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Relax, and get ready to Rumba in Caloundra

THERE'S no better place to kick back than Caloundra, complete with bikinis and five-star luxury, of course.

By Peter Smith

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One of Rumba's spacious five-star luxury suites. *Source: Supplied*

IT'S 3.30 on Saturday afternoon and we have just checked into our luxury oceanfront apartment at the Rumba Beach Resort in Caloundra.

The Rumba is a 5-star self-catering resort, which means there is a fully-equipped kitchen, including an espresso coffee machine complete with a starter pack of coffee pods, but sadly (well, for my wife, at least) no George Clooney in sight. As we stand on the balcony looking down on to the boardwalk at Bulcock Beach, the sun is shining, Bribie Island is in the foreground and the Glass House Mountains are clearly visible through the giant Norfolk pines that line the Esplanade. There are people everywhere - of course, it's school holidays - but I don't remember Caloundra being this vibrant.

We head downstairs, find a coffee shop with cappuccino and carrot cake, and sit back and watch children playing in the water, jet skis growling into life and people wetting a fishing line. Ah, this is the life!

With the temperature nudging 32C, we head back to the resort - well, actually the pool bar at the resort - so we can scan the cocktail list.

Regina, my wife, wants to go on the record as saying she highly recommends the Rumba Mudslide (Kahlua, vodka and chocolate ice cream).

After surviving several Mudslides, we arrive back in the apartment, cook some veal for dinner and have a bottle of chilled white wine while watching an on-demand movie on the Denon HD home theatre system.

Sunday begins in our king-size cloud bed checking emails (I love free Wi-Fi).

There are two pools at the resort; one is a heated lap pool, the other a family-friendly resort-style pool. There's also a huge spa - perhaps the biggest on the Sunshine Coast.

You can hire bicycles (\$15 for a half-day or \$20 for the full day) and it's tempting, as Caloundra has a great walk/cycle system right along the ocean edge.

We decide to walk to Moffat Beach. Along the way we pass Kings and Shelly beaches, and I loved all the signs along the route explaining environmental things.

There were also two war memorials and a 1km stretch of pathway with brass plaques honouring Australian military personnel who had taken part in conflicts, a really impressive initiative by the Caloundra RSL.

We had fish and chips at Moffat Beach and then, sated, started our journey home.

All up it was a 3 1/2-hour walk with only a few hills.

When we got back to the apartment we let the double spa soothe our aching muscles.

That night we ate out at Alfie's Moo Char and Bar, which was a short stroll from the Rumba.

Regina had the rump steak and I had the pork spare ribs. The food was great, and it was nice to see footy legend Allan "Alfie" Langer and his family eating at the restaurant that bears his name.

When we checked out on Monday morning we bumped into Rumba director and general manager Bill Darby, who told us that the resort opened in 2009 and was proud of its friendly local staff. He is a strong advocate for Bulcock Beach and the Caloundra region.

The writer was a guest of Rumba Beach Resort

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Staying there: The Rumba Beach Resort has one-bedroom spa suites from \$229 a night and two-bedroom spa suites from \$279 a night. Two-bedroom luxury ocean-view apartments start from \$319 a night, three-bedrooms from \$369 a night. All include secure undercover parking and secure lift access. Phone 5492 0555, email stay@rumbaresort.com.au or see rumbaresort.com.au

Getting there: The resort is an hour's drive north of Brisbane on the Bruce Hwy or 30 minutes' drive south from the Sunshine Coast Airport.

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