



Something old,

something new >>

DISCOVER THE PLACE WHERE THE WORLD'S LARGEST REEF MEETS THE PLANET'S OLDEST RAINFOREST

WORDS CHRISTINE RETSCHLAG

QUEENSLAND | DAINTREE



Getting there
Jetstar flies to Cairns, under two and a half hours by car from the Daintree. Allow time for Daintree River ferry crossings, particularly in peak season.

PHOTOGRAPHY TOURISM PORT DOUGLAS AND DAINTREE, TOURISM AND EVENTS QUEENSLAND

70

71



TOP TO BOTTOM: A basking croc, the Daintree River, a tree frog.



You'll learn there are 21 frog species and 700 plant species that can't be found anywhere else on the planet



found anywhere else on the planet.

"There are so many wow factors in this landscape. It's full of hidden secrets," Paul says.

"They say in the Northern Territory 'you'll never never know if you never never go'. In the Wet Tropics you'll never never know unless you've got a bloody good guide."

A close encounter

For those looking for a more personalised experience, join Mason's Tours' private tour operator Lawrence Mason, who is as colourful as his Crocs.

On this journey, you'll wrap your tongue around place names such as Tachalbadga Creek and Wujal Wujal country, and wrap your soul around the stillness. It's where fringing reef meets the rainforest and the rust-coloured earth contrasts with emerald-green trees. >>

PHOTOGRAPHY TOURISM PORT DOUGLAS AND DAINTREE, TOURISM AND EVENTS QUEENSLAND

Skyrail®

Rainforest Cableway



THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL RAINFOREST EXPERIENCE

skyrail.com.au



Port Douglas & Daintree

Tropical North Queensland

Where rainforest meets the reef

Lawrence, whose family arrived in Cow Bay in 1927, has driven the Bloomfield Track more than 2200 times.

He says there has been a shift in public opinion from the north being a 'red neck area' to a 'conservation area'.

"When the Bloomfield Track was built in 1968 it really put the Daintree on the map. That really was the awakening that here we have this amazing, ancient rainforest. There are plants here that are extraordinarily rare. There is nowhere else like it in Australia," he says.

"As we drive north, the forests start to change. On this side of the hill you'll get thick lush rainforest and on the other side of the hill you'll get gum trees and Moreton Bay Ash.

"It is a great day for croc spotting because it's overcast and cool.

They don't move around that often but when it's wet they hunt for food. We've seen more and more cassowaries here but they are just like everyone else. They are generally not grumpy but they are wild animals who can turn as soon as they feel threatened."



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Under the rainforest canopy, driving the Bloomfield Track, Daintree gelato.

“

That really was the awakening that here we have this amazing, ancient rainforest

Going wild

Back at Mason's Cafe, also run by Lawrence, there's a croc-free creek in which visitors can pay \$1 to swim after dining on one of his crocodile, buffalo, kangaroo, emu, boar or camel burgers.

He says crocs are habitat-based so that's why they are found in some watering holes and not others.

"They don't like the cold or being exposed in clear water," he says.

"You just need to know where to go." >>

PHOTOGRAPHY TOURISM AND EVENTS QUEENSLAND, DAINTREE ICE CREAM CO

Executive Retreats



Executive Retreats are the specialists in Tropical North Queensland holiday accommodation and wedding venues. Choose between unique and luxurious destinations dotted along the northern beaches, in the heart of Port Douglas or on private hinterland acreages. Stay in Luxury, Play in Paradise. Indulge in 'The Art of Tropical Living'.



+61 7 4098 1418
www.executiveretreats.com.au

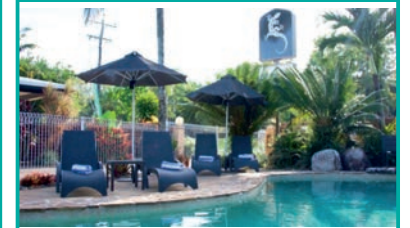
Indigo Sailing Charters



- 44' Fountaine Pajot Cruising Catamaran
- Max only 12 guests
- Family owned and run
- Sunset Sailing
- Low Isles Snorkel Trips
- Private Charters
- Overnight and extended charters

INDIGO +61 429 901 250 (Colin)
www.indigoportdouglas.com.au

Lazy Lizard Motor Inn



Rest and Relax at the friendliest Port Douglas Hotel • Set in Lush tropical gardens & an easy walk to the main street and 4 mile Beach • Clean and comfortable Queen, King and family Studios • Undercover parking at your door • Rooms serviced daily • FREE: WiFi • Bicycles and beach towel hire • Outdoor Saltwater pool • BBQ area



+61 7 4099 5900
www.lazylizardinn.com.au

Salsa Bar & Grill



Salsa Bar & Grill is the epitome of dining in the tropics; fresh local produce, amazing views across the Coral Sea and a fun, vibrant atmosphere complimented by spectacular cocktails. A local's favourite and a 'must do' when in Port Douglas.



Bookings Essential
+61 7 4099 4922
www.salsaportdouglas.com.au

Sweet Farm Tours



Our unique Australian farm gate experience offers an educational journey covering everything you ever wanted to know about Australian origin cocoa and a working sugarcane farm, Australian grown vanilla and a Koala Food plantation. Australian Origin chocolate tasting and fresh sugarcane juice on all tours.



Bookings Essential
+61 7 4098 8134
www.sweetfarmtours.com

Tropical Journeys



Family owned Tropical Journeys offers first class experiences to the Great Barrier Reef & Daintree Rainforest. Calypso offers snorkelling & diving to Agincourt & Opal Reefs & half day snorkelling options to Low Isles, Aquarius's exclusive outer reef luxury sailing, Twilight Sailing & Daintree Tours into the Daintree Rainforest.



+61 7 4099 6999
www.tropicaljourneys.com



Fast facts

STAY:
Sleep among the rainforest at Cape Trib Beach House capetribbeach.com.au
Or break up your journey in Port Douglas at QT Port Douglas qthotelsandresorts.com/port-douglas

PLAY:
For a private tour of the region join Lawrence Mason at masonstours.com.au

Soar above the rainforest canopy with Jungle Surfing junglesurfing.com.au

View the rainforest from every angle at the Daintree Discovery Centre discoverthedaintree.com

See where the rainforest meets the reef with a half-day eco tour and snorkelling adventure with Ocean Safari oceansafari.com.au

EAT:
Taste the tropics at the Daintree Ice Cream Company daintreeicecream.com.au

Eat a croc burger at Mason's Cafe and have a swim in a croc-free creek masonstours.com.au

For a different croc and wildlife experience, head to Hartley's Crocodile Adventures crocodileadventures.com

DISCOVER:
To download a copy of the Bloomfield Track eBook go to douglas.qld.gov.au

Further south in the Daintree, long-established business the Daintree Ice Cream Company, run by Jenna Rumney and her partner Dave Mainwaring, also operates day tours.

Visitors can take a self-guided walk through the 8.9ha orchard, the fruits of which are transformed into world-renowned flavours such as wattlesseed, jaboticaba and jackfruit.

"We've tried to make the business as environmentally sustainable as we can. Our ice cream cups are mulched and go on the garden," Jenna says.

Visitors are more than likely to have a wildlife encounter during their tour, as Jenna is part of a wildlife volunteer network and specialises in caring for orphaned animals, particularly wallabies, kangaroos and pademelons.

Open-air education

Just down the road the Daintree Discovery Centre offers a multi-dimensional experience from the floor of the rainforest to its canopy, via an innovative series of platform walks.

Operations co-ordinator Abi Ralph says she has lived in the Daintree for 20 years but is still learning about the wet tropics.

"There are a lot of people who come because they've heard about the Daintree and want to come for a pretty drive but there are also people who want to learn about the rainforest and why it's so special. Our centre gives people the chance to do this," Abi says.

"I feel very privileged to live here. There are not many places in the world where you can live and be surrounded by tropical rainforest."

And crocodiles. Don't forget the crocs, reptiles or otherwise. 🐊

Christine Retschlag travelled to Port Douglas as a guest of Tourism Port Douglas and Daintree, visitportdouglasdaintree.com

Travel info

Jetstar has great low fares to Cairns from across the network.

To book, visit JETSTAR.COM

PHOTOGRAPHY: JUNGLE SURFING, OCEAN SAFARI

PARONELLA PARK
VOTED #1
MUST DO IN QUEENSLAND



Discover True Treasures of Tropical North Queensland

SPEND THE DAY JUST OVER AN HOUR SOUTH OF CAIRNS AND SEE ALL THE REGION HAS TO OFFER



Spend the **morning** exploring the stunning Mamu Tropical Skywalk where you can climb the tallest public rainforest observation tower in North Queensland



www.mamutropicalskywalk.com.au
Phone: 4064 5294



Visit the historic Mena Creek Hotel for a delicious country pub style **lunch** just 200m from your afternoon destination of Paronella Park



www.menacreekhotel.com.au
Phone: 4065 3201



Take the **afternoon** and evening to discover the award winning Paronella Park, with guided day and evening tours included in admission. This is one not to be missed!



www.paronellapark.com.au
Phone: 4065 0000