

Tropical Family Escape

A place where active minds explore, and adventure is never far around the corner. Take in the wonders of the rainforest, and the magic of the islands and Great Barrier Reef – this is a place with so much to learn, and more fun to be had!

Townsville North Queensland

Trip Highlights



DURATION

3 – 5 Days



Sailing adventures



Magnetic Island paradise



Wildlife



In the regions

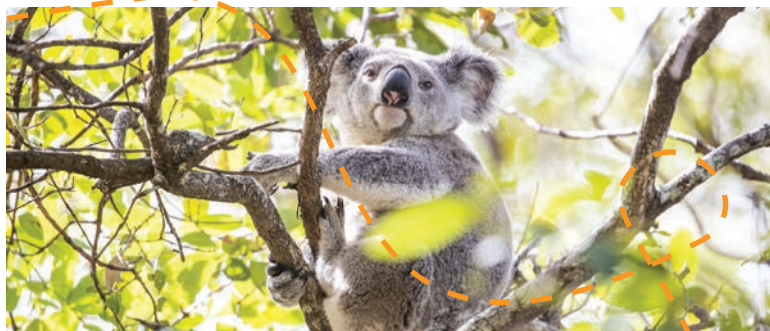
Stop 1

Take a short 20-minute ferry ride with **SeaLink Queensland** across to the locally nicknamed “Maggie”, where the adventure is up to you. Spend the day (or ideally days) exploring the 23 beaches and bays dotted around the island, either by car (if you travelled by **Magnetic Island Ferries** car barge) or hire topless jeep with **Magnetic Island Adventures**. If you want to experience some of the most remote and exclusive beaches on the island take a discovery tour with **Aquascene Charters** or sail along the coastline with **Pilgrim Sailing** or **Big Mama Sailing**.

If the kids are chasing an adrenaline hit, thrill-seekers should head to Horseshoe Bay where you can experience every childhood desire – jet skis, kayaks, paddleboards, tubing and more!

ON THE TRAILS

Make a splash along one (or both) of the self-guided snorkelling trails at Geoffrey Bay and Nelly Bay and get an up-close-and-personal look at the wonders of the coral reef – right off the beach! Or for the more adventurous, hop aboard your very own sea kayak to paddle the calm waters on an eco-accredited tour with **Magnetic Island Sea Kayaks**.

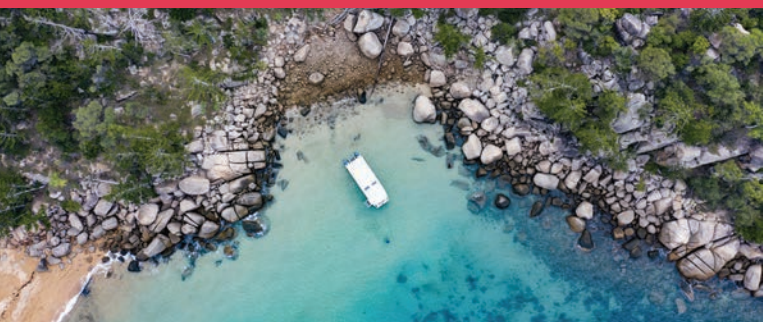


ARE YOU AN AVID HIKER?

One of the most popular walking tracks on Magnetic Island, the **Forts walk** leads to fascinating historic WWII fortifications and infrastructure – not to mention the stunning 360 views making the 4km trek to the summit worth every step...even if it means a parent-piggyback to get the kids there! And if that's not enough to get the kids ready to run, then the lure of a chance to see one of Northern Australia's largest colony of koalas in the wild should certainly do it (the Forts are one of their favourite places to eat and sleep on the island!)

If sight-seeing the furry companions from afar doesn't quite satisfy their inner Wildlife Warrior, then visit the **Bungalow Bay Koala Village** for an up-close and personal encounter with koalas, wombats, reptiles and birds!

After a dose of koala spotting and history lessons, it doesn't get much cuter than watching the kids interact with our furry rock wallaby friends at Geoffrey Bay. Arm yourself with a bag of rock wallaby feed from the nearby newsagency and make sure you have a camera on hand – these little guys love a good selfie!



Stop 2

Back on the mainland, the animal encounters continue with **Billabong Sanctuary**, a family favourite which has been entertaining and educating the young, and the young at heart, for over 35 years. With natural bushland to explore and a 2-hectare billabong at its heart, the Australian native animal wildlife park is home to over 50 native species including kangaroos, koalas, wombats, emus, parrots, and even the snappy variety – with mainland Queensland's biggest crocodile, Krakatoa at 5.1m (and his croc mates)!

You'll be hard pressed to find any 'must do' list for Townsville without this local hot spot! **The Strand** is a thriving beach foreshore with 2.5km of walkway, stunning views across to Magnetic Island, outdoor gym equipment, and more playgrounds than the kids will know what to do with, including the ever-popular free water park. The **Strand Jetty** is also the best location to view the **Ocean Siren** – a 16m art installation part of the Museum of Underwater Art project (Tip: Visit at sunset to watch her change colours in response to sea temperatures).

Take a hike to the top of **Castle Hill**, an iconic attraction which stands proudly at 286m in the centre of Townsville City. Home to several popular walking tracks – including the Goat Track and Cutheringa Track, the 360-degree views of Townsville at the top are well worth the journey! After you've seen the sights from above, don't miss the urban inner-city **Street Art Trail** for stunning murals which will lead you through the city centre.

Tip: Hire a stand-up paddle board for some active fun in the sun from **In The Loop** (Flinders Street, Townsville) – bikes, kite-boarding lessons and water sport equipment also available.

Local
Tip

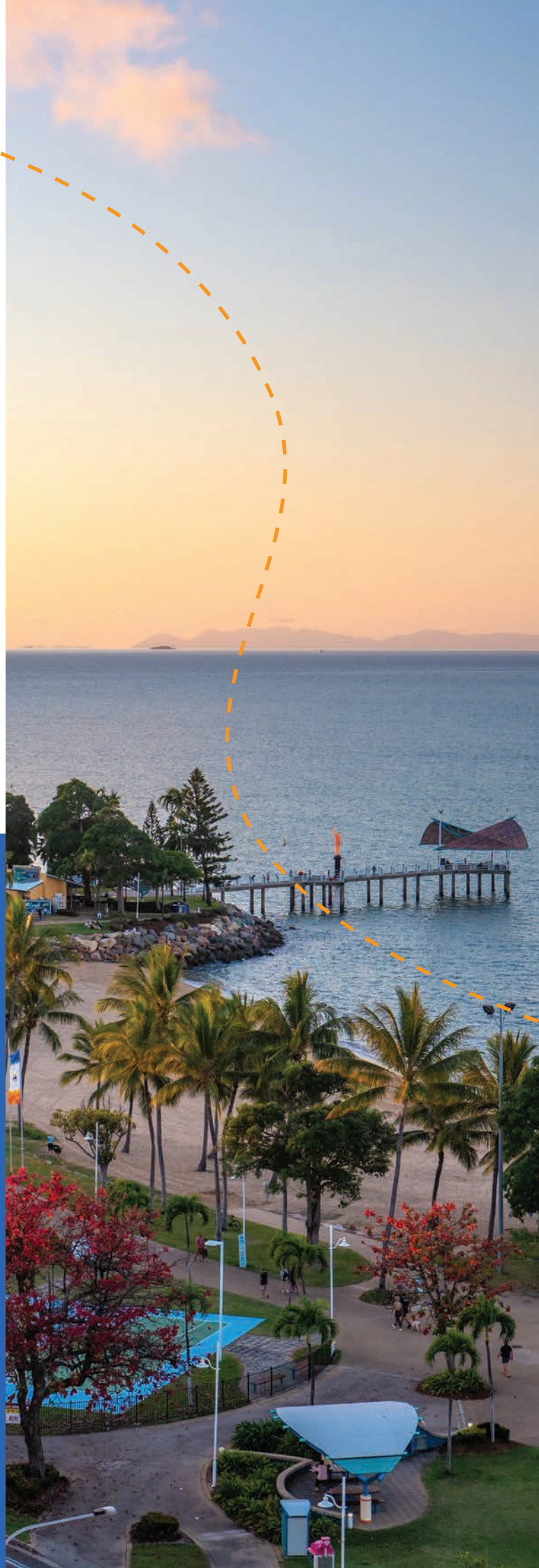
MUSEUM OF TROPICAL QUEENSLAND*

Let the learning begin with the Museum of Tropical Queensland, with exhibits including the Pandora Gallery, an interactive Sciencentre and the Enchanted Rainforest, the Secret Language of the Reef exhibit and many more travelling events to spark the imagination and enliven the entire family.

REEF HQ GREAT BARRIER REEF AQUARIUM*

Home of the world's largest living coral aquarium and the official headquarters of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Reef HQ is the perfect place to learn all about Nemo and his friends – without getting wet. With regular shows, and a functioning Turtle Hospital, the air-conditioned attractuib is one for young and the young at heart.

*Reef HQ will be closed for upgrades for a period of time in 2021. Please check www.reefhq.com.au for the latest updates.



Stop 3

With the coastal tropics well explored, take a short road trip from Townsville to **Paluma Range National Park** to discover a different kind of tropical – the Wet Tropics. A favourite swimming spot for locals, Big and Little **Crystal Creek** (yes, that's right – it's a two for one) run year-round with fresh mountain streams surrounded by cool rainforests. Paluma is exactly what you would expect of a picture-perfect family picnic spot.

Little Crystal Creek arched stone bridge (c. 1930) is not only heritage-listed but is also surrounded by pristine waterfalls with small pockets of water making perfect swimming holes. A littler further north is also the magnificent **Jourama Falls**, with rockslide formations, clear pools, and picnic areas.

ON THE TRAILS

Take the road less travelled and wander the trails snailing through the Paluma region, including Witt's Lookout, Birthday Creek Falls, H Track and Jourama Falls Track.



Take a step back to the 50's and show the kids the perfect way to enjoy a movie at the **Stardust Drive In Theatre** in Ayr. Pack the blankets and pillows and climb into the boot to enjoy the latest movies or even a good old classic whilst enjoying the stunning big sky views. The best part is they have a Snack Bar on site to grab all the essentials like a burger, chips and lollies – maybe even a coffee for Mum!

Stay a little longer...

Be sure to hit the bucket list of natural attractions there are to see in Townsville North Queensland, and venture further with the Townsville North Queensland Highlights itinerary.

To find our latest packages and deals, visit townsvillenorthqueensland.com.au