



Cairns & the Daintree Rainforest

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Vivo Bar & Grill (p422)
- ➔ Yorkeys Knob Boating Club (p419)
- ➔ Tokyo Dumpling (p414)
- ➔ Candy (p414)
- ➔ Chianti's (p420)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Bloomfield Lodge (p436)
- ➔ Peppers Beach Club (p433)
- ➔ Cape Trib Beach House (p437)
- ➔ Travellers Oasis (p413)
- ➔ Port O' Call Eco Lodge (p432)

Why Go?

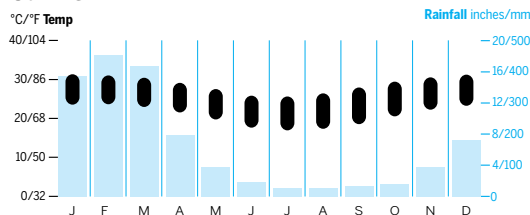
Cairns means R & R – the Reef and Rainforest. Together, they make this far-flung city an East Coast essential. Endless bus- and boatloads of eager beavers shuttle between Cairns and these World Heritage wonders, although upmarket Port Douglas is closer to the outer Reef and the Daintree Rainforest. Sultry, carefree Cairns swings between backpacker samsara and family fun-land. Head to Palm Cove or Port Douglas for upscale retreats. Inland, lush Atherton Tableland's cooler climes, lakes and waterfalls offer welcome relief from Cairns' humidity and crowds.

Highways hug scenic sections of the shoreline to Port Douglas, before meeting the mighty Daintree River's vehicular ferry. From here, the protected rainforest stretches up to Cape Tribulation, tumbling onto seductive white-sand beaches where hidden perils – marine stingers (October to May) and saltwater crocodiles (year-round) – should be taken seriously.

True-blue adventure-seekers head onwards to Cooktown on the 4WD-only Bloomfield Track.

When to Go

Cairns



May Port Douglas pizzazz at Carnivale. Stinger season ends.

Jun Cooktown Discovery Festival's costumed reenactment of Cook's landing.

Nov Divers delight in the reef's annual coral spawning.

Cairns & the Daintree Rainforest Highlights

1 Diving, snorkelling and swimming among the fish, turtles and corals of the **Great Barrier Reef** (p407).

2 Taking the **Kuku-Yalanji Dreamtime Walk** (p434) alongside the clear waters of the **Mossman Gorge** (p434) section of the Daintree National Park.

3 Riding the **Skyrail** (p418) above the rainforest to the markets of Kuranda, returning by the **Kuranda Scenic Railway** (p418).

4 Indulging in life's finer pleasures in the romantic restaurants and resorts of pristine **Palm Cove** (p421).

5 Savouring a coldie at the iconic **Lion's Den Hotel** (p441) upon



1 Great Barrier Reef