



Lava, Reef and Rainforest – 6 Day 4WD Self-Drive Adventure

This journey contrasts the dry Savannah Grasslands and richness of the Quinkan Aboriginal Art with the splendour of the reef and rainforest on the coast

From the amazing Lava tubes of Undara to the history of Cooktown, you explore the lower section of the Cape and all it has to offer in a short time. Chillagoe Caves, Cape Tribulation and the World Heritage Daintree are all visited at a leisurely pace that will leave you spellbound

Day 1 Cairns to Undara Lava Tubes

Depart Cairns and travel north up the Captain Cook Highway turn-off left to Kuranda. Ascend the windy road up onto the Atherton Tablelands for a stop at Kuranda. Continue through Mareeba and Yungaburra and detour to Lake Eacham and Lake Barrine, where you can lunch and cruise and walk to the giant Kauri Pines. The Curtain Fig Tree and Millaa Millaa Falls are visited as you travel this afternoon through Ravenshoe and on to Undara and your first

Overnight camp at the Undara Resort (Full facilities - shower, toilet & washing machines) (297km 5 hours driving 2 hours walking)

Day 2 Undara to Chillagoe

A morning walk to nearby lookouts will reward the active as you get panoramic vistas of the surrounding countryside and remnant volcanoes. Take a tour of the Lava Tubes. Retrace your steps to the Gulf Development Road and head left. Turn north and cross the Lynd River and Tate River before joining the Burke Development Road at Almadon, where you can stop to view the historic railway station and its lush gardens. Travel on to Chillagoe, an historic old mineral field

Overnight Caravan Park Chillagoe (Full facilities) (230km 3&1/2 hours driving)

Day 3 Chillagoe to Laura

This morning tour Royal Arch cave with a Ranger and explore the surrounding mining area ruins, museum and Aboriginal art. Retrace your steps to Almadon and on through to Dimbulah. Head north, through Mt Mulligan Station and over the Hodgkinson and Mitchell Rivers to the Peninsular Development Road near Bob's Lookout. After a stop to soak in the scenery, continue north to the Palmer River Roadhouse, with its mining museum and on to the irrigated farms of Lakeland, quite an oasis in the dry landscape. Continue to your overnight caravan park up the road. It must have one of the largest Caravan Park swimming pools in Australia!

Overnight camping Ang-gnarra Caravan Park Laura (Full facilities) (381km 6 & 1/2 hours driving 1 hour walking)

Day 4 Laura to Cooktown

Retrace your steps to Split Rock and take a walk to the wonderful galleries of Quinkan Aboriginal Art. Return to Laura and turn off the Peninsular Development Road to Lakefield National Park and Old Laura Homestead. Time should be spent wandering these restored ruins before making your way to Battle Camp, site of an Aboriginal massacre and through to Endeavour Falls. After a stop for a swim, continue to **Cooktown** and set up at one of the local

Caravan Parks for your overnight camp (Full facilities) (180km 4 hours driving 2 hours walking)

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Day 5 Cooktown to Cape Tribulation

After a morning exploration of the historic buildings, Captain Cook Museum and the Grassy Hill Lookout depart Cooktown and head back towards Mareeba on the bitumen to Black Mountain Lookout. Leave the highway and shortly you'll arrive at Lion's Den Hotel. The track takes you through rainforest, the Cedar Bay National Park and numerous small communities. You pass the beautiful Bloomfield River and on through the Wujal Wujal aboriginal Community. Just before the crossing of the Daintree, you turn right to Bloomfield Falls, a short walk up the track and a delightful diversion. Don't swim. Crocodiles live here!

Return to the Bloomfield Track and cross the River. The track now begins to climb through the steep rainforest ridges. You arrive at Cape Tribulation, where World Heritage rainforest and World Heritage reef converge, and have time to look, walk, swim and explore the wonderful beaches.

Overnight camping Cape Tribulation (Full facilities) (105km 3 hours driving 2 hours walking)

Day 6 Cape Tribulation to Cairns

After a delightful morning in Cape Tribulation, you begin the trek to Port Douglas through the World Heritage rainforest. Cooper's Creek has a 1 hour boat cruise through the rainforest. The scenery is spectacular as you pass National Park walks and lookouts as you make your way to the Daintree River. You detour to Daintree and continue towards Mossman and Mossman Gorge in the Daintree National Park.

Take a walk through the rainforest. Detour into Port Douglas to explore this resort town and have a look at the Rainforest Heritage Centre.

There are some great views of Trinity Bay as you make your way homeward. Stop at the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural centre and enjoy a performance to round off the great trip before continuing in to Cairns

(175 km 3 & 1/2 hour driving 2 hours walking)

Recommended References

The above itineraries are not intended as the sole guide to the details of your route.

Road Conditions

It is important to seek up to date advice on road conditions as things can change rapidly.

Map

HEMA Maps – Cape York.

Guide Book

Cape York- An Adventurers Guide by Ron and Viv Moon

Background Reading

The Explorers by Tim Flannery

Cape York- By the Australian Geographic Society.

Web Sites

Four Wheel Drive Hire Service www.4wdhire.com.au

Moon Guidebooks www.guidebooks.com.au

HEMA Maps for an idea of the range of maps and information on suppliers

www.hemamaps.com.au

Outback tracks information www.mynrma.com.au/travel/go/outback_tracks/index.shtml

QLD National Parks www.epa.qld.gov.au/environment/park/discover