



Cape York Peninsula

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Best Tours

- ➔ Cape York Day Tour (p446)
- ➔ Heritage Tours (p446)
- ➔ Aurukun Wetland Charters (p446)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Cape York Camping Punsand Bay (p450)
- ➔ Grand Hotel (p451)
- ➔ Laura Motel (p448)
- ➔ Eliot Falls Campground (p449)

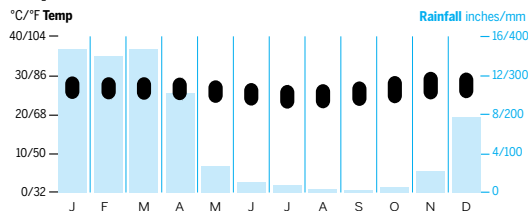
Why Go?

Rugged, remote, Cape York Peninsula has one of the wildest tropical environments on the planet. The Great Dividing Range forms the spine of the Cape: tropical rainforests and palm-fringed beaches flank its eastern side; sweeping savannah woodlands, eucalyptus forests and coastal mangroves its west. This untamed landscape undergoes a spectacular transformation each year when the torrential rains of the monsoonal wet season set in: dry earth turns into rich, red, mud; quenched, the tinder-dry bush awakens in vibrant greens, and trickling creek-beds swell to raging rivers.

Generally impossible in the Wet, the overland pilgrimage to the Tip is an exhilarating 4WD trek into one of Australia's last great frontiers. Rough, corrugated roads numb your bum, and challenging croc-infested river crossings are par for the course, while fine dining and pillow-top mattresses are nonexistent. Adventure, abundant wildlife, the stunning, unexpected vistas of the Tip, true isolation and a deep sense of achievement (however far you get) are the rewards.

When to Go

Cape York Peninsula



Jun–Aug Dry Season Days are warm and evenings cool; Top End pilgrims ply the dusty 4WD tracks.

Sep & Oct Visitor numbers drop in anticipation of the Wet; go under the radar.

Nov–Apr Sail, fly or ferry-hop to experience the sheer lushness of Cape York in the Wet.

Cape York Peninsula Highlights

- 1 Marvelling at the ancient Aboriginal rock paintings of the **Split Rock Gallery** (p447), outside Laura.
- 2 Congratulating yourself for making it to the **Tip** (p450), the northernmost point of the Australian continent.
- 3 Exploring the unique history and culture of tiny **Thursday Island** (p451).
- 4 Being amazed by the region's rich military history at the Torres Strait Heritage Museum on **Horn Island** (p451).
- 5 Camping beneath a carpet of stars at the remote and atmospheric **Eliot Falls Campground** (p449).



 Crocodiles can inhabit all waterways in tropical areas. Swimming is not recommended.