



## Torres Strait Islands & the Remote Reef

*The archipelago of over 100 Torres Strait Islands scatter between Northern Queensland and Papua New Guinea – they are Australia's most northerly frontier. Offering travellers a truly remarkable island experience, the unique history of the islands seafaring native inhabitants with an exciting fusion of Melanesian and Australian Aboriginal culture is just the beginning. Famed for its pearling and fishing, the pristine environment paired with an almost forgotten WWII history will captivate you. Stand on Australia's most northern point at Cape York, explore the most northern reaches of the Great Barrier Reef – you are so remote here, it is likely you will not encounter another traveller. Weave between secluded islands, eat the freshest seafood you have ever tasted and learn of life on the water. Soak in the sapphire waters and tread on talcum beaches. Swim amongst wild turtles and learn of one of Australia's richest regions in untold history and raw, natural beauty.*

### **Day 1 - Arrival**

Welcome to the Torres Strait Islands! You will begin your adventure by flying into Horn Island (flight not included). This flight will be a great introduction to your Torres Strait Island experience as you take in birds eye views over a sprinkle of islands and islets below. Upon arrival in Horn Island, you will be greeted and transferred to the colourful M/Y Wildcard where you will meet your crew and check into your cabin. This afternoon is yours to settle in and relax. The crew will take you for a walk around the island later in the afternoon before heading to the countries most northern pub for a drink. Head back to the harbour for dinner on board as the sun sets over the water. (D)

*7 nights M/Y Wildcard*

### **Day 2 – Thursday Island Tour**

This morning you will explore Thursday Island, formerly one of the world's richest pearl diving sites. Thursday Island is a place that runs on island time and where it feels unchanged for decades. This unique tropical region is home to the Indigenous Torres Strait Islanders whose culture is rich in the arts and whose lifestyle has evolved from the sea and its abundance of wildlife. Your day will start with a visit to the Gab Titui Cultural Centre which houses a contemporary gallery displaying historical artefacts and contemporary Indigenous art showcasing the cultural history of the Torres Strait.

Continue on to the Torres Strait Heritage Museum which reveals the island's significant and all-but-forgotten military history, including fixed gun sites and aircraft wrecks. Green Hill Fort is next, which is the highest point on Thursday Island. It is home to the well-preserved remains of a 19<sup>th</sup> century fort, built in 1891 in preparation for a possible Russian invasion. You can still see gun emplacements, underground bunkers and tunnels which have been restored. This is where the Torres Strait Historical Museum is located.

This afternoon, visit the heritage-listed Thursday Island Cemetery which houses the graves of more than 600 Japanese pearl divers and a memorial erected by the Japanese consulate in 1979. Look out for the memorial to Bernard Namok, who was the designer of the Torres Strait flag. A short boat ride from Thursday Island, is Friday Island. Visit a small working pearl farm for a fascinating three-hour tour led by former pearl diver Kazuyoshi Takami, with a demonstration of oyster seeding and cultivation followed by a Japanese seafood sushi-style lunch which may include a taste of pearl meat! (B,L,D)

### **Day 3 – Cape York to the Albany Passage**

Your first stop this morning is a visit to Cape York. Walk to the famous tip and place a rock at the iconic tower. Today is at a relaxed pace as you find your sea legs. Take in the incredible wild coastal scenery. Stroll along remote beaches and simply slow down. At the eastern tip of Cape York, lies Albany Passage. It is a narrow and very deep channel with strong currents between the mainland and Albany Island with steep hills on both sides. Cruise through the passage today as you learn about the history of the area. It was here that the British and Queensland governments established in 1861, a settlement they named Somerset. Mark Twain once remarked that Australian history was full of curiosities which was what made it so exciting. Somerset was in many ways a curiosity; a throw-back to the early years of Australian settlement when outposts were positioned around the coast for guarding or promoting a trade route. (B,L,D)

#### **Day 4 - 6 – Outer Barrier Reef**

Spend the next three days exploring the outer cays of the Great Barrier Reef including a visit to Dugong Islet. Cruise through sapphire waters as you weave between white wisps of sand cays and coral islets. Some of these remote atolls are nesting habitats for migrating birds. Float in the turquoise sea, walk along lonely stretches of sand rising from the ocean floor.

This remote area of the Great Barrier Reef demonstrates what coral and fish life used to be before en-masse human interference. Glide over florescent gardens or plunge into the cavernous formations created by centuries of uninterrupted growth. Expect to see Green Turtles, Manta Rays and prolific fish life as you soak in the privilege of having these remotes reaches of the reef to yourself. Devour fresh seafood as you relish in an ocean to plate experience daily with all seafood sourced sustainably and within fishing guidelines. (B,L,D)

#### **Day 7 – Mt Adolphus Island**

Today we head back towards the Albany Passage, to Mt Adolphus Island. Mt Adolphus sits at the very top of Cape York Peninsula and offers a stunning island walk and multiple wildlife watching opportunities. Enjoy some relaxed beachcombing before winding your way up to the top of the island. If time permits, why not enjoy lunch up here? The view here is simply stunning. Take time to breathe, to stop and take in the natural beauty that encompasses you. (B,L,D)

#### **Day 8 - Departure**

This morning we return to Horn Island. Enjoy your final breakfast onboard before bidding farewell to your incredible crew as you head to the airport for your onward flight. (B)

### **End of Services**

*An itinerary may at times be altered by our guides due to local conditions, the skill of participants and other unexpected circumstances such as homelands families moving around and weather. Our priority is always the experience and safety of our clients.*

#### **Our Services Include:**

- Return Airport transfers – Horn Island/M/Y Wildcard/Horn Island
- 7 nights accommodation aboard M/Y Wildcard
- Breakfast, lunch & dinner daily
- Beer, wine & soft drinks
- On board chef
- Expert on board crew
- Activities as per the itinerary
- Permits and fees for entering the homelands

- Fishing equipment
- Kayaks

**Our Services Exclude:**

- Visas
- International and domestic airfares
- Travel and medical insurance
- All services, meals other than those indicated above
- Any changes to the proposed and confirmed program.
- All items of a personal nature e.g. laundry, telephone calls, tips etc.

For full terms and conditions, please refer to <http://www.crooked-compass.com/terms-conditions/>