



Townsville to Mission Beach

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Best Places to Eat

- Wayne & Adele's Garden of Eating (p424)
- Sweatshop (p422)
- Monsoon Cruising (p440)
- Benny's Hot Wok (p423)
- Fish Bar (p438)

Best Places to Stay

- Shambhala Retreat (p428)
- Noorla Heritage Resort (p431)
- Jackaroo Hostel (p437)
- Bungalow Bay Koala Village (p428)
- Coral Lodge (p422)

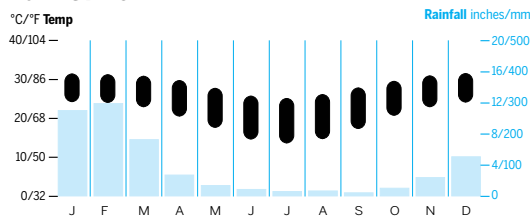
Why Go?

In between the tourist magnets of Cairns and Airlie Beach, Townsville is a 'real' city with a pulse. Although North Queensland's largest urban centre is often bypassed by visitors, it has a surprising number of attractions: a palm-lined beachfront promenade, gracious 19th-century architecture and a host of cultural and sporting venues and events. Magnetic Island's national park, beaches, walking trails and wildlife are a quick ferry ride away.

North of Townsville, the Great Green Way wends past small sugar towns including Ingham, Cardwell, Tully and Innisfail; a stop offers the chance to experience true far northern country hospitality. Mission Beach, about half an hour east of Tully, is a laid-back village that ironically attracts thrillseekers by the busload, all keen on the region's skydiving, white-water rafting and water sports. Forested Hinchinbrook Island and the lovely Dunk Island are top choices for the less adrenaline-addled.

When to Go

Townsville



May Celebrate all things wet and wonderful at Tully's Golden Gumboot Festival.

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

Oct Let your dreads down at Mission Beach's Mission Evolve Music Fest.



Townsville to Mission Beach Highlights

1 Hearing the story behind the ruined castles of **Paronella Park** (p439) on a day or night tour.

2 Cheering on the Cowboys, North Queensland's National Rugby League team, or National Basketball League team, the Crocodiles, in **Townsville** (p419).

3 Tackling the 32km-long Thorsborne Trail on pristine **Hinchinbrook Island** (p432).

4 Skydiving onto a sandy landing at **Mission Beach** (p435).

5 Having a secluded beach to yourself on **Dunk Island** (p439).

6 Watching a *Ghosts After Dark* outdoor film screening

in the gold-rush town of **Charters Towers** (p426).

7 Slipping, sliding and schlepping down to Australia's highest single-drop waterfall, **Wallaman Falls** (p431).

8 Watching wild cassowaries wander along the beach at picturesque **Etty Bay** (p439).