

THE  
*Whitsundays*

THE HEART OF THE  GREAT BARRIER REEF

3 Days / 2 Nights

**AIRLIE BEACH  
ITINERARY**



3 Days / 2 Nights

# ITINERARY



## GET THERE

In the Heart of the Great Barrier Reef lies The Whitsundays, 74 island wonders in the tropical warm waters of the Coral Sea.

The Whitsundays is located along Queensland's central coast in northeastern Australia, approximately 1,120 km north of Brisbane and 630 km south of Cairns. The Bruce Highway is the main route connecting Queensland's coastal cities and towns. It passes through Proserpine and Bowen, with Airlie Beach just a **20-minute drive from Proserpine**. Simply follow the signs to Airlie Beach and the Whitsunday Islands along Shute Harbour Road.

With its reliably sunny weather, The Whitsundays is an ideal destination year-round, boasting an average of **300 days of sunshine**. Whether you're interested in whale watching in winter, enjoying hot tropical summers, or experiencing the tranquil yet action-packed shoulder seasons, The Whitsundays has something for everyone. And with water temperatures around 25°C year-round, it's always a great time to dive in.

Average daily temperatures in The Whitsundays are:

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
°C	31	30	29	28	26	24	23	25	26	28	31	31
°F	88	86	84	82	79	75	73	77	79	82	88	88



## PACKING LIST

- Casual clothes for warm weather
- Comfortable shoes for walking and nights out
- Thongs/flip-flops and sneakers
- Small backpack/daypack for boat trips
- Reusable water bottle
- A light jacket/cardigan/sweater
- Sunscreen
- Swimwear
- Towel
- Hat
- Camera and a BIG SMILE

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## DAY 1

Welcome to Airlie Beach, your perfect starting point for exploring the **Great Barrier Reef** and the **Whitsunday Islands**. Set between the lush tropical hills of Conway National Park and the endless blues of the Coral Sea, this is a town with outsized energy and an easy confidence that comes from knowing exactly how naturally iconic it is.

### Rise & Shine | Breakfast at Fat Frog

Start your morning with an early **breakfast at Fat Frog Café**, known for its ocean views, delicious coffee and generous breakfast menu. Located at Cannonvale Beach, it's the perfect spot to stretch your legs after a big feed and settle into the day ahead with direct access to the **Bicentennial Walkway** if you are looking for a longer stroll.

**Local tip:** grab a seat outside to enjoy the breeze and a strong coffee among the locals before a big day on the water.

### 7:25am | Scenic Flight over Heart Reef

The Ocean Rafting team will pick you up at the café or near your accommodation; just make sure you notify them in advance. Their transport will take you to Whitsunday Airport for the start of something that is, frankly, unfairly perfect: a **60-minute scenic flight** paired with an Ocean Rafting day tour, giving you the most beautiful beach in the world from two completely different perspectives in a single day.

From the air, the full picture unfolds. All 74 islands are scattered across water that shifts between every shade of blue, the Great Barrier Reef stretches further than you expect and Heart Reef sits perfectly below like a symbol of nature's own magic.

### 10:00am | Ocean Rafting to Whitehaven Beach

Back at Coral Sea Marina, the friendly Ocean Rafting crew will do a quick briefing and before long, you're gripping the side of a raft as it skims across open water at full speed, music playing, faces soaked, life feeling noticeably lighter. Choose the **Southern Lights** route for beautiful snorkelling spots and maximum time on the iconic Whitehaven Beach.

A short walk from Tongue Bay leads up to **Hill Inlet**, where tidal currents push sand and water into something that looks more like abstract art than a natural feature. **Whitehaven Beach** stretches out in that particular shade of white that doesn't look real until you're standing on it, stingrays gliding through the crystal-clear shallows beside you.



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## DAY 1

### 5:00pm | Cool Down at the Lagoon

Back on shore, the lagoon is calling. Take a swim, shake off the salt and ease back into town before the evening begins.

### Evening | Cocktails, Bingo and Karaoke

**Cocktails and pizza at Paradiso** is the perfect way to ease into the night.

If the crowd at Boaty's, the backpacker pub at Nomads Hostel, pulls you in for a **round of bingo**, don't resist. Airlie Beach has a way of doing that. One drink turns into karaoke, and the next thing you know, you're dancing through the night.



## NIGHT 1

### Nomads Airlie Beach

Nomads is the place to be if you're looking to meet new people. With a big backpacker kitchen and accommodation options ranging from powered campsites to shared and private rooms, you'll always find a comfortable base to rest up.

### Peninsula Airlie Beach

For something more luxurious, Peninsula offers over 40 oceanfront apartments just a 25-minute stroll or 3-minute taxi ride from town. Thanks to their no-party policy, it's the perfect place to properly unwind and enjoy a self-contained, relaxing stay.



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## DAY 2

Day two is built for adrenaline. You'll go from free-falling above The Whitsundays to a guided walk-through ancient rainforest, before finishing the afternoon on a jet ski, tracing the coastline as turtles surface alongside you. It's a big day, but every minute of it is worth it.

### 5:45am | Skydive Australia

Meet your Skydive Australia crew at the Airlie Beach Main Street Bus Stop. They'll drive you to Whitsunday Airport for your safety briefing and an introduction to your tandem master.

Take in the stunning beauty of the islands and sparkling coastline as the **plane climbs to 15,000 feet**. Then take the leap, a **60-second freefall**, followed by 7 to 9 unforgettable minutes floating beneath the parachute with jaw-dropping views of Airlie Beach and the Whitsunday Islands below. It's consistently ranked one of the most spectacular places to skydive in Australia, and once you're up there, you'll understand exactly why. If conditions allow, you may even land directly on the beach. The entire experience takes around 30 minutes.

**Hot tip:** pre-book the video your instructor captures throughout the jump. It's worth every cent, not only to relive it, but to show everyone the look on your face during freefall.

### 8:30am | Driftwood Rainforest Tour

Check in with both operators in advance to confirm you're on an earlier plane and can comfortably do both tours back-to-back. If skydiving isn't your thing, this tour is a brilliant standalone and, honestly, a worthy alternative for anyone who'd rather explore the Whitsundays on foot than from above.

After a quick breakfast to go, the **Waterfalls and Rainforest Bushwalk** with Driftwood Tours takes you into a lush world of towering trees through one of the region's last remaining rainforest pockets. Your **eco-certified guide**, Chere, will share stories about the land and its deep cultural significance to the Ngaro people, the Traditional Owners of the Whitsundays. The tour finishes at **Cedar Creek Falls**, where jumping straight into the rock pools is a reward you'll have well and truly earned.



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## DAY 2

### 2:30pm | Whitsunday Jetski Tours

Make your way to the Whitsunday Jetski Tours office at Coral Sea Marina to meet your guides for the **Airline Adventure Tour**. Over the next 90 minutes, cruise between headlands, glide through quiet bays and keep a close eye on the water. **Turtles** have a habit of surfacing right alongside you when you least expect it for a quick breath before diving back into the deep blue ocean.

### Evening | Northerlies Beach Bar & Grill

Northerlies is the only logical way to end a day like this. Hop on the **courtesy bus** and head out to this beloved local hotspot, where island vibes, **fresh seafood platters**, cold drinks, and sweeping ocean views make it very easy to stay far longer than intended.



## NIGHT 2

### Magnums Accommodation

Magnums is classic for a reason: located in the centre of town, with tropical-garden dorms and an easy social energy that makes solo travel easy. Bonus: there is a supermarket and a bottle shop on their doorstep.



### Freedom Shores

Alternatively, Freedom Shore offers something truly unique. Located right next to Northerlies, you can choose from their boat bungalows, resort suites, or upgrade to the famous Beach Shack to enjoy your own private beach and lawn area.



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## DAY 3

Save the outer reef for last; it earns the finale. Today is quieter in pace but bigger in impact, trading speed and altitude for something altogether more immersive. Getting below the surface of the **Great Barrier Reef** is a different experience entirely, and one that tends to stay with you long after you've dried off and headed home.

### 8:00am | Outer Reef with Cruise Whitsundays

Depart from Port of Airlie and cruise through the islands as the passage opens up around you. Morning tea is served on board, so don't worry if breakfast didn't happen. The **pontoon** sits anchored in clear water, surrounded by reef on all sides.

Start with a **snorkel**, then go deeper with a **scuba dive**. First-timers are well looked after with a discovery dive, calm and experienced instructors keep everything simple and steady, and within minutes, the nerves dissolve. It's one thing to see the reef from the air. It's something else entirely to move through it. Colours shift as you descend. Fish move closer. Everything slows down. You stop thinking about the gear and start noticing what's around you, coral gardens stretching in every direction, movement everywhere.

**Not a confident swimmer?** The pontoon has a semi-submersible vessel and underwater observatory, so you can experience the reef up close without getting wet.

### 6:00pm | Arrive in Airlie Beach

Back in town, enjoy a little walk through town, grab an **ice cream**, and air-drop each other all the photos from the adventurous three days spent in Airlie Beach.

We are sure you'll be working out when you can come back before even making it to the highway. Until then...



THE  
*Whitsundays*  
... wish you a safe journey home.