



## A dream voyage through the magical Whitsunday Islands

When you set sail from Abel Point Marina on board DreamCatcher, an island adventure awaits you among some of the most beautiful islands in the world.

Due to the protection of the Great Barrier Reef, the waters are calm and the anchorages safe – and the scenery is sublime.

Following is a typical 14-day trip (subject to prevailing weather conditions), which we had ourselves. It takes in some of the most popular and stunning spots, as well as some of the more secluded ones.



## Day 1

From Airlie Beach we cruise leisurely to **Cid Harbour**, on Whitsunday Island's north-west side. The largest of all the Whitsunday Islands, it is uninhabited and 100 per cent National Park.

Cid Harbour is a very large, natural harbour with several sand beaches including popular Dugong Beach. Sawmill Beach is a beautiful beach and has picnic tables – certainly worth a stopover.

Cid Island itself forms the southern head to the harbour and we always enjoy the great snorkelling on the island's eastern side. There is also a magnificent stand of native paperbark trees and excellent views from the island down through Whitsunday Passage.

## Day 2

We head north around Whitsunday Island's northern tip, through Hook Passage, and we sail south along the eastern side of Whitsunday Island, down to world-famous **Whitehaven Beach**.

Seven kilometres of pure white silica sand make this one of the most dazzling and beautiful beaches in the world and it is a must-see on any Whitsundays trip.



We prefer to anchor at the southern end of the beach and we go to bed looking forward to one of the best mornings you could ever have – waking up to Whitehaven Beach when the water is flat and the sand still pristine before anyone else has arrived.

## Day 3

We cruise north back up the eastern side of Whitsunday Island and anchor for the afternoon and evening at **Tongue Bay**, a fairly large anchorage offering a secure haven for exploring neighbouring Hill Inlet.



Walking the track from the little beach across Tongue Point, it leads us to a silica sand beach on the other side where the spectacular vista of Whitehaven Beach and Hill Inlet unfolds.

The inlet is stunning as the tide shifts the sand and water to create a marbled effect of blue and white streaks.



#### Day 4

It's time to cruise north to Hook Island, the second largest island in the group and one of the most fascinating.



There are many beautiful anchorages but we like to start at **Manta Ray Bay** and make our way anti-clockwise around the island.

Manta Ray Bay, like many of Hook Island's bays, is renowned for its snorkelling with a vast array of coral in different shapes and colours, as well as colourful tropical fish – certainly a 'must-do' when you are in the Whitsundays.

Neighbouring Luncheon Bay, a very pleasant place, is always good for lunch – hence its name – and you might spot some wild goats on the rocks above the bay.

#### Day 5

You can't visit Hook Island without visiting **Butterfly Bay** – another great diving and snorkelling spot.

The reef and sand beach here make for fascinating exploring and keep an eye out for stingrays. Maureen's Cove, just around the point, is also good for exploring.



#### Day 6

Still hugging the northern end of Hook Island, we head down the western side of the island to **Stonehaven Anchorage**, which has a lovely sand beach and some good snorkelling too.



If you're into wildlife, a trip in the dinghy across to Bird Island would be worthwhile, as it is a significant bird site.

Stonehaven is a lovely spot to overnight as you can see the lights from Hayman Island Resort twinkling softly to the north.

## Day 7

We leave Stonehaven and head north to **Hayman Island**, one of Australia's most talked-about 5-star resorts with a man-made boat harbour on the southern side.

Should you wish to stay the night on Hayman Island, which has beautiful gardens and is stunningly presented, prior arrangements need to be made.



There are several restaurants offering a variety of cuisine and the last time we were there, the food was just perfect and the service excellent. A night ashore is usually a very memorable experience.

## Day 8

Still at Hayman Island, we cruise up the western side of the island to **Blue Pearl Bay**, on the north-west corner, a lovely expanse of bay with beautiful beaches.

Incredible fringing reef makes it a very popular diving and snorkelling spot. We prefer the dive sites off Castle Rock (to the south of the bay) and Dolphin Point (to the north), which are considered by some to be two of the best dive spots in the Whitsundays.

## Day 9

Having spent the night in beautiful Blue Pearl Bay, we slowly wake up and while the day away in a relaxed haze.....

## Day 10

Leaving Hayman Island, a brisk sail south down the western side of Hook Island takes up the morning and we cruise slowly up **Nara Inlet** in the afternoon.

Flanked by steep rock walls dotted with hoop pines, this inlet is almost like a fjord.

The finger of water runs deep into the island and you look up at rocky outcrops and silhouettes of trees, giving a ghostly feel. At night the water shimmers like a streak of silver.

We take our dinghy to the end of the inlet, where there is a beach with a track leading up to caves with aboriginal wall paintings. We enjoy the great view down, where we can see our yacht DreamCatcher. Thanks to park rangers, the existing boardwalk makes the walk not too daunting.



## Day 11

A visit to the Whitsunday Islands would not be complete without a day or two on world-renowned **Hamilton Island** – a cosmopolitan, bustling holiday island that caters for just about any interest.



There are about 10 restaurants and bars, as well as clothes shops, a supermarket, post office and bank. And when you've had enough shopping, lounge by one of the many pools. An array of activities, from go-karts to golf, keeps everyone amused.

Hamilton Island's world-class marina welcomes visiting yachts. Keep in mind, the busiest and most fascinating time here for sailors is during world-famous Hamilton Island Race Week, every August.



## Day 12

We explore Hamilton Island at our own pace. We like to hire a golf buggy to get around (there are no cars) or you can jump on and off the free shuttle bus.

The Marina Village is fun to walk around with its shops, cafes and tavern. On the other side of the island, make sure you visit Catseye Beach, where you can swim, snorkel and paddle ski.

There are also lovely bushwalking tracks through the island's National Park, affording excellent views over the surrounding islands.

At sundown, our favourite spot is One Tree Hill, where we have a cocktail or two and enjoy the breathtaking views of the islands as the sun sinks.



### Day 13

Having had a civilisation fix, it's time to head back to the wilds of Whitsunday Island, the largest and one of the most remote, and the island where our voyage started.

Just across from Hamilton Island, on the southern side of Whitsunday Island, is **Turtle Bay**, a beautiful series of bays just east of Fitzalan Passage.

We usually take advantage of the excellent picnic spots and - for those who just can't get enough - there is some great snorkelling to the west of the bay.

Smaller Crayfish Bay and Torres Herald Bay – tucked into the eastern side of Turtle Bay – are good for those still keen to explore.

### Day 14

As we set our sail and head north back towards Abel Point Marina – past Hamilton Island to our left, up through the passage between South Molle and North Molle Islands with Hook and Hayman in the distance to our right - we always reflect on what an amazing gift the Whitsunday Islands are.

On board DreamCatcher we will create your dream voyage among these magical islands.

All you have to do is sit back and relax and enjoy the comforts of your elegant, classic ketch, complete with timber fittings and modern amenities, and

we'll make your dream trip a reality.



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