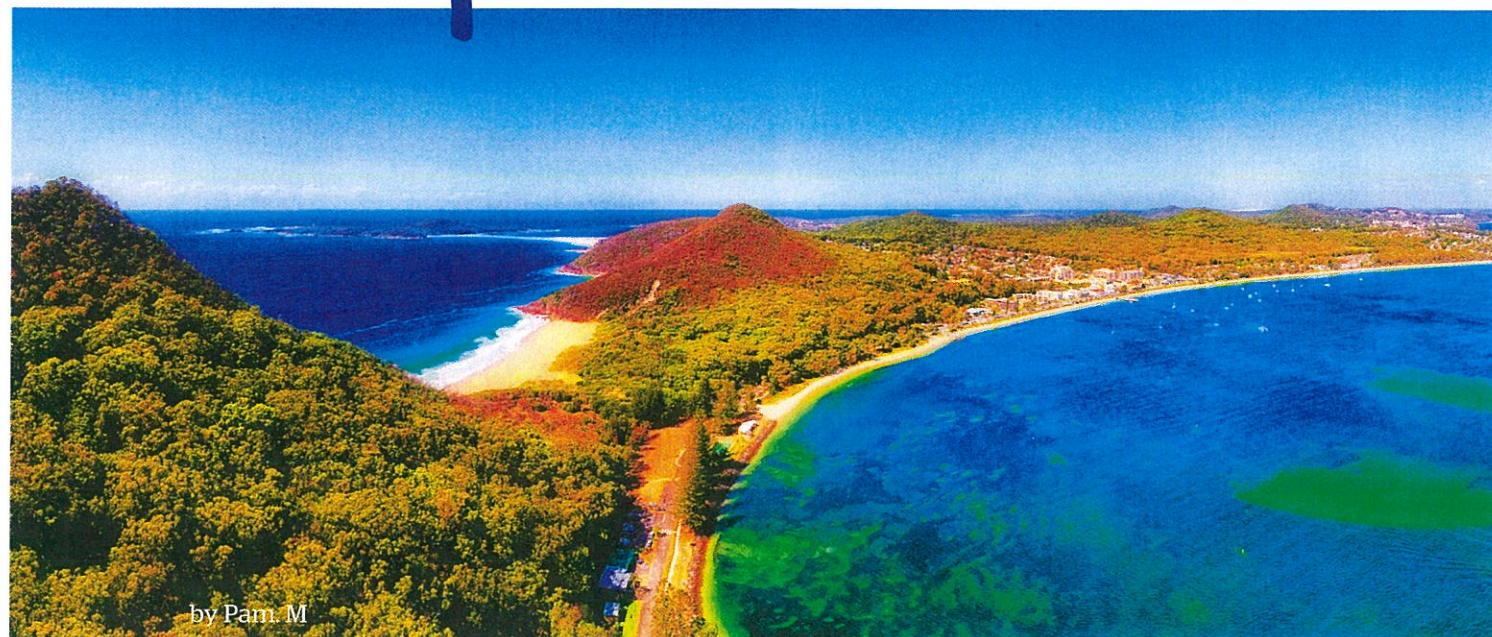


Tempted by Tidemark

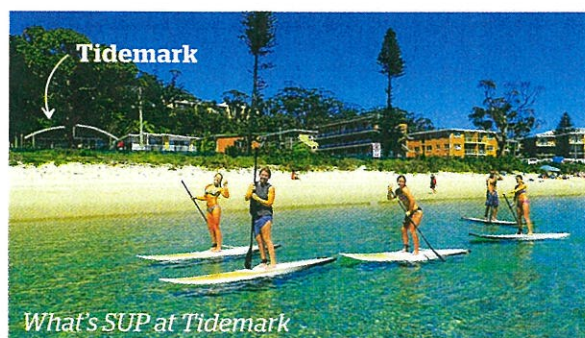


by Pam M

Paradoxically, I am sure my breathing slows down despite my rising excitement. The descent into **Nelson Bay** is the trigger for the feeling of relaxation to envelop me.

We drive past the glittering Marina and beach front, to grasp every possible moment to absorb the wonderful bay views. In less than 5 minutes the white sand and sapphire blue water of **Shoal Bay** appears to our left. Turning into **Shoal Bay Road**, the water and sand still on our left and restaurants, cafes and small shops appear on our right. In a few seconds, the curved roof line of **Tidemark** appears, marking our destination. I cannot help but slow down and pinch myself that this will be our home again for another week.

We have not even finished unloading before the double doors onto the large balcony have been slid wide open. With the bags in the rooms, chairs have been claimed around the balcony table, and shoes have been scattered somewhere. Holiday mode has kicked in.



What's SUP at Tidemark

Being a blended family, we can guarantee all the offspring suddenly become available when they hear a trip to **Tidemark** is on the cards.

The four gagging offspring take over the two rooms on the ground floor, as well as the bathroom. (We ban them from 'our' bathroom on the first floor.)

In the mornings, we rise earlier than the kids, make a coffee and sit on the balcony. For a while it is serenely peaceful, before the ruffle-haired, bleary-eyed crowd appear. The first question is always "do you think we will see any dolphins today?" usually closely followed by "what's for breakfast?"

“Sapphire-blue water views you will never forget”

The kids are old enough to take themselves to the beach to swim, snorkel, fish, sunbake or laugh and play games we cannot comprehend. They all take turns on the inflatable SUP (purchased from the nearby **BCF**, with the **10% API discount**)

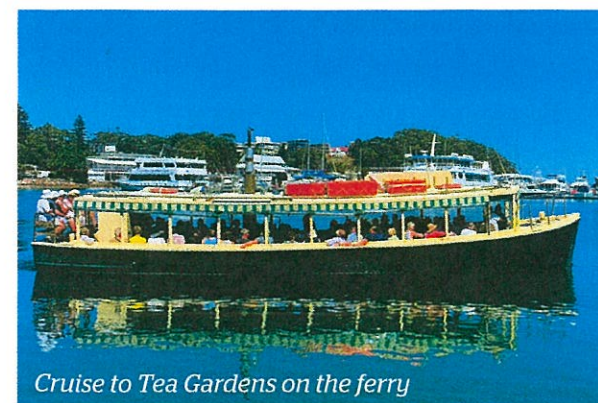
By late morning, hunger drives them back to the balcony. Replenished, they head back to the beach.

The whole gang stroll down to **Aussie Bob's** to pick up the most mouth-watering fish and chips. Sometimes we make it back to Tidemark's balcony for the best views in the region, sometimes we 'picnic' at one of the tables on the foreshore. It all depends on the starvation level and where the gaggle are positioned relative to the aroma of hot chips drifting out of the wrapping paper.

The **Longboat Café at Fingal Bay** has great service, food and coffee. Sometimes we walk, ride our bikes or drive there. It is always combined with a trip to the whale watching platform.

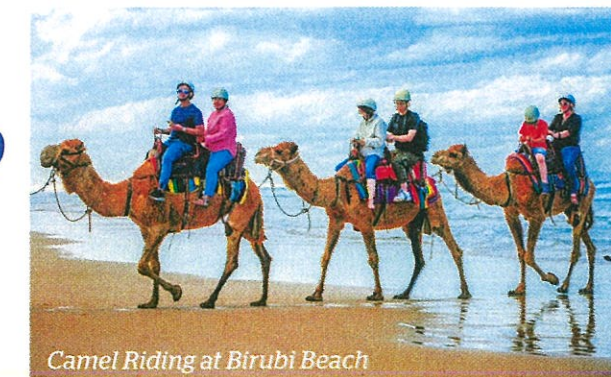
My partner and I usually slip away to the **Boat House** for lunch or take the foot ferry with the kids over to **Tea Gardens** to the Hotel or one of the many cafes. The journey by boat is as good as the destination.

The dolphin and whale watching cruises are really enjoyable and highly recommended.



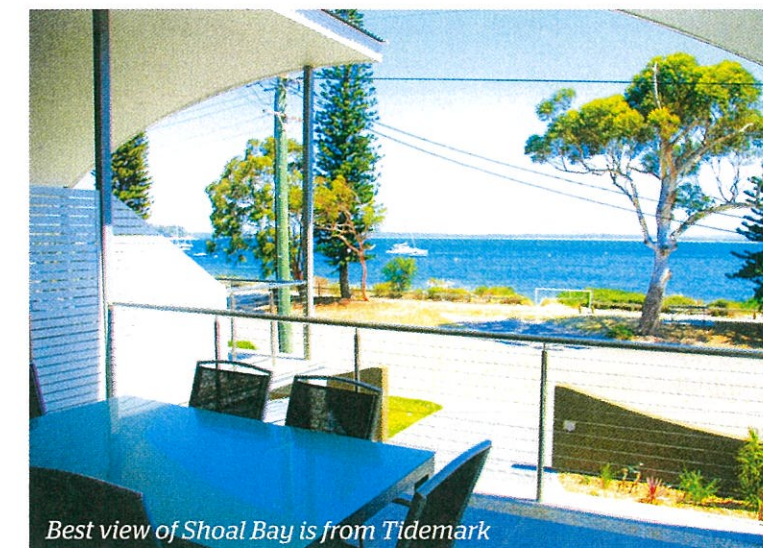
Cruise to Tea Gardens on the ferry

Book your stay in an API holiday home online at www.apilifestyle.com.au or call us on 1300 653 322.



Camel Riding at Birubi Beach

The camel rides at **Birubi Beach** were fun, although my rear end is very grateful, I am not a Bedouin. Booking **Experience Oz** through the **API website** saved us heaps. The quad bikes were a hoot. Fortunately, the café right on Birubi Beach has plenty of good meal options and saved at least one of the gaggle from dying of hunger!



Best view of Shoal Bay is from Tidemark

We don't go crazy, but we do pack in a few trips and tours as well as a few meals at restaurants or cafes. It's all part of the enjoyment of life. One of the amazing benefits of being an API member is being able to stay in the best location on the Bay, indulge in some trips, tours and café/restaurants and the whole lot costs us less than just equivalent accommodation alone, close by. **API**