

# NORTHERN RIVERS NSW

## motorcycle touring guide



welcome to the  
northern rivers



# HELLO FELLOW RIDER...

I'm Peter Thoeming, better known as 'The Bear', and I run the monthly motorcycle magazine - Australian Motorcyclist. I've also done a bit of riding, all over the world including a trip right around it! If there is one place that keeps calling me back for a ride, it's the hills and valleys around the Ballina Coast & Hinterland in the Northern Rivers.

My mother used to live in Ballina, and visiting her gave me my first introduction to these brilliant roads. And the roads are mostly good up here; sealed even high in the hills. Mind you, they do get bumpy! That all adds to the fun.

But of course it isn't just the roads; it's the picturesque little communities and the wonderful scenery that holds it all together. I find it hard to even imagine a place that would be more perfect for motorcycling – road and dirt. The logging trails up in the hills overlooking Mount Warning, for instance, are enough to keep any trail rider busy.

So let me welcome you to the Northern Rivers and its beautiful surroundings. I don't live here these days, but before you ask; yes, I am seriously considering retiring here – and I'll bring my bikes!

## **Peter 'The Bear' Thoeming**

Emeritus Editor in Chief  
Australian Motorcyclist Magazine



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# BALLINA COAST & HINTERLAND

Jingi Wahla – or welcome – to the Ballina Coast & Hinterland, the traditional Nyangbul Country of the Bundjalung Nation. Nyangbul custodianship of the Ballina Shire area dates back to many thousands of generations. Together with all Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, the Nyangbul people are part of the oldest and continuing culture in the world.

Our region is characterised by great biodiversity, with a laid back lifestyle and a friendly, diverse community. We extend you a warm welcome to spend some time with us and discover our network of scenic rides and authentic experiences.

With lush sub-tropical rainforests, 32 kilometres of pristine sandy beaches, endless waterways and the vast reaches of the Richmond River, the Ballina Coast & Hinterland is truly a natural wonder.

Away from the coast, the hinterland is dotted with villages where you'll find spacious parks and gardens, cosy cafés, country pubs, museums and historical places of interest, plus galleries filled with local arts and crafts. Come join in the fun and start discovering the Ballina Coast & Hinterland. On the following pages you'll find information and suggested rides throughout our region which will always bring you back to beautiful Ballina.

**ballina**  
coast & hinterland





### Local tip #1

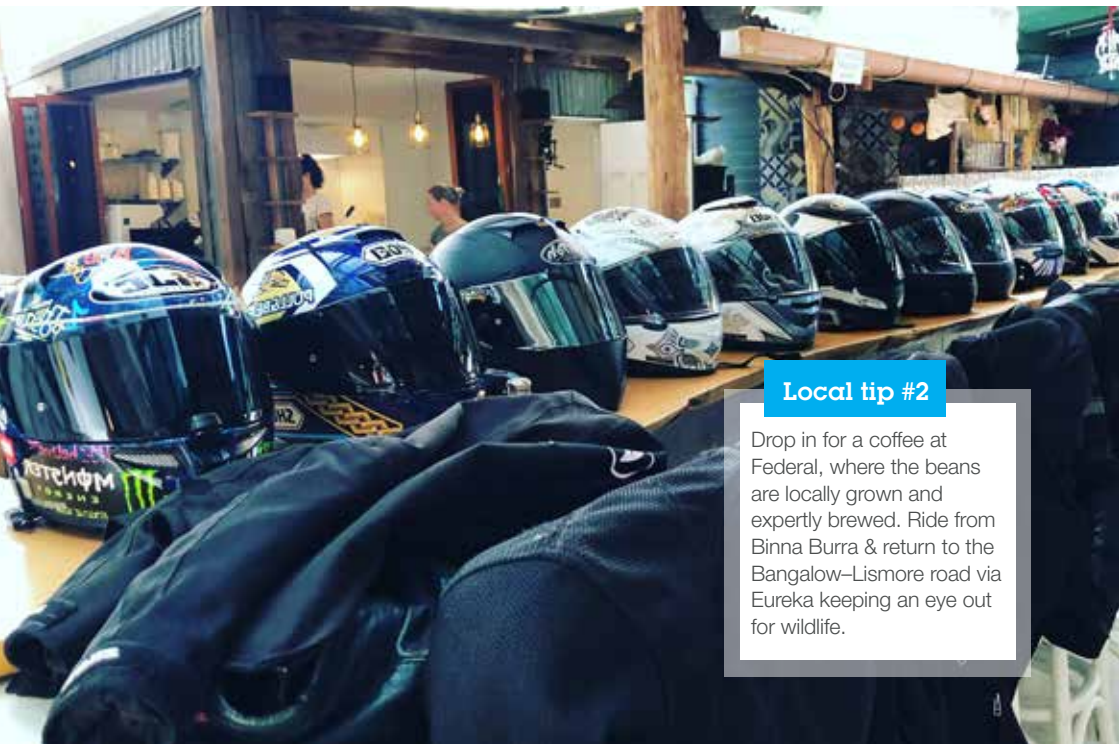
Take the Bangalow-Lismore road through Clunes, and turn off, either left or right, to discover wonderful scenery and terrific roads; watch for occasional potholes.





## BALLINA BASE RIDES

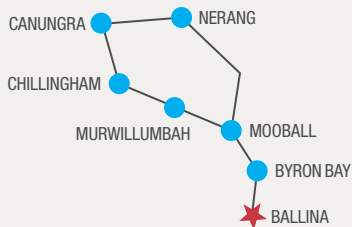
All the suggested rides will always bring you back to beautiful Ballina.



### Local tip #2

Drop in for a coffee at Federal, where the beans are locally grown and expertly brewed. Ride from Binna Burra & return to the Bangalow–Lismore road via Eureka keeping an eye out for wildlife.

## 1 BALLINA TO CANUNGRA ROUND TRIP



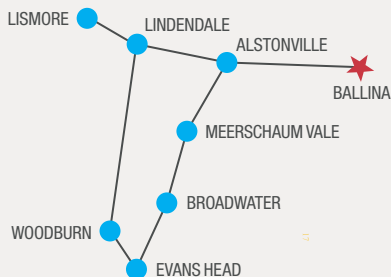
### The best ride in the region!

308KMS

This is one of the best rides in the region! The road will take riders through Byron Bay, Mooball, Murwillumbah, and Chillingham to the picturesque township of Canungra. From here the road leads back to Nerang where the ride will continue down the Pacific Highway and back to Ballina.

Towns along the way: Byron Bay, Mooball, Murwillumbah, Chillingham, Canungra, Nerang, Ballina

## 2 BALLINA TO EVANS HEAD ROUND TRIP



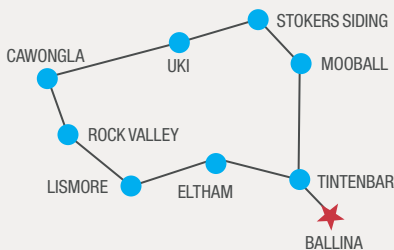
### A south western ride inland

146KMS

This is a scenic south-western ride inland and a great one to take mid-morning to lunch. This ride features great back road routes of the area, showcasing some of the smaller villages in the area.

Towns along the way: Alstonville, Broadwater, Evans Head, Woodburn, Lismore, Ballina

## 3 BALLINA TO UKI ROUND TRIP



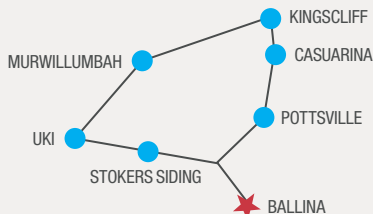
### Hinterland track

197KMS

Once you leave the highway on the road to Mooball, you will come across a number of quality galleries, pubs and cafés along the way. This is motorbike heaven, with fantastic back roads through spectacular rainforest scenery and smaller villages.

Towns along the way: Mooball, Stokers Siding, Uki, Lismore, Eltham, Ballina

## 4 BALLINA TO KINGSCLIFF ROUND TRIP



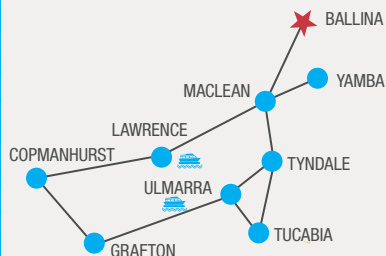
### Coastal and rural loop

200KMS

This is a great coastal ride to take a passenger. Incredible coastal views, pubs, cafés and good roads. Then ride over to Murwillumbah and Uki for a change of scenery over winding bush roads through rolling hills.

Towns along the way: Pottsville, Casuarina, Kingscliff, Murwillumbah, Uki, Ballina

## 5 BALLINA TO COPMANHURST ROUND TRIP

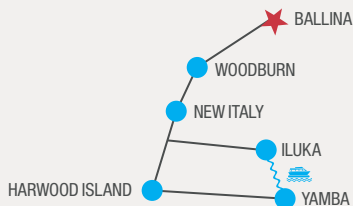


## Ferry rides

368KMS

This scenic ride follows the Clarence River in sections where you can stop to explore smaller towns enroute. Take the Ulmarra Ferry and head towards Grafton. North of Grafton head for Copmanhurst, then back through Lawrence to ride the Blue Point Ferry, crossing the Clarence River again. Travel north back through Maclean and Yamba. **Towns along the way:** Tyndale, Tucabia, Ulmarra, Grafton, Copmanhurst, Maclean, Yamba, Ballina

## 6 BALLINA TO YAMBA ROUND TRIP

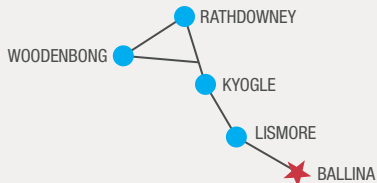


## A ride to the Clarence

240KM

A great mid-morning or lunch ride. Explore some of the smaller coastal villages located at the mouth of the Clarence. Catch the passenger ferry from either Iluka or Yamba and cross the Clarence for a perfect round trip. **Towns along the way:** Woodburn, New Italy, Harwood Island, Yamba, Iluka, Ballina

## 7 BALLINA TO RATHDOWNEY ROUND TRIP

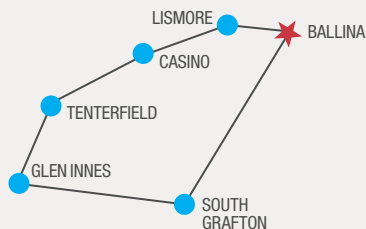


## Twists and turns

319KMS

This ride is built for bike touring; twisty, turning, up and down. Take the Lions Road from Kyogle to Rathdowney. The Mt Lindesay granite outcrop will emerge in all its majesty as you ride on the Mt Lindesay Highway to Woodenbong. **Towns along the way:** Lismore, Kyogle, Rathdowney, Woodenbong, Ballina

## 8 BALLINA TO GLEN INNES ROUND TRIP



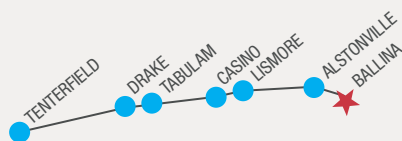
## Highway riding at its best

575KMS

This is highway riding at its best! An easy ride to South Grafton, followed by a ride up the Gwydir Highway to Glen Innes. From here take the New England Highway to Tenterfield, and then back down the meandering Bruxner Highway through Casino and Lismore and an easy ride back to Ballina. This route travels through spectacular scenery and the highways let you take it all in. **Towns along the way:** South Grafton, Glen Innes, Tenterfield, Casino, Lismore, Ballina



## 9 BALLINA TO TENTERFIELD ROUND TRIP



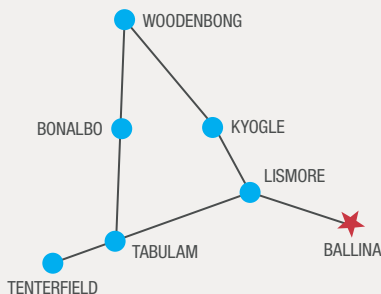
### Tenterfield saddler

380KMS

This route takes you inland right through to Tenterfield, with its bends and twists it's guaranteed to satisfy the most seasoned of riders. Explore the villages on the way and seek out the bike display at the pub in Drake. Take in views of the spectacular coastal escarpment as you ride back into Ballina in time for dinner.

Towns along the way: Alstonville, Lismore, Casino, Tabulam, Drake, Tenterfield, Ballina

## 10 BALLINA TO WOODENBONG ROUND TRIP

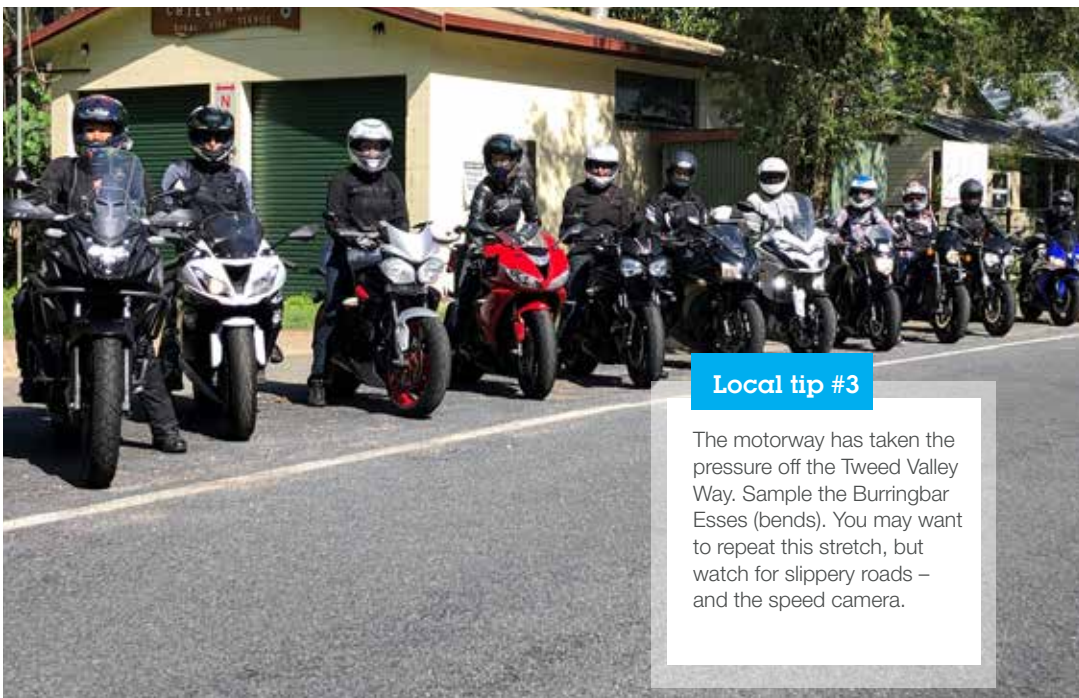


### Take the scenic back roads

473KMS

This route takes riders up to the New South Wales / Queensland border along scenic rural roads through townships with rural character and country charm.

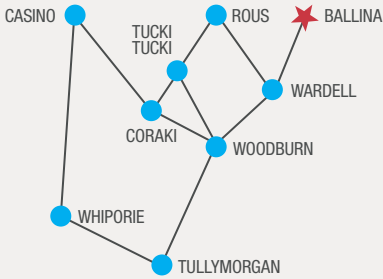
Towns along the way: Lismore, Kyogle, Woodenbong, Tenterfield, Ballina



### Local tip #3

The motorway has taken the pressure off the Tweed Valley Way. Sample the Burringbar Esses (bends). You may want to repeat this stretch, but watch for slippery roads – and the speed camera.

## 11 BALLINA TO WHIPORIE ROUND TRIP



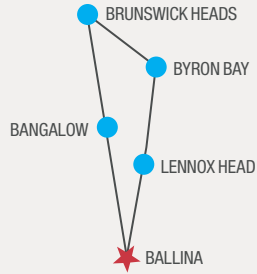
### Charming villages

299KMS

Several route options have been mapped out. Ride along the banks of the Richmond River then out to some back roads closer to Ballina. Take the shorter ride along some good gravel sections, via Woodburn, Coraki, Tucki Tucki back to Ballina, or continue through to Tullymorgan and Whiporie then along the Summerland Way via Casino back to Ballina.

Towns along the way: Wardell, Woodburn, Tullymorgan, Whiporie, Casino, Coraki, Tucki Tucki, Rous, Ballina

## 12 BALLINA TO BRUNSWICK HEADS ROUND TRIP



### Short and sweet

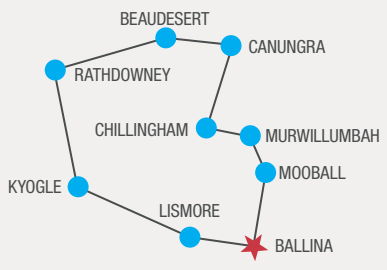
92KMS

This a great short ride. Head north on Tourist Drive 30 to Lennox Head, Byron Bay, then onto Brunswick Heads. Plenty of cafes, pubs, and live music on weekends. Explore the hidden gems of Billinudgel, Ocean Shores and Mullumbimby. Don't forget to drop into Bangalow on your way back to Ballina.

Towns along the way: Lennox Head, Byron Bay, Brunswick Heads, Bangalow, Ballina



**13 BALLINA TO CANUNGRA ROUND TRIP**

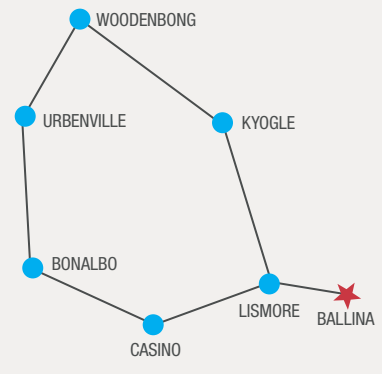


**Open spaces**  
360KMS

This is an extension of ride number 7. The roads from Canungra back through Rathdowney and Kyogle make some of the best biking roads in the district. This route has spectacular views, interesting stops and unique attractions along the way. See if you can spot the dinosaur in the paddock at the Natural Arch.

Towns along the way: Mooball, Murwillumbah, Chillingham, Canungra, Beaudesert, Rathdowney, Kyogle, Lismore, Ballina

**14 BALLINA TO BONALBO ROUND TRIP**



**Dotted with tourist spots**  
315KMS

This scenic laid-back ride takes in rural towns known for their flourishing beef and timber industries. On this ride you'll find unique dining options, shops and galleries, plus a range of picnic areas throughout the picturesque national parks.

Towns along the way: Lismore, Kyogle, Woodenbong, Urbenville, Bonalbo, Casino, Ballina



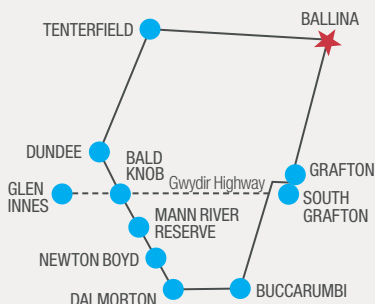
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR MORE LOCAL KNOWLEDGE ON BIKE ROUTES CONTACT THE MOTORCYCLE ORGANISATIONS LISTED ON PAGE 22



## Local tip #4

Just off the Tweed Valley Way is picturesque Stokers Siding. Turn off at the Tweed Art Gallery; the corners are a dream, but the road is narrow. Take special care when overtaking.

## 15 BALLINA TO TENTERFIELD ROUND TRIP



### Enduro Ride I

535KMS/545KMS

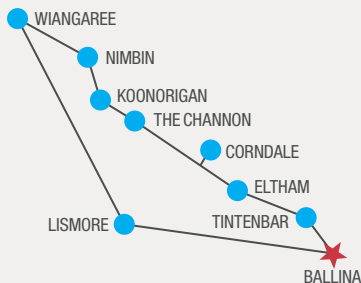
This ride links the mountains to the sea and is fringed by wild rivers and breathtaking scenery. Take Old Glen Innes Road and follow the Boyd River to historic Buccarumbi and Dalmorton. Ride through a 20metre hand-cut tunnel towards Newton Boyd and have a break at the Mann River Nature Reserve. You can head up to Tenterfield or return to Ballina back through Grafton via the Gwydir Highway.

- a. Ballina, Bald Knob, return via Grafton – 535km
- b. Ballina, Bald Knob, Tenterfield – 545km.

Leave early, this is a big ride with a good mix of tar and gravel.

Towns along the way: Grafton, Buccarumbi, Dalmorton, Newton Boyd, Bald Knob, Dundee, Tenterfield, Ballina

## 16 BALLINA TO NIMBIN ROUND TRIP

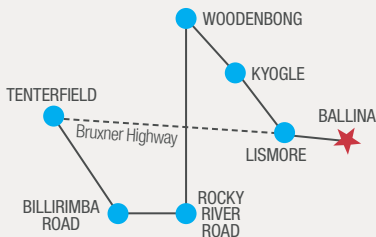


### Enduro Ride II

224KMS

This ride takes in the cultural heart of the region, Lismore. It is a mecca for artists, markets and galleries. Ride through the Border Ranges National Park. Give yourself plenty of time for sidetrips, waterfalls and lookouts via charming villages that offer an alternative way of life. Towns along the way: Lismore, Wiangaree, Nimbin, Koonorigan, The Channon, Corndale, Eltham, Tintenbar, Ballina

## 17 BALLINA TO TENTERFIELD ROUND TRIP

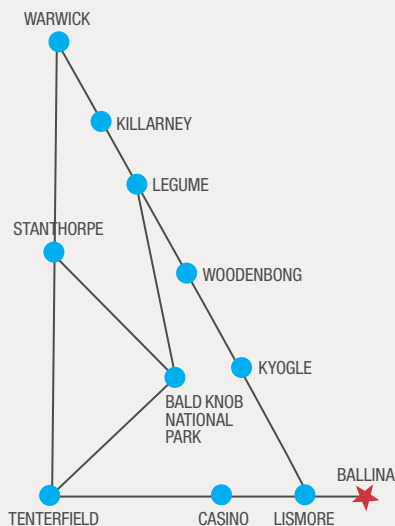


### Enduro Ride III

505KMS

This is another great road bike ride on the Bruxner Highway to Tenterfield. This ride is best for enduros so if you return on the Bruxner you have the best of both worlds. Towns along the way: Lismore, Casino, Drake, Tabulam, Tenterfield, Woodenbong, Kyogle

## 18 BALLINA-WARWICK-TENTERFIELD



### Enduro Ride IV

#### A FEW VARIATIONS

This is a variation on rides 15 and 17 but through the same type of great biking roads. Take your time exploring this country. The section from Woodenbong to Legume might slow you down a bit, and the enduro will round you up, but don't let that deter you. Test out the great gravel sections between Tenterfield and Bald Rock National Park.

Here are a few route options:

- a. Ballina, Warwick, Ballina  
– 446kms
- b. Ballina, Legume, Bald Rock, Tenterfield, Ballina  
– 484kms  
(this is in your guide)
- c. Ballina, Legume, Bald Rock, Stanthorpe, Tenterfield, Ballina  
– 560kms
- d. Ballina, Warwick, Tenterfield, Ballina  
– 533kms

Towns along the way: Ballina, Warwick, Legume, Bald Rock, Tenterfield, Stanthorpe

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN OTHER ROUTE OPTIONS, CHECK OUT THE HEMA MAPS MOTORCYCLE ATLAS

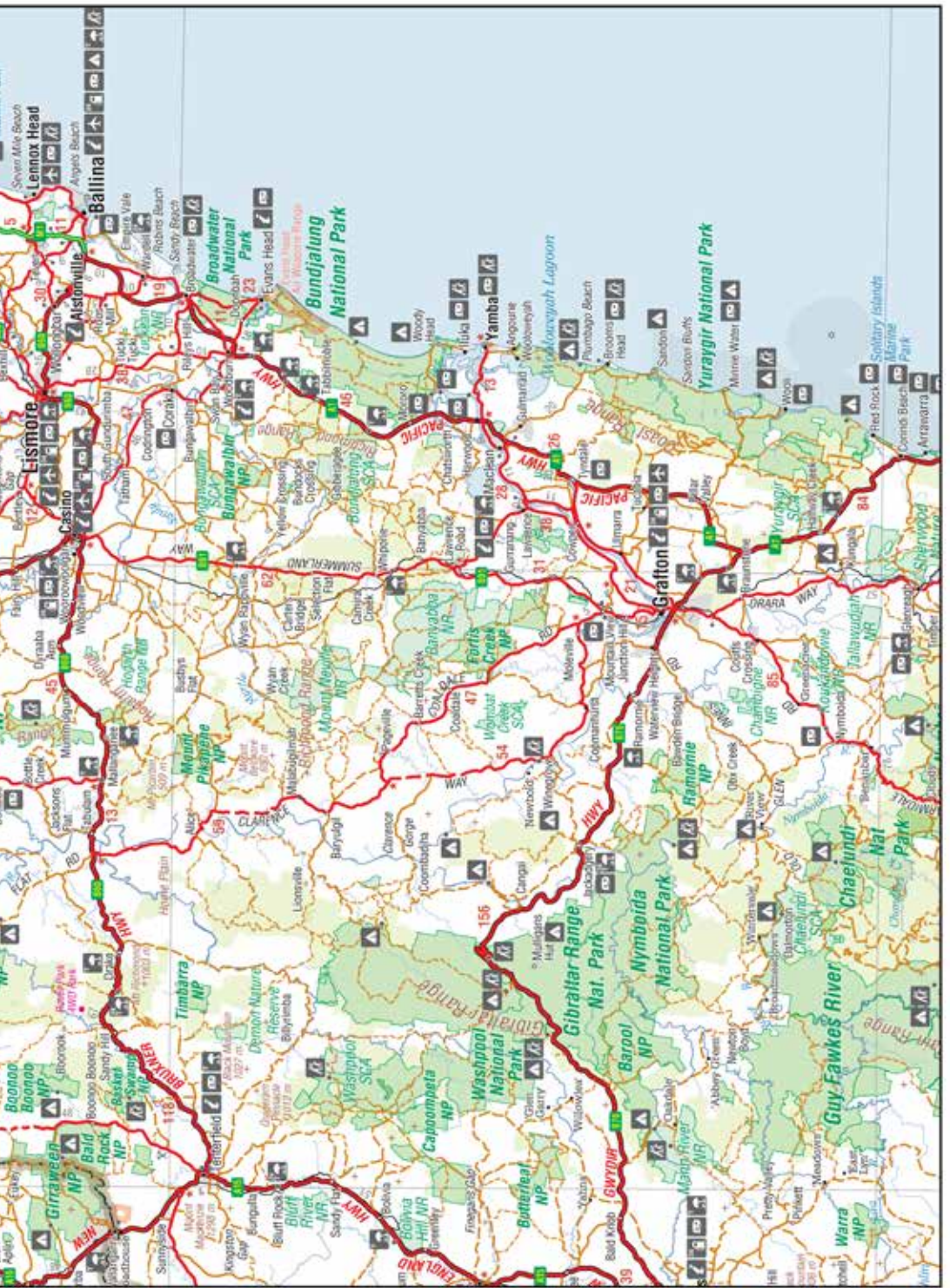
enduro rides











# DISCOVER OUR TOWNS *AND* VILLAGES

## Local tip #5

Coolamon Scenic Drive is not the shortest way from Mullumbimby to Byron Bay, but it's the most fun on a bike. Keep an eye out for animal droppings on the road.



## BALLINA

Centred on an island at the mouth of the Richmond River lies Ballina, the commercial and cultural heart of the area. The town is brimming with things to see and do; visit the maritime museum, discover treasure troves of antiques and curios, art and craft shops, browse the boutiques and stroll the magnificent walks.

Enjoy a leisurely cruise on the Richmond River and journey to the teeming wetlands of North Creek, or thrill to the annual migration of humpback whales from any of the coastal headlands.

## LENNOX HEAD

Laid back Lennox Head is a leisurely and very scenic 10 minute ride north of Ballina. Along the main street, you'll find boutiques, galleries, cafés and gourmet restaurants and just down the road, across from Seven Mile Beach are the tea-tree stained waters of Lake Ainsworth.

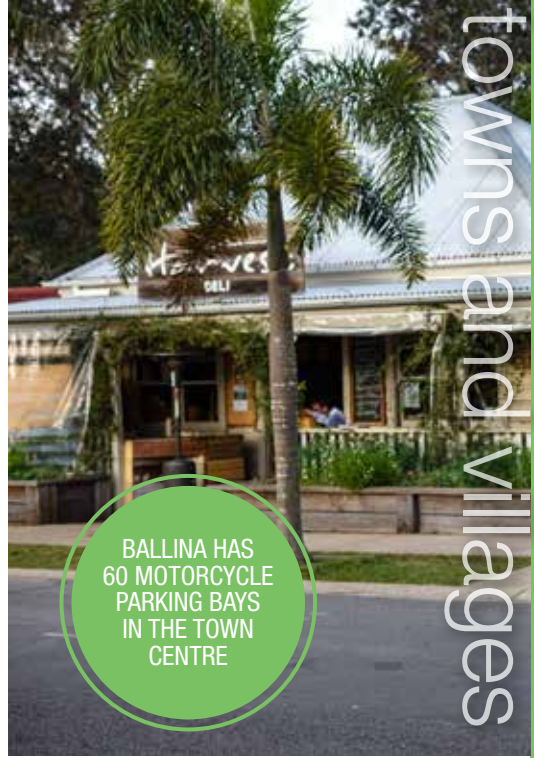
## ALSTONVILLE

A few kilometres inland of Ballina lies Alstonville; an Aladdin's cave for curio hunters and culture buffs with its historic buildings, classic Australian federation architecture, galleries and cafés.

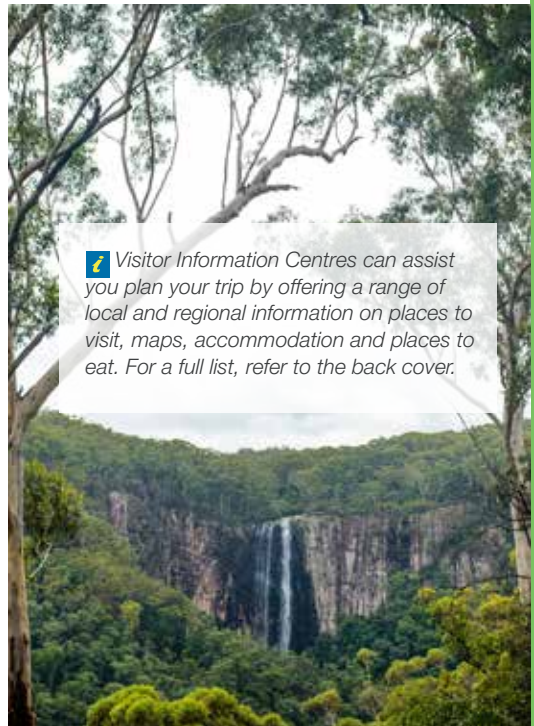
Throughout the surrounding plateau are parks and gardens with the iconic Tibouchina blossoms showing their brilliant display of violet in late Summer and Autumn.


## VILLAGES

Affectionately known as the hinterland, break away from Ballina and explore the villages along winding country roads and enjoy the scenery of rolling hills and coastal escarpments. Dotted through the hinterland, you will find interesting general stores, quirky shops and a variety of eateries that provide fresh local produce.



**BALLINA HAS  
60 MOTORCYCLE  
PARKING BAYS  
IN THE TOWN  
CENTRE**



 Visitor Information Centres can assist you plan your trip by offering a range of local and regional information on places to visit, maps, accommodation and places to eat. For a full list, refer to the back cover.





## RIDING TIPS AND SAFETY

### Local tip #6

Coming from the south? Turn off the Highway into River Drive just before Wardell and follow the Richmond River to the Burns Point Ferry to Ballina. Watch for cane harvesting!

## Helmet

Wear an approved helmet that is securely fastened when riding. Helmets should be replaced after five years, or when the helmet is no longer a secure fit or after a substantial impact.

Never place your helmet on the petrol tank of your bike, the petrol fumes damage the inner lining.

## Gloves

Gauntlet style gloves made from full grain-leather with a strengthened palm and knuckle area provide good protection.

## Jackets, Pants & Suits

Protective clothing must be made from highly abrasive and tear resistant material and completely cover your arms, legs and body. They should be secured at the wrists, waist and ankles to prevent riding up and exposing the skin. Always travel with wet weather gear just in case weather conditions change.

## Footwear

Motorcycle boots are designed specifically for riding motorcycles and provide protection as well as flexibility to operate the motorcycle controls safely. Boots should fit securely and overlap the pants with additional reinforcement around the ankle, shin and toe area.

*For detailed information regarding protective clothing visit the Motorcycle Council of NSW website [mccofnsw.org.au](http://mccofnsw.org.au).*

## Prepare yourself

- Be well rested and have a good night's sleep before heading off.
- Avoid alcohol and other drugs. Skills and reaction times can be severely affected.
- Check medication – it may affect your riding.
- Don't ride when you normally sleep.
- Avoid riding when tired, stressed or emotional.
- Drink plenty of water before and during your ride. Dehydration can be a problem on a long ride.

## Prepare your bike

Make sure your bike is serviced and in good condition for the distances you'll be riding.

Check the following before you head out:

- Tread depth (minimum legal depth is 1.5mm)
- Tyre pressure (keep a gauge under your seat)
- Tension and condition of your chain
- Lights, indicators, brake lights and high beam
- Fluid levels and signs of leaks.

REFER TO YOUR  
MAPS BEFORE  
HEADING OFF ON  
YOUR RIDE

## GROUP RIDING

The success of a group ride can often be attributed to good planning. The ride leader should ensure that all riders only ever ride within their own ability.

### The Do's

- Before setting out, provide all riders with a map indicating meeting points, toilet, fuel and food stops. Distribute a list of mobile phone contact numbers for all riders so that anyone can be reached if they are running late or need assistance.
- Host a briefing before you set off to go over the planned route. This is a good time to buddy up riders with similar level of riding skills and experience. Larger numbers of riders should consider travelling in smaller groups. Match skills and abilities into similar groupings.
- Always have an experienced lead rider that knows the route and an experienced sweep rider. The sweep rider should carry a first aid kit and be first aid trained, or at least know who in the group is first aid trained.
- At the briefing discuss the expected behaviour of all riders on the trip. Start with a full tank. Agree on hand signals and the corner marking system.
- Keep a 3-second gap. Increase the gap in challenging road, weather and traffic conditions.
- Each rider needs to be able to move freely in the lane: riding side by side can be hazardous.
- In the event of a crash, be aware of your own safety, the safety of other riders in your group and the traffic in front and behind you.
- If communication is necessary, stop at a safe location to talk.

### The Don't's

- Don't ride in formation or pairs as this restricts movement around potholes and other obstacles.
- Don't pass in groups - individual overtaking is essential.
- Don't let others push your limits or bend the 'road rules'.
- Don't ride beyond your abilities, good group riders will always wait for you.
- Don't ignore signs of fatigue. Riding a motorcycle is more mentally and physically demanding than driving a car. Rest regularly on long trips.
- Alcohol and riding don't mix. Don't drink and ride. Many pubs in our areas have secure areas for motorcycles. Consider spending the night instead.

#### Local tip #7

Of course you'll want to visit Nimbin. Take the Tuntable Creek Road (from Tuntable Creek); to view the beautiful scenery, but beware of the surface and mindful for the locals in tight corners!





## PILLION PASSENGERS

### Carrying a pillion passenger

Sharing the thrill of riding with a passenger can be an enjoyable aspect of motorcycling, but carrying a passenger is a big responsibility.

Carrying a passenger can affect the way a motorcycle handles. The extra weight makes starting off more difficult and reduces acceleration, more time and space is required for passing and it increases stopping distances. Stability may also be affected on turns and curves.

Points to consider:

- Good quality protective gear for both rider and pillion is paramount.
- Adjust the suspension settings and tyre pressure. Refer to your owner's manual.
- Take regular rest breaks, allowing your passenger to stretch their legs.
- Discuss the ride with your passenger before starting off. Your passenger must lean with the bike otherwise steering and stability will be affected.
- Decide on signals e.g. 3 taps on the shoulder to stop.
- If you are carrying children, the child must be 8 years or older and their feet must reach the pegs securely.
- Children experience fatigue earlier than adults so don't ride long distances with children.

### Riding as a pillion passenger

Enjoy the excitement with a great ride with an experienced rider.

Points to consider:

- Keep your feet up, particularly when stopped.
- Keep your feet on the pegs.
- Align your body with the rider, find a comfortable position, and avoid sudden movement.
- Grip with your knees when a rider is braking.
- Discuss the ride with your rider and set up signals if you don't have electronic communication.
- Ensure you wear protective gear.
- Listen to instructions from the rider.

### Plan your trip

- Have your route mapped out with planned fuel and regular rest stops.
- Check road and weather conditions for the areas you will be travelling through.
- Give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination. Do not travel at speeds that increase your risk of a crash.
- If you can, plan to finish the days ride before dusk to avoid hazards such as wildlife.
- Be realistic about how many hours you can ride each day to avoid fatigue.
- Carry a first aid kit, tool kit, ear plugs, tyre repair kit, torch and maps.



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## LOCAL MOTORCYCLE ORGANISATIONS

### **Northern NSW H.O.G. Local Member**

Gary Rayner 0427 273 538

### **ULYSSES Northern Rivers Club**

Ron Gaudron 02 6622 5669 or  
0418 198 369

### **Northern Rivers Classic Motorcycle Club**

0429 662 915

### **Veterans Motorcycle Club**

#### **Northern NSW President**

Daryle Larking 02 6684 0347

Northern NSW President

Ron James 0402 339 590

Mid North Coast President

Sonny - Rock Valley Chapter 0468 930 997

### **Digger Military Motorcycle Club**

Len Oboune 0401 415 119

### **North Coast V Twins**

02 6650 4200

### **Wheel Skills Rider Training**

1800 153 571

**The following is a list of motorcycle dealers in the region, should you have mechanical problems or want to browse new and second hand motorcycles.**

### **Ballina Motorcycles**

*BMW, KTM*

02 6681 3000 ballinamotorcycles.com.au

### **Lismore Motorcycles**

*Yamaha, Suzuki*

02 6621 8553 liscycles.com.au

### **Desmo Headquarters, Byron Bay**

*Ducati*

02 6685 6316 desmohq.com.au

### **City Bikeworks, Lismore**

*Kawasaki, Triumph, Harley Davidson*

*H.O.G. Sponsor*

02 6622 6226 citybikeworx.com.au

# UNIQUE EXPERIENCES



## Excite all your senses

The Northern Rivers of NSW is so much more than a destination! Blessed by Mother Nature, the region offers experiences that will excite your soul, engage your mind, enliven your hunger and thrill you to pieces. It's a place that is rich in diversity and creative spirit with so many unique experiences on offer. Get amongst it and feel your spirit come to life.



Make your stay a more enjoyable one

Let the **Ballina Visitor Information Centre** book a unique experience for you.

visit [discoverballina.com.au](http://discoverballina.com.au) or call 1800 777 666

discover **ballina** .com.au





# ask



## will take you there

### **Ballina**

Visitor Information Centre  
6 River Street  
1800 777 666  
[discoverballina.com.au](http://discoverballina.com.au)

### **Brunswick Heads**

Visitor Information Centre  
7 Park Street  
02 6685 1002  
[brunswickheads.org.au](http://brunswickheads.org.au)

### **Byron Bay**

Visitor Information Centre  
80 Jonson Street  
02 6680 8558  
[visitbyron.com](http://visitbyron.com)

### **Casino**

Visitor Information Centre  
84 Centre Street  
02 6662 3566  
[discoverrichmondvalley.com.au](http://discoverrichmondvalley.com.au)

### **Evans Head**

Visitor Information Centre  
18 Park Street  
02 6660 0308  
[discoverrichmondvalley.com.au](http://discoverrichmondvalley.com.au)

### **Lismore**

Visitor Information Centre  
207 Molesworth Street  
1300 369 795  
[visitlismore.com.au](http://visitlismore.com.au)

### **Kyogle**

Visitor Information Centre  
Summerland Way & Anzac Dve  
02 6632 2700  
[visitkyogle.com.au](http://visitkyogle.com.au)

### **Clarence Valley**

Visitor Information  
02 6643 0800  
[myclarenc valley.com](http://myclarenc valley.com)

### **Murwillumbah**

Visitor Information Centre  
281 Tweed Valley Way  
02 6672 1340  
[visitthetweed.com.au](http://visitthetweed.com.au)

### **Nimbin**

Visitor Information Centre  
46 Cullen Street, Nimbin  
02 6689 1388  
[visitnimbin.com.au](http://visitnimbin.com.au)

### **The Tweed**

Visitor Information Centre  
cnr Wharf and Bay Streets  
1800 674 414  
[visitthetweed.com.au](http://visitthetweed.com.au)

### **Woodburn**

Visitor Information Centre  
114 River Street  
02 6682 2032  
[discoverrichmondvalley.com.au](http://discoverrichmondvalley.com.au)