

CAPE YORK WILDERNESS ADVENTURE

CAIRNS - CAIRNS SAMPLE ITINERARY

This is a sample itinerary and may be subject to change. We may need to alter or amend itineraries, excursions, accommodation, or sightseeing arrangements from those published, with little or no notice. This may be due to road conditions, weather, cultural considerations, safety factors and other operational considerations or government regulations. Final itineraries are sent to passengers approximately 2-3 weeks before travel.

DAY 1 – Cairns – Port Douglas

Today you will be greeted by our friendly and professional Tour Directors. We then begin our journey north with a scenic drive along the Captain Cook Highway to Port Douglas. Enjoy a brief tour of this famous tropical village before checking into the premier accommodation choice in Port Douglas - the Sheraton Grand Mirage Resort for our overnight stay.

This evening enjoy a sumptuous welcome dinner together at the resort. **Meals: (D)**

DAY 2 – Port Douglas – Mossman Gorge – Daintree National Park

This morning we continue our journey north and visit the award-winning Mossman Gorge Centre in the Daintree National Park. Here we enjoy the Dreamtime Gorge Walk, which begins with a traditional smoking ceremony to cleanse and ward off bad spirits. Setting off on the walk, we'll be accompanied by experienced Indigenous guides who'll demonstrate traditional plant use, identify bush food sources and provide an enchanting narrative of the rainforest. At the end of the walk enjoy traditional bush tea and damper.

We then venture further into the World Heritage Listed Daintree, the oldest and most biologically diverse rainforest in the world. First up, we enjoy an informative cruise on the Daintree River before an exclusive guided tour at Cooper Creek Wilderness. Situated directly below Thornton Peak, the epicentre of refugial significance in the Daintree, Cooper Creek is home to pristine old growth rainforest and extraordinary fan palm galleries. Here we'll take a guided tour along the forest floor with expert,

inhabitant guides; an exclusive experience that's far removed from other mass tourism offerings in the area.

Late this afternoon we arrive at the Heritage Lodge and Spa for our overnight stay. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 3 – Cape Tribulation – Bloomfield Track – Cooktown

This morning we continue our journey through the Daintree to Cape Tribulation, a headland named by Lieutenant James Cook after his ship struck the Great Barrier Reef in 1770. After a stroll along the beach and a cup of tea, we'll continue north and tackle the infamous Bloomfield Track. Impassable during the wet season, the track passes through some wild country and should only be tackled by 4WD vehicles. There are numerous steep climbs through the rainforest and several creek crossings to negotiate, so sit back and enjoy the scenery as your experienced tour driver does the hard work!

Once across the Bloomfield River we'll visit Bloomfield Falls before lunch at the Lion's Den Hotel, one of QLD's oldest bush pubs. We then depart for Cooktown, where Lieutenant Cook beached the Endeavour for repairs after hitting the reef. Upon our arrival we'll enjoy a town tour including the James Cook Museum, Cooktown Botanic Gardens and the Grassy Hill lookout.

We then check in to the 4-star Sovereign Resort Hotel for our overnight stay. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 4 – Laura – Lotusbird Lodge

Today we depart Cooktown along the Battle Camp Road and visit the Old Laura Homestead before arriving in to Laura. This area is famous for its rock art.

This morning we visit art sites in the Laura area, where an experienced Aboriginal guide will accompany us to interpret the art and explain the significance of this cultural site.

Later on we enjoy lunch and a visit to the Quinkan Cultural Centre. We then travel through the grassy plains and woodlands of Rinyirru (Lakefield) National Park, tackling several creek crossings along the way. We'll stop at Kalpowar on the Normanby River for afternoon tea, followed by a visit to Red Lily Lagoon, home to a vast array

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of flora and fauna. Admire the tall lotus lily with its spectacular pink flowers and dense yellow stamens, and keep an eye out for Brolgas and Sarus cranes striding through the lilies searching for sedge tubers.

This afternoon we pass through Nifold Plain, an open savannah characterised by thousands of magnetic termite mounds. We then continue through to Lotusbird Lodge, beautifully located on the edge of a tranquil billabong. Enjoy an exclusive two night stay to discover the area.

Meals: (B,L,D)

DAY 5 – Rinyirru (Lakefield) from the Air

Today enjoy a breathtaking helicopter flight over Rinyirru (Lakefield). Board our exclusively chartered Bell Jet Ranger and fly over swamps, plains and forests before following the Kennedy River to Princess Charlotte Bay. You'll spot crocodiles, pigs, cattle and all sorts of other wildlife on this mesmerising flight. It really is the only way to get a true appreciation of the area and adds a great perspective of Cape York Peninsula.

After lunch there's time for a walk around the lodge's billabong or some bird watching. Alternatively, enjoy some free time to yourself and soak up the atmosphere of Cape York from this tranquil location. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

Please note: Weight limits apply to all scenic flights

DAY 6 – Coen – Weipa

Today we farewell Lotusbird Lodge and make our way north along the Peninsula Development Road. Pass through Coen before arriving at Archer River Roadhouse for lunch. We then continue on to Weipa, arriving mid-afternoon to check in to the Albatross Bay Resort. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 7 – Wildlife Cruise – Batavia Downs – Moreton Telegraph Station

This morning we join Western Cape Eco Tours for a cruise on the Embley River. Explore diverse wildlife habitat, learn about local culture and keep an eye out for some big salt water crocodiles! Our skipper will also provide a detailed insight into Weipa's bauxite mining industry. Afterwards, we'll visit the Western Cape Cultural Centre which showcases the history of Weipa and its surrounding communities. The centre enjoys an enviable location

overlooking the bay, so it's also a great place for a picnic lunch.

This afternoon we depart Weipa and make our way towards Moreton Telegraph Station. We pass by Batavia Downs before heading north along the Telegraph Track, arriving at Moreton mid-afternoon. Situated on the banks of the Wenlock River, Moreton served as a repeater station for the Overland Telegraph Line established in the 1880's. The last Morse telegram code was sent from Brisbane to Thursday Island on the 24th June 1964, yet the line remained in use until 1987 as the local telephone line.

Upon our arrival at Moreton we'll check in to our exclusive wilderness lodge for two nights to relax and explore the local area. Our newly refurbished rooms feature ensuite bathrooms, quality furnishings and air-conditioning. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 8 – Moreton Telegraph Station

In the 1860's construction began on the Overland Telegraph Line. The northern section ran through very difficult rugged country and the telegraph survey expedition was only the fourth overland expedition ever made to Cape York. Work on the Cape York Peninsula section was completed in 1886, and Moreton Telegraph Station was completed in 1887.

The line served Australia well until the outbreak of war when better communications were required in the face of the threat to the northern coastline. After more than 100 years of service, Moreton eventually ceased communication operations in 1987 with the introduction of the modern era of telecommunications.

Today, join our guides for some interpretive walks around the station and along the Wenlock River, which contains the highest diversity of freshwater fish of all Australian rivers. Species include the Freshwater Sawfish, Spear tooth Shark and more common fish like the Sooty Grunter and Barramundi.

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After lunch, there is time to catch up on some washing or simply relax and take in the beautiful surrounds followed by our second night at this historic site. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 9 – Telegraph Track – Heathlands – Fruit Bat Falls – Bamaga

Today our journey continues north along the Telegraph Track, passing through some wild and rugged countryside. However, as some sections of the track are impassable we'll mainly be travelling on the northern and southern bypass roads on our journey north from Moreton.

This morning enjoy a visit to Fruit Bat Falls for a refreshing swim in the crystal clear water of Eliot Creek, followed by a picnic lunch.

We then continue north and cross the Jardine River by vehicular ferry, before arriving at Bamaga where we check in to the Cape York Peninsula Lodge for the next two nights. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 10 – Bamaga – The Tip of Cape York

Today we venture to the northernmost point on the Australian Mainland, a Cape traveller's ultimate destination. The walking track commences at Pajinka and requires a good level of fitness, but is well worth the effort! Get your picture taken next to the iconic signpost and soak up the views of the Torres Strait as your guide fills you in on the history of the area.

This afternoon we visit Somerset, once the home of Frank Jardine and the official government residence on the Cape, protected by British Marines. After a BBQ lunch we return to the hotel where the rest of the day can be spent at your leisure. Tonight enjoy a performance by a local dance group at the resort. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 11 – Endeavour Strait – Thursday Island – Kazu Pearls Friday Island

This morning we head to Seisia and board the ferry for our cruise across Endeavour Strait. Enjoy informative commentary about the Torres Strait Islands from the captain as we make our way to Thursday Island, situated 35km northwest of the tip of Cape York. The Island has a population of approximately 3,000 people and is the main administrative centre of the Torres Strait.

Upon our arrival on Thursday Island we'll enjoy a tour with a local expert before some free time.

We then take the short ferry trip across to Friday Island, home to Kazu Pearls. Here we enjoy a pearl demonstration and a visit to the pearl farm shop where we will have the opportunity to purchase some of their exquisite pearl jewellery.

Later this afternoon we return to Thursday Island for our overnight stay at the Jardine Motel. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

Note: For your convenience when taking the ferries to the islands, we suggest that you reduce your luggage to a small backpack. You will require a change of clothes, comfortable shoes, bathers, toiletries (no sharps), personal ID and Qantas Frequent Flyer card (if you have one). The rest of your luggage will return to Cairns on the coach.

DAY 12 – Horn Island – Cairns

This morning we catch a ferry across to Horn Island and enjoy a tour of this once prominent WWII air base before visiting the Torres Strait Heritage Museum. We then board our QANTAS flight back to Cairns, arriving in time for lunch.

For our final evening together, we'll check into the Shangri-La The Marina. Enjoy luxurious rooms in this perfectly positioned hotel along the Esplanade. Tonight, enjoy a special farewell dinner at the hotel and reflect upon our incredible adventure to the tip of Australia. **Meals: (B,L,D)**

DAY 13 – Cairns

After breakfast enjoy a relaxing morning before your transfer to Cairns airport, or to your accommodation if staying on. **Meals: (B)**

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