

## **CORAL SEA KAYAKING**

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# **Hinchinbrook Expedition Outline**

**Price \$2900 AUD all inclusive**

**6 days on the water. Ex Mission Beach, North Queensland**

Our 6 day Hinchinbrook Expedition is our flagship trip and one of the world's great sea kayak journeys. Hinchinbrook Island is an impressive destination. The ruggedly majestic outlook of Hinchinbrook is a sight to behold. Imagine a pristine tropical island paradise lying off the North Queensland coast where towering mountains are flanked by rainforest which descends to deserted sandy beaches and the warm waters of the Coral Sea.

Hinchinbrook is an incredible World Heritage area and Australia's largest island national park which you will mostly have to yourself as visitors to Hinchinbrook are required to have a permit. This restricts numbers and maintains the island's wilderness mystique. We only run small group expeditions to ensure quality, personalised experiences for our customers and environmentally sustainable practices.

Why go with us:

- 25 years running Hinchinbrook kayak expeditions
- We have an impeccable safety record and continue to maintain a very high safety standard
- Customer satisfaction is our priority (see Trip Advisor!)
- Professional kayak guides with years of experience running expeditions
- Small groups to ensure a personalised and boutique experience
- We serve delicious healthy cuisine and source high quality produce
- We use high quality equipment including handmade composite kayaks
- We are an owner operated small business

What's included:

- All transport from Mission Beach
- All permits and parks passes
- Accommodation whilst on tour

- All meals and catering
- Camping equipment
- All sea kayaking equipment
- Professional sea kayak guides

**WARNING!** Like most expedition sea kayak trips, the Hinchinbrook paddle is not a lake or estuary trip. It is a multi-day expedition involving paddling an exposed coastline and completing crossings between islands that can be susceptible to changing sea states. Participants are sometimes required to paddle in wind and ocean swell. Our basic requirements for all participants is they must have moderate fitness, good water confidence and swimming ability and have some camping experience.

## **Trip Outline:**

Off the tropical coast of North Queensland between Ingham and Mission Beach lie 15 continental islands, 11 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 to tiny Purtaboi Island situated just off the coast of renowned Dunk Island. These islands present a magnificent landscape of tropical sandy beaches, precipitous headlands, rugged mountains, waterfalls and dense rainforest, all of which offer the most spectacular backdrop for our sea kayaking expeditions.

On our 6 day expedition we paddle north from the small town of Lucinda out and along the beautiful east coast of Hinchinbrook island camping on secluded beaches, swimming in idyllic, clear fresh waterholes and eating like royalty. Each day allows for just the right amount of activity as we paddle to the next stunning campsite. It's not all rush rush like many expeditions and most days allow for some island time in the afternoon to chill out or go for a walk, a swim or just relax with a good book in the hammock. Each evening ends with a gourmet meal cooked by our skilled guides who are just as handy with a chef's knife as they are with a paddle. All served up in nature's restaurant, arguably some of the best alfresco dining available.

After we reach the northern end of Hinchinbrook we begin island hopping. Our first stop is the tranquillity of Goold Island where we camp with beautiful views of the Family Islands to the north and the towering peaks of Hinchinbrook to the south. From Goold we continue north to picturesque Wheeler Island in the Family Island group. We spend our last night on Wheeler Island and the next day paddle to Dunk Island for a break before returning to Australia and making landfall at Mission Beach.

Paddling the coast of Hinchinbrook Island and camping on the white sandy beaches is a true taste of paradise and one of the world's great sea kayaking journeys. The uninhabited island offers stunning views and untouched beaches. The Island really hasn't changed in thousands of years, no major infrastructure exists and there are mostly no other humans on the island, a true tropical wilderness. This expedition style trip will take you off the grid and allow you to unplug and unwind from the pressures of the modern world. It will let you relax and enjoy the pristine nature that abounds and the fine company of your other expeditioners.

Hinchinbrook Island is part of the UNESCO, World Heritage area, listed for its unique flora and fauna. The waters of the Coral Sea which surround Hinchinbrook Island are part of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, world renowned for its abundant marine life offering us a chance to view sea turtles, dolphins and dugongs. Humpback whales migrate along the islands coastline and are frequently sighted during July & August. These islands offer excellent conditions to view many sea birds including, osprey, white-breasted sea eagles, shy oystercatchers and endangered beach curlews.

## **Fitness Level**

This moderate level trip will be most enjoyed by participants who are reasonably active, healthy and happy to participate in kayaking, swimming and walking for 4 - 6 hours a day. As the name indicates sea kayaking is a sea based sport and so is susceptible to changing weather and increased sea states. Customers are required to be water confident in an ocean environment and happy paddling a kayak along an exposed coastline and in swell and wind. At times due to changing weather conditions some days may include some strenuous activity.

## **Pre-trip meeting:**

**Our pre-trip meeting will be held at 6:00pm on the evening prior to our departure at Mission Reef Resort, Wongaling Beach. Our guides will introduce themselves and discuss the planned paddling itinerary and answer any questions you may have regarding your trip. They will also issue you with dry-bags for your personal belongings, these should be packed and ready when you are collected the following morning. Any belongings not being taken may be stored at our office or at your hotel.**

## **The paddle plan:**

### **Day 1.**

An early start is often necessary, usually 7.00am but will be confirmed by your guides to make the most of favourable winds and tides. We drive by bus to our departure point at Lucinda two hours south of Mission Beach. Here we pack our kayaks, practise our paddling skills and discuss all safety procedures. We then set off across the channel to lunch at Georges Point our first landing site on Hinchinbrook island. After lunch we paddle on taking in the southern reaches of Hinchinbrook Island. Our first night camp is at Mulligans Bay, Sunken Reef or even Zoe bay depending on wind and weather.

### **Day 2/3.**

Following the coast, we head north into stunning Zoe Bay with the verdant backdrop of Mount Bowen (1142 metres) and the Thumb. Here we can explore the rainforest, following Zoe Creek up to the refreshing clear pools of Zoe Falls. A relaxing swim and early lunch is

enjoyed before we continue along the coast where our days paddle finishes at sheltered Agnes Beach campsite.

On these days we paddle past many secluded little coves and beaches hidden along the rocky coastline, the escarpments of the Mt Bowen massif always present to instil that wild island impression. We paddle the length of Ramsey Bay curving north then head for Cape Sandwich the most easterly point on Hinchinbrook Island. Rounding Cape Sandwich is one of our crux moves for the trip and can involve some specific timing regarding wind and swell. The high sand dunes and sparse vegetation of this part of the island contrast greatly with the craggy grandeur of the previous days paddling. We end our days at Banksia Beach and Sunset Beach with a sunset drink and a delicious meal.

#### **Day 4.**

Heading towards the northern point of the island we paddle across scenic Shepard Bay towards Cape Richards where the pandanus and casuarinas seem to defy the elements by surviving on these exposed rocky headlands. After picnic lunching on beautiful Orchid Beach we paddle around the northern headland of Hinchinbrook Island and make a short crossing to Goold Island's sheltered beaches. That night we camp on beautiful Goold Island which affords great views, excellent beachcombing and if tides are right, a look at ancient fish traps.

#### **Day 5.**

We set off leaving Hinchinbrook and Goold Islands behind us heading north. This is our longest open water crossing to the verdant rainforest isles of the Family Island Group. These tiny islands are surrounded in fringing reef with white sandy beaches. The sheltered campground of Wheeler Island offers beautiful views back towards Hinchinbrook's lofty peaks and west to view the sunset over mainland Australia.

#### **Day 6.**

Our last day on the water has a leisurely start as we leave Wheeler Island to pass Bedarra and Timana Islands, two of the eleven that make up the Family Islands. Dunk Island is the most well-known of these islands and the last Island stop of our expedition (weather dependent) before returning to Australia and landing at Mission Beach for our final delicious lunch together. The end

**For further information or booking please contact our office. We look forward to paddling with you 😊**