

the great tropical drive

DISCOVER NATURE'S PLAYGROUND



COOKTOWN | CAIRNS | TOWNSVILLE | AYR
QUEENSLAND AUSTRALIA
www.greattropicaldrive.com.au



Great Tropical Drive

01 Great Tropical Drive 🚗 🏠 🌿 🏞️ 🏡
 Cairns – Port Douglas – Cooktown – Charters Towers – Townsville – Cairns (2079km)

The Great Tropical Drive is a world class touring loop that travels from the Great Barrier Reef through the rainforests of the Wet Tropics into the golden savannah of Outback Queensland.

02 Great Green Way 🌿 🏡 🏞️
 Townsville – Cairns (457km)

Starting from Townsville or Cairns, the Great Green Way encompasses the World Heritage-listed Wet Tropics Rainforest and Great Barrier Reef, islands, waterfalls, wetlands, farming areas and friendly country towns. It's the perfect drive to experience coastal North Queensland.

03 Daintree Explorer 🌿 🏡 🏞️
 Mossman – Bloomfield Track – Cooktown – Mossman (417km)

Explore the rugged landscape beyond the Daintree coast. Immerse yourself in rainforest Aboriginal culture, spot a croc or two and discover the legacy of Captain James Cook and the north's great goldrush.

04 Cooktown 🏞️ 🏠 🏡
 Cooktown – Lakefield National Park – Laura – Cooktown (279km)

Explore deep into the past from the present on a journey that explores the colour of the varied landscape of Cape York Peninsula, ancient Aboriginal culture, early colonial history and remote Australia's contemporary lifestyle.

05 Reef to Rainforest 🌿 🏞️
 Cairns – Port Douglas – Yungaburra – Cairns (261km)

Experience one of the most beautiful ocean drives in the world, where reef and rainforest lie side by side, as you cruise the highway to Port Douglas. Then drive up Rex Range and spend a few days tasting the speciality foods of tropical Australia.

06 Waterfalls 🌿 🏞️ 🏡
 Cairns – Malanda (326km)

Cruise through fields of sugar cane before climbing the coastal range to the highlands that overlook Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef, where farming communities share the tablelands with some of the region's most impressive natural habitats.

07 Chillagoe 🌿 🏞️ 🏡
 Mareeba – Chillagoe – Undara – Mareeba (559km)

This trail is a true adventure drive that will take you from lush rainforest across the golden savannah – where you will disappear underground to explore the limestone caves of Chillagoe and Undara lava tubes. 4WD vehicle recommended.

08 Georgetown 🌿 🏞️ 🏡
 Ravenshoe – Undara – The Lynd Junction (489km)

Descend from the Atherton Tableland to the base of the Great Dividing Range where the grasslands of the Gulf Savannah reveal the remains of 160 extinct volcanoes in the McBride Volcanic Province. Their legacy includes deep lava tubes, craters, gemfields and hot springs.

09 Canecutter Way 🏞️ 🏡 🏠
 Innisfail – Silkwood – Innisfail (162km)

This relaxing drive takes you from the Art Deco architecture of Innisfail, to the crumbling ruins of a former grandiose Spanish style home, passing through lush sugarcane fields and rainforest.

10 Tully to Mission Beach 🌿 🏞️ 🏡
 Tully – Mission Beach – Tully (218km)

This trail takes you through some of truly scenic wonders of the tropical north – lush rainforests, golden beaches, and strange flightless birds – the elusive cassowary. You will gain a good insight into the traditions and culture of the local Indigenous people, and enjoy unlimited opportunities to test your skills with more adventurous activities.

11 Hinchinbrook 🌿 🏞️ 🏡
 Ingham – Lucinda – Hidden Valley – Ingham (462km)

Experience the delights of beaches, rivers, valleys, a dormant volcano, wetlands, sugarcane and Australia's highest single drop waterfall, Wallaman Falls. World Heritage-listed rainforest and reef, friendly country folk and spectacular coastal and island views are guaranteed in Hinchinbrook, part of the Great Green Way.

12 Paluma 🌿 🏞️ 🏡
 Townsville – Paluma – Townsville (279km)

A great two-day drive from Townsville through a very photogenic section of the Great Green Way region (recommended for 4WD vehicles). This is a journey of contrasts – passing through varying picturesque regions from the coast and beaches, to cool mountain ranges, villages, rivers, lookouts, misty World Heritage rainforest and outback and grazing country.

13 Western Heritage 🌿 🏞️ 🏡
 Townsville – Charters Towers – Bluff Downs – Townsville (674km)

This tour includes the heritage gold mining town of Charters Towers, the outback and wetlands. The southern region includes rivers, mountain ranges, geological formations and an abundance of flora and fauna. The small rural communities offer the visitor agricultural history, culture and great stories.

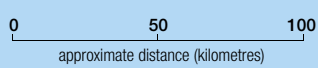
14 Liquid Gold 🌿 🏞️ 🏡
 Townsville – Ayr – Townsville (350km)

A great relaxing two-day drive passing through national park, scenic bushland areas and sugar cane fields. Explore legendary ghost stories in historic Ravenswood, World War 2 sites, the Brandon Historic Precinct and the fascinating Gudjuda Indigenous Culture Centre.



The Great Tropical Drive is a self-drive route that will take you from Cairns or Townsville to some amazing places – less than a few hours away! Dive the Great Barrier Reef, raft whitewater rapids, trek Queensland's highest peak, share bush tucker with traditional owners, wander through the world's largest lava tube and indulge in the freshest tropical foods.

Take the time to experience the entire Great Tropical Drive route or choose a shorter drive to suit: from easy one-day drives to week-long 4WD and campervan adventures.



Planning your Great Tropical Drive
 Visit www.greattropicaldrive.com.au for everything you need to plan your trip. Here you will find detailed travel information on the Great Tropical Drive and the self-drive Discovery Trails.



Great Tropical Drive Experience Trails
 If you can't decide which trail to take, just follow your senses! The Great Tropical Drive website features six "Experience Trails" that will help you discover the best of adventure, nature, indigenous culture, food, heritage and wildlife experiences in Tropical Australia.

- Adventure Trail** 🏞️
 Explore the hidden walking & 4WD tracks of this challenging landscape.
- Nature Trail** 🌿
 Uncover the hidden secrets of an area of unrivalled natural beauty.
- Indigenous Trail** 🏡
 This region's unique culture evolved in tropical forests over many thousands of years.
- Food Trail** 🍷
 Taste a vast range of local produce including fresh seafood, rare tropical fruits, speciality teas and coffee.
- Heritage Trail** 🏠
 Follow in the footsteps of great explorers – including the greatest of all, Captain Cook.
- Wildlife Trail** 🦘
 Meet the unique birdlife and mammals living in the rainforest and savannah habitats.

Set your pace to tropical speed on a self-driving holiday taking in some of the most amazing places between Townsville and Cape York in tropical Australia.

Winding its way from palm-fringed beaches to ancient World Heritage rainforest, the golden Outback, and wonders of the Great Barrier Reef lying just offshore, it's a driving

adventure packed with the colours and characters of Queensland.

Take time to experience the whole route or a shorter drive or week-long 4WD adventure. Whether you're into nature-based activities or pure adventure, the Great Tropical Drive has something for everyone.

Explore one of nature's miracles – the world's longest system of lava tubes in the Undara Volcanic National Park, cool off with a swim in the clear waters of Crystal Creek at Paluma, or spot crocodiles in the wild in the midst of the ancient World Heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest.

Stop off along the way in the charming relaxed coastal villages of Mission Beach, Palm Cove or Port Douglas or inland to the historic mining towns of Charters Towers or Herberton.

Visit one of the world's top 10 rock art sites, dive or snorkel the reef. Further north, there's the pure adventure of four-wheel-driving to Cape York and the tip of Australia for some of the best sports fishing in the world. Whether you try a section, or the whole Great Tropical Drive, you'll have memories of this very special part of northern Australia to last a lifetime.

the great tropical drive



adventure



Opportunities are unlimited from climbing mountains, sky diving and world-class white water rafting to dive expeditions or four-wheel-driving.

nature



Pure and unspoilt, experience the Great Barrier Reef, ancient Daintree and Wet Tropics rainforest, Outback Savannah and golden beaches.

wildlife



Spot cassowaries or crocodiles in the wild, have breakfast with the birds, discover a diverse marine life or visit Magnetic Island, home to one of Australia's largest koala colonies.

heritage



Step back in time and discover the charms of Art Deco Innisfail, Paronella Park, Charters Towers, Ravenswood, Herberton Historic Village and more.

food & wine



Treat yourself to the very best local produce including superb seafood, tropical fruits, coffee and tea, and try our award-winning cafés and restaurants.

indigenous



Learn more about ancient Aboriginal culture by experiencing guided Indigenous tours, art and bush tucker.

great barrier reef

Experience the very best of the Great Barrier Reef off the coast of North Queensland. This World Heritage wonder of vibrant reef systems, coral cays and marine life is easily accessed from key areas like Cairns, Port Douglas, Mission Beach and Townsville as well as other spots along the coast.



outback



North Queensland offers an abundance of outback experiences. Ranging from fossicking for gold at Charters Towers in the south to the inland Gulf Savannah's outback gorges and series of remarkable tunnels that were formed over 190,000 years ago by flowing lava from a volcanic eruption. Guided tours of the Undara Lava Tubes unearth the secrets of their formation and the thousands of resident microbats. Stay nearby in a restored railway carriage, at the lodge or camp out.

food trails

Taste paradise in the Tropics... an abundant food destination awaits. Exotic tropical fruits, locally made cheeses, tea and coffee plantations, organic produce, farmers markets and the freshest of seafood are highlights that can be experienced on a self-drive or guided food trail of the Tablelands and coastal villages of Palm Cove and Port Douglas.



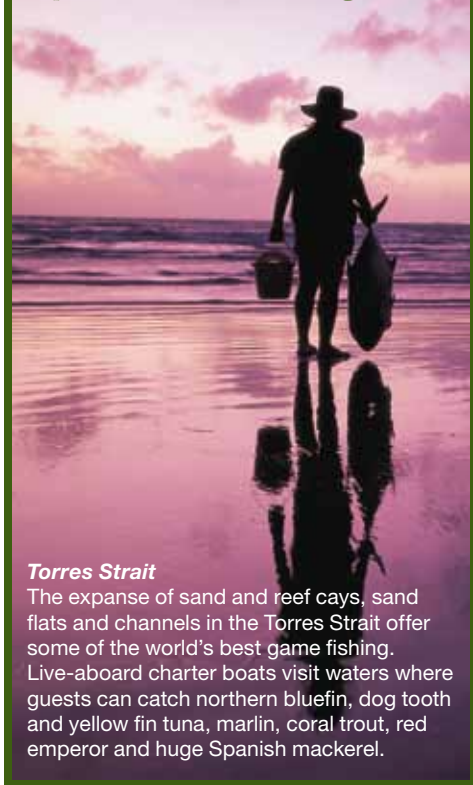
nature trails



Wallaman Falls / Millaa Millaa Waterfall

These two falls can claim to be the largest single drop waterfall and most photographed in Australia respectively. Wallaman Falls, near Ingham, cascades 305 metres into a large pool. Millaa Millaa Falls are surrounded by lush rainforest and are part of the famous Atherton Tablelands Waterfall Circuit.

sports fishing



Torres Strait

The expanse of sand and reef cays, sand flats and channels in the Torres Strait offer some of the world's best game fishing. Live-aboard charter boats visit waters where guests can catch northern bluefin, dog tooth and yellow fin tuna, marlin, coral trout, red emperor and huge Spanish mackerel.

four wheel driving



Cooktown – Test your 4WD skills on the Cape Tribulation to Cooktown Bloomfield Track – a drive that takes you deep into the rainforest; crosses several creeks and rivers, and includes steep climbs and descents. Marvel at Black Mountain, an enormous heap of volcanic boulders, prior to entering the quaint and historic township of Cooktown. Here you can explore the site of Captain Cook's discovery in 1770 of a safe harbour for his crippled ship, the "Endeavour", during his first journey up the north eastern coast of Australia.

an eventful journey

march

FEAST OF THE SENSES – Innisfail

An annual celebration of the region's produce. www.feastofthesenses.com.au

april



TEN DAYS IN THE TOWERS – Charters Towers

Incorporating the All Australian Jamboree and Charters Towers Country Music Festival. www.charterstowerscountrymusic.com

may

AUSTRALIAN ITALIAN FESTIVAL – Ingham

This popular festival showcases the region's rich Italian heritage, culture and cuisine. www.australianitalianfestival.com.au

august

FESTIVAL OF CAIRNS – Cairns

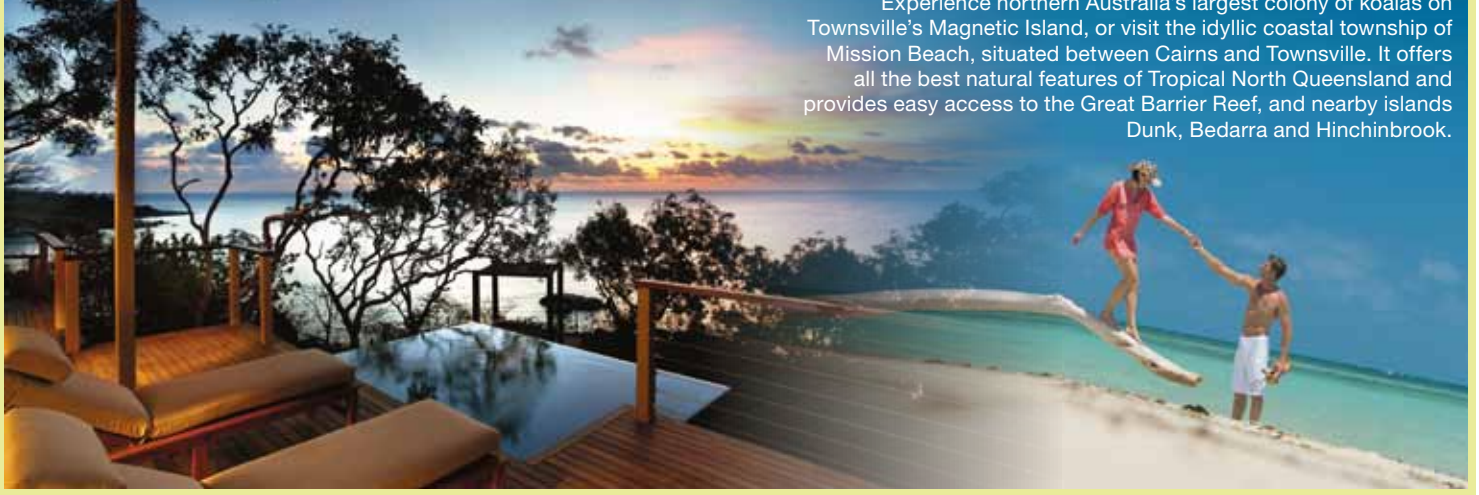
The city's annual celebration in August / September showcases all Cairns has to offer through art, entertainment, food, sport and more. www.festivalcairns.com.au

september

MISSION BEACH FILM FESTIVAL – Mission Beach

This charming coastal village presents a diverse program of film and entertainment. www.missionbeachfilmfestival.com.au

islands and beaches



There is a variety of island adventures to be had in the region. Experience northern Australia's largest colony of koalas on Townsville's Magnetic Island, or visit the idyllic coastal township of Mission Beach, situated between Cairns and Townsville. It offers all the best natural features of Tropical North Queensland and provides easy access to the Great Barrier Reef, and nearby islands Dunk, Bedarra and Hinchinbrook.

Experience the region's rich Indigenous history and culture along the drive, ranging from Tully-based Echo Creek Spirit of Rainforest, Mungalla Station at Ingham to the award-winning Tjapukai Aboriginal cultural experience near Cairns. Join a guided rainforest tour, indulge in an Indigenous-inspired spa treatment at Daintree Eco Lodge or take a rock art tour with Willie Gordon of Guurbi Tours near Cooktown.



culture

rainforest



Daintree / Mossman

The tiny North Queensland village of Mossman is located on the edge of the wilderness. To the west is Mossman Gorge, entrance to the ancient World Heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest. Australia's largest rainforest area is home to the highest number of rare and threatened plants and animals in the world.



For the ultimate 4WD explorer's paradise test your driving skills as you move further north into Cape York, one of Australia's few remaining wilderness areas. Cape York can only be accessed during the dry season (May-November) and is full of bulldust, corrugations, deep river crossings and saltwater crocodiles. Some must-do's include Lakefield and Iron Range National Parks for nature and birdwatching, visit turtles at Mapoon and fish the magical coastal waters of Weipa.



Paronella Park / Herberton

A lovingly-restored castle and a collection of historic Australian buildings are musts for heritage lovers visiting the Atherton Tablelands. Built in 1913, Paronella Park is framed by magnificent gardens, lakeside tunnels and bridges. Herberton Historic Village includes a century-old farmhouse, classroom and classic pub bar.

may



PORT DOUGLAS CARNIVALE – Port Douglas

An annual 10 day celebration of food, wine and fun hosted by the seaside village of Port Douglas. www.carnivale.com.au

june

COOKTOWN DISCOVERY FESTIVAL – Cooktown

Annual celebration of the European discovery of Australia and reenactment of the landing of Lieutenant James Cook in 1770. www.cooktowndiscovery.com.au

october

OPERA IN THE OUTBACK – Undara

Some of Australia's most accomplished operatic performers take the stage in the tropical savannah bushland. www.undara.com.au

august



AUSTRALIAN FESTIVAL OF CHAMBER MUSIC – Townsville

An international chamber music festival held over nine days. www.afcm.com.au

roads less travelled

the savannah way

The ultimate adventure across the top of Australia. From Queensland head out of Cairns to the lush landscapes of the Atherton Tablelands and on to the wide expanses of the Gulf Savannah. Some of the route is 4WD only, but large sections are suitable for conventional cars. Pick your favourite section, grab the maps and head off into the wilderness!

For more information visit www.savannahway.com.au



driving cape york

This traditional adventure driving destination is best visited by 4WD but during August and September conventional vehicles can make the 700km drive from Lakeland near Cooktown. During the drive to the "tip", check out the Aboriginal rock art at Laura, on odd numbered years the Aboriginal Dance and Cultural Festival, as well as Lakefield National Park, the mining town of Weipa, and Bamaga township.

For more information visit www.cooktownandcapeyork.com



getting around

Find out more about Australian road rules and driving safety tips before you go. Visit:

www.driveqld.com.au
www.mainroads.qld.gov.au

Various types of transport are available on the Great Tropical Drive so its easy to combine different modes of transport during your Great Tropical Drive experience. Some tips to make your journey more than a drive:

- Join a local day tour to one of many tourist attractions, national parks, beaches, islands or local food and wine areas
- Experience the region and Great Barrier Reef from above; take a helicopter tour or go hot air ballooning

Once you arrive, there are plenty of regional visitor centres to provide you with all the information you'll need to help plan your itinerary and make bookings. Look for accredited visitor information centres displaying the official symbol (i) which will assure you a high standard of service and professionalism. These centres are staffed mostly by local volunteers who are knowledgeable and passionate about their local areas.

getting there

Qantas, Virgin Blue and Jetstar all fly direct to Cairns and Townsville from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. For more information or to book your flights visit:

www.qantas.com.au
www.virginblue.com.au
www.jetstar.com.au

important things to remember when self-driving

- Make sure your vehicle is suitable for the roads you intend to travel on
- Swimming in coastal waters can be dangerous during summer months due to marine stingers
- Alcohol restrictions have been introduced for many Aboriginal and/or islander community areas For more information visit www.mcmc.qld.gov.au
- During wet periods numerous road closures will occur at river and creek crossings. Prior to heading north, information on road conditions should be sought from RACQ at www.racq.com.au or **1300 130 595**

more information

For more ideas and assistance when planning your Great Tropical Drive trip visit:

TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND
www.cairnsgreatbarrierreef.org.au

CHARTERS TOWERS
www.charterstowers.qld.gov.au

MISSION BEACH
www.missionbeachtourism.com

TOWNSVILLE
www.townsvilleholidays.info

PORT DOUGLAS AND DAINTREE
www.tpdd.com.au

PALM COVE
www.tourismpalmcove.com

ATHERTON TABLELANDS
www.athertontablelands.com.au

COOKTOWN AND CAPE YORK
www.cooktownandcapeyork.com

HINCHINBROOK
www.hinchinbrooknq.com.au