

SSV AUSTRALIA-QUEENSLAND

WHITSUNDAY ISLANDS KAYAK ADVENTURE

SIX DAY WHITEHAVEN BEACH & HOOK ISLAND BASE CAMP





THE TRIP

Located in the heart of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the Whitsundays are an archipelago of 74 islands abundant in vibrant fringing coral reefs, incredible marine life and turquoise waters. This six-day adventure combines two of our finest island base camps into one tropical exploration. Our first night is spent at our Airlie Beach group hotel where we will provide a thorough briefing on what to expect of your time in the Islands.

The first two nights in the Islands are spent camping on the iconic white silica sands of Whitehaven Beach on Whitsunday Island. From this base camp, we explore Haslewood Island, Solway Passage and the world-renowned Hill Inlet lookout. We then head north to a second base camp at Maureen's Cove on Hook Island, a prized spot for its uninterrupted views over the fringing reef out to the Coral Sea. From our camp we paddle to Butterfly Bay, Black and Langford Islands and the celebrated snorkelling sites of Mantaray and Luncheon Bays.

With only two camps to set up and a water taxi directly to each site, we enjoy more time for our water and land explorations. Our enthusiastic and skilled kayak guides and expert cooks, will show adventurers the best of the Whitsundays on an island getaway of unforgettable beauty.

TRIP DETAILS

2027 Dates: 30 May-4 Jun, 20-25 Jun, 11-16 Jul, 22-27 Aug, 5-10 Sep, 3-8 Oct.

Location: Whitsunday Islands, Queensland, Australia

Camps: Whitehaven Beach (Whitsunday Is.) & Maureen's Cove (Hook Is.)

Hotel: One night, Airlie Beach (mid-trip)

Grade: Easy to Moderate

Trip cost: AU\$3,950.00 per person

Group Size: Minimum six and maximum 16 participants.

A QUICK ITINERARY

B = Breakfast • L = Lunch • D = Dinner.

Day 1: Meet the group at your Airlie Beach. Hotel.

Day 2: Transfer to Whitsunday Island. Camping B • L • D

Day 3: Kayak and snorkel Whitsunday Island. Camping B • L • D

Day 4: Morning kayaking. Transfer to Hook Island. Camping B • L • D

Day 5: Kayak and snorkel around Hook Island. Camping. B • L • D

Day 6: Morning outing. Transfer to mainland. End of trip. B • L



HOW TO GET THERE

The closest airport to our start point of Airlie Beach is Whitsunday Coast Airport (also called Proserpine Airport – PPP), located 40km south of Airlie Beach. An airport shuttle bus is usually the most economical way to transfer from the airport to Airlie Beach. Whitsunday Transit meets all incoming and departing flights from the Whitsunday Coast Airport. A transfer to Airlie Beach takes about 45 minutes at a cost of around \$20–\$25 one way, and bookings can be made via whitsundaytransit.com.au. Other transfer companies include Airlie Airport Bus and Heart of Reef Shuttles. If flying into or out of Hamilton Island (airport code HTI), Cruise Whitsundays operates a ferry service to the Port of Airlie on the mainland. If coming by vehicle, Airlie Beach is a 12.5-hour drive north from Brisbane (1100km) and 7.5 hours south from Cairns (625km). Queensland Rail's 'Spirit of Queensland' train and Greyhound and Premier coaches also service the region.

KAYAKING PROGRAM AND FITNESS REQUIREMENTS

Sea kayaking is an activity that anyone with a moderate level of fitness can enjoy and it's often compared to brisk walking or cycling. While previous kayaking experience isn't necessary, it is important to have a sound level of fitness and, most importantly, a sense of adventure. The degree of difficulty on any trip will depend on weather conditions, so flexibility and a positive attitude are key. Our trips cater to both frequent paddlers and those new to the sport, and we take pride in introducing people to the joy of paddling. To ensure the highest safety and to maximise the experience of the group as a whole, we primarily use double kayaks. Single kayaks are offered on request, subject to approval and demonstration of experience appropriate to the trip; the overall configuration of the group is at the discretion of the guide.

MONEY MATTERS

Included in the trip

- One night's hotel accommodation in Airlie Beach (Day 1).
- Transfer from accommodation in Airlie Beach to Shute Harbour (Day 2).
- Water taxi transport to and from both island base camps.
- Transfer from Shute Harbour to Airlie Beach on the final return (Day 6).
- All meals and snacks from breakfast on Day 1 to lunch on Day 6.
- All kayaking, group camping equipment and tents.
- Sleeping mat and sleeping bag (bring your own if you prefer).
- Snorkelling gear and stinger suits.
- Dry bags for your personal gear.
- Experienced guides.
- All Park, reef and camping permits.

Not included in the trip

- Flights, transport and transfers to/from Airlie Beach / Hamilton Island.
- Pre-trip accommodation and meals in Airlie Beach (the night before Day 1).
- Dinner in Airlie Beach on Day 1 (the hotel night).
- Accommodation and dinner in Airlie Beach on Day 6.
- Travel insurance (strongly recommended).

ITINERARY

The following itinerary should be seen as a guide only as it can vary due to weather, sea conditions, tides, paddlers' ability and transport logistics. Our guides have excellent knowledge of the area and will plan the best alternative route if necessary. Please note paddling distances and times are approximate only.

DAY 1: Make your way to the group hotel accommodation, Mantra Club Croc, located just five minutes drive out of Airlie Beach town in Cannonvale. Room check in is from 2pm. The day is at your own leisure until the meeting with your kayak guide at 5pm at the hotel. During the meeting, your guide will hand out dry bags, show you how and what to pack, confirm the pick up time for the next morning and answer any questions. Luggage not required during the kayak trip can either be stored at the hotel if you're returning for a stay post trip, or at our base in Shute Harbour. Your dry bags should be packed and ready for your pick up the following morning.

Many people choose to arrive in Airlie Beach a day or two before the trip to give them time to relax and enjoy the amazing location. From Cannonvale, there is a boardwalk which leads along the seafront into Airlie Beach town, about a 25 minute walk. Airlie Beach has a large lagoon, with sea views and conveniently situated on the ocean side of the main street. Additionally, there are some amazing, easily accessible walking trails in Airlie Beach and surrounds, plus an assortment of great cafes and restaurants.

NO MEALS INCLUDED / OVERNIGHT MANTRA CLUB CROC

DAY 2: You'll be picked up from your Airlie Beach hotel this morning (the exact time will be confirmed closer to departure as it is tide-related) and transferred to our kayak base at Shute Harbour, about a 15-minute drive. At the base your guides who will organise equipment and prepare you for the expedition. Paddlers, kayaks and supplies are then transported by water taxi to stunning Whitehaven Beach, on the southeast of Whitsunday Island. On arrival we set up our first base camp, followed by a picnic lunch on the scenic white-sand beach. After a thorough briefing we launch the kayaks and paddle to nearby Haslewood Island, where the snorkelling sites of Chalkie's Beach and Windy Bay offer a stunning mix of colourful fringing coral gardens and prolific marine life including schools of electric blue damsels, angel and butterfly fish. Returning to camp, we relax on the beach for our first island sunset, followed by a delicious dinner. Paddling distance today is approximately six kilometres (1–1.25 hours).

B • L • D / CAMPING ON WHITEHAVEN BEACH, WHITSUNDAY ISLAND

DAY 3: After packing what we need for the day, we launch the kayaks and paddle through the Solway Passage to Teague Island, south of Haslewood Island. Here we explore a range of snorkel sites including Teague Reef, where brain corals and giant clams (with their brightly coloured mantles of blues, greens and pinks) may be spotted. If conditions permit, we may paddle a full circumnavigation of Haslewood Island, approximately 22 kilometres. Once back at camp, and if time allows, we stretch our legs on one of the walking trails from the Whitehaven Campground: the 1.2km Solway Circuit climbs through grass trees, cycads and rock ferns with sensational views over Solway Passage; the 3.6km Chance Bay Walk winds through forest and woodlands to a secluded white-silica bay and the newer Headland Track offers stunning views across Whitehaven's 8km shoreline. We return to camp for dinner under a multitude of stars.

B • L • D / CAMPING ON WHITEHAVEN BEACH, WHITSUNDAY ISLAND

DAY 4: After breakfast we launch the kayaks for today's adventure. Whitehaven Beach stretches for seven kilometres and its white silica sands form a perfect backdrop as we paddle north along the coastline, usually with the assistance of the south-easterly trade winds at our backs. We stop off near the entrance of Hill Inlet for a swim and a walk to the world-renowned lookout with its breathtaking views (search for green sea turtles and stingrays). After an early lunch we return south to the campground to pack up for our transfer aboard the fast water taxi to Maureen's Cove on Hook Island's northern coast — our second base camp. The campsite is known for its natural beauty and peaceful setting, with a small creek meandering to the bay and pandanus and beach gardenias providing shelter. On arrival we set up camp, and if time and tide permit we may snorkel the reef edge before a delicious meal prepared by the guides followed by a tranquil Whitsunday sunset. Paddling distance today is approximately 14 kilometres (4–4.5 hours).

B • L • D / CAMPING AT MAUREEN'S COVE, HOOK ISLAND

DAY 6: After packing what we need for the day, we set out westward to explore two remarkable sites — Baia Hai (Black) Island and Langford Island. Black Island is renowned for its striking volcanic landscape and vibrant fringing reef, which attracts large parrot fish and coral trout throughout the coral gardens. Langford Island is a sparkling jewel of the Whitsundays, famed for the long sand spit that stretches into the turquoise sea — a perfect spot for a picnic lunch, with coral gardens and nearby seagrass beds that often attract turtles. If time allows, we take the short walking trail to the Langford Island lookout, where native Whitsunday bottle trees frame spectacular views across Black Island, Hook Island and the Langford sand spit. We return to Maureen's Cove in the afternoon to relax and enjoy dinner under the stars.

B • L • D / CAMPING AT MAUREEN'S COVE, HOOK ISLAND

DAY 6: After breakfast we launch the kayaks and explore the northeast coast of Hook Island, including Luncheon Bay, Mantaray Bay and the Pinnacles — a region known for its coral diversity and calm, sheltered waters. Luncheon Bay features rocky outcrops covered in beautiful soft corals, black coral trees, gorgonians and sea whips, while Mantaray Bay is dubbed 'the Aquarium' for its abundance of fish life, from Maori wrasse and giant trevally to batfish and thousands of yellow-tail fusiliers. Returning to camp, there's time for a short hike through Butterfly Valley or a last snorkel before packing up for the return journey. A fast vessel collects the group, kayaks and gear for the trip back to Shute Harbour, where we unpack and collect any stored luggage. For those heading back to Airlie Beach, a complimentary transfer is included. Accommodation and dinner tonight are not included in the trip cost.

B • L / END OF TRIP ARRANGEMENTS



CLIMATE

Our trip departure dates range from June through to early October, the typical dry season in tropical north Queensland. Expect average maximum daytime temperatures of 22–26°C, with minimums of 18–21°C and an average sea temperature around 23°C. The south-easterly trade winds typically move along the coast at this time of year, with our morning departures taking advantage of the lighter breezes. Generally the sea conditions are calm, however there may be wind chop if the breeze is up, and light rain showers can occur anytime. When on the ocean ensure you have good protection against the elements, including sunscreen, a hat and a lightweight wind/rainproof jacket. Stinger suits are provided for safety.

TRIP ORGANISATION

The sun rises and sets quickly in the tropics, so paddling days start and finish early to take advantage of cooler temperatures and lighter winds. It's a good idea to pack your dry bags before breakfast so that loading for departure can be organised. We like to be on the water before 9:00am and arrive back into camp mid-afternoon. The group will kayak at the speed of the slowest members, and a successful trip relies on teamwork — helping lift kayaks, unloading boats and setting up tents. Afternoons are generally at your own leisure, though guides may suggest escorted walks for those who'd like to explore more.

EXPEDITION STAFF AND SAFETY

Your guides are highly experienced sea kayakers who love to share wilderness experiences. They are experienced in trip logistics, local knowledge and expedition organisation. All guides are qualified in first aid and CPR. For communication, your guides carry a satellite phone and radio and check in with the base daily. Safety equipment carried includes a first aid kit, flares, defibrillator and oxygen bottle. If you have any questions or concerns during the trip, please do not hesitate to talk to your guide.

MEALS

Your guide will prepare delicious and hearty meals during the expedition. Breakfasts include cereal, fruit, breads, coffee, tea and one cooked item such as eggs. Lunches are usually beachside picnics of salads and sandwiches. Dinners are a gourmet affair, usually with a tropical theme, and may start with dips, cheese and crackers, followed by a main and dessert. Fresh, clean drinking water is supplied on the trip, however, no alcohol is permitted during water-based activities. Space in the kayaks is limited and large-volume drinks like beer and cider will not fit (please avoid glass containers). For vegetarians and those with special dietary requirements we are happy to make the necessary arrangements — please advise our office on booking.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is highly recommended that all participants purchase a personal comprehensive travel insurance policy. Please make sure your policy covers lost monies in the event that you need to cancel due to illness or injury before or after the trip departure date. Australian residents should note: under the Federal Government Medicare Act it is prohibited for any domestic travel insurance product to provide financial reimbursement for ambulance or air ambulance services. We advise clients to take specific cover for ambulance services through the respective State Ambulance Service providers or their private health insurance.

TIME AND COMMUNICATION

Queensland and the Whitsunday Islands are always on Australian Eastern Standard Time (there is no daylight saving). There is mobile coverage on the trip but it varies between locations. If you're arriving into the Whitsundays via Airlie Beach you will find full phone reception on the mainland. Once we head out to the islands, reception will vary. Telstra is the main carrier service. We ask all participants to switch their phones to silent for the comfort and peace of others. There is no electricity to charge phones while camping.

THE WHITSUNDAY ISLANDS, PEOPLE AND NATURE

With over 70 islands stretching from Bowen in the north to the Repulse Islands in the south, the Whitsunday group is part of Australia's largest offshore island chain, known as the Cumberland group. All the islands and their surrounding waters have international protection as part of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. The rocky islands are continental islands, once part of the continent of Australia. The Whitsundays and the neighbouring coastal fringe are the traditional home of the Ngaro Aboriginal people, also known as the 'Canoe People', who mastered the sea using distinctive three-piece canoes. Archaeological research shows the Ngaro inhabited the Whitsundays for at least the past 9,000 years, with evidence including stone tools on South Molle Island, numerous fish traps throughout the islands, and rock art at Nara Inlet on Hook Island. The name Whitsundays comes from Captain James Cook, who navigated the east coast in 1770 and named the passage after the day he thought it was. The islands are home to six species of sea turtle, migrating humpback whales, manta rays and reef fish, as well as sea eagles, ospreys and curlews, with wallabies, kangaroos and goannas ashore.

CONSERVATION

It has always been our motto that "we take only photographs and leave only footprints". We are keenly aware of the ecology of the areas we visit and try to limit our impact. We ask that each person takes out everything they bring in, including wrappers, batteries and all plastics. Please use reef-safe sunscreen that exclusively lists zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide as active ingredients and do not contain parabens, triclosan, triclocarban or phenoxyethanol.

WASHING AND TOILET FACILITIES

Our campsites are scenic but basic. There are no shower facilities and only occasionally will you have the chance to wash with fresh water. All campsites have established toilets managed by the Department of Parks and Wildlife.

MEDICAL MATTERS

Trip participants are required to provide a full and accurately completed online medical questionnaire. For those aged 70 years or over, a doctor's sign-off or letter is required stating your fitness for a multi-day kayak trip. Sea kayaking requires being active for most of the day and all participants must have a good level of physical fitness.

Please advise us of any side effects of medication you take and of any related dietary requirements, and let your guide know of any drugs to which you are allergic. If you are anaphylactic, you will need to supply and carry two EpiPens.

Hygiene

In wilderness areas good hygiene is essential — wash your hands after using the toilet and before eating. Your guide will have soap and water available.

Vaccinations

Due to the chance of cuts and scratches, we strongly advise that you're up to date with your tetanus vaccine.

Medical supplies to bring:

- Sunscreen (water resistant, at least SP30 and reef safe).
- Lip protectant (high SPF).
- Band-aid strips.
- Compeed (or similar) blister protection.
- Insect repellent (DEET is generally more effective in the tropics).
- A mild anti-nausea drug if concerned about sea sickness.
- Paracetamol or equivalent headache remedy.
- A mild antiseptic soap / liquid hand wash.

PACKING LIST

As we transport all of our food and equipment out to the islands, it is essential that you travel light. All personal clothing and effects are stored in the two supplied dry bags (40 litres total — 2 × 20L). If you'd like your camera accessible during the day, consider a waterproof camera or a separate waterproof bag for the kayak deck. Light-coloured clothing is advisable, as sand-flies and mosquitos may be present at certain times of year and are more attracted to dark colours.

Essential items

- Suitable paddling footwear — neoprene booties, reef shoes, Crocs, Tevas or Keens (not thongs).
- Toiletries & medications (see medical supplies).
- A wide-brimmed hat with a stiff brim and chin strap; a light neck scarf is useful too.
- Sunglasses with a cord; side flaps are a good idea.
- Lightweight rain or spray jacket (you may want two — one for paddling, one for camp).
- Two long-sleeve lightweight synthetic shirts for sun protection while paddling.
- A long-sleeve shirt to wear around camp for insect protection.
- An extra lycra sun top for swimming/snorkelling.
- One pair of lightweight full-length pants for camp.
- Underwear.
- Two pairs of quick-dry shorts / boardshorts / swimwear.
- Sarong (doubles as a second sheet).
- Very lightweight fleece (e.g. Polartec 100) or sweatshirt; lightweight thermal top.
- Running shoes and socks for hikes and around camp.
- Small towel (a chamois or medium hand towel).
- Headlamp or small torch and batteries.
- One or two 1-litre water bottles (double-walled recommended).
- Lightweight sailing or cycling gloves to ease blistering.
- Pillow case or very small airline pillow that fits into your dry bag.

Optional items

- Camera with waterproof container.
- Book, cards, games.
- Binoculars.
- Talcum powder to prevent salt-water rash.
- Small dry bag for access while kayaking (store on the kayak deck).

CONTACT DETAILS:

Ph: (03) 6292 5610 | Intl: (+61) 3 6292 5610 | ssvtrips@southernseaventures.com

Office hours are 9.30am–5pm Mon–Fri (Australian Eastern Standard Time).

Closed weekends and public holidays.

