

# Townsville & Magnetic Island

**Townsville is a city on the mid north coast of Queensland, approximately 1,300 kilometres north of Brisbane and 350 kilometres south of Cairns. The central section of the spectacular Great Barrier Reef, as well as the idyllic tropical paradise of Magnetic Island, lies just off the shore of Townsville.**

Townsville is also surrounded by hinterlands of tropical rainforests and cascading waterfalls and has a population of approximately 143,328 people. Townsville is the sunniest city on the Queensland coast (Magnetic Island averages over 320 days of sunshine per year). Townsville is most well known on the tourist circuit for its proximity to Magnetic Island. Ferries run daily to this idyllic island, where you can snorkel, kayak, bushwalk or sunbake to your heart's content! A wide range of accommodation is available in Townsville, from hotels and resorts through to the casino, motels/motor inns, self contained apartments, budget accommodation and backpacker hostels. This tropical cosmopolitan city features an array of cafes, bars, restaurants, nightclubs, a casino and shops. 'Maggie Island' as it's known by locals, also offers hotels, camping facilities and a fantastic waterfront backpacker hostel.

## Sights & Attractions

Townsville lies on the shores of Cleveland Bay, with several large beaches and continually shifting sand bars, while the Ross River flows gently through the city. The central city skyline is dominated by a mass of red granite called Castle Hill, 292 metres high (just 8 metres short of being a mountain). There is a lookout at the summit giving breathtaking views of the city, Cleveland Bay and Magnetic Island. There are a number of parks scattered throughout the city, including three sensational botanical gardens (the Palmetum, Anderson Park, and Queens Gardens).

Popular attractions accessible from Townsville include Magnetic Island, "Reef HQ" (the world's largest living coral reef aquarium holding many of the Great Barrier Reef's native flora and fauna), the Museum of Tropical Queensland, the Billabong Sanctuary (learn all about Australia's native wildlife), and many other cultural and heritage attractions such as the Brolga Dreaming Aboriginal Centre. Visitors can also enjoy visiting 'The Strand' (a long tropical beach) and Riverway (a riverfront parkland attraction located on the banks of Ross River).

Magnetic Island is just 8 kilometres offshore of Townsville to the north of the city centre (20 minutes by fast "Cat" across Cleveland Bay from Townsville). 'Maggie' is a beautiful island boasting pristine national parkland, a variety of holiday resorts and budget accommodation, and a permanent resident population of just 2500 people. Over half of the Island's 5,184 hectares is magnificent National Park, with Mt Cook in the centre rising to 497 metres. Discover secluded beaches and 24 kilometres of walking tracks that wind through the park (with spectacular

lookouts to fully appreciate the fantastic views). The National Park on Magnetic Island is home for a variety of wildlife such as rock wallabies, possums, koalas and birds.

## Climate

Townsville has an average daily temperature between 19.7 °C (Degrees Celsius) to 28.8 °C. December is the warmest month of the year with daily temperatures ranging from 24 °C to 31.4 °C. July is the coolest month with daily temperatures ranging from 13.5 °C to 25 °C. Townsville experiences an annual average of 8.4 hours of sunshine per day. Maggie Island's climate is very similar to Townsville.

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