



Capricorn Coast & the Southern Reef Islands

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Getaway Garden Café (p170)
- ➔ Ginger Mule (p175)
- ➔ Lightbox (p172)
- ➔ Megalomania (p177)
- ➔ Sol Foods (p170)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Svendsen's Beach (p178)
- ➔ Cool Bananas (p169)
- ➔ Lady Elliot Island Eco Resort (p173)
- ➔ Takarakka Bush Resort (p180)

Why Go?

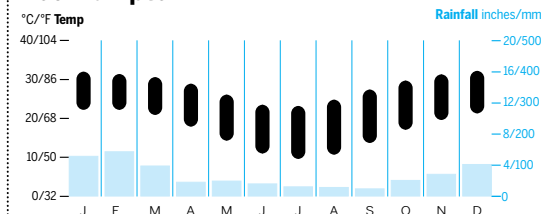
The stretch of coastline that straddles the tropic of Capricorn is one of the quietest and most lovely lengths of the east coast. While local families flock to the main beaches during school holidays, the scene is uncrowded for most of the year, and even in high season you needn't travel far to find a deserted beach.

Agnes Water and Town of 1770 are twin towns with a glowing reputation, and many travelers head from here for some of the world's best snorkelling and diving on the Southern Reef Islands. Opportunities for wildlife spotting are plentiful.

Great Keppel National Park is another tourism commercial in the making. The stunning powdery white sand and turquoise waters of the Capricorn Coast fit the holiday-brochure image perfectly. Unspoiled and windswept national parks such as Deepwater and Byfield can be found along the entire coastline, and are almost never busy.

Inland, you'll find bustling Rockhampton – Capricornia's economic hub and the capital of cattle country, with the steakhouses, rodeos and gigantic hats to prove it.

When to Go Rockhampton



Feb The Agnes Blues & Roots Festival rocks the Discovery Coast.

May–Sep Warm winter temperatures are ideal for swimming and sunning.

Dec Nature puts on a stunning light show during the summer solstice at Capricorn Caves.

Capricorn Coast & the Southern Reef Islands Highlights

- 1 Heron Island** (p173)
and **Lady Elliot Island**
(p173) Diving the spectacular
underwater coral gardens.
- 2 Great Keppel Island**
(p178) Claiming a tropical
beach for the day.
- 3 Agnes Water** (p169)
Surfing and chilling at
- 4 Carnarvon Gorge** (p179)
Hiking to find aboriginal rock
art.
- 5 Rockhampton** (p174)
Tucking into a huge steak in
Australia's beef capital.
- 6 Capricorn Caves** (p175)
Crawling through black holes
and tight tunnels.
- 7 Gem Fields** (p180)
Fossicking for a fortune-
changing sapphire.

