



# Whitsunday Coast

WHITSUNDAY COAST

Just the very word Whitsundays conjures images of everyone's idea of the perfect holiday. Go on, say it out loud. Don't be embarrassed. Whitsundays. Feels good doesn't it?

Now close your eyes and imagine yourself island hopping aboard a luxury yacht. Picture the dazzling white sand of Whitehaven Beach. Think about snorkelling amid pristine coral reefs among countless tropical fish. Feel the cool breeze dance over your skin as the sun warms you on a tropical island. Anticipate the throbbing nightlife and international cuisine at Airlie Beach.

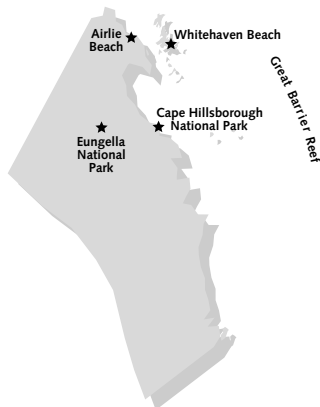
The Whitsundays is not at all overhyped. If you can't enjoy yourself here, you don't have a pulse. And yet, the area is not all about the Whitsunday Islands themselves. What, there's more?

Mackay is a thriving regional city with a real heartbeat and plenty of soul; the Pioneer Valley and Eungella National Park offer cool respite, stunning scenery and cute platypuses; and Cape Hillsborough is rugged and largely untamed.

Tell someone you're heading to the Whitsunday Coast and prepare for a jealous response and cries of 'Can I come too?'. You've chosen wisely.

## HIGHLIGHTS

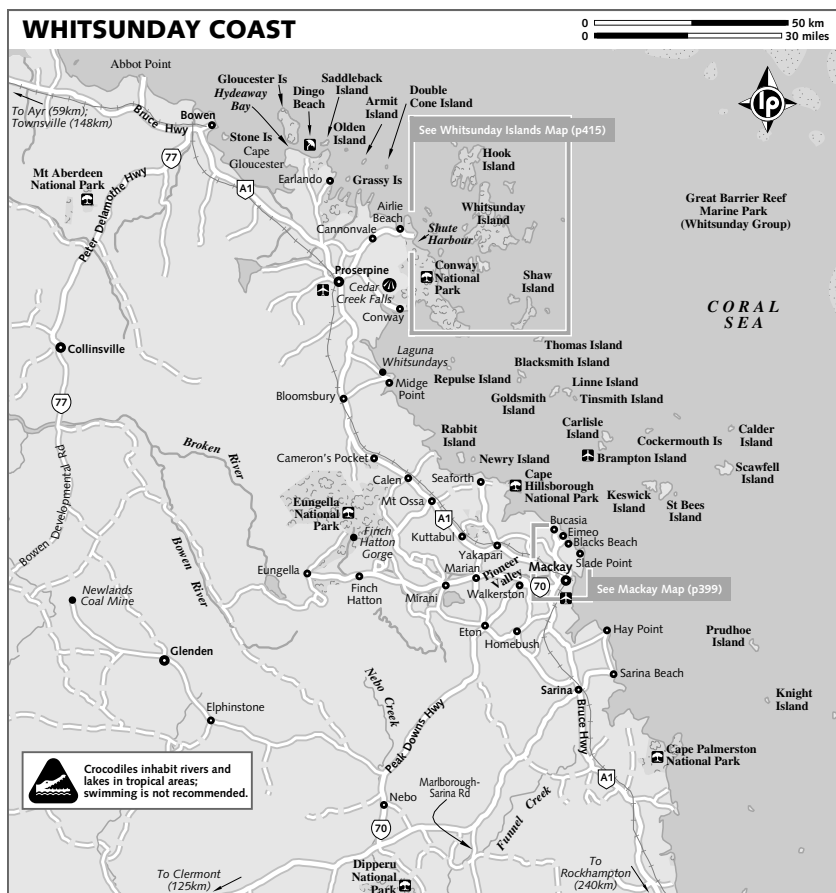
- Being dazzled by the bright-white silicon sand at stunning **Whitehaven Beach** (p420)
- Gliding on top of the bright-blue ocean on a cruise to a secluded snorkelling spot on the **Great Barrier Reef** (p407)
- Waiting patiently for a glimpse of a shy platypus and walking in the misty rainforest at **Eungella National Park** (p404)
- Sharing the beach at dusk with the local kangaroos at ruggedly beautiful **Cape Hillsborough National Park** (p406)
- Hooking up with other travellers and planning a cruise trip over a beer at fun lovin' **Airlie Beach** (p410)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 07

■ [www.queenslandholidays.com.au/whitsundays/index.cfm](http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au/whitsundays/index.cfm)

■ [www.whitsunday.com](http://www.whitsunday.com)



## Getting There & Away

### AIR

Mackay has a major domestic **airport** ([www.mackayairport.com.au](http://www.mackayairport.com.au)), and **Jetstar** (☎ 13 15 38; [www.jetstar.com.au](http://www.jetstar.com.au)), **Qantas** (☎ 13 13 13; [www.qantas.com.au](http://www.qantas.com.au)) and **Virgin Blue** (☎ 13 67 89; [www.virginblue.com.au](http://www.virginblue.com.au)) have regular flights to/from the major centres. **Tiger Airways** (☎ 03-9335 3033; [www.tigerairways.com.au](http://www.tigerairways.com.au)) flies to Mackay from Melbourne.

Jetstar and Qantas have frequent flights to Hamilton Island, from where there are boat/air transfers to the other islands. All three fly into Proserpine (aka Whitsunday Coast) on the mainland; from there you can take a charter flight to the islands or a bus to Airlie Beach or nearby Shute Harbour.

### BOAT

Airlie Beach and Shute Harbour are the launching pads for boat trips to the Whitsundays; see individual islands for details.

### BUS

**Greyhound** (☎ 13 14 99; [www.greyhound.com.au](http://www.greyhound.com.au)) and **Premier** (☎ 13 34 10; [www.premierms.com.au](http://www.premierms.com.au)) have coach services along the Bruce Hwy with stops at the major towns. They detour off the highway from Proserpine to Airlie Beach. For details see the relevant towns and cities.

### TRAIN

**Queensland Rail** ([www.traveltrain.com.au](http://www.traveltrain.com.au)) has services between Brisbane and Townsville/Cairns