



Eastern Australia: Icons, Reef, and Rainforest

Highlights of a 12 day trip to Australia

BY RENEE VAN DRENT 3.29.2016

Designed by Cox & Kings Asia & the Pacific Destination Manager Renee Van Drent, this spectacular journey along the eastern coast of Australia begins in the cosmopolitan city of Sydney, where you'll explore parks and gardens and visit the iconic opera house. Then you'll head north to tropical Brisbane and the beautiful landscapes of Fraser Island, which you'll discover on thrilling 4WD adventures. Continue on to spend some time in a resort on pretty Airlie Beach, fly to the magical Whitsunday Islands, and venture deep into the oldest rainforest in the world, which lies just inland from the Great Barrier Reef.



DAY 1 - ARRIVE IN SYDNEY

Upon arrival in **Sydney**, you will be welcomed by your Cox & Kings local representative and escorted to your hotel. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to relax and indulge in some of the amenities of the [Park Hyatt Sydney](#), your home for the next two nights.

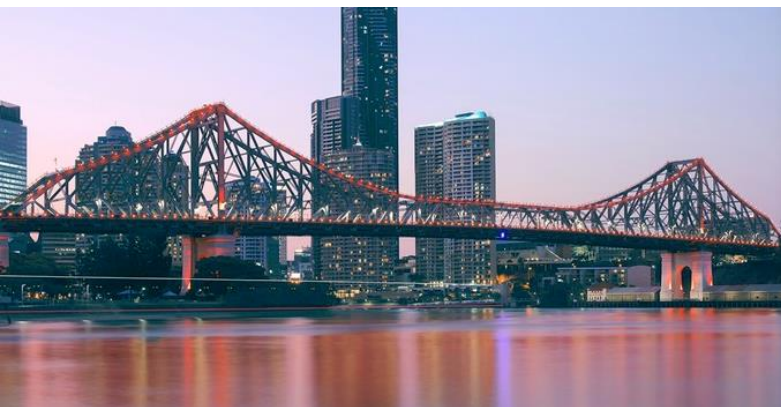
DAY 2 - PRIVATE TOUR OF SYDNEY

This morning, explore the highlights of Sydney on a private tour. See the **Botanical Gardens** and **Hyde Park**, and learn about the chair carved out of a rock ledge for the governor's wife to gaze upon the harbor. Then take a private tour of the **Sydney Opera House**, which has become a familiar symbol of the city recognized around the world.



DAY 3 - TO BRISBANE

In the morning, head to the airport for your flight to **Brisbane**. No longer a town in the country, Queensland's capital and Australia's third largest city has become an exciting metropolis set on the banks of the Brisbane River. See the city from the water on a **cruise**, then stroll through the gardens of the **South Bank** and visit some of the city's **museums and galleries**.



DAYS 4 TO 6 - FRASER ISLAND

Day 4: Enjoy a privately guided tour of the famed **Australia Zoo**, which boasts an incredible collection of the country's unique fauna. Continue to **River Heads** where you board the ferry and cross Hervey Bay en route to **Fraser Island** where you'll spend the next two nights at the [Kingfisher Bay Resort](#).

Day 5: Embark on a **private 4WD tour** through the sand dunes and forests of Fraser Island. Drive along the sands of one of Australia's prettiest beaches, see the sparkling turquoise waters and volcanic rock of the **Champagne Pools**, watch for **sharks** and **sea turtles** off Indian Head, and marvel at a giant dune sweeping down into the emerald **Lake Wabby**.

Day 6: Start your day with more off-road explorations of Fraser Island, including visits to the clear waters of **Lake McKenzie**, the rainforest of **Central Station** and the sandy forests of **Pile Valley**. Return to the dock for your ferry ride back to the mainland and on to the beachfront [Mercure Capricorn Resort](#).





DAY 7 - TO AIRLIE BEACH

Enjoy a leisurely morning at your resort. Stroll along the beaches or out around the headlands of **Bluff Point**, which offers beautiful views of the Pacific. This afternoon, embark on a scenic journey to **Airlie Beach** along the coast road and your home for the next three nights, the [Coral Sea Resort](#).



DAY 8 - AIRLIE BEACH

Relax and recharge amid the pristine natural landscape of your Airlie Beach resort, which sits directly on the beach and is just a short walk away from charming **Airlie Beach village**. Take a stroll along the fine sand, enjoy a swim in the crystal-clear waters, visit the boutiques in town and marvel at the stunning views.



DAY 9 - WHITEHAVEN BEACH

After breakfast this morning, head to Whitsunday Airport and take to the skies on your half-day air tour to **Whitehaven Beach**, an idyllic stretch of white sand bordering the cerulean waters of a lagoon. Enjoy a blissful morning on what has often been described as one of the finest beaches in the entire world.



DAY 10 - PORT DOUGLAS

Enjoy a day of transport on the sea and in the air en route to **Cairns** and **Port Douglas**, the gateway to the **Great Barrier Reef**. Upon arrival, relax and enjoy the evening at leisure before retiring at your hotel for the night, the [Peninsula Boutique Hotel](#).

DAY 11- PORT DOUGLAS

Take a full-day guided excursion into the oldest rainforest in the world. The UNESCO World Heritage **Daintree Rainforest** is considered a time capsule of the earth's evolution as it contains several of the most ancient and extinct ferns and plants. Despite covering only 0.1 percent of Australia's landmass, the Daintree is home to one third of Australia's reptiles and nearly three quarters of its butterfly species.

DAYS 12 & 13 - GREAT BARRIER REEF

Day 12: Enjoy the day at leisure. If you like, the incredible **Great Barrier Reef** is nearby. It's the perfect spot to do some snorkelling or scuba diving along the world's longest barrier reef.

Day 13: Bid farewell to Australia this morning as you are escorted to the Cairns airport for your onward flight.