

Seven days in Cairns & Great Barrier Reef

Enjoy a week of tropical wonders



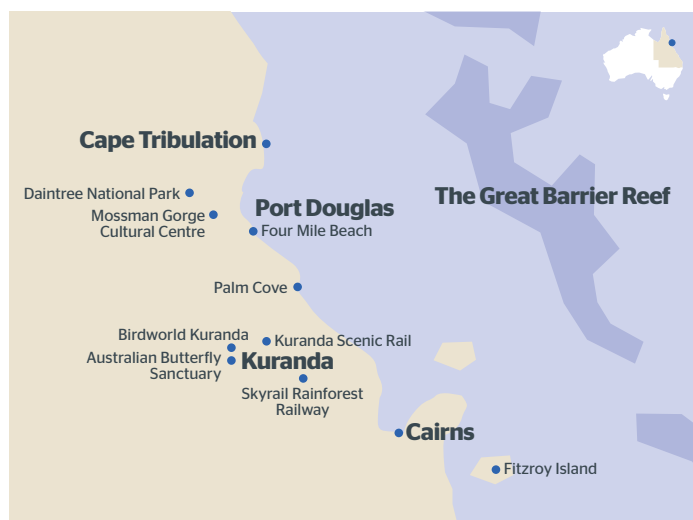
Skyrail Rainforest Cableway



Four Mile Beach



Cairns Aquarium



Turtle season

The Great Barrier Reef is home to the largest green turtle rookery in the world, **Raine Island**. Find it off Cape York, which can only be accessed via a long-range liveaboard dive boat. While you can't step afoot on the coral cay itself, you can snorkel and dive its fringing reef for guaranteed turtle spotting.

There's plenty of reasons to visit the Cairns & Great Barrier Reef region - but the fact it's home to two of Australia's World Heritage Areas is the premier reason it should sit atop your 'to-visit' list.

1 Day one

Morning:

Arrive into Cairns Airport, transfer to your accommodation to drop off your luggage - you have a big day ahead of you.

Start your Cairns & Great Barrier Reef adventure with a bird's-eye view, taking the **Skyrail Rainforest Cableway** from Smithfield to the "village in the rainforest," **Kuranda**.

Across one and a half hours, you'll glide over the famous Wet Tropics canopy from the comfort of an air-conditioned gondola and enjoy the opportunity to see Wet Tropics Rainforest from the top down.

Disembark at two stations along the journey, Red Peak and **Barron Falls**, where you can explore lookouts and the surrounding forest on foot either solo or with the interpretation of a Skyrail ranger.

Once you've disembarked in Kuranda, spend time browsing through the village's markets and shops. For an animal encounter and ultimate photo opportunity, visit the **Australian Butterfly**

Sanctuary (pro tip: wear a red or bright pink shirt to attract the butterflies) or **Bird World** where more than 60 species of birds such as rainbow lorikeets and macaws, roam and fly freely.

Afternoon:

Mix up your return journey back to Cairns taking the **Kuranda Scenic Railway** which meanders its way back down the mountain range across a two-hour journey.

Marvel at the feat of engineering undertaken by early pioneers who built the track which rises 327 metres (0.2 miles) above sea level, travelling over 55 bridges, 98 curves and through 15 hand-carved tunnels.

For added luxury, upgrade your tickets to Gold Class to enjoy a cold beverage and local produce for afternoon tea in a cabin boasting individual lounge seating and historical photographs.

Evening:

This evening, choose from one of the **many restaurants** in Cairns.

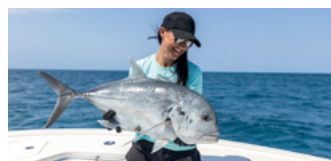
Overnight:

There's no shortage of **accommodation options** for your stay in Cairns. Check into any of the resort style, self-contained apartments, budget friendly backpackers or luxury hotel options which front the waterfront, CBD or hinterland.



Local Tip

Go waterfall chasing in the Atherton Tablelands for a refreshing way to cool off. The surrounding hinterland has its very own waterfall circuit to see all the best falls - **Babinda Boulders, Josephine Falls, Tchupala Falls, Wallicher Falls, Nandroya Falls, Millaa Millaa Falls, Ellinjaa Falls, Zillie Falls, Mungalli Falls**.



Food

Cairns & Great Barrier Reef is a region that packs a flavour punch. Whether it's food grown from the nutrient-rich Atherton Tablelands or freshly caught reef fish from the Great Barrier Reef, there's no shortage of local flavours to be savoured.

The Cairns & Great Barrier Reef region is considered a 'bucket-list' destination thanks to its breathtaking natural beauty and abundance of marine life.

 **7 Days
6 Nights**

Weather

Average temperature
28°C | 82°F Summer months,
October to March
23°C | 73°F Winter months,
April to September
Green Season
November to March

How to get there and get around

Cairns and surrounding areas are serviced by Cairns Airport. Queensland Rail connects Brisbane with Cairns.

Cairns is a 1,700km (1,056 M) drive from Brisbane, and the Great Barrier Reef Drive is 140kms (87 M) from Cairns to Cape Tribulation.

Traveller type

Couples, Solo travellers

Wildlife calendar

 **Dwarf Minke Whale season**
June - July

Best time to visit

Positioned in north Queensland, Cairns & Great Barrier Reef enjoys tropical weather year-round with the mercury seldom dropping below 20 degrees, even in winter.

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2 Day two

Morning:

Leave the Cairns CBD behind today and take a tour north to explore the **Daintree Rainforest** and **Cape Tribulation**.

If you'd prefer to self-drive, there are plenty of self-paced drive routes or alternatively there's a range of day tours like **Tropic Wings**, **Down Under Tours**, **Jungle Tours** and **Billy Tea Safaris** who will take care of the planning and preparation.

When you're discovering a World Heritage-listed rainforest that pre-dates the Amazon, it pays to have a guide to interpret the flora and fauna.

If time is on your itinerary's side, extend the adventure further, stay the night in either Daintree or Cape Tribulation to immerse yourself truly in the only known place on the planet where two World Heritage-listed sites meet.

Evening:

This evening, enjoy dinner right in the heart of Cape Tribulation at the aptly named **WHET Cafe Bar Restaurant**. This restaurant is all about "whetting your appetite" on the local produce sourced from the surrounding waters and agricultural land flanking the region.

Overnight:

Choose from the range of accommodation nestled into the rainforest around Cape Tribulation such as **Daintree EcoLodge**, **Ferntree Rainforest Lodge** or **Cape Trib Beach House**.

3 Day three

Morning:

Join **Ocean Safari** for a half day eco-tour of the Great Barrier Reef. Leaving from Cape Tribulation, it's only a 25-minute ferry ride between the mainland and you snorkelling the Mackay and Undine Reefs. With more time spent on the reef than getting to it, fill your day with sightings of colourful coral, tropical fish, eagle rays, turtles, giant clams and starfish. With views back to the mainland of where the rainforest meets the reef, this tour is as remarkable as the landscape it visits.

To explore the landscape from dry land, spend the morning exploring the biodiversity of Cape Tribulation on a guided horse-riding tour with **Cape Trib Horse Rides**. From the saddle, explore one of the spots where the Daintree National Park and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park meet. Whether it's your first time on horseback or you're an experienced rider, so long as you're over the age of five, you can participate in this 1.5-hour trail ride along Myall Beach.

Afternoon:

After a morning of adventure, recharge the batteries by visiting **Port Douglas** and spend the afternoon exploring the shops and cafés on the main street.

If retail therapy isn't your style, may we suggest leaving footprints in the four miles of golden sand of **Four Mile Beach**, which is patrolled (northern end) all year round. Take a wander, hire a sun lounge or sand-bike to explore one of the most well-known beaches in Tropical North Queensland.

Evening:

Take in a magical Port Douglas sunset over the Coral Sea with a Sunset Cruise aboard **Sailaway Port Douglas'** luxury catamaran. Magic hour will be accompanied by a welcome drink and canapes, with views of Port Douglas' silhouetted surrounding mountain ranges.

Return to the mainland to enjoy dinner at one of the heavily-awarded restaurants in Port Douglas.

Overnight:

Check into one of the **accommodation options** in Port Douglas which range from budget-friendly, resort-style, self-contained apartments and luxury hotel rooms.

4 Day four

Morning:

Connect with culture this morning by visiting the **Mossman Gorge Discovery Centre** in Mossman. Be taken on a tour through the world's oldest rainforests by booking onto one of the award-winning **Ngadiku Dreamtime Walks**. Hosted by a Kuku Yalanji guide, you'll be taken on a journey steeped in heritage as you uncover their ancient culture and traditions, including a smoking ceremony and introduction to bush medicine.

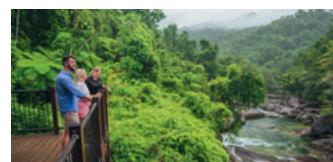
Afternoon:

Make your way an hour south to Cairns, stopping in at the beachside village of Palm Cove for lunch. No matter where you choose for lunch, be spoilt by views from the palm-lined esplanade out to the Coral Sea.



Did you know?

Cairns & Great Barrier Reef is the only place in Australia where two Indigenous cultures meet and there are plenty of opportunities to experience Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history during your stay. To connect with the country, visit **Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre** and join **Ngadiku Dreamtime Walks** where you'll be taken through the rainforest guided by the Kuku Yalanji people.



Must see and do

Discover the World Heritage-listed **Wet Tropics Rainforest** which spans 8,940km², from Townsville to Cooktown. What makes it worthy of its UNESCO status is its biodiversity. While covering only 0.2 per cent of Australia's land mass, the Wet Tropics habitat is home to more than a quarter of the marsupial species in the country, 58 per cent of all Australian bat species, 58 per cent of the butterfly species and 40 per cent of bird species.



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Arrive into Cairns by the afternoon for a relaxed afternoon by the hotel pool – an itinerary in the tropics doesn't have to be all go, go, go. If you're looking to explore Cairns but stay cool, head to the **Cairns Lagoon** for a quick dip or enjoy the shady ambience of the **Cairns Botanic Gardens**.

If you're after a bit more action, pay a visit to the **Cairns Aquarium** to see 16,000 animals from 10 different ecosystems and 71 habitats across Tropical North Queensland.

For a wildlife experience founded on observation, appreciation and conservation, visit the **Wildlife Habitat** where if you dare you can even take a swim with saltwater crocodiles (don't worry it's a controlled and safe environment).

Wildlife Habitat is an open and interactive wildlife exhibit, where you can explore the five distinct environments (including Wetlands, Rainforest, Savannah, Nocturnal and Woodlands) at your own leisurely pace.

Evening:

This evening, book a table at one of the many **restaurants** in Cairns.

Overnight:

Check into one of the many **accommodation options** in Cairns.

5 Day five

Morning/Afternoon:

Say goodbye to the mainland, it's time to discover a tropical island off the coast of Cairns, **Fitzroy Island**.

Just 45-minutes connects you from the Reef Fleet Terminal at Cairns Marina (near the Pier) with this idyllic island which blends tranquil nature with outdoor adventure.

On a day trip you can pack the best of the island into six hours, with enough time to snorkel Fitzroy's fringing reefs surrounding Fitzroy Island, head out on a glass-bottom boat tour, or hire a stand-up paddleboard or glass-bottom sea kayak.

If you can peel yourself away, catch the 4pm ferry back to Cairns. If time is on your side, there's always the option to stay overnight.

Evening:

This evening, book a table at one of the many **restaurants** in Cairns.

Overnight:

Check into one of the many **accommodation options** in Cairns.

6 Day six

Morning/Afternoon:

Discover the world's most famous reef system with a day trip out to the Great Barrier Reef with one of the many reef cruise operators who leave from the Cairns marina.

If the budget allows, opt to fly one way via helicopter for spectacular views of the Great Barrier Reef from above, returning to the mainland by regular boat cruise in the afternoon. There's a reef tour to suit you – with the choice of visiting a pontoon, an island or multiple sites – somewhere closer to the mainland or much further afield.

Most operators such as **Quicksilver Cruises**, **Reef Magic**, and **Sunlover Reef Cruises** offer a variety of options for visiting the reef suitable to both swimmers and non-swimmers with the likes of glass-bottomed boats and semi-submersibles.

Evening:

Book a table this evening at one of the many Cairns CBD **restaurants**.

Overnight:

Enjoy your overnight stay at one of the many **accommodation options** in Cairns.

7 Day seven

Morning/Afternoon:

Swap the Cairns CBD for the countryside, with a day trip to the **Atherton Tablelands** recognised for its paddock to plate cuisine, iconic volcanic landscape and abundant waterfalls. To get there, you'll spend 90 minutes in the car between Cairns and Atherton Tablelands, with the option to access to Tablelands via Kuranda in the north or Gordonvale in the south.

Pack your swimmers to go waterfall chasing. There's no shortage of waterfalls to find, including a drive trail that visits popular waterfalls such as Millaa Millaa Falls or the lesser-known Zillie Falls, gigantic curtain fig tree and two crater lakes (Lake Eacham and Lake Barrine).

You won't go hungry up here – but with so many options, you'll need to prioritise where you try first. For the best in show, don't leave the area without trying Devonshire tea at **Lake Barrine Tea House**, the handmade chocolates and cheeses at **Gallo's Dairyland**, the coffee from **Skybury** or **Coffee Works** or the award-winning gin and liqueurs from **Mt. Uncle Distillery**.

Evening:

Book a table this evening at one of the many Cairns CBD **restaurants**.

Overnight:

Enjoy your overnight stay at one of the many **accommodation options** in Cairns.

Visit teq.queensland.com/trade/itineraries



Did you know?

The world's largest and most famous reef system, the Great Barrier Reef, is found just offshore, stretching from the tip of Cape York all the way to Bundaberg in the south. Each **precinct of the reef** offers a different perspective – with options for discovery including above and below the water's surface. If you're looking to explore the reef, Cairns and Port Douglas are a great option to find and book a tour through an operator.



Dwarf Minke Whales

For an encounter like no other in the world, time your trip for June and July when you can swim with the **dwarf minke whales** who return to the Great Barrier Reef each year. The warm waters off the Cairns coastline is the only place in the world you can swim with these mysterious creatures.



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