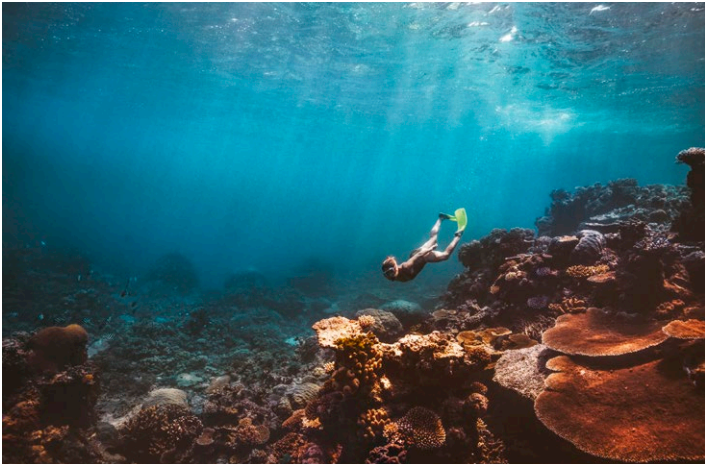


Exploring The Reef



Tourism Tropical North Queensland is encouraging Kiwis to spend their next trip exploring the Great Barrier Reef.

The RTO says there's a variety of reef and island experiences (ranging from sailing, snorkelling, and intro & certified scuba diving tours) available ex Cairns, Port Douglas, Cape Tribulation and Mission Beach—which are all popular due to their close proximity to the Great Barrier Reef.

“Summer in the tropics brings a whole different cast of characters as there is an abundance of food,” says the RTO. “Turtles return from all over the globe to their nesting grounds, so you regularly see much larger turtles on the reef in summer.”

... Operators

Clients can visit the reef with Indigenous Sea Rangers on Dreamtime Dive & Snorkel or explore Reef Restoration Foundation's Hastings Reef Coral Nursery with Seastar Cruises. Those clients with their hearts set on seeing a turtle can go with Ocean Spirit or Frankland Islands Reef Cruises, which visit shallow waters of the islands and sand cays where turtles hang out. Seawalker on Green Island is the best

way for anyone who can't swim to get a taste of snorkelling, says the RTO.

Sailaway offers premium sailing, and has exclusive access to the Mackay and Undine coral cay and specialises in snorkelling with a qualified marine biologist on the outer reef and idyllic coral cay islands.

Another popular option, it says, is the reef platforms on the outer edge of the Great Barrier Reef.

Great Adventures, Reef Magic Cruises and Sunlover Cruises depart to the pontoons from Cairns and Quicksilver departs ex Port Douglas.

Alternatively, clients can fly over the reef, ex Cairns, with GBR Helicopters and stop for a picnic on their own private sandy cay.

... Diving

For certified divers, there's a number of liveboard adventures ex Cairns such as Mike Ball Dive Expeditions which visits the remote reefs on what is said to be Australia's most awarded live-aboard boat.

Uncertified divers can also learn to dive in purpose-built diving pools before joining liveboard trips to the outer Great Barrier Reef with operators including Divers Den and Pro Dive Cairns. See cairnsgreatbarrierreef.com

Mondrian Is GC-bound



Australia's first Mondrian hotel and residences is coming to the Gold Coast in 2022. Located on the Burleigh Heads Beachfront, the dual tower property will have 80m of ocean frontage, apartment and hotel accommodation, a fitness centre, spa, restaurants, and pools overlooking the beach and Burleigh Headland National Park. See mondrianresidencesgc.com

Sundowner Express

Historic steam train Mary Valley Rattler has introduced a new Sunset Express service. Clients can enjoy a sundowner as the heritage locomotive travels through Queensland's countryside. The three-hour Sat service travels through the Mary Valley to Amamoor. See maryvalleyrattler.com.au

Silky Oaks Sneak Peak

While the Silky Oaks Lodge isn't scheduled to reopen to 01 Oct 2021, Kiwi agents can have a sneak peak at the Daintree Rainforest property's proposed upgrade via its Instagram feed. To have a look, click [HERE](#).

Cairns Insider Tip



Ochre Restaurant specialises in sustainable Australian regional produce created with native ingredients, for clients looking for recommendations. Located opposite the marina, Ochre is a great place for a balmy afternoon on the boardwalk with a Cassowary cocktail, featuring local Davidson plum, while the kitchen prepares a platter of fresh sashimi, grilled barramundi or a deconstructed banana banoffee pie. See ochrerestaurant.com.au

Enjoy Laidback Luxury At Lizard Island Resort



Lizard Island Resort has re-opened, offering accommodation on the Great Barrier Reef's northernmost island.

The luxury boutique resort, accessed by private charter from Cairns, has 40 rooms and easy access to the reef and 24 powdery-white beaches. The property was recently named among Condé Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice Awards top 20 Australia Pacific resorts. It was also named Top Australian Resort in the Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards 2020. For more, click [HERE](#)

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