

20 TOP EXPERIENCES

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Great Barrier Reef

1 Stretching more than 2000km up the Queensland coastline, the awe-inspiring Great Barrier Reef (p317) is one of the world's great wonders. Among the best ways to experience it: donning a mask and fins and delving into the vivid undersea kingdom for a close-up view of dazzling corals, sea turtles, sharks, rays and tropical fish of every colour and size. You can also explore the reef by sailboat, take a scenic flight, gaze at marine life through a glass-bottomed semisubmersible and linger in a resort (or camp) on a remote coral-fringed island. Hardy Reef (p256)

The Daintree Rainforest

2 Fan palms, ferns and mangroves are just some of the 3000 or so plant species in the ancient, World Heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest (p366), which is alive with a chorus of birds, insects and frogs. Guided day walks, wildlife-spotting night tours, mountain treks, interpretive boardwalks, canopy walks, self-guided walking trails, 4WD trips, horse riding, kayaking, croc-spotting cruises and tropical-fruit orchard tours and tastings are among the many ways to experience one of the most extraordinary ecosystems on the planet.



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ARTWORK: THE SKIN SPEAKS A LANGUAGE NOT ITS OWN; BHARTI KHER

Brisbane

3 Brisbane (p52) is an arts-loving city with a packed calendar of food and music festivals, top dance and theatre performances, cutting-edge exhibitions (such as at the Queensland Art Gallery, pictured) and big-name concerts. There's great sports events and plenty of ways to enjoy the subtropical climate year-round. The river city boasts vibrant open-air markets, colourful boutiques and a fantastic cafe scene, while award-winning restaurants and burgeoning nightlife means you'll never run out of options when the sun goes down.