

Top 10 things to do on Hamilton Island

One of the special things about visiting Hamilton Island on Australia's Great Barrier Reef is that there are so many things to do. But if you do nothing else, make sure you try some of these top 10.

1. Find Nemo (and many of his friends)

Hamilton Island is in the heart of the Great Barrier Reef. A fringing reef surrounds the island and at low tide, the watersports playground of Catseye Beach turns into a snorkeler's paradise. Fish have been hand-fed here for more than 20 years, so their numbers are plentiful and their colours amazing. For the ultimate Great Barrier Reef experience, visit the outer reef by boat, plane, helicopter, semi-submersible or from an underwater viewing room on a stable platform.

2. Catch dinner

Head out on a fishing safari with Renegade Charters. The expert crew are on hand to help with bait selection and reeling your catch in. They will also clean and fillet your catch – ready for you to present to Chef to cook for your dinner in one of the island's restaurants or for you to cook in your kitchen if you are staying in one of the island's many holiday homes.

3. Get some therapy, naturally

A visit to Hamilton Island's new full service day spa, Spa wumurdaylin, will soothe the soul (and the shoulders) with a variety of treatments including body cocoon wraps, exfoliations, facials, massage and body treatments. Guests at qualia, our world class resort located on the northernmost tip of the island can also enjoy Spa qualia and indulge in a range of indigenous treatments from Australian company Li'tya or wine lovers can try a Burgundy Bath Soak, Vinotherapie Body Scrub, Pinot Noir Mask and Chardonnay Massage.

4. Fill the Sails

Hamilton Island and the magnificent waters of the Whitsundays are known as a sailing mecca. You can get a taste for the sport in the trapeze of a 36ft catamaran *Adrenalin Rush* or take it a bit easier on a sunset or full day tour on the charming *Banjo Paterson*. If you get the sailing bug, you can complete a "learn to sail" course on Hamilton Island and take your own yacht on a bareboat charter for a few nights. The last week in August is a sailor's delight as Australia's largest offshore yachting regatta, the Audi Hamilton Island Race Week is staged.

5. Get in touch with nature

Start the day with yoga on the beach, followed by a rewardingly strenuous walk to Passage Peak - the highest point on Hamilton Island - where the views will take your breath away. On the way, you will more than likely see wallabies, kangaroos and Australian birds like the famed kookaburra and cockatoo. Then have 'Breakfast with the Koalas' at the Koala Gallery and head out on a kayaking tour where you will get up close and personal with local marine life.

6. Get 'Eventuous'

There is nearly always something happening at Hamilton Island in terms of special events. Ranging from major sporting extravaganzas such as the Audi Hamilton Island Race Week (August) or one of the world's largest paddling events Hamilton Island Cup (June) right through to cultural experiences like

presentations by The Australian Ballet at qualia or jazz weekends, Hamilton Island is renowned for its events and parties.

7. Paint a Picture

Take home your holiday memories on canvas. Art classes are conducted each week, under the tutelage of a visiting Artist in Residence. There are adult classes as well as special classes for the children and you will be surprised at the talent that lies within you.

8. Pump some adrenalin

The fastest way to tour around Hamilton Island is on a jetski. Jetski tours are a fun and interactive way to see the waters around Hamilton Island and to learn a bit about local history and marine life. Guests wear helmets fitted with speakers so they are in constant touch with their tour guide.

9. Say I do

While you cannot elope on Hamilton Island, with a bit of planning you can marry in this idyllic paradise. Wedding locations vary from a quaint chapel overlooking the sea to countless beachside and garden settings. One couple even got married underwater. And if you are just thinking about popping the question, imagine the surprise when she (or he) looks out of the helicopter window on your scenic flight over magnificent Whitehaven Beach to see 'Will you marry me?' on the beach.

10. Do nothing

Relax. Sleep in. Laze around the pool (pick your favourite pool among many). Have Hamilton Island's staff take care of everything for you. The only thing to do while you are doing nothing is to decide where the next meal and drink is coming from and with a choice of more than 10 restaurants and bars, that won't be hard.

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