

Fraser Island and Whale Watching

Dates: Saturday, 9th August to Sunday, 17th August 2008 (9 days)
Cost: \$1,900 **Style:** Camping **Start and Finish:** Brisbane

Fraser Island is to the sand masses of the world what the Great Barrier Reef is to the world's coral reefs. It features expansive beaches, majestic forests (including rainforest), magically clear lakes, spectacular variegated cliffs and diverse vegetation, all in sand. Its World Heritage status is based on its outstanding aesthetic qualities and its most impressive geomorphic features such as sandblows, which have been likened to glaciers. This safari coincides with the annual migration of humpback whales through Hervey Bay. Tour Maryborough to discover its heritage buildings with a vernacular architecture, unique to Queensland.

Fraser Island: Covering 184,000 hectares, Fraser Island stretches in length 123 kms and averages 14 kms in breadth. Dunes reach 240 metres in height. It has evolved over several episodes of fluctuations in the sea levels during the last 800,000 or more years into the most complex dune system in the world. Dune types range from parabolic and transverse dunes to parallel beach ridges and complex lake lunettes. This safari will attempt to traverse and interpret them all.

Guide: John Sinclair has been an indefatigable campaigner for the protection of Fraser Island for over 35 years. He knows Fraser Island better than any other person. He has written a number of books including "Discovering Fraser Island and Cooloola" and his autobiography "Fighting for Fraser Island", with Peter Corris. He is keen to share his knowledge and show off its most impressive features. Discover the wonderful values of this great natural wonder of the world and share John's passion for it.

Style: This camping safari travels in a convoy of four 4WD Toyota Land Cruisers. While little walking is essential, there are good opportunities for both walking and swimming.

Draft Itinerary

Day 1; Saturday, 9th August: Depart Roma Street, Brisbane, at 7.30 am. Travel to Fraser Island via Rainbow Beach then via the Southern Lakes stopping at the burgundy coloured Lake Boomanjin and the crystal clear Lake Birrabeen before establishing our camp in the rainforest. Camp: Central Station.

Day 2; Sunday, 10th August: Visit some of the island's most popular and iconic features— Lake McKenzie & McKenzie's Jetty before stopping at majestic Pile Valley to walk along Wanggoolba Creek, one of most interesting walks on the island. Camp: Central Station.

Day 3; Monday, 11th August: Explore the "Valley of the Giants" where the world's largest *Syncarpia* and tallowwoods grow and the site of the Aboriginal mission (1897-1905) at Bogimbah Creek as well as the mangroves of Great Sandy Strait. Return to camp. Camp: Central Station.

Day 4; Tuesday, 12th August: Travel to Wabby Lakes to take one of the most interesting walks on the island to appreciate sandblow dynamics then proceed up the beach to Eli Creek, Maheno, and coloured sands. Camp: Kgari

Day 5; Wednesday, 13th August: Top End Run to discover the wild grandeur of Sandy Cape, Breaksea Spit and Flinders Sandblow. Also visit Orchid Beach, Ocean Lake, a typical window lake and thee rugged rocky headlands. Indian Head, Middle Rocks and Waddy Point are the western extremities of an ancient volcano. Camp: Kgari

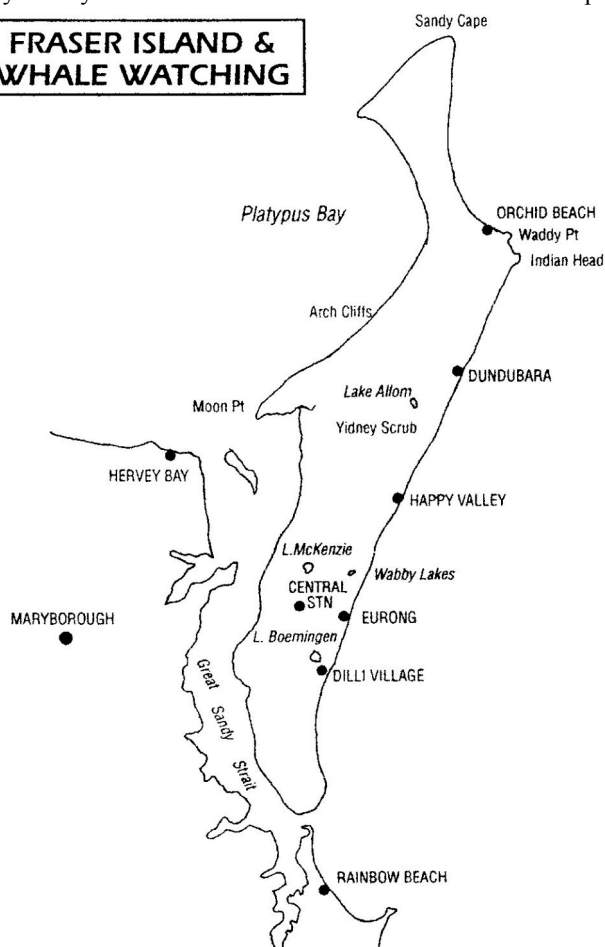
Day 6; Thursday, 14th August: Break camp and do a transect of the island's dune systems. Stop at Knifeblade Sandblow and Lake Allom, a magnificent perched lake set in the rainforest for lunch s short rainforest walk and a swim on the way to the western beach. Camp: Arch Cliffs.

Day 7; Friday, 15th August: Bowarrady Walk: Either relax in camp and keep an eye out for the whales which can be seen from the beach here or take a very pleasant 26 kilometre hike to Lake Bowarrady or part thereof. This is our last night of camping and when safarists usually deliver their party pieces after dinner. Camp: Arch Cliffs.

Day 8; Saturday, 16th August: The tides ensure that this will be a very relaxed start to the day in a wonderful setting. Make a morning excursion north to Wathumba Creek. Break camp in time to catch the 4.30 pm Moon Point ferry to Hervey Bay. Accom: Bay View Motel, Hervey Bay.

Day 9; Sunday, 17th August: Take a morning cruise to Platypus Bay where playful humpback whales often play around the boat. Then back ashore we travel to Maryborough to view the vernacular architecture of Maryborough, John Sinclair's home town, which has the best assemblage of Queensland houses. After lunch return to Brisbane via the Mary Valley. Arrive Brisbane about 6.30 pm.

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NOTE: This itinerary is a guide only. It has to be flexible and is subject to variation due to tides, weather conditions and any limitations imposed by Fraser Island's managers.