

# Around Brisbane



The bayside surrounding Brisbane contains some lovely areas that make for great day trips – or longer – from the city and will relieve that sense of urban grit. Redcliffe feels almost as if it was designed for families, with morning jaunts along its esplanade as stressful as it gets. The town is a historical treasure, being the site of the first white settlement in Queensland. If you're interested in boating, grab the train down to Manly, where the main pursuits include sailing into the bay and eating fish and chips by the harbourside.

The patch of water lapping at Brisbane's urban edges and merging into the Southern Pacific Ocean is one of the city's greatest assets. Packed full of marine life including whales, porpoises and dugongs, Moreton Bay also has a bunch of startlingly beautiful islands, which are very accessible from the mainland. North Stradbroke is a gem with thick bush, inland lakes and a glorious stretch of beach that will entice you to linger. The island is quite well developed, providing decent infrastructure for holidaying Brisbanites. If you feel like getting further off the track, the rugged wilderness of Moreton Island beckons. Bush camping on this sand island with its tropical foliage is sublime and there is wonderful snorkelling around an old wreck just offshore.

It's well worth exploring Brisbane's surrounds and nearby islands – you may even find yourself relocating for a while...

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Tramping around **North Stradbroke Island** (p129) and discovering powder-sand beaches
- Walking through rainforest on **Moreton Island** (p133), then watching a flaming-red sunset over the **Tangalooma Wrecks** (p134)
- Hand-feeding frolicking dolphins and just lazing about under swaying palm trees at **Tangalooma** (p134)
- Gorging on fresh fish at **Manly** (p128) and then catching a day cruise and spotting magnificent Moreton Bay marine life
- Checking out the fascinating local history museum at **Redcliffe** (p126) and stretching your legs around the peninsula
- Bush camping on **Moreton Island** (p133) and waking up to a symphony of bird calls



## REDCLIFFE

As the state's first white settlement, the Redcliffe Peninsula, located on the bay 35km north of the state capital, talks up its historical credentials. They're pretty organised up here with informative tourist centres and a surprisingly good museum. Redcliffe, a picturesque jut of land doused in an ambling, happy coastal ambience, makes a great break from the urban lashings of Brisbane and that's what it's mainly used for. Particularly good for families, the area has calm beaches ideal for the kids.

The Ningy Ningy people were the first residents of the peninsula, occupying the land for hundreds of years before white settlement. In 1824 John Oxley and Henry Miller landed the *Amity*, carrying settlers, soldiers and convicts, and the peninsula became the site of the first white settlement in Queensland. When the settlement moved to Brisbane only a year later, the Ningy Ningy called the place Humpybong (Dead Houses) and the name is still applied to the peninsula.

### INFORMATION

The main **Redcliffe Visitor Information Centre** (☎ 1800 659 500, 3284 3500; www.redcliffetourism.com; Pelican Park, Hornibrook Esplanade, Clontarf; ☎ 9am-4pm) is at the base of the peninsula. There's also another smaller, central **branch** (☎ 1800 659 500; cnr Redcliffe Pde & Irene St; ☎ 9am-4pm) in Redcliffe.

### SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

A pedestrian and cycle path hugs the peninsula's shore from Scarborough in the north to Redcliffe Point in the centre. It's the most scenic way to see the area, and there are frequent stairs to the shops and cafés on the esplanade atop the slight slope. On the way you can stretch your legs on the sizable **Redcliffe Jetty**, which has had several makeovers since its beginnings in 1885. A few hundred metres south of the jetty sits **Settlement Cove Lagoon**, a small lagoon that looks like it migrated from Toyland. It's a veritable Utopia for little ones, who get to scramble over colourful boats and castles and cool off in the various pools. Understandably it's a fantastic spot for families and the barbecues and shady spots facilitate an all-day visit.

At the base of the peninsula, on Clontarf Beach, the Redcliffe Visitor Information

Centre feeds the voracious local pelicans every day at 10am.

A few blocks east, the old Hornibrook Hwy used to be the main access point for folk heading onto the peninsula from the south. Having long been replaced by a dirty great concrete slab running parallel to it, the old highway is now a 2.8km jetty and popular fishing spot.

The small but interesting **Redcliffe Historical Museum** (☎ 3883 1898; 75 Anzac Ave; admission free; ☎ 10am-4pm Tue-Sun) details the peninsula's history through information boards, artefacts and a great series of personal accounts from locals. The excellent *Spectravision* wraps Redcliffe's story up in a clever and engrossing 15-minute multimedia presentation. The audiovisual pays respect to the Ningy Ningy people and their role in saving three shipwrecked whitefellas. The museum also has interesting artistic and photographic displays from local artists.

If you're feeling adventurous, what better place to learn how to kite-surf? This is one adrenalin-pumping sport and **Bris Kites** (☎ 3283 1818; www.briskites.com.au; 2/10 Hornibrook Esplanade) runs a kite-surf school at the peninsula; a two-hour introductory lesson is \$140.

### SLEEPING & EATING

**Waltzing Matilda Hotel** (☎ 3283 7177; 109 Margate Parade, Margate Beach; r \$80-95) We won't lie – this place has seen better days, but at the price it's good value. 1970s in almost every respect, the rooms worth chasing here are the upstairs sea-facing ones – especially numbers 11 to 14. These come with small balconies and water views making the décor behind you fade into insignificance. Rooms at the rear are cheaper, and so they should be: worn and tattered, they'd do at a pinch if you plan to spend most of your time out and about anyway.

**Baringa B&B** (☎ 3284 9230; salis@technet2000.com.au; 1 Baringa St; d \$95-105; ☎) At Baringa you get space. Your options are a huge double room (with extra single bed) separate from the main residence; or upstairs, above the owner's residence, you get your own unit complete with full kitchen, lounge room and balcony. In the unit you have a choice of three bedrooms, so it's a good option for groups. The owners aren't the friendliest folk on the planet but they'll leave you to do your own thing.

**Pale Pacific Holiday Units** (☎ 3284 7743; borger@hotkey.com.au; 159 Margate Pde, Margate; units per week from \$500; ☎) A handful of old-fashioned units that