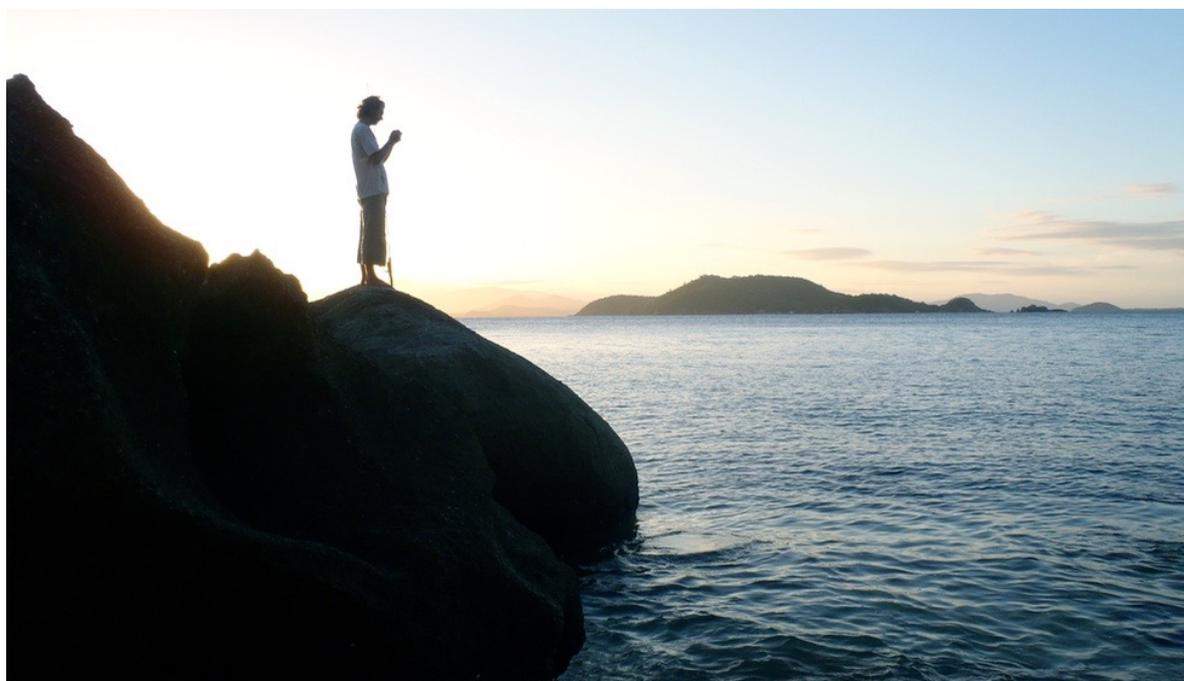


Sea Kayak Hire for experienced paddlers

If you are an experienced sea kayaker and wish to explore the beauty of the lush tropical Queensland coast and surrounding islands at your own pace we can offer you sea kayaks for hire. We can also offer transportation of the kayaks to various nearby destinations.

If you would like to find out more regarding the various choices of paddling destinations in Tropical North Queensland please contact us and we will give you the benefit of more than eighteen years local knowledge and experience. We can suggest itineraries for trips of any type, for the paddler who wants an easy relaxing couple of days away or for more adventure seeking groups who would like to explore further afield.

Off the tropical coast of North Queensland between Innisfail and Ingham lie 24 continental islands, 21 of which are National Parks, surrounded by the waters and fringing reefs of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. They range from Hinchinbrook Island, 39,000 ha, the largest National Park Island in Australia, tiny Purtaboi Island situated just off the coast of renowned Dunk Island to the jewel like islands of the Barnard's just to the north. Together these islands present a magnificent landscape of deserted sandy beaches, precipitous headlands, rugged mountains, waterfalls and dense rainforest, offering the most spectacular backdrop for sea kayaking adventures.



You can take a weekend or weeks to explore these tropical islands enjoying the peace and tranquillity of the secluded sheltered bays. Our two person sea kayaks allow easy access over fringing reefs and among the stunning islands and coastline. Marine life abounds in these waters with dolphins, sea turtles, rays and many tropical fish. Rarely seen Dugongs also inhabit the waters off Hinchinbrook Island and the Family Group. During the months of July, August & September you

may sometimes be lucky enough to encounter the superb humpback whales that immigrate annually to these northern waters. The bird life is plentiful, with white-breasted sea eagles soaring above and many sea birds sighted along the beaches and rocky headlands.

The kayaks

Our fleet consists of both double and single fibreglass sea kayaks. All kayaks have both fore and aft hatches and are fitted with rudders. The Dobbe doubles are nearly seven metres in length, reasonably wide across the centre and are extremely stable. They offer plenty of room with a very large central hatch to pack everything you could want on an extended tour. Our single kayaks are Ocean Raiders and Sea Bears; all of which are approx 5.7metres, nice stable boats which track well and have plenty of room for gear even though the Raider would not be classed as particularly high volume kayak. All our boats are fitted with neoprene deck and hatch covers (for the larger hatches).

All the kayaks are hired complete with buoyancy vest, paddles, bailer, sponge and pump. Each hire group is issued with a comprehensive repair kit, flares, V sheet, and spare paddle. If you require communication on Hinchinbrook we will be able to arrange satellite phone hire, however in most other areas Telstra mobiles have range. We also recommend that you take along a small AM/FM radio so you can keep up with the local coastal waters weather forecast whilst out of mobile phone service.

We prefer not to hire to solo paddlers unless they are extremely experienced, proficient in surf techniques and have a solid reliable roll, along with plenty of solo expedition experience.

What conditions to expect?

The coastline of Tropical North Queensland is bordered by the Coral Sea. The Great Barrier Reef lies approximately 30 kilometres off shore, starting from the northern tip of Australia and stretching for over 2000 kilometres down the coast. All our coastal islands are therefore protected from any large ocean swells that may come in from the Pacific. The islands we visit range from 5 kilometres to 20 kilometres off the coast and consist of various groups of islands. No strong currents run between the islands and we rarely have winds over 20 knots along the coast.

During the months of May to October we have the southeast trade winds that consistently give us southeasterly breezes, these may be negligible at under 5 knots or up to 20 - 25 knots in occasional strong conditions. This time of the year is the most popular time for sea kayaking with cooler temperatures and most trips are planned to take advantage of the trade winds by paddling in a northerly direction through the islands. Daytime temperatures can range from lows of 18 - 22 degrees (July & August) to highs of between 27 - 32 degrees Celsius (October). Water temperature at this time of year drops to approximately 23 - 24 degrees Celsius. These southeasterly trade winds can sometimes build up during the day, so paddlers can often take advantage of lighter winds during the mornings for longer crossings. Although this time of year is known as the dry season along this section of the coast showers are sometimes inevitable. When paddling on any ocean, even the tropics, it is advisable to have good protection against the conditions, so ensure you have good sun protection and a lightweight wind/rainproof jacket.

During the summer months of November to April the temperatures rise a little and the winds drop and become more variable in direction. The main months of the summer are December to March and during this time we may have many weeks of beautiful clear calm balmy days, however this is also our wet season and the time when cyclones may occur along the coast. We therefore do not recommend extended trips of more than three days. Day time temperatures range from 27 - 35 degrees Celsius and may drop by as little as 8 degrees overnight. The water temperature during these months is about 28 - 29 degrees Celsius. April and November are times to plan trips if you are looking for the warmer weather, however the winds may be very variable with some north easterly sea breezes occurring in November and early April, with the winds turning south easterly during mid to late April.

Due to the remote nature of most of the islands we only hire to paddlers who are both experienced and competent, and have previously organised extended trips. As with any

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e-mail: info@coralseakayaking.com Website: www.coralseakayaking.com

area of open coastline the weather in this region can change rapidly and all paddlers should be confident with the following skills in metre plus seas, surf landing and launching, bracing techniques, deep-water rescue and or Eskimo roll. A knowledge and understanding of tidal movements, chart and map reading skills are also a necessity. We strongly recommend that you have suitable maps or charts to plan your trip and have an am/fm radio and/or some form of communication to keep up with changing weather forecasts.

Camping and Transfers

All of the nearby islands that permit camping are National Park Islands. Permits are required for all National Park Island campsites. Permits can be obtained from Cardwell National Parks' office or on line for Hinchinbrook, Goold, Garden, Wheeler and Coombe Islands. Most of these campsites have next to no facilities. However, they are all very beautiful unspoilt beaches. Fresh drinking water can usually be obtained from many of the creeks on Hinchinbrook Island; availability depends on the season and rainfall. However you should be able to carry enough water to see you through at least a couple of days (we recommend at least 4 litres per person per day). On Goold, Garden, Wheeler and Coombe Islands no fresh water can be guaranteed, there is a water tank of Western Beach, Goold Island but we would recommend relying on it. Cardwell Parks Information Office (details below) should provide all information regarding camping regulations and explain all low impact camping requirements, they will also send out simple maps and information leaflets about all the islands, on request.

Rainforest & Reef Information Centre
14 Victoria Street
Cardwell Q 4849
Tel: (07) 4066 8115

<http://parks.nprsr.qld.gov.au>

At present there is camping on Dunk Island booking can be made via www.dunk-island.com. Fri, Sat, Sun & Queensland school holidays there is a great beach café open on Dunk Island near the jetty. Hours around 10.00am – 5.00pm

We recommend all private paddling groups have suitable maps (topos 1:100,000 or larger) or marine charts, as well as any maps provided by the National Parks.

Marine Chart – *Palm Islands to Brooks Islands* – includes Hinchinbrook, Goold Islands and the Family Islands.

Topo survey maps – *Series R631 Sheet 8161* – includes Hinchinbrook, Goold Islands and the southern Family Islands.

Series R631 Sheet 8162 – includes Dunk Island, north to the Barnard Islands

To check out the lay out of the islands simple, clear maps are available to view on our web-site www.coralseakayaking.com, these are not suitable for navigation.

Further north along the coast from Mission Beach lay the Barnard Islands, approximately 9 kilometres off the coast. These National Park Islands also offer camping, permits are available from the Cairns National Parks Office

Reef & National Park Information Centre
PO Box 2066
Cairns Q 4870
Tel: (07) 4046 6600

<http://parks.nprsr.qld.gov.au>

We can also offer transfers for our kayaks and paddlers from our office at South Mission Beach to your planned starting point and collection at the end of your trip for a minimum cost. By far the best spot to stay at in the immediate area is Mission Beach for both facilities and scenic beauty. If you plan to paddle the coast of Hinchinbrook, Lucinda is the starting point. It is often best to get an early start so we are happy to do transfers the late afternoon/ evening prior to booking. Wanderers Camping/Caravan Park at Lucinda that offers reasonably good facilities for your night prior to departure. No kayaking is advised on the western side of Hinchinbrook Island within the channel, the dense mangrove forest is saltwater crocodile habitat and therefore not suitable for sea kayaking.

Mission Beach and How to get there

Mission Beach is situated approximately two hours drive south of Cairns and two and a half hours north of Townsville. Cairns is serviced by both national and international flights. Qantas, Jetstar and Virgin Blue offer regular flights from all major Australian cities. On arrival in Cairns there are several coach companies with regular services to Mission Beach and an airport shuttle or taxis which will take you to the bus station. Another alternative to the bus is a one-way car hire from Cairns to Mission Beach which gives greater freedom and makes pre-trip shopping easy. Townsville is serviced by national flights Qantas, Jetstar and Virgin Blue, which offer regular flights from major Australian cities. Various interstate coaches offer regular services to Ingham, Cardwell and Mission Beach.

Mission Beach now has a large supermarket (Woolworth's) located next to the interstate bus stop. You can shop for an extended trip with no problems at all, however at the moment it doesn't open on Sundays. I would recommend you shop for fuel (shellite, gas, etc) prior to arriving in Mission Beach.

Mission Beach comprises of several beaches, each with its own small community. There are various places to stay ranging from resort style to backpacker accommodation. Mission Beach also offers many reef and rainforest activities, including scuba diving, whitewater rafting and skydiving. You may well like to stay a few days and enjoy relaxing on the fourteen kilometres of golden sandy beaches that make up this region.

We are happy to recommend your pre and post-trip bus travel, accommodation and tours. Please contact our office by e-mail or phone, if you have any questions regarding travel or accommodation details. Check out www.missionbeachtourism.com

Car Hire

There are many car hire companies in Cairns to choose from and we are happy to have you park a vehicle with us when you are out on the islands.

One-way rentals Cairns-Mission Beach

Sugarlands Car Rentals

<http://www.sugarland.com.au/>

Phone 07 40688272

Bus options - may alter so please check details when booking

McCafferty's/Greyhound Phone 13 14 99 or 13 20 30

<http://www.greyhound.com.au>

Cairns Bus terminal - Mission Beach Bus Terminal

Cost \$ 22 - \$36.40 one-way. Approximately 2 hours.

Departs Cairns 7.45am, 1.00pm, 7.00pm

Departs Mission Beach 10.55am, 3.40pm, 6.00pm,

Townsville Bus terminal - Mission Beach Bus Terminal

Cost \$ 50 - \$61.90 one-way. Approximately 3.5 hours.

Departs Townsville 7.15am, 12.00noon, 2.20pm,

Departs Mission Beach 10.00am, 3.10pm, 8.55pm

Premier Motor Service

Phone 13 34 10

<http://www.premierms.com.au>

Cairns Premier terminal - Mission Beach Bus Terminal

Cost \$19 one-way. Approximately 2 hours.

Departs Cairns 7.25am. Departs Mission Beach 5.20pm.

Townsville Premier terminal - Mission Beach Bus Terminal

Cost \$46 one-way. Approximately 3.5 hours.

Departs Townsville 1.50pm. Departs Mission Beach 9.25am.

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