

# Five day adventure in Cairns & Great Barrier Reef

Time to adventure in the tropics



The adventure capital of Queensland, the Cairns & Great Barrier Reef region, needs little introduction. It's home to a world-famous reef and rainforest, with adventure experiences dotted in between. If you're looking to get out of your comfort zone, discover Cairns & Great Barrier Reef with this itinerary.

## 1 Day one

### Morning:

Kick off your day by arriving at Cairns (Gimuy). Whether you fly, train, or drive you'll immediately feel like you're on holidays with the tropical vibe on offer in Cairns. Drop your bags at your choice of the range of **CBD accommodation** on offer.

### Evening:

Start your trip in the means you wish to continue - with divine dining celebrating the local flavours of Tropical North Queensland. Tonight, dine at one of the many Cairns restaurants such as **Ochre Restaurant** or **Dundees Restaurant on the Waterfront**. On the Ochre menu, you'll find plenty of tastes from the region and surrounding waters including local prawns, Tablelands raised and grazed beef, and smoked crocodile.

After an evening wining and dining, take in the fresh tropical air as your orientating yourself to the area with a stroll along the esplanade and lagoon.

### Overnight:

Spend the night at your choice of Cairns accommodation - whether it's one of Cairns' Mantra properties (**Esplanade**, **Trilogy** or **Amphora**) or one of the three Crystalbrook Collection hotels (**Riley**, **Flynn** or **Bailey**), you'll find something to suit.

## 2 Day two

### Morning:

Rise and shine early - your day starts well before the sun to transfer from Cairns to Kuranda where you'll board a **hot air balloon** to glide over the Atherton Tablelands.

From over the Mareeba highlands, you'll catch a picturesque sunrise over the rolling green hills - with 360 degree vistas out towards the rainforest and reef.

Once back on ground, drop into Caffiend for cold-drip coffee and their homemade banana and walnut bread, or enjoy breakfast at one of the other great Cairns **cafés**, before being dropped at the **Skyrail Rainforest Cableway** terminal, where you can explore the famous Wet Tropics rainforest from new heights. Enjoy a truly

unique perspective, gliding metres above the pristine canopy before descending to explore the rainforest close up.

Across 1.5 hours, you'll spot plants, some of which are 298 - 385 million years old, aboard your air conditioned Skyrail gondola. Choose the open-air option if you love the wind in your face as you immerse yourself in the ancient rainforest.

Don't dismiss this as a purely aerial experience - the trip is broken into three sections with two mid-stations where you can join a ranger guided tour to explore further on foot - including a spectacular viewing platform of **Barron Falls (Din Din)**.



## Dwarf Minke Whales

The Great Barrier Reef is the only place in the world you can swim with dwarf minke whales. The short but sweet season only lasts two months of the year (June / July) and is your opportunity to join a liveboard adventure for an elusive and exclusive animal encounter.



## Food


When visiting one of the most verdant food bowls in Australia, you'll want to pack your appetite. The Atherton Tablelands is Cairns' crop-country, and thanks to its 300 days of sunshine each year, you're guaranteed to find its farm-fresh produce starring on menus across your North Queensland travels.

Get out of your comfort zone and embrace living with this non-stop adventure itinerary of Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef.


 **5 Days  
4 Nights**

### Weather

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


 **How to get there  
and get around**

Cairns and surrounding areas are serviced by Cairns Airport. Catch the train from Brisbane to Cairns with Queensland Rail, or plan a 1,700km (1,056 miles) coastal drive.

 **Traveller type**  
Couples, Solo, Families

### Wildlife calendar

 **Dwarf Minke Whale season**  
June - July

 **Cassowary season**  
All year, especially summer

### Best time to visit

Cairns & Great Barrier Reef enjoys tropical weather year-round. The winter months are generally drier and provide the perfect weather for outdoor dining and connecting with nature, while summer sees the region come to life as waterfalls flow.

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Skymail Rainforest Cableway



Billy Tea Safaris



Daintree Discovery Centre

## Afternoon:

Upon reaching the Kuranda Skyrail Terminal, enjoy this **rainforest village** at your leisure. Colourful and quirky, the centre point of the village is its markets, which have been running five days a week for more than 30 years.

Outside of shopping, there's plenty of things to see and do here, whether it be a rainforest walk along the Barron River, exploration of Barron Falls themselves or spotting the birdlife who call the fringing rainforest home.

Return to Cairns via railway, hopping aboard the historic **Kuranda Scenic Railway**. A window seat is a must to see the rainforest up close across this two-hour journey.

Don't forget to marvel at this feat of engineering – built by Queensland pioneers between 1887 and 1891 on steep cliffs and through unforgiving conditions.

## Evening:

For an alfresco dinner to remember, pull up a seat at **Prawn Star**, which takes trawler-to-table dining to new levels. This former trawler, now anchored in Cairns marina, is a licenced restaurant open for lunch and dinner, serving fresh raw and cooked seafood.

## Overnight:

Spend the night at your choice of **Cairns accommodation**.

## 3 Day three

### Morning/Afternoon:

Enjoy a morning exploring the best of both worlds by heading to **Cape Tribulation**, the only spot in the world where two World Heritage-listed sites collide, and one of the very spot the rainforest meets the reef here in Cairns & Great Barrier Reef.

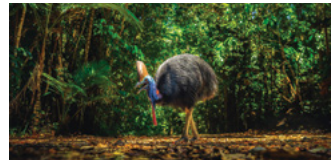
To explore the Daintree and Cape Tribulation, join a guided tour like **Billy Tea Safaris** or **Tropic Wings Cairns Tours and Charters**, which offer pick up from Cairns, Palm Cove, Northern Beaches and Port Douglas. Both tours will take you comfortably on an air-conditioned 4WD from the city into the thick of the **Daintree National Park**, another part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

After putting tyres to tarmac on one of the most scenic stretches of road, the Captain Cook Highway, break up the journey with a Daintree River cruise where you can spot crocodiles sunbaking on its banks.

Both tours finish on Cape Tribulation Beach before turning home via a stop at the **Daintree Ice Cream Company** for an exotic scoop of homemade ice cream – think black sapote, jack fruit, mangosteen and durian to name a few.



Port Douglas



## Cassowaries

While you can see cassowaries all year round in Tropical North Queensland, the best time to spot these ancient birds is summer. Summer marks hatching season, as chicks take their first steps, escorted by dad. Try your luck spotting them in the wild or guaranteed viewing at an accredited wildlife park.



## Did you know?

If you're looking for Indigenous art, head north of Cairns to Laura in Cape York to find the internationally significant, Quinkan Rock Art Sites. UNESCO ranked these ancient paintings, stencils and engravings among the top 10 rock art sites in the world. Discover them for yourself with **Jarramali Rock Art Tours**.



## Local Tip

If you can tear yourself away from the reef or the rainforest for a day or two, head inland to explore the **Undara Caves**, the ancient volcanic cave system found 35 hours west of Cairns. Dating back 190,000 years the landscape here points to a time the area was a volatile active volcano. Today, it's dormant and heralded as one of the oldest and best-preserved lava tube systems in the world. Yours to discover underground by joining the Undara Experience.



Daintree Boatman Wildlife Cruises



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Hot Air Balloon Cairns



Tropic Wings Cairns Tours and Charters



Quicksilver Cruises

## Evening:

Rather than return to Cairns this evening, base your night in Port Douglas. Enjoy dinner at your choice of one of the many award-winning Port Douglas restaurants – book in advance to ensure you don't miss out on a table.

## Overnight:

Choose from one of the Port Douglas accommodation options such as **Pullman Port Douglas Sea Temple Resort and Spa** or **Peppers Beach Club Port Douglas**.

## 4 Day four

### Morning/Afternoon:

Discover the **Great Barrier Reef** with a day trip to the icon, one of the wonders of the world.

For a full day to the outer reef, hop aboard **Quicksilver Cruises** catamaran. Your destination – a floating pontoon on the pristine Agincourt Reef. From the pontoon, you can join the day's activity program whether that be snorkelling, scuba diving, or taking a semi-submarine, glass bottom boat or ocean walker experience.

Never dived before but keen to try?

You can become PADI certified with Quicksilver's purpose-built diver training centre, Quicksilver Dive.

For a reef experience closer to the mainland, swap up the outer reef for the Low Isles, an idyllic coral cay island with world-class snorkelling just steps off the shore.

**Sailaway Port Douglas** offer an eco, luxury, intimate catamaran experience, with guest numbers capped for a premium reef experience.

Running in full day, afternoon and sunset format, Sailaway offers many ways to see the reef to suit your time frame.

### Evening:

This evening, book a table at one of the many **Port Douglas restaurants** and sample local cuisine in a laidback atmosphere.

### Overnight:

Choose from one of the Port Douglas accommodation options such as **Pullman Port Douglas Sea Temple Resort and Spa** or **Peppers Beach Club Port Douglas**.

## 5 Day five

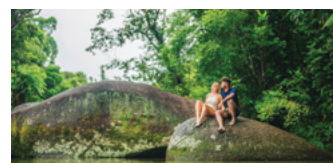
### Morning:

Spend your final morning exploring Mossman Gorge. Immerse yourself in the natural wonder of the Daintree and learn about the stories and legends of the Kuku Yalanji people, who have inhabited the Daintree Rainforest for more than 50,000 years. Choose from a guided **Ngadiku Dreamtime Walk** conducted by the local indigenous people, or embark on a self-guided walk around the gorge – either way, enjoy being surrounded by lush greenery, trickling waterfalls and the sounds of this ancient forest.

### Afternoon:

Return to Cairns for your departure and onward journey.

Visit [teq.queensland.com/trade/itineraries](http://teq.queensland.com/trade/itineraries)



## Must see and do

Discover the World Heritage-listed **Wet Tropics of Queensland** which surrounds Cairns. It's easy to be mesmerised by the oldest continuously surviving tropical rainforest whose dense foliage stretches from just north of Townsville, to Cooktown. The choice is yours for how to discover its precincts whether it be on two feet, on two wheels or high above it. Guided tours recommended.



## Did you know?

You can float down the Mossman River under the canopy of the Daintree Rainforest with a one-of-a-kind inland snorkelling experience. With **Back Country Bliss**, you'll board an inflatable raft and ride the current, floating down the river with nothing but the sounds of nature to interrupt your solitude. With a snorkel mask you can explore this complex eco-system from both above and below water level.



Divers Den

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