



essential guide to

Queensland

Luxury Journeys

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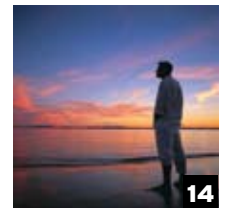
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Think Queensland ...

Some time ago during long and harried days with my inbox overflowing and my diary over full, I began to daydream of the perfumes of warm tropical nights, of soothing massages in flowering gardens. Of wandering through lush landscapes and bathing in a warm, clean ocean. And perhaps just a little gentle adventure to keep the mind and body from descending into a mashed banana state.

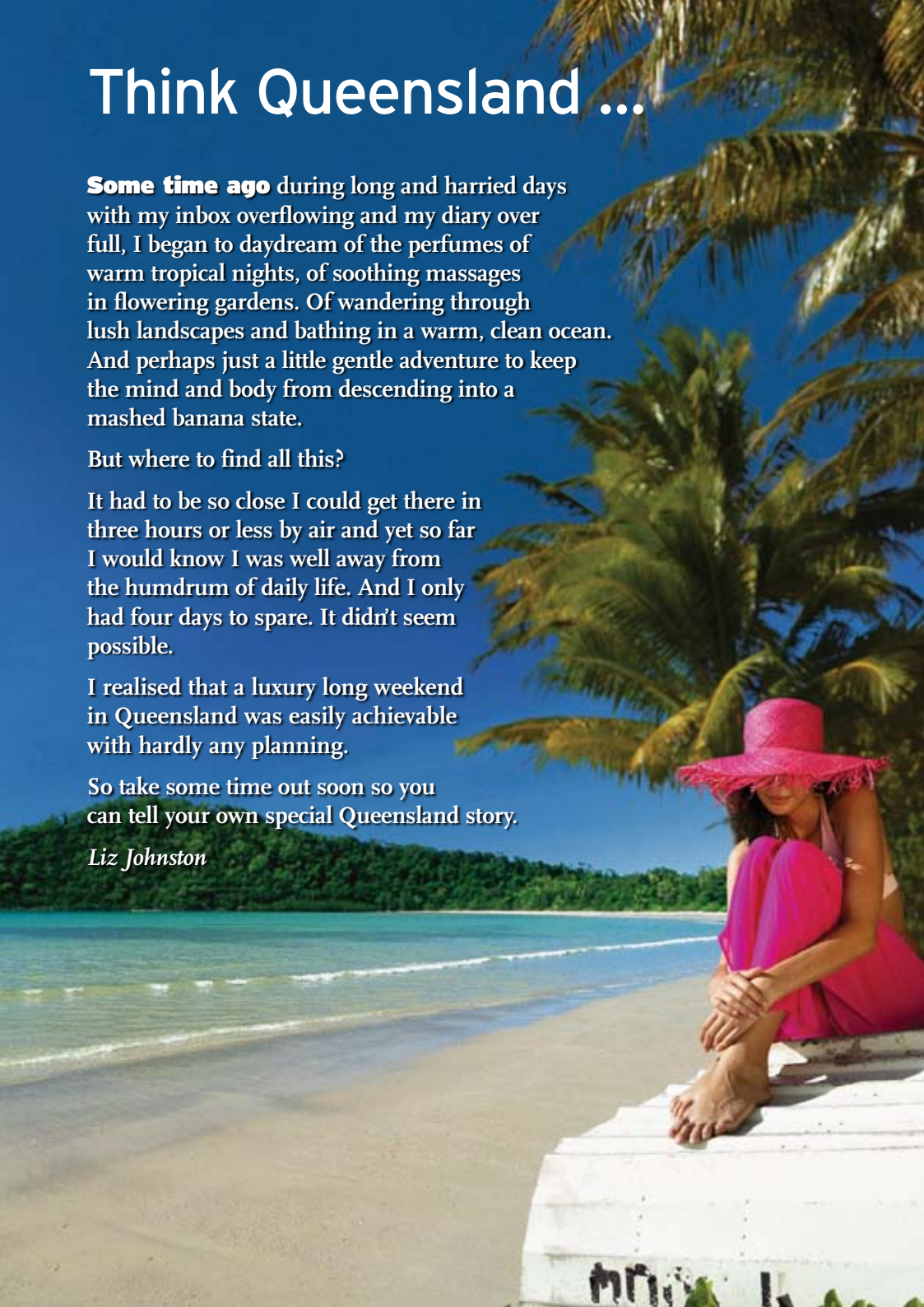
But where to find all this?

It had to be so close I could get there in three hours or less by air and yet so far I would know I was well away from the humdrum of daily life. And I only had four days to spare. It didn't seem possible.

I realised that a luxury long weekend in Queensland was easily achievable with hardly any planning.

So take some time out soon so you can tell your own special Queensland story.

Liz Johnston



The Tropical North

Tropical North Queensland is chic, it's contemporary, it's natural and, with a network of scenic drives, is easily accessible. For many discerning travellers seeking a thoroughly sophisticated five-star paradise, it is one of the best places in Australia to rejuvenate.

Journey One — Tropical Breezes

Palm-fringed beaches, exotic spas, dreamy accommodation, beautiful golf courses and five-star service - contemporary Tropical North Queensland is purpose-built for luxurious holidays amid extraordinary natural attractions.

Day One: Looking out the aircraft window on descent over the emerald green hills and

sparkling tropical waters of the Coral Sea, just the sight of Cairns put me in the calm zone. A 30-minute drive in a hire car took us to our first luxurious accommodation in this long dreamed of journey of the senses. Sebel Reef House at Palm Cove was once a grand private home, and although it now has 69 rooms, you still get the feeling you are an honoured guest. Our room opened to a private veranda with a double spa, screened but still allowing for views of surrounding tropical gardens. The bed was draped in a muslin mosquito net, and, if we chose to, we could ignore the air-conditioning and sleep beneath a gently revolving ceiling fan with the wall of doors leading to the veranda wide open to the tropical breezes. We toasted the start of our four-day escape at nearby Nu Nu



Left: Port Douglas. Above: Mossman Gorge

The Tropical North

ARRIVING

Daily direct flights to Cairns on Jetstar, Qantas and Virgin Blue from Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

- Nautilus Restaurant - www.nautilus-restaurant.com.au
- Bella Baci
- Choc Dee Thai
- Il Forno

WHERE TO STAY

- Shangri-La and other luxury villas and homes: www.executiveretreats.com.au
- Five-star resorts and hotels:
- Silky Oaks Lodge, Mossman - www.silkyoakslodge.com.au
- Sebel Reef House, Palm Cove - www.reefhouse.com.au
- Sea Temple Resort and Spa, Palm Cove - www.seatemple.com.au
- Sea Temple Golf and Country Club, Port Douglas - www.seatemple.com.au
- Angsana Resort and Spa, Palm Cove - www.angsana.com.au
- Peppers Beach Club and Spa, Palm Cove - www.peppers.com.au/Beach-Club-&-Spa
- Nu Nu Restaurant - www.nunu.com.au

ON THE SIDE

- Take a day trip to the Great Barrier Reef onboard any one of several large and comfortable catamarans from either Cairns or Port Douglas.
- Drive to the Atherton Tablelands for coffee plantations and historic places.
- See the Daintree Cape Tribulation coast, the only place in the world where two World Heritage areas, the Great Barrier Reef and the Daintree rainforest, exist side by side.
- Go bush in style to Wrotham Park Lodge (www.wrothampark.com.au), 300km west of Cairns, and relive the grand days of the barons of the bush when rural landholders were Australia's royalty.



Angsana Resort

Restaurant with a cocktail called chicky chicky chow chow, made with watermelon, mint, citrus vodka and cranberry. Don't try to say it if you've had more than one.

Day Two: Up early for a walk on the palm-fringed beach and a swim in the resort pool. Breakfast beside the pool was followed by a 90-minute pepper berry brush spa treatment. Then it was time to drive to our very private



retreat, Shangri-La, a secluded luxury home in 12 hectares of private grounds in a valley 25 minutes from Port Douglas. Large enough for eight people but intimate enough for two, the house has its own Vichy treatment room, a spa therapist on call and a heated saltwater pool. We could have arranged in-house catering but preferred to self-cater, buying some fabulous fresh food on the drive up. On our second night, we took a chauffeured limo to Port Douglas to dine at the legendary Nautilus restaurant.

Day Three: Rainforests are unfamiliar territory for people like us from Australia's drier southern regions, and the Daintree Discovery Centre was quite an eye-opener, especially from the elevated aerial skyway right through the middle of the forest canopy.

In the afternoon, I was dubious about going croc spotting, but Bruce Belcher has been taking people along the Daintree River since 1987, and his vessel looked pretty stable. Still, staring down a croc's throat through the binoculars provided by Bruce was a bit unnerving. The golfer of the family had chosen to play a round at the Sea Temple golf course at Port Douglas instead.

Day Four: A leisurely drive back to the airport provided some pleasant surprises for a dedicated coffee drinker like me on the Atherton Tablelands, where several plantations serve the freshest brews. I bought beans from several of them and their aroma brings alive memories of this luxurious yet still pristine part of the world when I have my morning coffee back home.



Four Mile Beach, Port Douglas

The Tropical North



Alma Bay, Magnetic Island

Journey Two — Sultry Adventures

You will love: Wandering through Townsville with its fine old heritage buildings, exploring nearby tropical mountain ranges, swimming in crystal-clear mountain streams, visiting some of the largest and best island national parks in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and kayaking at Mission Beach.



Day One: People here seem to have a big personal commitment to eating, drinking and having more fun than is perhaps quite proper. My travelling companion from Sydney was derisive when I said Townsville was a bit like the harbour city only smaller and less crowded. Typical Sydneyite, I chided, won't see beyond your own backyard. We're only spending one night here but have enjoyed the buzz of footpath cafes in Palmer Street and an after-dinner stroll to Flinders Street East, a frenetic precinct of all-night clubs and bars frequented by students, backpackers and local armed services personnel. All these pumping venues are housed rather incongruously in elegant heritage buildings. By contrast, a walk on The Strand on the shore of Cleveland Bay was blissfully peaceful and quite emotional when passing through the memorial to thousands of men and women who served in Townsville and the north in World War II.

Day Two: Mission Beach is only a three-hour drive from Townsville but there is much to see along the way. We detoured to Paluma Range National Park for our first taste of Australia's Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, stopping at a lovely stone bridge over Little Crystal Creek with its deep, cool rock pools formed by granite boulders. I couldn't resist following some of the many signs along the highway to coastal fishing villages before the turnoff to Mission Beach. It was dark when we arrived at Sejala Luxury Beach House. From there it was a five-minute stroll to the town under a balmy tropical sky to choose one of the many small BYO restaurants for dinner and make a selection from a very good bottle shop.

Day Three: Woke to the rustle of coconut palms and the morning chorus of birds. Grabbed a Sejala sarong and inspected the huge kitchen. Made coffee and toast and



The Tropical North



Above: Magnetic Island. Right: Heron Island

found some delicious rainforest jam. Next decision: Turn my chair to look at the sea and islands or the pool, which I marked for a swim sans swimwear beneath the stars tonight, protected from prying eyes by a tall hedge of pink ginger and mandevilla. There are many adventurous activities on offer around Mission Beach, from whitewater rafting on the thunderous Tully River to jet-ski tours and sea kayaking. I chose a half-day sea kayak trip along the coastline after being reassured by my guide that if I did get tired I could either walk back to Mission Beach or be towed by another kayak. But it was an easy paddle and I learned a lot about the reefs and mangroves close to shore.

Day Four: Going home today. Where did the

time go? We took the Palmerston Highway at Innisfail for the long way (three hours non-stop) to Cairns. Again three hours doubled to six as we marvelled at the views, the rope bridges strung

across the roads to let small animals cross safely from treetop to treetop, the coffee and tea plantations and the Mungalli Creek Bio-dynamic Dairy farm where we stopped for cheesy dishes of all kinds and a pot of local *Nucifora* Tea. Then on to Yungaburra, a tiny mountain village with 18 heritage-listed buildings, including the Lake Eacham Hotel, built in 1910 by craftsmen carpenters using the finest cedar and silky oak local timbercutters could find. After a quick inspection of the town and Gordon and Susan Chuck's new Li'Tya Day Spa, it was a hurry through the rainforests on the Gillies Highway to the airport and home. Note to self: Much more to do. Must come back soon to North Queensland.

ARRIVING

Jetstar and Qantas direct flights daily to Townsville from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. Virgin Blue from Sydney and Brisbane.

Blue-On-Blue

- Jupiters Townsville Hotel and Casino - www.jupitertownsville.com.au

MAIN COURSE

- Zestivale at Castaways on the Beach, Mission Beach - www.zestivale.com

WHERE TO STAY

- Sejala Luxury Beach House - www.sejala.com
- Peppers Blue on Blue, opening mid 2007 - www.peppers.com.au/

- Oceania Bar and Grill, Mission Beach

ON THE SIDE

- Magnetic Island is 20 minutes by catamaran from Townsville, and has a vibrant local community and a variety of holiday accommodation and tours. It is one of the few Queensland islands with a permanent population.

- Hinchinbrook Island, Australia's biggest island national park, is the jewel

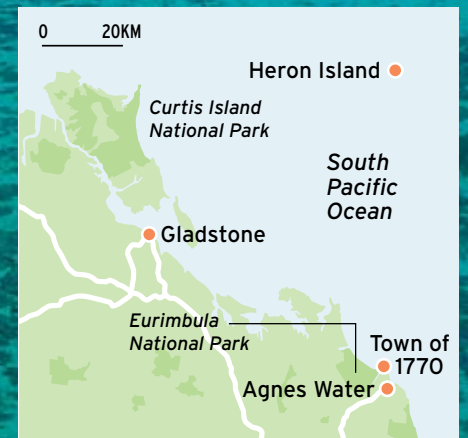
among many island jewels in this region. It has a resort and extensive walking trails. www.hinchinbrookresort.com.au.

- Drive on a mountain road made by hand during the Depression and eat home-made cakes and jam at Paluma, a rainforest village in the clouds, settled by tin miners 130 years ago.

Central Queensland & Fraser Coast



Exquisite Great Barrier Reef coral cays are strung like a many-coloured necklace of glittering gems hugging the coastline of Central Queensland. This is the place to paddle your own kayak in meandering creeks and walk at low tide on coral reefs and on sandbanks where you can still see indentations left behind by giant rays. Discover pretty rural towns and tiny seaside villages, and at the southern end of the region are the coloured sands and wind-driven sand blows, rainforests and creeks of World Heritage Fraser Island.



Central Queensland & Fraser Coast



Above: 1770. Right: Heron Island

Journey One — Glittering Gems

Take a journey beyond imagining to the Great Barrier Reef and its adjacent coastal national parks. You must go in order to believe in an otherwise unbelievable beauty of colourful reefs and marine life and lush rainforested mountains.

Day One: There aren't enough superlatives to describe a helicopter flight from Gladstone over the Great Barrier Reef. The colours alone defy description, with every shade of blue imaginable beneath you as you look down on coral-fringed lagoons and reefs teeming with marine life. There are dolphins, turtles, rays, sharks and humpback whales from July to November, and flying over the reef is the best way to get any sense of its geography and diversity. I didn't think anything on Heron Island, our home for the next two nights, could have the impact of the flight to get there. I was wrong on several counts. A

guided reef walk at low tide got us up close and personal with the finer details of these fabulous ecosystems. The natural attractions of Heron were so enthralling we stayed too long in the sun. Luckily we'd booked spa treatments in the double massage room; the Sodashi Sea Spray Sunburn Treatment will hopefully fulfil its promise to help prevent peeling.

Day Two: Staying out of the sun today wasn't a problem because my friend went diving, as most people do on Heron, so had a wetsuit for protection. I wore a shirt with sun protection to snorkel in the lagoon at high tide. I also joined a guided bird walk, figuring I might as well know more about the noddies that live in the island's aptly named pisonia forests and whose droppings turn the trees white. On Heron, you wear a hat or you wear bird droppings. But hey, the birds were here first. My impression is you don't go to Heron for the nightlife, unless it's night diving.

The day has been so full of new experiences and sights that sleep will come easily for me tonight. Perhaps watching a movie under the stars will be the perfect wind-down before bed time.

Day Three: A helicopter flight back to Gladstone Airport this morning to collect a car and drive to the Town of 1770, where we found ourselves in another superlative-defying location, this time a private home, alinghi, in a gated estate on 3.6 hectares of headland overlooking a sandy cove. The estate's five houses use rainwater tanks and spring water from the property and share the use of a pool and tennis courts. Property manager Corey Karras had already organised a masseuse to visit and a chef to bring along a seafood platter for dinner. Alinghi can sleep up to 12 but we slept in the smaller owners' pavilion. Loved their outdoor bathroom. It was hard to tear ourselves away from the house for a sunset LARC (Light Amphibious Resupply Cargo vessel) tour. I'm glad we did, though, because this is a great eco-tour thanks to the knowledge and enthusiasm of owner-operator Neil Mergard. Still, I had some trepidation when we drove off the boat ramp into the water. And I certainly wasn't one of the people screaming "yes" when Neil



ARRIVING

Qantaslink has several flights a day from Brisbane to Gladstone and Bundaberg.

ON THE SIDE

- Lady Elliott Island for the experience of living and playing beside an unspoiled tropical lagoon. www.ladyelliott.com.au

WHERE TO STAY

- Heron Island Resort - www.heronisland.com
- Luxury beach houses through - www.1770beach.com.au

- Learn to surf at Agnes Water where the surf is mostly gentle enough for beginners to be hanging 10 in no time. www.townof1770-agneswater.com.au

MAIN COURSE

- Saltwater Cafe, Captain Cook Road, next to the Tree Bar.
- Flinders Restaurant, Gladstone.

- Kayak at 1770 to explore the coastline and the winding hidden creeks of Eurimbula National Park. www.townof1770-agneswater.com.au

asked if we wanted to take the LARC for a bit of a surf. He did. It was OK. But I was glad when he surfed back on to firm sand.

Day Four: Woke up determined not to leave town until I bought some new swimwear. But it was hard to leave the luxury of alinghi, and we delayed with a walk along some bush tracks down to the beach and a last swim in the pool. Corey told me about Beach Buddies, who custom-make bathers. So we stopped at the shop on the way out of town to Bundaberg Airport, and I bought a one-piece off the rack and was measured for two different styles that she'll mail to me.



Journey Two — Nature's Treasures

Pay attention to the rhythm of your own breathing along with the sound of the wind and the cries of the wild birds. On tiny isolated and uninhabited coral cays, nature is all-powerful. No man-made structures impinge. Along quiet country roads talk to producers selling their fruit and vegetables and honeys and jams at roadside stalls, and stop for a chat with friendly locals in small-town shops and cafes.

Day One: Hervey Bay turns out to be an unbroken string of small towns along the waterfront with names reminiscent of English

seaside villages. I love the way you can walk beside the beach along shady parklands for miles, stopping for a swim every so often. There are some old-fashioned shops, such as the great SecondHand Man at Scarness that has all sorts of treasures small and large. We saw some fabulous hand-made timber furniture, a reminder of the years of logging on Fraser Island before it was declared a World Heritage Area. The proprietor can help with shipping. Then it was back to Urangan in time for a spa treatment and dinner at the new Peppers Pier Resort.

Day Two: Breakfast was at Enzo's on the beach at Scarness, then across the Esplanade

to buy French pastries from Patisserie Patricia before driving to Bundaberg. We took a shortcut along the Torbanlea Pialba Road and stopped at Takura, where we found a man called Jimmy selling local fruit from a roadside stall. Jimmy is 83 and claims to be the last pineapple grower left in this part of the world. We drove through Childers, such a pretty town with its old-fashioned buildings. Bundaberg is all about sugar and the famous Bundy rum, and it's a pretty drive into town with cane crops growing right up against the houses. We checked in to Manta Bargara before dinner and a late night watching for turtles laying eggs and hatching at Mon Repos sanctuary. The season is from November to March, and while we didn't see any of these endangered creatures this time, the talks and displays at the centre and the walks with guides up the dark beach looking for them with torches made for a great experience.

Day Three: No plans today except not to plan. We drove south to Woodgate Beach, and there were even more roadside farm



ARRIVING

Fraser Coast Airport at Hervey Bay has direct flights from Sydney with Jetstar and Virgin Blue. Several daily flights on Qantaslink from Brisbane to Gladstone, Bundaberg and Hervey Bay.

WHERE TO STAY

- alinghi beach house, 1770 - www.1770beachaccommodation.com.au
- Manta Bargara - www.mantabargara.com.au
- Bargara Beachfront Resort - www.cbargara.com.au
- Peppers Pier Resort Hervey Bay - www.peppers.com.au/Pier-Resort
- Mantra Pavilions, 1770 - www.mantraresorts.com.au

MAIN COURSE

- Kacy's, Bargara Beach.
- Peppers Pier Resort, Hervey Bay - www.peppers.com.au/Pier-Resort
- Saltwater Cafe, 1770

ON THE SIDE

- Woodgate Beach because it is surrounded by national parks.
- Lady Musgrave Island for its spirituality and its opening of the senses to the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef.
- Whale watching July to November from Hervey Bay.
- Day trip by barge and self-drive or guided 4WD tour of Fraser Island.
- Catamaran trips to Kingfisher Bay on Fraser Island.
- Turtle spotting at Mon Repos November to March.



stalls than real estate signs, and that's saying something in this part of Queensland now that a sealed road to the coast has everyone looking for their own piece of paradise. We got to the beach with a car loaded with fresh fruits, local honey and home-made jams. Woodgate is a tiny town with a beautiful undeveloped 20km beach and is surrounded by the Burrum Coast National Park. A hand-printed sign on a tree reminded us that kangaroos use the road too. As if programmed, a family of five roos bounded into the path of our car, headed for a backyard with a delicious newly mown lawn. Then it was back to Bundaberg and on to Agnes Water for an overnight stay at the Mantra Pavilions. We went via Lowmead on narrow roads used by farm machinery and dotted with friendly small towns well worth a stop and a chat with locals, and then

on to Tablelands Road through beautiful mountain scenery.

Day Four: Spent the day on a cruise from 1770 to Lady Musgrave Island, a traditional Aboriginal land and an exquisite coral cay without buildings or shops, although you can get a permit to camp overnight. We floated on our backs gazing at the blue sky and the birds hovering above and then rolled over to use mask and snorkel to spot rainbow-coloured fish. Sunset drinks in 1770 at the Tree Bar and dinner at Saltwater Cafe next door brought us back to a very pleasant reality. As we walked slowly home to Cocktail, our stylish villa overlooking Round Hill Creek and Bustard Bay, I knew I would dream of Lady Musgrave that night, before a leisurely drive back to Gladstone for a flight south in the morning.

Here you'll find nurturing health retreats, charming cellar doors and exquisite wines complemented by great art, fine buildings and great shopping experiences. So throw away those city clothes and slip into something cool for a relaxing journey into South-East Queensland.

Journey One — Scenic Retreats

No wonder so many people have been moving to South-East Queensland. Where else could you choose to live in modern residential towers or small heritage apartment blocks in a lively CBD and be just an hour from sophisticated surfside cities and rainforest mountain hideaways?

Day One: We flew into Brisbane and drove west for 90 minutes to Peppers Spicers Peak. The beautifully designed lodge, with just 10 boutique suites, sits atop a mountain in wilderness adjacent to the Scenic Rim and Main Range national parks. It's at the end of 12km of steep and winding gravel road, and since there had been recent rain we took the staff's advice to leave our small hire car at a pick-up point and be driven to the top in one of their 4WD vehicles. Had we not been keen to drive to other parts of the south-east and the Gold Coast, we might have taken the helicopter option from Brisbane Airport to the lodge. The 40-minute flight over the Scenic Rim would surely have been spectacular. We took a dip in the sensational infinity pool and then played a game of tennis before I headed off for a two-hour Arbré Body Spa and Hahana Hot Stones Massage while my companion enjoyed some short bush walks around the property. Dinner tonight is a seven-course degustation.



Left: 1770. Above: Curtis Falls



Peppers Spicers Peak

Day Two: It's a good thing we'll be staying at a health retreat tonight because dinner at Peppers was sensational, and we perhaps should have held back a bit on the accompanying wines. On the way to Gwinganna Organic Health Retreat and Spa we drove through some very quaint little towns, still amazingly unchanged since they were built by German settlers early in the state's history. Then we were in the lovely Tamborine Mountain area, surrounded by national parks. There are several wineries here, and we enjoyed Witches Falls for its pinot noirs made from Queensland Granite Belt cool-climate grapes. The winemakers are very hands-on, so much so that I noticed their hands were stained dark purple from stirring and testing the grapes in the vats. We arrived at Gwinganna for lunch and a healthy weekend, starting with a naturopathic consultation.

Day Three: An organic nutrition lesson this morning has opened my eyes to the many ways you can prepare fresh, healthy food and never be bored by it. I'm going to ask for some recipes to take home, especially for the corn fritters we had for breakfast. Unfortunately, once we're back home we won't be able to get the delicious range of fresh organic tropical fruit served at breakfast. In the morning I headed for the hills, literally, for a long scenic walk and then it was back for a chat with John Palmer about setting up a small organic garden of my own. John is an Order of Australia recipient for his services to the environment and lives on site at Gwinganna. Lucky man.

Day Four: Gwinganna is only 30 minutes from Coolangatta Airport, and that left us plenty of time before our flight to look at the

Gold Coast, a place that never stays the same for long. We were interested to see Q1, the world's tallest residential tower, and Air at Broadbeach, a 35-storey high-rise designed

on ecologically sustainable lines. Note to self: Next visit I must set aside a day for shopping at Marina Mirage's designer boutiques and at Harbour Town.

ARRIVING

Daily flights with Virgin, Jetstar and Qantas from Sydney and Melbourne to Brisbane and Coolangatta airports.

- Gwinganna Organic Health Retreat and Spa - www.gwinganna.com

MAIN COURSE

- Peppers Spicers Peak Lodge: Seven-course degustation lunch or dinner. www.peppers.com.au/ Scenic-Rim-Dining

WHERE TO STAY

- Peppers Spicers Peak Lodge - www.peppers.com.au/ Spicers

- Songbirds, Mt Tamborine - www.songbirds.com.au

ON THE SIDE

- Couran Cove Resort on South Stradbroke Island is modern, luxurious yet built to environmentally sustainable standards - www.couran-cove.com.au
- Seventeen great beaches from Rainbow Bay to Runaway Bay.

- of the Gold Coast hinterland.
- Harbour Town where you can save a fortune and spend a fortune at brand outlet stores.
- Surfers Paradise Beachfront Markets on Wednesday and Friday nights.



Journey Two — Boutique Escapes

Walk in the wilderness, sleep in a treehouse in a forest, paddle through everglades, ride on a ferry boat along two great rivers lined with millionaires' dream homes, go shopping in a famous street of boutiques by the sea or visit Australia's newest and most exciting art gallery. On the Sunshine Coast, Noosa's Hastings Street has long been a magnet for foodies and fashionistas. But there is also an amazing range of laid-back outdoor adventures available on beaches, rivers and mountains.

Day One: Keen to try the Great Walk through the Blackall Range, we headed straight for the Sunshine Coast hinterland from Brisbane Airport. Ninety minutes later we were checked into Secrets on the Lake and soon had our walking boots on and a picnic lunch our hosts had prepared for the journey. The entire 58km walk takes four days so we settled for one of the shorter sections starting at the trail head near the town of Montville and spent a couple of hours getting to and from the Baroon Lookout over Obi Obi Gorge and the Baroon Pocket Dam. Back in our treehouse at Secrets on the Lake, we gave some thought to the big decision of the day: where to dine. There are so many choices in this part of the world we called for help from our hosts, who recommended a range from Australian contemporary to German. We ended up deciding on French cuisine at Le Relais Bressan.

Day Two: Our home for the next two nights is the Sheraton in Hastings Street, and it's an ideal place from which to enjoy the Noosa River. This gem of a river begins in the sand-filtered springs of the Cooloola section of the Great Sandy National Park and travels 60km to the sea at Laguna Bay north of the Noosa Headland. It would have taken more time than I had on this trip to see all of it so I settled on an Everglades Cruise and Coloured Sand Safari. Of course, dinner tonight has to be at the chic but casual and always classy Berardos, a short walk from the Sheraton and the domain of one-time Michelin-starred chef Bruno Loubet.



Left: Mud crab, Noosa. Above: Cycling in Brisbane

South-East Queensland

ARRIVING

Qantas, Jetstar and Virgin Blue fly daily to Brisbane from Sydney and Melbourne.

WHERE TO STAY

• Secrets on the Lake, Montville - www.secretsonthelake.com.au

• Sebel, Noosa - www.sebelnoosa.com

• Sheraton, Noosa - www.starwoodhotels.com/sheraton/noosa

• Hyatt, Coolum - www.hyattcoolum.com

MAIN COURSE

• Ricky's River Bar and Restaurant, Noosa - www.rickys.com.au

• Berardos on the Beach, Noosa - www.berardos.com.au

• Gusto, Noosaville

• The Spirit House, Yandina - www.spirithouse.com.au

• McKenzie Grill, Hyatt Regency Coolum

ON THE SIDE

On the Sunshine Coast

• Canoeing in the Everglades

• Day trips to Fraser Island

• Cooking courses at The Tamarind or Spirit House - www.thetamarind.com.au

• Kabi Golf Course at Boreen Point, Australia's only certified organic golf course - www.kabigolf.com.au

From Brisbane

• Tours across Moreton Bay to Moreton Island or North Stradbroke Island from Brisbane

• Abseiling on the Kangaroo Point Cliffs - www.riverlife.com.au

• Kayaking on the Brisbane River - www.riverlife.com.au



Day Three: Boutique shopping on Hastings Street was always high on my list but today I also decided to take the river ferry from the Sheraton jetty up to Noosaville where the boutiques and cafes are giving Hastings Street some tough competition. The ferry ride itself is delightful, with a fun and informative commentary and a good chance to see the cutting-edge beach architecture of the huge houses along the waterfront on Noosa Sound.

Day Four: Back to Brisbane to spend a day catching up with all the new and exciting happenings in the city, in particular the new Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA) and the many lively restaurants at South Bank. It was also fun to hop on and off the CityCats and explore other reaches of the Brisbane River, where sparkling new riverfront homes are evidence of the rapidly growing city's new-found affluence. I loved the Powerhouse Arts Centre at New Farm so much I ended up taking a guided tour to see more of the performance spaces in this rejuvenated industrial building, where the textures have been left raw and bold and even with original graffiti.



Where's the resort?

*A lot of people are discovering our rainforest retreats.
You just need to know where to look.*

Where you can drop
down a gear



Pick an experience only a drive away, turn up and wind down - that's the beauty of a Queensland luxury journey.

driveqld.com.au/journeys reveals all you need to know to plan your perfect Queensland getaway. Use our itineraries, maps and local insight into the experiences and attractions throughout Queensland.