



Townsville to Mission Beach

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Best Places to Eat

- PepperVine (p435)
- Bingil Bay Cafe (p434)
- Oliveri's Continental Deli (p437)
- Longboard Bar & Grill (p422)
- Wayne & Adele's Garden of Eating (p423)

Best Places to Sleep

- Jackaroo Hostel (p433)
- Sejala on the Beach (p434)
- Civic Guest House (p421)
- Orpheus Island Lodge (p429)
- Base Backpackers (p426)

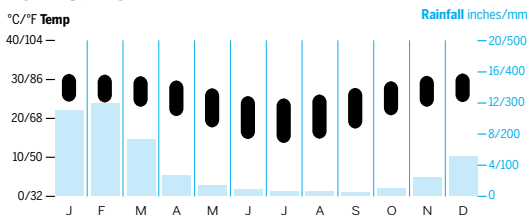
Why Go?

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** (p436)
 Launching to this quintessential tropical Queensland escape.
- 2 Tully River** (p430)
 Veering wildly around white-water bends.
- 3 Paluma Range National Park** (p431)
 Searching for the shy platypus in the winding trails of this national park.
- 4 Magnetic Island** (p424)
 Spotting dozing koalas or hand-feeding rock wallabies on this paradisiacal island.
- 5 Yongala** (p423)
 Scuba diving at one of Australia's greatest wreck dives.
- 6 Wallaman Falls** (p428)
 Admiring the view then schlepping down to the bottom of Australia's highest single-drop waterfall.
- 7 Townsville** (p419)
 Cheering on the Cowboys, North Queensland's revered National Rugby League team.
- 8 Charters Towers** (p425)
 Watching a *Ghosts After Dark* outdoor film screening in this outback gold-rush town.