

Avani Mooloolaba Beach Hotel

10 Brisbane Road,
Mooloolaba, Qld



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Location

Avani Mooloolaba Beach Hotel doesn't offer absolute beachfront accommodation, but it comes close. Set one street back from a bustling esplanade packed with shops, restaurants and cafes, it's only a short stroll to the golden sands of north-facing Mooloolaba Beach. In a region saturated with serviced apartments, the Sunshine Coast's first full-service hotel in 40 years is a welcome addition.

First impressions

Having driven up from Brisbane, my first glimpse of the hotel is from the porte-cochere, where a cheerful concierge directs me to a first-floor carpark. Peak holiday periods deliver parking headaches here, so the carpark's presence eliminates a major pain point. The concierge meets me at the ground floor lift, spirits my luggage away, and directs me to one of three sit-down check-in desks lavishly decorated with tropical blooms. An orange spritz materialises from the bar nearby and a staffer takes my order for a Mooloolaba prawn roll. We're off to a good start.

Design

The 12-storey, 180-key Avani Mooloolaba was developed, owned and operated by KPAT Hotels under a franchise agreement with Minor Hotels. Staff were still slipping covers on the menus hours before I arrived, yet it has

the gravitas of a longer-established property. Interiors were designed by Brisbane's Taryn Raso. The open-plan lobby sets the tone, with curvilinear, custom-designed furniture in shades of sapphire and sage, positioned on a sand-coloured stone tile floor. Lush potted plants, trailing greenery and paper lantern pendant lights soften the mood. The rest of the hotel draws on a soothing palette of terracotta and sky blue. The overall look is beachy yet refined.

Accommodation

Avani Mooloolaba essentially offers two categories – rooms starting at 26sq m and suites starting at 38sq m. I'm in a 44sq m Ocean Suite with a private balcony and ocean views. The room itself is trifurcated by blonde wood panels into sleeping, bathing and entertainment zones. I slip on a plush powder-blue robe and matching slippers to explore further.

There's a marshmallow-soft king bed dressed in white cotton and a pillow menu should you need it. A freestanding circular tub anchors the bathroom space, alongside a pink marbled vanity with twin sinks. A walk-in rain shower and separate toilet are discreetly hidden behind frosted glass doors. The entertainment space centres on a comfortable couch positioned a tad too close to a 55-inch flat-screen TV.



Clockwise from top left: Hotel lobby; rooftop pool; AvaniSpa; Ocean Suite; oysters at Sully's Rooftop Restaurant & Bar

Dining

Perched atop the hotel, bright and breezy Sully's Rooftop Restaurant & Bar offers all-day dining with wraparound views. It has done away with the buffet breakfast (good riddance) and in its place are eight options ranging from coconut waffles to Eggs Benny. But Sully's really hits its stride from lunchtime onwards, with a modern Australian menu showcasing ingredients from local trawlers, growers and providores. I devour the artisanal flatbreads topped with prosciutto, stretched cheese and pink peppercorns and wood-fired Margra lamb topped with goat curd, mint and peas.

Sully's has a respectable five-page wine list and a good selection of beer, cider and cocktails. But if you can't decide between nightcap and dessert, why not have both? The showstopping Sgroppino blends seasonal sorbet, liqueur and champagne for the ultimate digestivo. Downstairs, the sophisticated First Avenue Cellar + Bar is set to open in August.

The pool

The rooftop infinity pool, which stands alone on the 13th floor, is the perfect spot to swim, sunbathe, or sip on the Sully's Slushie of the day while enjoying 270-degree views. I snap up one of four enclosed cabanas decked out in playful peach and white stripes and settle in for the morning.

Wellness

Twin treats on Level 3 are the compact AvaniFit gym and the small-but-mighty AvaniSpa. At the latter, I unspool in a Finnish-style sauna before entering one of four

treatment rooms for a 90-minute Surfers Release massage – a melange of light and firm pressure, hot stones and stretching. I emerge far too relaxed to drive home immediately, so head back upstairs for oysters.

Likes

I love executive chef Marky Godbeer's cheeky riffs on culinary crowd-pleasers. The ubiquitous Bunnings sausage, for instance, inspired his smoked Wagyu beef snags enclosed in a milk bun with caramelised onion and bone marrow aioli. Australia's Cherry Ripe chocolate bars are reincarnated as dark chocolate mousse with coconut crumb and cherry sorbet. And what else is there to sprinkle on hand-cut fries but lip-smacking chicken salt?

Dislikes

Avani Mooloolaba has jumped aboard the open wardrobe trend – a detail I find jarring. Exposed hanging rails create the illusion of more space in compact hotel rooms, but they detract from the spacious suite's luxury feel. The half-dozen wooden and cream satin hangers don't salvage the situation either. More hooks in the bathroom too, please. There are very few places to hang wet towels or togs.

Tariff

Rooms from \$332 per night; ocean suites from \$494 a night.

Denise Cullen was a guest of Avani Mooloolaba Beach.

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