



RESTAURANTS

10 of Wollongong's favourite places to dine out

Wollongong has many great restaurants offering everything from top-class cuisine to reasonably priced café fare. Head to the harbour for fresh seafood, Keira Street for Asian food from China, Thailand, India, Singapore and Vietnam and the southern end of central Wollongong for eastern food.

1 LAGOON SEAFOOD RESTAURANT: Wollongong's best seafood restaurant, right on the waters edge. Try the crab and ricotta ravioli or the John Dory with scampi. Stuart Park North Wollongong. Tel: (02) 4226 1677. Open daily for lunch and dinner. The Lagoon Lounge Bar is open till 2am and there's live entertainment every Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

2 DIGGIES CAFÉ: housed in a renovated kiosk right on the edge of the sand it's a perfect spot for breakfast or lunch on the beach. 1 Cliff Road, North Beach, North Wollongong. Tel: (02) 4226 2688. Open daily 7am-5pm. Open for dinner in summer.

3 FIVE ISLANDS BREWERY: try one of the hand-crafted beers made from all sorts of unlikely ingredients, like coriander and peaches, and then tuck into great bar snacks or something more substantial such as a seafood plate with salt and pepper squid, beer battered fish, salmon rice roll, mixed leaf salad and scallop skewer in the large lounge and terrace, just 50 metres from the beach. Five Islands Brewery, Win Entertainment Centre, Crown St (cnr Harbour St) Wollongong. Open daily from noon.

4 AUSTI BEACH CAFÉ: the place to go for the best home-made gelato this side of Sicily. 104 Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Austinmer. Opening hours vary with the seasons. Weekdays 9.30am-4.30pm; weekends 8.30am-5.30pm. Friday and Saturday nights from 5pm in winter and Wednesday and Thursday nights in summer.

5 CHEDO'S CAFÉ: good value pastas and Mediterranean platters for lunch with a focus on local produce. 748 Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Coledale. Tel: (02) 4268 3000. Open for breakfast and lunch Wednesday to Friday from 9am, Saturday and Sunday from 8.30am and dinner Wednesday to Saturday nights from 6pm.

6 BOMBORA SEAFOOD: another great harbour-side seafood restaurant – with fish so fresh they like to boast that if it was "any fresher it would flap". Tuesdays are Thai Tuesdays with a new Thai menu each week. Fishermans Co-Op Building, Wollongong Harbour. Tel: (02) 4229 7011. Open daily 8am until late.

7 CAVEAU: Wollongong's only hatted restaurant dishes up superb French cuisine. Perfect for a romantic dinner for two or special occasion. 122 Keira St. Tel: (02) 4226 4855. Open for dinner Tuesdays to Saturdays from 6pm, and lunch on Thursdays and Fridays.

8 LORENZO'S DINER: tuck into huge servings of great northern Italian food in this cheerful eatery. 119 Keira St. Tel: (02) 4229 5633. Open for lunch Thursday and Friday; dinner Tuesday through to Saturday.

9 MICHAEL'S RISTORANTE: another good Italian trattoria in the city centre serving up traditional and modern Italian dishes. 50 Crown St. Tel: (02) 4225 9542. Open for lunch, Tuesday to Friday; dinner Tuesday to Saturday.

10 FLANAGAN'S FISH CAFÉ: best fish and chips to take away or buy it fresh and cook it your self. 190 Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Thirroul. Tel: (02) 4268 1598. Open daily until 5pm.