the great tropical drive
DISCOVER NATURE’S PLAYGROUND
Great Tropical Drive Experience Trails

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.

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

- **Adventure Trail**: Explore the hidden walking & 4WD tracks of this challenging landscape.
- **Nature Trail**: Uncover the hidden secrets of an area of unvisited 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, specialty teas and coffee.
- **Heritage Trail**: Follow in the footsteps of great explorers – including Captain Cook.
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.

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

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

**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.**

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

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

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

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.

Outback
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.

Food trails
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.

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

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

www.greattropicaldrive.com.au

Sports fishing
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.

Torres Strait

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.

Cooktown

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.

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.

An eventful journey

An eventful journey

Feast of the Senses – Innisfail
An annual celebration of the region’s produce. www.feastofthesenses.com.au

TEN DAYS IN THE TOWERS – Charters Towers
Incorporating the All Australian Jamboree and Charters Towers Country Music Festival. www.charterstowerscountrymusic.com

Australian Italian Festival – Ingham
This popular festival showcases the region’s rich Italian heritage, culture and cuisine. www.australianitalianfestival.com.au

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

Mission Beach Film Festival – Mission Beach
This charming coastal village presents a diverse program of film and entertainment. www.missionbeachfilmfestival.com.au

www.greattropicaldrive.com.au
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, 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.

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.

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.

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

COOKTOWN DISCOVERY FESTIVAL – Cooktown

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

AUSTRALIAN FESTIVAL OF CHAMBER MUSIC – Townsville
An international chamber music festival held over nine days. www.afcm.com.au

For more information on events in the region, visit: www.qdevents.com.au
roads less travelled

the savannah way

The ultimate adventure across the top of Australia. From 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

going 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 it’s 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 (7) 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.rac.com.au or 1300 130 595

more information

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND</th>
<th>TOWNSVILLE</th>
<th>ATHERTON TABLELANDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHARTERS TOWERS</td>
<td>PORT DOUGLAS AND DAINTREE</td>
<td>COOKTOWN AND CAPE YORK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSION BEACH</td>
<td>PALM COVE</td>
<td>HINCHINBROOK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planning your Great Tropical Drive

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 challenging landscape.

& 4WD tracks of this

Explore the hidden walking

04 08 03

Reef to Rainforest

07

Chillagoe

01

Great Tropical Drive

10

Liquid Gold

14

Adventure Trail

03

Savannah reveal the remains of 160 extinct
crumbing ruins of a former grandiose Spanish
tropical north
gemfields and hot springs.
deep lava tubes, craters,
varied landscape of Cape York Peninsula, ancient Aboriginal culture, early colonial history and
rainforest lie side by side, as you cruise the highway to Port Douglas. Then drive up
cruise through fi elds of sugar cane before climbing the coastal range
Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef, where
World Heritage-listed Wet Tropics Rainforest and Great Barrier Reef, islands,
starting from Townsville or Cairns, the Great Green Way encompasses the
This trail takes you through some of truly scenic wonders of the tropical north
cruise through fields of sugar cane before climbing the coastal range
to the highlands that overlook Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef, where
This region’s unique
flora and fauna. The small rural communities offer the visitor agricultural history, culture and
This tour includes the heritage gold mining town of Charters Towers, the outback and wetlands.
You will gain a good insight into the traditions and culture of the local Indigenous people, and enjoy
of years.
forests over many thousands
cratered ranges and mountain ranges as you cruise the highway to Port Douglas. Then drive up
cruise through fields of sugar cane before climbing the coastal range
to the highlands that overlook Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef, where
This region’s unique
flora and fauna. The small rural communities offer the visitor agricultural history, culture and
This tour includes the heritage gold mining town of Charters Towers, the outback and wetlands.
You will gain a good insight into the traditions and culture of the local Indigenous people, and enjoy
of years.
forests over many thousands

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TROPICAL NORTH QUEENSLAND</th>
<th>TOWNSVILLE</th>
<th>ATHERTON TABLELANDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHARTERS TOWERS</td>
<td>PORT DOUGLAS AND DAINTREE</td>
<td>COOKTOWN AND CAPE YORK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSION BEACH</td>
<td>PALM COVE</td>
<td>HINCHINBROOK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>