



# Townsville to Mission Beach

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Pepper Vine (p225)
- ➔ Bingil Bay Cafe (p224)
- ➔ Oliveri's Continental Deli (p227)
- ➔ Longboard Bar & Grill (p212)
- ➔ Wayne & Adele's Garden of Eating (p213)

## Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Jackaroo Hostel (p223)
- ➔ Sejala on the Beach (p224)
- ➔ Civic Guest House (p211)
- ➔ Orpheus Island Lodge (p219)
- ➔ Base Backpackers (p216)

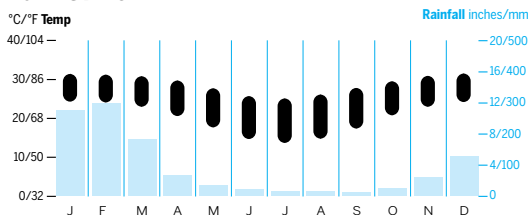
## Why Go?

Spread out between the tourist darlings of Cairns and the Whitsunday Islands, this lesser-known, rainforested stretch of quiet, palm-edged beaches is where giant endangered cassowary graze for seeds, and koalas nap in gum trees on turquoise encircled islands. Oft-overlooked Townsville is the urban centre and offers pleasant, wide, modern streets, a landscaped seaside promenade, gracious 19th-century architecture, and a host of cultural venues and sporting events. It's also the jumping-off point for Magnetic Island, a great budget alternative to the Whitsundays and with far more wildlife – hand-feed wild wallabies, spot an incredible range of bird life on fantastic bushwalking trails, and look for koalas.

North of Townsville, beautiful Mission Beach is a laid-back village that ironically attracts thrill seekers by the busload, all eager to skydive over the reef and on to white-sand beaches, or go on an adrenalin-pumping white-water rafting trip along the Tully River.

## When to Go

### Townsville



**May–Oct** Stinger-free seas make this the best time of year for water activities.

**Aug** Townsville shows off its cultural side during the Australian Festival of Chamber Music.

**Sep** Magnetic Island moves gently into second gear for the month-long Bay Dayz Festival.



## Townsville to Mission Beach Highlights

- 1 Dunk Island** (p226)  
Launching to this quintessential tropical Queensland escape.
- 2 Tully River** (p220)  
Veering wildly around white-water bends.
- 3 Paluma Range National Park** (p221) Searching for the shy platypus in the winding trails of this national park.

- 4 Magnetic Island** (p214)  
Spotting dozing koalas or hand-feeding rock wallabies on this paradisiacal island.
- 5 Yongala** (p213) Scuba diving at one of Australia's greatest wreck dives.
- 6 Wallaman Falls** (p218)  
Admiring the view then schlepping down to the

bottom of Australia's highest single-drop waterfall.

- 7 Townsville** (p209)  
Cheering on the Cowboys, North Queensland's revered National Rugby League team.
- 8 Charters Towers** (p215)  
Watching a *Ghosts After Dark* outdoor film screening in this outback gold-rush town.