



EMU 21 Day Sydney to Cairns Tour

Stray Journeys - Australia East Coast

RETAIL: AUD\$5,395

STARTS: Sydney; **FINISHES:** Cairns

DURATION: 21 days

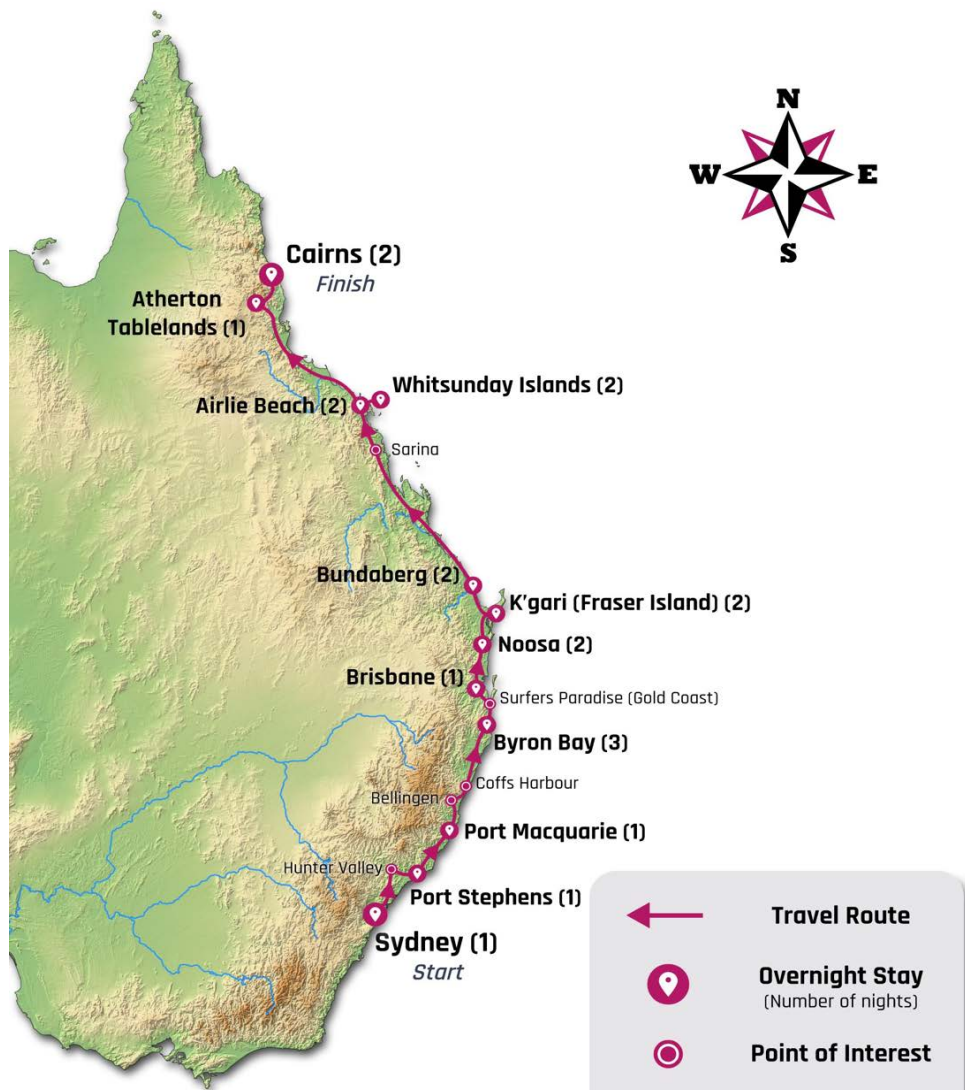
START DAY: Monday

2022 DEPARTURES: 3 Oct, 31 Oct, 28 Nov

2023 DEPARTURES: 2 Jan, 30 Jan, 27 Feb, 10 Apr, 8 May, 5 Jun, 10 Jul, 7 Aug, 4 Sep, 9 Oct, 23 Oct

MINIMUM NUMBERS: 8 passengers

MAXIMUM NUMBERS: 24 passengers



Overview

If you're looking for our biggest and 'bestest' tour, then our 21-Day Emu Tour is for you. As Australia's largest native bird, the Emu is the perfect companion to guide you from Sydney all the way up the east coast to tropical Cairns. You'll explore golden beaches and rainforests, meet the cheeky wildlife and friendly locals and discover some off the beaten track locations that aren't on the usual tourist trail. You'll travel with a local guide (who will share their insider knowledge) and a bunch of like-minded travellers (who will become lifelong friends) and explore everything that Aussie has to offer in style!

Day 1 - Monday: Arrive Sydney

G'day and welcome to your epic East Coast adventure. Your tour begins in Sydney with a day to yourself to explore the city sights and world-famous landmarks. If you've just flown in, we recommend taking the train from the airport to Central Station, your accommodation is conveniently located straight across the road. Check into the hostel anytime after 2pm and if you'd like to begin your trip with a delicious cocktail (because wine-not?), head down to Circular Quay and the Opera Bar. Located at the base of the Opera House, with views of the Harbour Bridge, you'll get all the iconic Sydney pics you can dream of. At 7pm head down to the hostel bar for pizza night and to meet your Stray guide and travel mates for the next few weeks.

Accommodation included: Wake Up Sydney or similar

Optional activities: Bondi to Coogee beach walk, visit Darling Harbour, explore King Street Wharf, Royal Botanic Gardens, Taronga Zoo, walk around the Opera House and the Rocks, the oldest area of Sydney. You can also take the ferry from Circular Quay to Manly.

Meal options: Head down to the hostel bar for Pizza Night

Day 2 - Tuesday: Sydney to Port Stephens

We depart the harbour city this morning and make our way north to the Hunter Valley wine region where we'll taste some of the local wine and cheese before continuing through to Port Stephens, our destination for the night.

We'll be staying at the Surfside hostel, set on 6 acres of natural bushland, with kangaroos and wallabies on site. This boutique accommodation is about creating a relaxing experience in an environmentally conscious way. They've used wood and glass to maximise light and ensured all development encompasses the natural flora and fauna.

Once we've checked in, you can explore the area, relax, or head to the beach for a swim.

Tonight, we'll enjoy a classic Aussie BBQ dinner and get to know each other - anyone have a good icebreaker?

Accommodation: Surfside Hostel

Meals included: BBQ Dinner

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Included activity: Wine and Cheese Tasting

Free activities: Wildlife spotting at our accommodation, beach swim

Day 3 - Wednesday: Port Stephens to Port Macquarie

This morning either enjoy a relaxing sleep in or get up bright and early and jump in a 4WD bus to partake in some first-class sandboarding down the Stockton Sand Dunes (optional expense). The local guide will teach you how to safely sandboard as well as inform you all about the amazing area and the rich aboriginal history of the region.

Depending on the conditions, we will go for a walk to the summit of Tomaree Head, which stands at 161 metres above the Port Stephens entrance. This short 2.2km return track offers breath-taking views of the coastline and panoramic views of Yacaaba Head, Cabbage Tree and Boondelbah islands, as well as Zenith, Wreck and Box Beaches, Fingal Island and Point Stephens Lighthouse - you might even be lucky enough to see some dolphins (and if it's May - September, you could see Whales!).

Late morning, we'll pack up and move on to our next overnight stop, Port Macquarie. We'll have lunch on the way before visiting the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital, where we'll get a closer look at Australia's laziest (and arguably cutest) marsupials. Check out the information centre to learn all about the hospital's efforts to rehabilitate, protect and preserve the koalas.

Accommodation: Port Macquarie YHA or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Included activity: Koala Hospital visit

Free activities: Sleep in, swim, relax on the beach, Headland Walk

Optional paid activities: Sandboarding

Day 4 - Thursday: Port Macquarie to Byron Bay

Today we're heading to the iconic surfing town of Byron Bay, known for its relaxed vibes and no worries attitude. On the way to Byron, we'll stop at the historic and hipster town of Bellingen to get some lunch, followed by a special Aboriginal experience learning about the First Nations people of Australia.

Your Cultural Experience takes place at an important cultural site of the Gumbaynggirr people, the stunning location of "Niigi Niigi" (Sealy Lookout) within the Orara East State Forest. You'll go for a 2-hour tour and see 360-degree views, as well as getting the opportunity to immerse yourself in culture through stories, songs, language and the uses of native plants. By taking part in the experience, you're making a direct contribution to the revitalisation of Gumbaynggirr language and culture. This will be an unforgettable cultural experience with an emphasis on authentic connection and contributing to helping a community regain their culture and identity.

When we arrive in Byron Bay, we'll take you on an orientation drive around town to help you get your bearings, showing you points of interest and the top spots for food, shopping and nightlife. For the next few nights, we're staying at boutique hostel The Surf House, located right in the heart of Byron and just a couple of hundred metres from the main beach - heaven!

Accommodation: The Surf House or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants, BBQ at the rooftop of the hostel

Included activities: Historic town and Aboriginal Cultural Experience

Day 5 - Friday: Byron Bay Free Day

Today you have a full day in Byron Bay to "cheer up, slow down, and chill out" as the town's famous welcome sign instructs. Start your day off with a morning yoga class on the rooftop of your hostel and then spend your day exploring the laidback hippy town.

You can walk to Cape Byron Lighthouse, mainland Australia's most easterly point, or check out the many eclectic boutiques and cafes around town. You could join a sea kayaking or snorkel trip and search for dolphins and other marine life, or even go for an iconic Australian activity - learning to surf.

Accommodation: The Surf House or similar

Included activity: Morning yoga class

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Optional paid activities: Surf lesson, dolphin kayak, snorkel or dive at Julian Rocks, skydive

Free activities: Walk to the lighthouse, swim, relax on the beach, check out the shops and cafes, free surfboard hire

Day 6: Saturday: Byron Bay Free Day

You lucky thing - you have ANOTHER free day to explore Byron Bay today. Tick off any activities you didn't get the chance to do yesterday or pass the day wandering the township or relaxing on the beach. Hone your surf skills with more lessons or borrow one of the free surfboards at your hostel to try it out by yourself.

If you're a foodie, we assure you that eating your way around Byron is an experience in itself. There are heaps of vegetarian and vegan options available, a couple of our favourites are the Cardamom Pod for lunch and No Bones for dinner, both of which are super close to your hostel. This evening, head to the Saturday twilight markets for some live music and lots of boutique stalls showcasing local arts, crafts and some incredible food.

Accommodation: Surfhouse or similar

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants. We recommend trying one of the many great vegan options!

Optional paid activities: Surf lesson, dolphin kayak, snorkel or dive, skydive

Free activities: Walk to the lighthouse, swim, relax on the beach, check out the shops and cafes

Day 7 - Sunday: Byron Bay to Brisbane via Surfers Paradise

This morning, meet your guide and group outside the Surf House hostel at 8:50am. Then we'll jump on the Stray bus and depart north across the NSW border to Queensland, and head to the famous Surfers Paradise where we'll stretch our legs and grab some lunch. We'll then head to a nearby nature reserve to spot some wild kangaroos, before continuing to Brisbane, the capital city of Queensland for the night. We'll head down to Southbank for a walk along the Brisbane River and then check out some of the many bars and restaurants. We'll then head to a nearby nature reserve to spot some wild kangaroos, before continuing to Brisbane, the capital city of Queensland for the night. We'll head down to Southbank for a walk along the Brisbane River and then check out some of the many bars and restaurants.

Accommodation: Brisbane YHA or similar

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Free activities: Visit Mullumbimby, Surfers Paradise, kangaroo spotting, catch the Brisbane city ferry

Day 8 - Monday: Brisbane to Noosa

It's a relaxed departure today as we leave Brisbane mid-morning and make our way north to Noosa. We'll stop along the way for lunch and a walk to see incredible views of Noosa and Noosa headlands before arriving at our accommodation in the afternoon.

Our Noosa accommodation is less of a hostel and more of a resort, with a pool and a licensed cafe (did someone say poolside margaritas?) as well as designer dorms with privacy screens and USB charging points. This evening, we'll grab a drink at the bar and make plans to head and explore Noosa.

Accommodation: Bounce

Meals included: Breakfast, drink on arrival

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, dinner at hostel

Free activities: Swim, walks, lookouts

Day 9 - Tuesday: Noosa Free Day

Today you have a completely free day to spend doing whatever you like. Explore the Everglades by kayak or book a skydive and see Noosa and surroundings from above. Grab a sun lounger and get some much-needed R&R, go for a walk around the incredible headland, visit the beach or have a long, lazy lunch in the sun. The Noosa Surf Club is one of our faves so if you'd like to go out for dinner, you can't go wrong with a local hotspot!

Accommodation: Bounce

Optional paid activities: Everglades Kayak, Skydive, Surf Lesson

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Free activities: Chilling by the resort pool, going for a walk in the National Park, visiting the famous beach or checking out the local boutiques and cafes

Day 10 - Wednesday: Noosa to K'gari (Fraser Island)

It's an early start this morning as you head out for your 3-day, 2-night K'gari (Fraser Island) adventure. During this amazing experience you'll explore the largest sand island in the world on a 4WD expedition, see the magical Lake Boorangoora (McKenzie), discover towering rainforests, spot a wild dingo, cruise along endless sandy beaches and lose yourself in the magic of stargazing. If you fancy learning how to drive a 4WD, you can do that! This is going to be one of the best experiences of your whole trip and is definitely the best way to explore this world-heritage listed National Park.

After a bus, ferry and 4WD transfer, you'll arrive at Beach Camp on K'gari (your accommodation for the next 2 nights). You'll have some tasty lunch and then you can check out the camp which has a kitchen and a deck with ocean views. We'll then head out for your first adventure to see some of the Island highlights. This evening, you'll arrive back at camp to enjoy dinner, share stories, play the didgeridoo around the campfire and engage in some mind-blowing stargazing. Tonight, you'll be lulled to sleep by the sound of the waves as you settle into your safari tent (which includes a comfy mattress and hotel quality linens).

Accommodation: Beach Camp K'gari (Fraser Island) Safari Tents*

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner & Snacks

Included activities: K'gari adventure tour

**Between Oct-Nov 22, the groups will be staying in cabins rather than safari tents*

Day 11 - Thursday: K'gari

This morning, wake up to the gorgeous golden sunrise over the ocean, enjoy breakfast and get ready for a fun-filled morning exploring K'gari and her hidden treasures. Enjoy lunch on the beach and then spend the afternoon discovering more lakes (there are over 100!) and epic views before arriving back to camp in time for another dinner under the stars and some fun evening activities.

Accommodation: Beach Camp K'gari (Fraser Island) in 2-3 share Safari Tents*

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner & Snacks

Included activities: K'gari adventure tour

**Between Oct-Nov 22, the groups will be staying in cabins rather than safari tents.*

Day 12 - Friday: K'gari to Bundaberg

After breakfast today you'll hit the inland tracks to discover towering trees and take one last refreshing dip, enjoy lunch in the forest and then begin your journey back to the mainland, arriving into Rainbow Beach around mid-afternoon ready for your next journey north up to Bundaberg.

Bundaberg is well-known for sugarcane, rum, ginger beer and more recently has been called the 'Bundaberg Bowl' for its reputation of growing and producing fresh food that's served across the country. Your accommodation in Bundaberg is a relaxed eco-resort, this time you'll be located by a nature reserve and have access to a spa, sauna, tennis courts and more! Tonight, we'll have a group BBQ dinner and a chilled evening.

Accommodation: Kelly's Eco Resort in villas or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Snacks, BBQ Dinner

Included activities: K'gari adventure tour

Day 13 - Saturday: Bundaberg Free Day

It's a day of exploring Bundaberg today! After breakfast we'll head to the Mon Repos turtle centre for a wholesome morning learning all about these amazing animals. The centre supports the largest concentration of nesting mating turtles on the eastern Australian mainland. You can grab a snack or lunch at the onsite indigenous inspired Gidji cafe.

In the afternoon we'll head to the Bundaberg Rum Centre for a tour of their distillery and a tasting of their iconic rum. Or, if you'd prefer a full day out on the water and the chance to visit the Southern part of the Great Barrier Reef, your guide can book you onto the incredible Lady Musgrave Full Day Snorkel Tour for a day of snorkelling, a boat cruise, island walk and delicious food.

Accommodation: Kelly's Eco Resort or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Included Activities: Mon Repos Turtle Centre, Rum Tasting

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Optional paid activities: Lady Musgrave Full Day Snorkel Tour

Free activities: Checking out Bargara Beach

Day 14 - Sunday: Bundaberg to Airlie Beach

Today is a big drive day to Airlie Beach, the gateway to the amazing Whitsunday Islands, so load up on the snacks, make sure your phone is charged and you've got some good tunes loaded up. We'll make some stops to stretch our legs and see some sweet views along the way, arriving in Airlie in the evening.

Accommodation: Base Airlie Beach or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, bakery, restaurants

Day 15 - Monday: Airlie Beach to Whitsunday Islands

This morning, enjoy a sleep in, take a stroll down to the Airlie lagoon for a dip and then check in and receive your briefing for your sailing trip. After lunch, head down to the marina to meet your crew and jump onboard a 76-foot, maxi sailing yacht which will be your home for the next two days. As you leave the marina and Airlie Beach behind you, watch your crew hoist the sails for an exhilarating cruise out to the Whitsunday Islands - part of the World Heritage Listed Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Once you arrive out around the Islands, jump in for a swim or snorkel amongst the fringing reef and then enjoy the sunset with a drink in hand on one of the crew's favourite little beaches. In the evening relax on deck, have a few drinks, get to know the crew, stargaze and let the calm waters gently rock you to sleep - for the adventurous, mats are provided to sleep on deck under the stars or if you prefer a bit more comfort, a bed awaits you below deck.

Accommodation: Shared dorm cabins/sections on a maxi sailing yacht

Meals included: Afternoon Snacks, Dinner & Dessert (BYO drinks)

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes

Included activities: Sailing, snorkelling and exploring the Whitsunday Islands

Day 16 - Tuesday: Whitsunday Islands

This morning you'll be forgiven for thinking you're in paradise, as you wake up on a yacht surrounded by beautiful islands and enjoy a delicious breakfast on deck as you sail towards Whitsunday Island, home to the best beach in the world - Whitehaven Beach. You'll disembark and enjoy a bush-walk to Hill Inlet Lookout and then spend the rest of the day exploring and relaxing on Whitehaven Beach. You can also go snorkelling today, enjoy a sunset beach session and another fun evening onboard with your group and the crew.

Accommodation: Shared dorm cabins/sections on a maxi sailing yacht

Meals included: Breakfast, Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon Snacks, Dinner & Dessert

Included activities: Whitehaven Beach, Hill Inlet Lookout, bush-walk, sailing, snorkelling

Day 17 - Wednesday: Whitsunday Islands to Airlie Beach

Enjoy your final morning on-board the yacht, jump in for another magical swim or snorkel and then sail on back to Airlie Beach. This afternoon once you've checked back into your hostel, go and laze in the sun by the lagoon or explore the town before freshening up and meeting your group and boat crew for the after party! There will be a reserved table, drink discounts and meal deals - so get ready for a big night.

Accommodation: Base Airlie or similar

Meals included: Breakfast, Morning Tea

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Included Activities: Sailing, snorkelling

Day 18 - Thursday: Airlie Beach to Yungaburra

Today we'll get on the road again and head up to the stunning Atherton Tablelands. We'll stop at the famous Millaa Millaa Falls along the way for a swim and some amazing photo ops.

Tonight, we're staying at a cosy eco-lodge in the historic village of Yungaburra. We'll check in and have a BBQ dinner before heading out for a moonlit paddle for some amazing stargazing through the rainforest at Lake Tinaroo. This night canoeing tour is the best way to spot unique nocturnal rainforest animals in their natural habitat.

Accommodation: On the Wallaby Eco Lodge

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Meal options: Self-cater, bakery or cafes

Free activities: Millaa Millaa Falls

Included activities: Night wildlife canoe trip. *Note: depending on conditions, we might do the canoe trip in the morning.*

Day 19 - Friday: Yungaburra to Cairns

Today we have an awesome day planned, visiting lots of cool spots before we reach our final destination of Cairns. In the morning we'll visit the heritage-listed Curtain Fig Tree and Lake Eacham, a beautiful crater lake for a swim and a walk. Then we'll head to the quirky Kuranda markets set in the rainforest, for lunch and a browse before heading to Cairns. Tonight, we're staying at an amazing resort with its own person-made beach! We'll have a group dinner at the resort and then check out the Cairns nightlife.

Accommodation: Gilligans Cairns or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Included activities: Swim, walk, markets

Day 20 - Saturday: Free Day Cairns

Today is a completely free day so if you have a few too many cocktails last night, enjoy a lazy sleep-in and perhaps some hair-of-the-dog by the pool in the afternoon. If you're ready for another day of adventure, why not book into a tour of Cape Tribulation or go to see the iconic Great Barrier Reef?

Accommodation: Gilligans Cairns or similar

Meals included: Breakfast

Meal options: Self-cater, local cafes, restaurants

Free activities: Hang out at the amazing resort pool, walk the Esplanade, visit the Botanical gardens

Optional Activities: Cape Tribulation day trip, bungee jump, Great Barrier Reef trip, skydive, rafting

Day 21 - Sunday: Cairns

Today is the final day of your Stray adventure. Give a wave and a hug to your new mates and head off for the next leg of your adventure, taking with you the most incredible memories, everything you've learned about Australia's special culture and wildlife, and of course some classic Aussie lingo - G'DAY MATES!

This itinerary is a guide. Given the spontaneous nature of our trips and lack of control over Australia's weather(!), what we do each day might occasionally vary.

What's Included:

- Experienced tour guide
- Private coach transport
- 20 nights' accommodation in 4-6 shared dorms in a range of hostels, backpacker resorts, eco-lodges, apart from 2 nights K'Gari/Fraser Island (safari tents), Whitsunday Sailing (shared dorms/sections onboard yacht).
- 24 meals (13 Breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 7 Dinners)
- 3 Day / 2 Night K'Gari 4WD Safari Tour
- 2 Day / 2 Night Whitsunday Sailing Adventure
- Wine and Cheese Tasting, Hunter Valley
- Aboriginal Cultural Bush Walk
- Mon Repos Turtle Centre Entry
- Rum Tasting, Bundaberg
- Night Wildlife Canoeing
- Walks and wildlife
- Waterfalls, lookouts and so much more!

What to Bring:

Camera, Sturdy walking shoes/boots, Warm clothing, Waterproof jacket, Hat & Sunscreen, Swimsuit/towel, Water bottle, Toiletries, Motion sickness tablets, Insect repellent

Please Note:

- Luggage is limited to one piece per person with a maximum weight of 20kg plus a day pack

- A basic level of fitness is required for medium length walks
- Accommodation is in 4-6 shared dorms in a range of hostels, backpacker resorts, eco-lodges, apart from 2 nights K’Gari/Fraser Island (safari tents) and 2 nights Whitsunday Sailing (shared dorms/sections onboard yacht).
- 24 meals are included. We make regular supermarket stops so you can self-cater for other meals, or there are usually quite a few cafe/restaurant options in each location.

Highlights:

Waterfalls, canoeing, sailing, wildlife spotting! There are so many awesome inclusions with the Stray Emu Sydney to Cairns Tour and we can’t wait for you to experience them:

- Discover your inner wine connoisseur at **Hunter Valley** and taste award-winning samples fresh from the vineyard
- Catch a glimpse of local wildlife and snap the amazing views at **Port Stephens**
- Get a closer look at Australia's laziest (and cutest) marsupials at the **Port Macquarie Koala Hospital**
- Visit the quirky towns of **Bellingen** and **Kuranda** for a taste of alternative lifestyles
- Connect and gain an understanding of the incredible Aboriginal Culture through a bush walk and cultural experience
- Centre yourself with a yoga class in laid-back **Byron Bay**
- Drop into the iconic **Surfers Paradise** and enjoy views of kilometres of golden sand beaches
- Spend a night exploring the buzzing riverside city of **Brisbane**
- Embark on a 3-day 4WD Safari to **Fraser Island**. Camp under the stars, visit a shipwreck and swim in crystal clear waters before enjoying sundowners on deck
- Visit the Mon Repos Turtle Centre to discover how incredible turtles really are and taste some of **Bundaberg's** famous rum
- Explore the breath-taking **Whitsunday Islands** during a 2-days/2-night sailing trip. Snorkel over vibrant fringing reefs and visit some of the world's most pristine beaches
- Discover the magic of the **Atherton Tablelands** - from amazing waterfalls and lush rainforest to a pristine crater lake!
- Go for a moonlit paddle through the rainforest to stargaze and spot wildlife
- Enjoy the relaxed **Cairns** lifestyle and the fun nightlife that it’s famous for!