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Australia's Brisbane & Queensland



Synopsis

Following are a few paragraphs from this inspiring and astonishingly detailed guide. The author, a native Australian, covers everything you might want to know about Queensland - guaranteed! The places to stay in every part of Queensland, from budget to luxury, rentals to B&Bs, the restaurants, from fast food to the highest quality, the beachwalks and bushwalks, the wildlife and how to see it, exploring the country by air, on water, by bike, and every other way. The immense state of Queensland nearly takes up Australia's entire northeastern quadrant, stretching from halfway up the rough-chiseled east coast all the way to the middle of the Gulf of Carpentaria. With a landmass of 1,727,200 sq km, it's the second-largest state after Western Australia, and it encompasses every environment imaginable. To the east, golden beaches and touristy surf towns are cloaked in thick swathes of rainforest, and fronted by palm-fringed islands in clear, azure bays. The verdant greenery runs right over the rugged Great Dividing Range, ending in high, windswept central plains and stark-red, dusty western deserts. This is Australia's holiday state, with a Florida-style beach culture and more than 300 sunny days every year. There's a ton to do for anyone and everyone, from just lazing on the sand to finding physical challenges galore. Hiking, watching wildlife, skydiving, and spelunking provide just a few tastes off the menu of grand land adventures, which are linked by scenic train and cable-car journeys, meandering back-road drives, and sprawling desert explorations. On the water, there are endless choices for sailing and kayaking, surfing, snorkeling, and diving along the coast and through the Great Barrier Reef. It's the most popular vacation spot in the country because everything's here: nature, culture, history, and adventure, all conveniently set upon a framework of modern towns and wrapped up in some of the world's wildest environments. Brisbane, the state capital, sits 15 mi/25 km inland from the Pacific along the banks of the serpentine Brisbane River. It's a perfectly modern city today, with glittering high-rise buildings and an abundance of green park areas, a surrounding of hilly suburbs, and a wealth of adventure opportunities. To the south, the Gold Coast continues in a line of hotels, restaurants, bars, and beaches; to the north, the Sunshine Coast is equally touristy, but more refined. Small coastal towns like Hervey Bay, Bundaberg, Gladstone, and Rockhampton are major sightseeing spots and exit points to Queensland's famous offshore islands. Rockhampton, at the Tropic of Capricorn, roughly ends the southern third of Queensland, the region covered by this chapter. Head west of the coast from Brisbane to Rockhampton, and you'll find the scenic tropical forests covering the Great Dividing Range. Keep going, and you'll hit the gemfields, full of gold, rubies, sapphires, and other goodies. Past here, you're into the red Outback deserts. If there's one thing about Queensland, you'll never be bored for lack of new things to see or new adventures to try. And if you

can choose just one destination in Australia, this power-packed state will give you the most for your money and time. The Land: Queensland may be massive, but its very different environments can be neatly divided into a half-dozen unique sectors which together hold some 3.5-million citizens. Although the state is so big it's been broken into three separate regions for this book, a general rundown of the varying outdoor scenes is covered here. You'll find a more detailed look at the land, flora, and fauna of the central and northern areas in the two following chapters. The coast, of course, is the primary focus of most visitors to Queensland, a landscape laced with clean white beaches, sparkling blue bays, and perfect, rolling surfines often punctuated by high, rocky outcrops and dizzying cliffs.

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