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Gold Coast Bulletin

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FESTIVE FEASTS

CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY ON THE COAST.
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FIVE OF THE BEST: CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Join the midyear cheer

Eat, drink and be merry - Christmas in July is about to arrive on the Coast, writes **Ann Wason Moore**

FORGET expensive airfares overseas, the Gold Coast is the perfect place for a Christmas winter wonderland – just adjust the date to July.

While the cooler climate of the Hinterland makes it great for a midyear yuletide getaway, the trend for a traditional winter celebration is spreading across the city.

And one of the best places is a little pub in Surfers Paradise.

The iconic destination for all things Irish, the D'Arcy Arms is offering a traditional Christmas menu all month – not to mention being decorated top to table with pine trees, tinsel and all things white and wonderful.

"We transform D'Arcy Arms into a winter wonderland," says manager Mick Ellison.

"We have professional decorators coming in to drape our bar and restaurant in everything you expect to see at Christmas time."

The month-long Christmas festivities kick off tomorrow with a dinner banquet.

For \$85 per diner, guests will be treated to a three-hour beverage package including sparkling, beer and wine as well as a traditional festive feast.

"We are starting the month with a ticketed event – The Christmas in July Dinner Banquet," says Mick.

"Guests can join us by the fire at 6pm for an eggnog or mulled wine, be treated to traditional Christmas roasts

including pork, ham, turkey, beef and chicken and even salmon fillets."

There'll be a three-hour beverage package and dessert, including Christmas pudding and the famous trifle.

For those who don't make it to tomorrow night's banquet, there are plenty more than 12 days to this Christmas in July.

Mick says the D'Arcy Arms will offer a Christmas menu all month, with roasts and the rest of the trimmings for \$45 a person.

"To put you in the extra festive mood you can also have a choice of a port or traditional mulled wine."

And while tradition is not something the QT Hotel usually follows, the Surfers establishment is also giving the theme a spin.

Food and beverage manager Rupert Sakora says the QT's Bazaar Marketplace will be hosting a one-off holiday dinner on July 23.

"Our chefs will be spoiling our guests with traditional Christmas dishes with a modern twist," says Rupert.

"Roast beef and Yorkshire puddings with lashings of gravy, roast turkey stuffed with cranberries and pistachio, rum

and pineapple glazed ham, sweet potato with cinnamon, homemade roasted

marshmallows, plum pudding and so much more are on the menu."

Rupert says the QT's Stingray Lounge will also feature a special Christmas Cocktail for a pre or post-dinner beverage or two ... so there's something for every diner, whether naughty or nice.

Mick says interest has already been strong for the D'Arcy Arms Christmas in July events.

He says Gold Coast diners are continuing to embrace the midyear celebration.

"It is a great time to celebrate the end of the financial year, family gatherings or just a long lunch or dinner," he says.

"Not to mention gathering by a fireplace."

BINNA BURRA LODGE **Beechmont**

Escape to the mountains in the Gold Coast Hinterland for a traditional winter Christmas in July at Binna Burra Lodge. This year's authentic yuletide event will take place from July 17-19 at the historic Lodge in Lamington National Park. Relax in front of a roaring log fire, sip on mulled wine at sunset in the library, and tuck into a traditional Christmas dinner.

BEARDED DRAGON, **Mount Tamborine**

Set on 45 hectares of farm and bushland, with county accommodation and an a la carte restaurant, the Bearded Dragon offers a cooler climate to accompany its Christmas roast dinner by the roaring fireplace. The tavern is hosting its annual Christmas in July this Saturday with themed tables,



lights display, bonbons and live entertainment.

**FOOD FANTASY,
Jupiters, Broadbeach**

It's a month-long Christmas celebration at Food Fantasy, with an Aussie prawn buffet available for lunch and dinner every day in July. For more traditional yuletide tastes, there's roast turkey with pinot jus and cranberry sauce, roasted vegetables, Yorkshire pudding and festive desserts including plum pudding with brandy custard, eggnog mousse and indulgent yule log.

**ST BERNARDS HOTEL,
Mount Tamborine**

It feels like Christmas every day at the historic St Bernards

Hotel. But each Saturday in July the mountainside restaurant is turning up the festive heat – literally, with multiple open fires set to roast those chestnuts. Enjoy festive live music as well as a gourmet selection of traditional meals – and don't forget to sample the bar's range of ports and liqueurs to keep Christmas merry.

**O'REILLY'S CANUNGRA
VALLEY VINEYARDS
Canungra**

Celebrate with a traditional two-course lunch, washed down with a few glasses of the house drop. There will be plenty of lucky door prizes at the July 26 event, live music, firepits on the lawn and maybe even a visit from the man in red.



