

# Diver's Utopia



## Suggested itinerary duration:

9 - 12 nights, plus a night or two at your arrival or departure destination as desired.

The Australian coastline covers some 25,000 kilometres and is surrounded by many thousands of fringing islands and reefs. Three of Australia's most outstanding coral reefs, all World Heritage Listed, are the Great Barrier Reef, the fringing Ningaloo Reef and the barrier reef at Lord Howe Island - each a dream discovery for divers and snorkellers of all ages.

From Cairns Airport, 1hr scenic flight to Lizard Island.

## 1 Lizard Island

Great Barrier Reef, Queensland

**Lizard Island** is located right alongside the World Heritage listed **Great Barrier Reef**, 240 kilometres north of Cairns. Boasting 24 powdery-white beaches, over 1000 hectares of national park, understated island luxe suites, outstanding dive and snorkel spots and the bluest of clear blue ocean views from every angle.

### What will I do there?

- Cod Hole – accessible via Lizard's purpose-built dive boat, the MV Serranidae, this world famous dive destination is known for its giant potato cod but is also home to a plentiful array of other marine creatures and is a magnificent dive experience.
- Mrs Watsons Bay – this shallow dive (or snorkel) provides an extraordinary view of the enormous 100 year-old giant clams spread across the seabed.
- Night Diving - an afternoon dive familiarises divers with the site, and following a surface break, a night dive then provides a unique opportunity to see nocturnal marine animals.

3 nights



1hr flight to Cairns Airport, 3hr flight to Sydney Airport, overnight in Sydney, next day, 2hr flight to Lord Howe Island Airport, 5min hosted drive to Capella Lodge.

## 2 Capella Lodge

Lord Howe Island, New South Wales

Inspired by the Australian beach-house, **Capella Lodge** is **Lord Howe Island's** celebrated luxury retreat. Protected as a marine park for over a century, the crescent-shaped island cradles the world's southern-most coral reef, home to a mix of temperate and tropical marine life.

### What will I do there?

- Ball's Pyramid – the world's tallest rock stack and one for the must-dive list. Expect to see massive schools of violet sweep, amberjack, silver drummer, ballina angelfish, rainbow runners and occasionally marlin, dolphins and wahoo. The dive sites average 25m in depth and range from drift dives, cave dives or simply following a coral wall.
- Deacon's Delight – discovered in 2008 this 'new' reef rivals some of the best dive sites around Lord Howe. Carpets of mauve soft corals are home to a variety of species; Galapagos reef shark, schools of blue streak fusiliers, trevally, kingfish, butterfly fish and the rare harlequin tuskfish.
- Malabar Landslide – long swim throughs with a pair of small caves at the beginning of the dive makes it a memorable navigational dive. Lookout for coral crayfish, large Spanish dancers, and silver sweetlips.

3 nights



5min transfer to Lord Howe Island Airport, 2hr flight to Sydney Airport, 5hr flight to Perth. Overnight in Perth, next day, 2hr flight to Exmouth (Learmonth Airport) 1.5hr drive to Sal Salis.

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## Sal Salis

Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia

3 nights

Home to luxe coastal camp **Sal Salis**, the **Ningaloo Reef** offers over 500 species of fish, 250 species of coral, and 600 species of molluscs. It is also a major breeding area for hawksbill, green and loggerhead turtles, which can be seen in the waters in front of the camp.

### What will I do there?

- Swim with whale sharks - technically not a dive, but must be mentioned, as the Ningaloo coast is known as one of the best places on earth to see and swim with whale sharks and manta rays (mid March - July).
- Exmouth Navy Pier - voted as one of the top ten dive sites in Australia, it has a maximum depth of 14 metres and is right next door to Bundegi Reef. The pier has been closed to fishing for a number of years so is an underwater playground for wobbegong sharks, white-tip reef sharks, large cods and groupers, stonefish, scorpionfish, lionfish, anglerfish, moray eels, frogfish, octopuses, trevally, barracuda the list goes on.
- Ningaloo Reef - discover dive spots along some 260km in length, teeming with fish, octopuses, eels, turtles, manta rays and abundant corals.



*Optional* - For the true dive junkie add a heli-diving excursion over the Great Barrier Reef to the beginning of this trip with a stay at qualia.

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## qualia

Great Barrier Reef, Queensland

3 nights

**qualia**, located on the secluded northern tip of Hamilton Island, surrounded by the beauty of the Whitsunday Islands and **Great Barrier Reef**, this world-class resort immerses you in a sophisticated, sensory and relaxed atmosphere.

### What will I do there?

- Heli-dive - fly to Reefworld by helicopter to dive the Great Barrier Reef, with stunning aerial views of Heart Reef, Whitehaven Beach and the Whitsunday Passage en route.
- Bait Reef Marine Park - one of the most spectacular sites of the region offering underwater canyons, vertical stepping stones, shallow lagoons with an abundance of coral gardens and marine life.
- Black Reef - accessed via boat, soft corals walls inhabit alongside hard coral gardens, home to the always-inquisitive Maori wrasse as well as octopus, turtles, reef sharks, and rays.



*Did you know?* The Great Barrier Reef is the only living thing on earth visible from space.

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