

Sydney Social Flying

August 2025 Air Safari

Destination Cape York

Two Week Flying Adventure to the Top of Australia



**EXPLORE THE GULF OF CARPENTARIA, VISIT
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS, AND CRUISE TO CAPE YORK**

2025 August Cape York Air Safari



Air Safari Lead

Chris Muller

chris.muller@socialflying.com.au

Air Safari Head Office Support

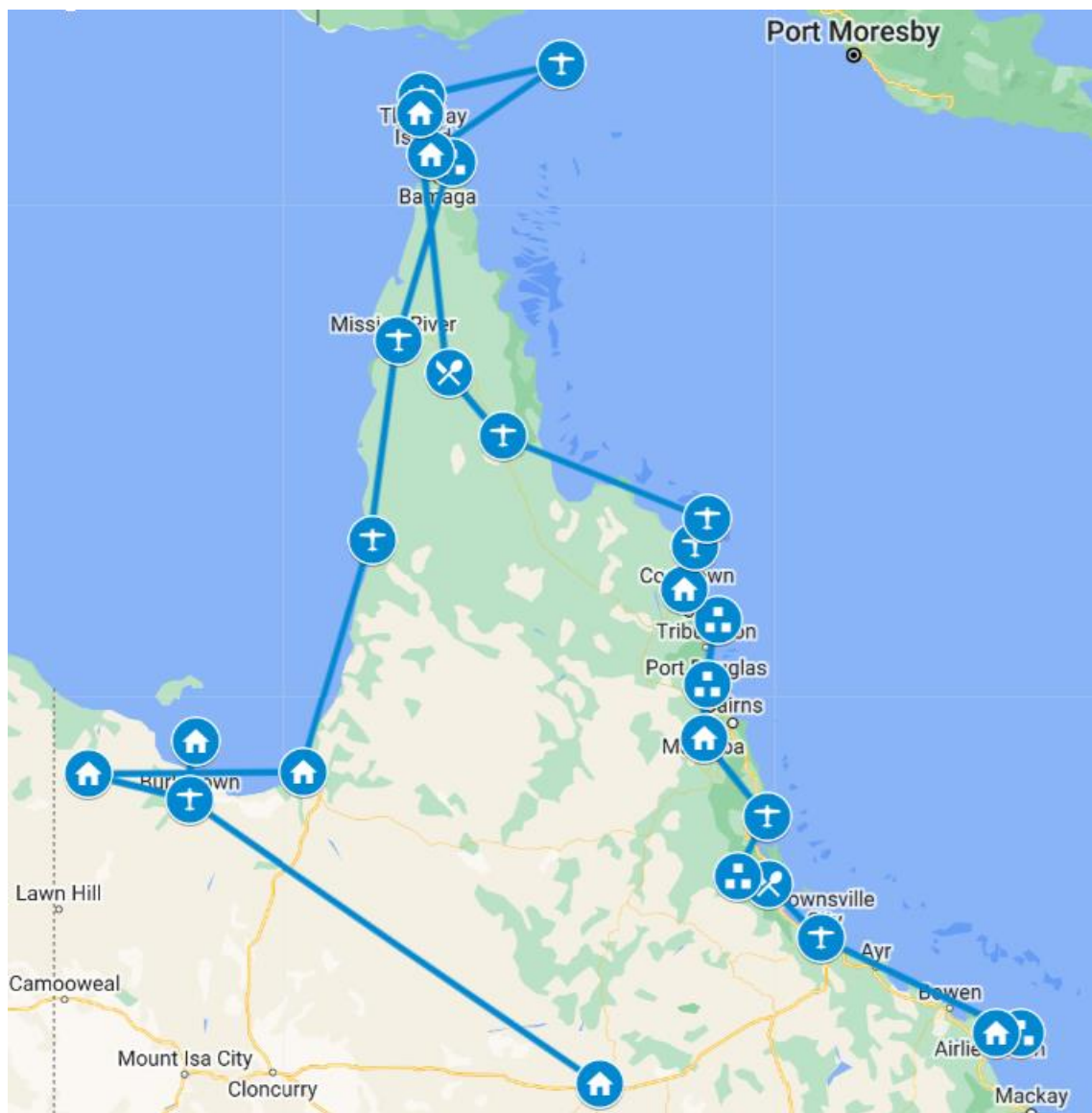
George Higgins

george.higgins@socialflying.com.au

Phone: 02 7228 0320



2025 August Cape York Air Safari



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Date	Route	Overnight	Distance (nm)
9-Aug	Home Base to YHUG	Hughenden	
10-Aug	YHUG-YBKT-YSWE	Sweers Island	361
11-Aug	Rest Day	Sweers Island	
12-Aug	YSWE-YBKT-YHEG	Hells Gate Roadhouse	107
13-Aug	YHEG-YKMB	Karumba	141
14-Aug	YKMB-YPMP-YBWP-Cape York-YHID	Thursday Island	433
15-Aug	Rest Day	Thursday Island	
16-Aug	YHID-YDLI-YMAA-YBAU	Badu Island	215
17-Aug	Rest Day	Badu Island	
18-Aug	YBAU-YMEU-YCOE-YLZI-YCFL-YCKN	Cooktown	426
19-Aug	YCKN-EDOR-PTD-YMBA	Yungaburra	107
20-Aug	Rest Day	Yungaburra	
21-Aug	YMBA-YDKI-Wallaman Falls-YIGM-YBTL-YSHR	Airlie Beach	340
22-Aug	Rest Day	Airlie Beach	
23-Aug	YSHR to Home Base		
	11 Stops	14 Nights	2,130

Note: Distances exclude travel to start location and return to home airport

Cost Summary

Item	Single Occupancy	Double / Twin Share
Price	\$7,800	\$6,700

- Prices are quoted **per person**.
- **Pricing includes** Accommodation for 14 nights and excludes getting to Hughenden and returning from Airlie Beach.
- **Pricing includes** 6 Breakfasts, 6 Lunches, 5 Dinners and 1 morning tea.
- **Pricing includes** Island Stars Full Malu Experience, with dinner included.
- **Pricing includes** Thursday Island Sunset Cruise, with dinner included.
- **Pricing includes** Cape York Cruise, with breakfast and lunch included.
- **Pricing includes** airport transfers at Hughenden, Karumba, Thursday Island, Badu Island, Cooktown, Yungaburra, and Airlie Beach.
- **Pricing excludes** Activities. A list of optional activities can be found on the Activities page towards the end of this document. The total price of the likely most popular Tours and Activities would be an additional \$865 per person. Please note lunch is inclusive with some activities.

Note spaces are limited at Sweers Island and Badu Island.

Alternative accommodation for Sweers Island is the Savannah Lodge at Burketown, plus two breakfasts, two dinners, lunch at Sweers Island, and the Gumbamanda Sunset Cruise. Pricing will be reduced by \$475 and \$275 per person for double / twin share and single occupancy respectively for this option.

Alternative accommodation for Badu Island is one night at Merluna Station and an extra night at Cooktown, plus one lunch, one breakfasts and one dinner at Merluna Station, use of a 4WD including fuel to explore Cooktown. Pricing will be reduced by \$500 and \$225 per person for double / twin share and single occupancy respectively for this option.

A deposit of \$1,500 per person is required to secure your place.

Cape York Air Safari Participants will be advised of their total cost by early July, with final payment expected mid-July



2025 August Cape York Air Safari

Terms and Conditions

Sydney Social Flying is a tour company, that arranges accommodation, catering, transfers, and activities for Safari participants.

It is the responsibility of the pilot in command and passengers to ensure the safe operation of the aircraft that they are travelling in.

All participants accept Sydney Social Flying may change the itinerary.

Sydney Social Flying makes no assurance that the information in this document or any other documents relating to Safaris is correct.

Payments you make to Sydney Social Flying may be used to pay for; accommodation, landside activities, tours, restaurants, and other planned activities.

On making your payment, you are authorizing Sydney Social Flying to make bookings on your behalf. Sydney Social Flying payments to suppliers are subject to their Terms and Conditions. Should you need to cancel your booking, this could result in cancellation charges being levied by suppliers.

Our cancellation policy is as follows. Sydney Social Flying will refund the monies paid, less any supplier cancellation fees. Additionally, we reserve the right to charge up to a \$250 per person cancellation administration fee.

2025 August Cape York Air Safari

Itinerary Saturday 9 to Saturday 23 August

DAY ONE Saturday 9 August



**Windmill rotunda in Brodie Street,
Hughenden**

This year, the safari begins in Hughenden, a well-presented small outback town located halfway between Townsville and Mount Isa.

Hughenden was established in the early 1860s, following a glowing report by William Landsborough about the region's fine grasslands, which triggered a rush of pastoralists.

If you plan to arrive in the early afternoon, you will have time for a short tour of the town, visit the impressive fossil collection at the Flinders Discovery Centre, and enjoy an outback sunset from Mount Walker, which offers stunning views of Hughenden.



**Bridge over the Flinders River,
Queensland's longest at Hughenden**

DAY TWO Sunday 10 August

Depart	Arrive	Track (Mag)	Dist (nm)
Hughenden (YHUG)	Burketown (YBKT)	299	323
Burketown (YBKT)	Sweers Island (YSWE)	001	38

Before heading off to Sweers Island, there will be an opportunity to visit Porcupine Gorge, located about an hour's drive to the north.

Carved out by Porcupine Creek, the gorge stretches for over 25 kilometers and has a depth of up to 120 meters, revealing layers of sedimentary rock that span hundreds of millions of years.

On the way back, you will be dropped off at Hughenden Airport, with a brief stopover at Burketown for fuel before proceeding to Sweers Island.



Porcupine Gorge

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DAY THREE Monday 11 August

The warm waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria provide excellent fishing opportunities, and Sweers Island is ideally located to take advantage of this.

The island was a refuge for survivors when malaria struck Burketown in 1866.

You can use one of the several boats available at the resort to explore and find a fishing spot or go on a charter for a better chance of catching a big one.

All meals, including freshly caught fish, are provided during your stay at Sweers Island.



Boats used for fishing with a Morning Glory backdrop



Freshly caught fish for Lunch at Sweers Island

DAY FOUR Tuesday 12 August

Depart	Arrive	Track (Mag)	Dist (nm)
Sweers Island (YSWE)	Burketown (YBKT)	181	38
Burketown (YBKT)	Hells Gate Roadhouse (YHEG)	279	69

About 50 kilometers from the Northern Territory lies Hell's Gate Roadhouse, established in the mid-1980s as part of the adjoining Clifdale Station.

Hell's Gate got its name from a nearby gap that the road passes through. In the early days of the Gulf settlement, troublemakers were escorted to Hell's Gate with instructions to walk to Katherine and not return!

To gain insight into how a cattle station operates, it is well worth taking a two-hour tour of Clifdale Station in the afternoon.



Clifdale Station, Cattle

2025 August Cape York Air Safari

DAY FIVE Wednesday 13 August

Depart	Arrive	Track (Mag)	Dist (nm)
Hells Gate Roadhouse (YHEG)	Karumba (YKMB)	085	141

A late morning departure will get you to Karumba by lunchtime, which serves as the home port for an extensive fleet of prawn trawlers.

Karumba has a significant aviation heritage; in 1937, it became a refueling point for Qantas and BOAC flying boats traveling from Australia to London. Additionally, during World War II, the town served as an RAAF base for Catalinas flying into New Guinea, Timor, and Indonesia.

An afternoon cruise will first take you down the Norman River for a town tour, where you may often see crocodiles on the mudflats

Then you will head to a sand island just off the coast, the perfect location to witness a famous Karumba sunset, accompanied by drinks, nibbles, and freshly cooked Gulf prawns.



Karumba Sand Island Sunset

DAY SIX Thursday 14 August

Depart	Arrive	Track (Mag)	Dist (nm)
Karumba (YKMB)	Pormpuraaw (YPMP)	011	159
Pormpuraaw (YPMP)	Wiepa (YBWP)	003	134
Wiepa (YBWP)	Cape York	012	124
Cape York	Horn Island (YHID)	289	16

After breakfast, we will embark on the longest flying day of the safari to Horn Island. Towards the end of the flight, a small detour will provide aerial views of Cape York.

Planning for an early afternoon arrival, there should be ample time for a tour of Thursday Island or a leisurely stroll exploring the area.

In the evening, around 5:30 PM, we will board the Nekana II for a dinner cruise, enjoying a spectacular sunset over the Arafura Sea.



Cape York, Continental Australia's northernmost point

2025 August Cape York Air Safari

DAY SEVEN Friday 15 August



Departing Thursday Island for Cape York

This morning, we will leave around 7 AM for a cruise on the Nekana II to continental Australia's northernmost point. While enjoying breakfast, we will cruise through sheltered waters, passing Prince of Wales, Roko, and Possession Islands.

The anchor will be dropped late morning in view of the tip. The Dory will transfer you to the mainland, where you can take a short walk for a photo opportunity.

After lunch on the return trip, it is possible that the boat could stop by Friday Island, where you may have the chance for a swim.

That evening, enjoy traditional dance, storytelling, and a musical show, followed by dinner.



James, skipper of Nekana II

DAY EIGHT Saturday 16 August

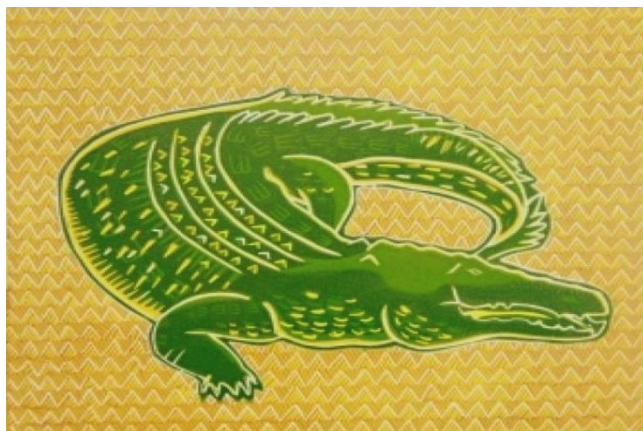
Depart	Arrive	Track (Mag)	Dist (nm)
Horn Island (YHID)	Darnley Island (YDLI)	051	107
Darnley Island (YDLI)	Mabuiag Island (YMAA)	252	96
Mabuiag Island (YMAA)	Badu Island (YBAU)	182	12

Following breakfast, we will head down to the wharf to catch the ferry over to Horn Island. The aim is to fly a route that will get us to Badu Island by noon, possibly taking us via Darnley and Mabuiag Islands to showcase the stunning Torres Strait.

Upon arrival at Badu Island, you will be greeted and taken to the Badu Island Art Centre to gain insight into Torres Strait culture and perhaps purchase an artwork or a unique memento.

After enjoying lunch at the Art Centre, a 30-minute drive will take you to the remote northwest of the island to Alup, with its private beach.

You will have plenty of time to settle in and enjoy dinner, which will likely include freshly caught crayfish.



Nguzi Aadhi by Matilda Nona
Badu Island Art Centre

2025 August Cape York Air Safari

DAY NINE Sunday 17 August



Chilling out at Alup

The facilities at Alup, consist of one small open-air shack for sleeping and another for cooking and gathering.

Additional tents are provided to accommodate our group, or you can choose to sleep beside the fire on the beach. It is that sort of place!

Alup is a unique tourist destination, so much so that Forbes Magazine voted it one of the top 50 tourist destinations in the world.

Your "rest day" at Alup is yours to enjoy. You can walk along the white sandy beach or swim in the crystal-clear tropical waters. Perhaps you might want to help catch dinner.

At low tide, you can access some rocks from the shore, which are abundant with crayfish. Nancy, the owner, along with others who may drop by, will share their knowledge of island cuisine, weaving, and the rich culture of the islands.



Afternoon dip!

DAY TEN Monday 18 August

Depart	Arrive	Track (Mag)	Dist (nm)
Badu Island (YBAU)	Merluna Station (YMEU)	170	174
Merluna Station (YMEU)	Coen (YCOE)	134	56
Coen (YCOE)	Lizard Island (YLZI)	106	147
Lizard Island (YLZI)	Cape Flattery (YCFL)	199	20
Cape Flattery (YCFL)	Cooktown (YCKN)	188	29

After saying farewell to Alup, you will be driven to Badu Island Airport. The first stop for the day will be at Merluna Station for morning tea.

The next stop is likely to be at Coen for fuel. It is recommended that you track via Lizard Island to Cooktown to experience the beauty of the Great Barrier Reef from the air.

That evening, enjoy a sunset cruise along the Endeavour River, where you might spot a crocodile lurking in the mangroves!



Lizard Island

DAY ELEVEN Tuesday 19 August

Depart	Arrive	Track (Mag)	Dist (nm)
Cooktown (YCKN)	Endeavour Reef (EDOR)	126	30
Endeavour Reef (EDOR)	Port Douglas (PTD)	182	42
Port Douglas (PTD)	Cooktown (YCKN)	177	35

A suggested route for the short flight to Mareeba is to go via the Endeavour Reef, which is associated with Captain Cook, and Port Douglas. This route will also take you past Cape Tribulation.

In the afternoon, you will have ample time to explore the quaint town of Yungaburra.



Mirage Resort, Port Douglas



Yungaburra Village Centre

DAY TWELVE Wednesday 20 August



Milla Milla Falls

Today's tour will first take us to the Curtain Fig Tree, located a couple of kilometers from Yungaburra. This giant strangler fig has aerial roots that drop 15 meters to the ground and is estimated to be around 500 years old.

Before we stop off at the Malanda Hotel, Australia's largest wooden pub, we will visit Shaylee Strawberry Farm for morning tea and Gallo Dairyland for a cheese and chocolate tasting.

After lunch, we will visit Millaa Millaa Falls, renowned as one of the most photographed falls in all of Australia, and tranquil Lake Barrine, a crater lake adorned with towering bull kauri pine trees.



**Enjoying a morning tea at
Shaylee Strawberries**

2025 August Cape York Air Safari

DAY THIRTEEN Thursday 21 August

Depart	Arrive	Track (Mag)	Dist (nm)
Mareeba (YMBA)	Dunk Island (YDKI)	135	66
Dunk Island (YDKI)	Wallaman Falls	199	44
Wallaman Falls	Ingham (YIGM)	095	20
Ingham (YIGM)	Townsville (YBTL)	128	50
Townsville (YBTL)	Whitehaven Beach	108	143
Whitehaven Beach	Shute Harbour (YSHR)	262	17

The flight today will showcase the stunning scenery of North Queensland. The route to Dunk Island will take you past Bartle Frere, Queensland's highest mountain, and Wallaman Falls, which boasts a drop of around 270 meters and is Australia's tallest single-drop waterfall. You will also fly around Magnetic Island at Townsville.

Finally, you will soar over the beautiful Whitsunday Islands and fly past Whitehaven Beach before landing at Shute Harbour Airport.



Wallaman Falls

DAY FOURTEEN Friday 22 August



Whitehaven Beach, Whitsundays

For the final day of the Safari, a cruise has been arranged to visit the Whitsundays' islands, inlets, and beaches. The cruise includes lunch on the famous Whitehaven Beach. There will also be plenty of time to go snorkeling.

Staying at Airlie Beach Hotel, it is only a short stroll to the village, providing options for entertainment and places to eat.

DAY FIFTEEN Saturday 23 August

After a hearty breakfast, it is time to say goodbye to your fellow travellers and set off for home.





2025 August Cape York Air Safari

Accommodation

Date	Destination	Accommodation	Web Site	Phone
Sat Aug 9	Hughenden	Royal Hotel	https://www.hughendenhotelmotel.com.au	(07) 4741 1183
Sun Aug 10 Mon Aug 11	Sweers Island	Sweers Island Resort	https://www.sweers.com.au	(07) 4748 5544
Tue Aug 12	Hells Gate Roadhouse	Hells Gate Hellton	https://www.hellsgateroadhouse.com.au	(07) 4745 8258
Wed Aug 13	Karumba	End of the Road Motel	http://www.endoftheroadmotel.com.au	(07) 4745 9599
Thu Aug 14 Fri Aug 15	Thursday Island	Grand Hotel Thursday Island	https://grandhotelti.com.au	(07) 4069 1557
Sat Aug 16 Sun Aug 17	Badu Island	Alup Healing	https://www.instagram.com/alup_baduisland/?hl=en	
Mon Aug 18	Cooktown	Sea View Motel	http://www.cooktownseaviewmotel.com.au	(07) 4069 5377
Tue Aug 19 Wed Aug 20	Yungaburra	Kookaburra Lodge Motel	https://www.kookaburra-lodge.com	(07) 4095 3222
Thu Aug 21 Fri Aug 22	Airlie Beach	Airlie Beach Hotel	https://airliebeachhotel.com.au	(07) 4964 1999

Included Transfers

Return airfield transfers at

- Hughenden, Sweers Island, Karumba,
- Thursday Island, Badu Island,
- Cooktown, Yungaburra and Airlie Beach.

Included Meals

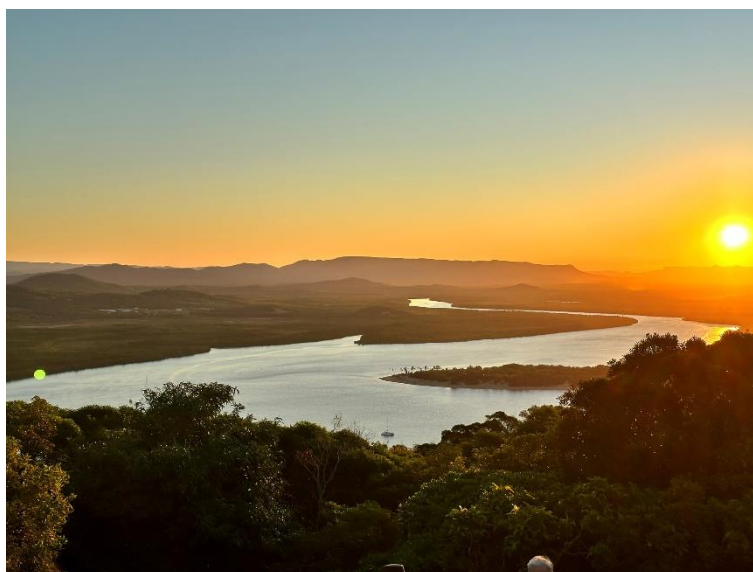
- Sweers Island: 2 dinners, 2 breakfasts and 1 lunch.
- Hells Gate Roadhouse: 1 dinner, 1 breakfast and 1 lunch.
- Thursday Island: sunset cruise dinner, Full Malu experience dinner, cape York cruise breakfast and lunch, and 1 hotel breakfast
- Badu Island: 2 dinners, 2 breakfasts and 2 lunches.
- Merluna Station: morning tea
- Yungaburra: 1 dinner
- Ingham: lunch

**Totals: 6 Breakfasts, 6 Lunches, 5 Dinners and 1 morning tea plus
Island Stars Full Malu Experience and Thursday Island Dinner and Cape York Tip Cruise**

Tours

Date	Location	Activity	Start	Duration	Cost (Per Person)	Catering
Mon Aug 12	Airlie Beach	# Ocean Rafting Whitsunday Islands, Whitehaven Beach and Snorkelling (includes Lunch)	09:00	7.0 hours	\$260	Lunch
Sat Aug 9	Hughenden	# Flinders Discovery entry, town and Mount Walker tour	15:00	3.0 hours	\$75	
Sun Aug 10	Hughenden	# Porcupine Gorge Tour	08:30	3.0 hours	\$75	
Mon Aug 11	Sweers Island	Half Day Fishing Charter	09:00	4.0 hours	\$300	
Tue Aug 12	Hells Gate	# Cliffdale Station Tour	14:00	2.0 hours	\$75	
Wed Aug 13	Karumba	# Sand Island Sunset Tour	16:30	3.0 hours	\$110	Nibbles
Thu Aug 14	Thursday Island	Thursday Island Garrison Tour	TBA	2.0 hours	\$50	
	Horn Island	In Their Steps Tour	TBA	2.0 hours	\$85	
Mon Aug 18	Cooktown	# Endeavour River Sunset Cruise	16:30	3.0 hours	\$90	Nibbles
Wed Aug 20	Yungaburra	# Atherton Tablelands Tour	09:00	7.0 hours	\$175	Lunch
Fri Aug 22	Airlie Beach	# Ocean Rafting Whitsunday Islands, Whitehaven Beach and Snorkelling (includes Lunch)	09:00	7.0 hours	\$260	Lunch

These tours are considered to be likely the most popular – Estimated Total Cost is \$865





2025 August Cape York Air Safari

Airfields

Airfield	ICAO Code	Fuel Provider	Phone	Payment Method	Self Service
Hughenden	YHUG	Peter Riordan	0438 290 403	Master or Visa Card	No
Hervey Bay	YHVB	Fraser Coast Aviation	0412 253 267	World Fuel Carnet Card	Yes
Gladstone	YGLA	Viva	0427 239 293	Viva Carnet Card Master or Visa Card	Yes
Rockhampton	YBRK	Viva World Fuel	07 4927 3181 0411 162 210	Viva Carnet Card World Fuel Carnet Card	No
		Air BP	0409 638 801	Air BP Carnet Card	Yes
Shute Harbour	YSHR	Whitsunday Airport	(07) 4946 9185	Master or Visa Card	No
Ingham	YIGM	NQ Aviation Services	(07) 4776 0350 (0409)356 252	Master or Visa Card	No
Cooktown	YCKN	Cook Shire Council	(07) 4069 5360 (0419) 511 289	Master or Visa Card	Yes
Normanton	YNTN	World Fuel Services	(07) 4745 1615	World Fuel Carnet Card Master or Visa Card (via App)	No
Karumba	YKMB	World Fuel Services	(0427) 117 765	World Fuel Carnet Card Master or Visa Card (via App)	Yes
Coen	YCOE	Cook Shire Council	(07) 4060 1136	Master or Visa Card	No
Horn Island	YHID	Air BP	(07) 4069 2224 (0409) 024 572	Air BP Carnet Card Master or Visa Card	No
Weipa	YBWP	Oznorth Services	(07) 4069 7318	Master or Visa Card	No
Merluna Station	YMEU	N/A	(07) 4060 3209	N/A	N/A
Burketown	YBKT	Nowland	(0427) 455 107	Master or Visa Card	Yes
Hells Gate Roadhouse	YHEG	N/A	(07) 4745 8258	Master or Visa Card	No



2025 August Cape York Air Safari

Maintenance Organisations

Organisation	Location	Web Site	Contact
Aircraft Maintenance Specialists	Caloundra Airport	http://www.ams99.com.au	07 5491 6819
Hervey Bay Aircraft Maintenance	Hervey Bay Airport		07 4128 7721
Rose Aircraft Engineers	Rockhampton Airport		07 4922 6454
NQ Aviation Services	Ingham Airport	http://www.nqaviation.com.au	07 4776 0350
Flighttech Maintance	Cairns Airport		07 4040 1222
Aero Enterprise Aust Pty Ltd	Cairns Airport	http://www.aero.com.au	07 4055 1866
Cooktown Aircraft Maintenance	Cooktown Airport	https://www.cooktownaircraftmaintenance.com.au	(07) 4034 9300
Flighttech Maintance	Horn Island Airport		0419 837 746
Marker Aviation Services Pty Ltd	Mount Isa Airport	https://www.markeraviation.com.au	07 4743 5306
Longreach Aircraft Maintenance Pty Ltd	Longreach Airport		(07) 4658 2211 (0427) 682 211
Western Queensland Air Maintenance	Charleville Airport		07 4654 2074

Links

<https://www.visithughenden.com.au>

<https://www.outbackqueensland.com.au/town/hughenden>

<https://www.sweers.com.au>

<https://www.exploreburke.com.au/sweers-island>

<https://www.hellsgateroadhouse.com.au>

<https://www.exploreburke.com.au/hells-gate-roadhouse>

<https://queenslandplaces.com.au/karumba>

<https://www.aussietowns.com.au/town/karumba-qld>

<https://sunsetcp.com.au/2023/05/28/the-history-of-karumba>

<https://eatlas.org.au/ts/gallery/ts-scenery>

<http://www.tourismcapeyork.com/explore/npa-torres-strait>

<https://www.facebook.com/TorresStraitCulturalExperience>

<http://www.tourismcapeyork.com/explore/western-cape>

<https://www.indigenous.gov.au/community/badu-island-mulgrave-island>

<https://www.nla.gov.au/research-guides/torres-strait-islands-collection/near-western-islands>

<https://www.merlunastation.com.au>

<http://www.tourismcapeyork.com/explore/cooktown>

<http://www.tourismcapeyork.com/explore/cooktown/accommodation/lions-den-hotel>

<https://www.yungaburra.com>

<https://www.athertontablelands.com.au>

<https://www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au>



