

# Perfect break

We know surfing is good for the body and great for the mind, but life today rarely allows for two weeks chasing swell. *Upward Curve* packs up the board and heads to four of the world's premier surf destinations, in search of the perfect break

Surfing culture has changed. Tube-hunters no longer hang out in beat up vans, chasing swell up and down a coast line. Now considered a 'wellness' activity, this refreshing recreation comes hand-in-hand with a skinny soy latte and smashed avocado on sourdough. Weather radar smartphone apps deliver real-time surf reports direct to hand, allowing the flexible worker an opportunity to burst away from the desk and jump on the board. But surfing has not

changed. It's still about time with nature – away from it all.

And popularity is still on the rise. Surfing will become an Olympic discipline at Tokyo 2020, where the best will battle it out for the greatest accolade in sport – not just prize money (which is now gender equal).

*Upward Curve* heads to California, Gold Coast Australia, Hawaii and South Africa – where all four destinations regularly deliver at least 100 days of rideable waves every year.

## SOUTH AFRICA

South African waters get cold so best to layer up for this one – although they are usually more bearable through winter (June to August), with warm swells coming through.

Regardless, the rewards are magnificent, with Jeffreys Bay, an hour west of Port Elizabeth, serving up the best surf in South Africa.

'J-Bay' as it's known to locals, hosts the annual World Surf League (WSL) surfing event at Super Tubes during July, attracting spectators and professional surfers from across the world. The fast, right-hand point break consistently barrels along the west side of the bay for 300 metres in season and, occasionally different sections link up for a one-kilometre ride, optimally reaching between four and ten feet on Hawaiian scale.

Elsewhere, the Cape Peninsula and greater Cape Town area boasts Muizenberg, Long Beach, Big Bay, Dunes, Off The Wall and Dungeons, which offer some

of the greatest surfing to those who can master the complex wind and swell directions. The whole 3,000-kilometre coastline cops plenty of the good stuff from Antarctic lows, with Durban also providing some fantastic spots for beginners, intermediates and advanced surfers alike. [surfingsouthafrica.co.za](http://surfingsouthafrica.co.za)

## CALIFORNIA

With 900 miles of Pacific coastline, the Golden State was created for surf. From sizable

beach breaks to famous points, to once-in-a-lifetime novelty spots, California has it all. While water temperature close to Los Angeles ranges between 14.4°C and 20°C, further up north, from Santa Monica through County Line Beach, Ventura, Malibu (think *Point Break*, *Big Wednesday*) and then up towards San Francisco, the swell gets cooler while the surf heats up.

And with half a million Angelinos working the gig economy as freelancers or entrepreneurs in arts, entertainment, fashion and design; there is no shortage of company when the stars align

and the good stuff rolls in. El Porto, Venice Breakwater, Zuma and Topanga Beach all fill up rapidly, with local etiquette to be strictly adhered to.

South of the city, Huntington Beach, San Clemente, San Onofre State Beach and Old Man's Surfing Area are a little more relaxed and make for some great beginners' spots. Further north, Santa Barbara is where it all began – as documented in surf movies *Gidget* and *The Endless Summer*.

Things get serious closer to San Francisco, with Santa Cruz – 90 minutes south of the city – stretching into Monterey Bay and

Mavericks (for big wave surfers only) just half an hour away. [californiabeaches.com](http://californiabeaches.com)

## GOLD COAST

There are plenty of places to surf in Australia, yet even the locals down under flock to the Gold Coast. Seventy kilometres and four consistent point breaks make this one of the world's premier spots.

The 'Superbank' at Snapper Rocks, made up of southern ►

**Below: Supertubes at Jeffreys Bay is one of the world's most famous surf spots – close to Port Elizabeth in South Africa**



points Kirra, Rainbow Bay and Duranbah Beach, is home to the annual Quiksilver Pro surfing competition and adds a bucket list location for serious surfers the world over.

A pure, hollow wave breaks from the south end of Rainbow Bay and, occasionally pumps for two kilometres to Kirra Beach. The entry and take-off at Snapper can be tricky (you have to time your leap from the rocks).

Rainbow Bay offers great surf for beginners too, with one of the longest right-handers in the world. Currumbin and Duranbah cater for all levels.

Perfect and reliable waves roll in all day at Coolangatta's south end, Greenmount, and further south, The Pass at Byron Bay – where surfing is a sport for everyone – offers an idyllic spot for first-timers.

Home to the famous 'Burleigh barrel', three distinct breaks attract surfers to Burleigh Heads. In the right conditions, they combine to create a quite astounding experience, for those who can ride out the fast barrels that break over sand.



Gold Coast beaches are patrolled year-round by professional lifeguards and conditions suit all skill levels.  
[australia.com](http://australia.com)

#### HAWAII

Hawaiian Olympic swimming champion Duke Kahanamoku is responsible for introducing surfing

to Australia (in 1914), where he showed locals how to ride waves on a heavy finless board carved from a piece of pine. The art of standing on a board, however, was first recorded on James Cook's maiden voyage in Tahiti in 1769, where it is believed to have been central to everyday life for the Tahitian islanders.

Today, Hawaii is considered the home of surfing, with the warm waters of O'ahu's famous north shore offering some of the best surf in the world, just one hour from Honolulu. That's not to say the town beaches are no good, with Publics, Waikiki, Ala Moana Bowls and Kaisers kicking out some high quality, cruisy waves for all levels.

The surf gets a little more extreme up the north shore, where Three Tables Beach, Haleiwa and Banzai Pipeline draw advanced surfers who prefer a little more space to let rip. Jaws (Pe'ahi in Hawaiian) is the biggest surf spot in all. The reef break was largely inaccessible to surfers before the advent of tow-in surfing. This has brought an influx of inexperienced surfers, angering locals who must now share breaks and worry about injuries. Water temperature stays between 22°C and 27°C, so leave the wetsuit at home.  
[gohawaii.com](http://gohawaii.com) ■

**Top: Tube-hunting is fair game – the world over** **Left: Located on Oahu's east shore, Makapuu Beach Park is a great surf spot**