



If you've been thinking of heading off on a trip to a warmer climate, then the Gold Coast Hinterland is a goldmine of lush greenery and breathtaking vistas – so it's the perfect place to dig out those gaiters and boots for a hike!

Here are my three picks ranging from intermediate to difficult, of the best trails to hike in the Gold Coast Hinterland area.



*Hiking in the Gold Coast Hinterland allows you to view spectacular scenes such as this.
Image: Sabrina Blaas.*

1. Pages Pinnacle

Duration: 2-3 hours return

Getting there: From the Gold Coast, follow Nerang Murwillumbah road and turn left onto the Gold Coast Springbrook Road. Approximately 2-3 kilometres after the turn-off, there will be a car park which is next to the Scouts Numinbah Camp Site.

The hike: From the carpark, walk around the gate on the right and follow the fire trail. When you come to the first junction turn right. Then turn right again at the next junction, then left. You should be walking uphill for quite some time. When you see the pinnacle on your left, look for a small cairn near a large gum tree. This is where you turn left to follow the track up to the ridge all the way to the pinnacle.

Intensity of hike: Intermediate

Notes: The view at the top of the Pages Pinnacle overlooks Hinze Dam, and is by far one of the most beautiful lookouts on the Gold Coast.



The top of the Pages Pinnacle overlooks the Hinze Dam. Image: Sabrina Blaas.

2. Mt. Cougal

Duration: 4-5 hours

Getting there: From the Gold Coast, drive along Currumbin Creek Road. Turn left into Tomewin Mountain Road. Turn right into Garden of Eden Road and follow this road along for 4 kilometres. Park at the gate.

The hike: Walk around the locked gate and follow the fence line. The path may be overgrown so it's best to wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt and hiking boots. You will need to walk through some sugarcane and after walking further uphill, you will find yourself in the rainforest. After continuing to walk uphill, the path will veer right. It will be another 5 minutes of walking until you reach the first summit (East Cougal). Then, follow the path to walk over to the second summit (West Cougal).

Intensity of hike: Intermediate/ Difficult

Notes: At the top of East Cougal you will look over to West Cougal. This is a good opportunity to take photos. West Cougal has a small opening at the top of the peak where you can see the Gold Coast skyscrapers and ocean.



Check out that spectacular view of Mt Cougal! Image: Sabrina Blaas.



3. Mt. Ernest

Duration: 7-8 hours

Getting there: From the Gold Coast, head towards Beaudesert. Continue towards Rathdowney and turn off onto Upper Logan Road. Follow this road until you get to Yellowpinch carpark.

The hike: From Yellowpinch carpark, walk along the fire trail. Go through the hiker's gate and continue to follow the fire trail until you reach campsite 9. From here, cross the river and walk in an eastern direction (downstream) for about a kilometre. From here, you will then head uphill towards Mt. Ernest. This will mainly involve bushbashing but aim to get to the eastern side of Mt. Ernest as this is the easiest way up. Once you reach the top, follow the ridge along until you reach the top of Mt. Ernest. The walk along the ridge may take a couple hours as it's at least 3-4 km in distance. You will know when you reach the top as there is a cairn there. The viewpoint overlooking Mt. Barney is breathtaking.

Intensity of hike: Difficult

Notes: There isn't a path up to the top which means you will need to create your own track. However, once you reach the ridge, there is a path which'll help you get to the peak of Mt. Ernest. It's best to bring a map, compass and other safety gear, such as a first aid kit. You will need to wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Also be careful not to go onto private property!



After a bit of bushbashing, you get to see this view of Mt Barney from Mt Ernest. Image: Sabrina Blaas.

So, there you have it! Three amazing places for hikers to visit in the Gold Coast Hinterland area.

Have you explored the Gold Coast Hinterland area? Got any hikes under your belt that you think should have made the cut?