



**CAIRNS
CONVENTION
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PASSION IS IN OUR NATURE

TOURISM FACT SHEET

Cairns is home to two world heritage listed sites - the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics Rainforest. It is a tourism mecca. A 'bucket list' destination for many, there is something for everyone whether that's SCUBA diving, hiking, learning about the local wildlife, adrenaline sports, gourmet food tours or simply relaxing in paradise.

The region also offers many study options to those pursuing a career in tourism. Tourism is the main economic driver in the region, and is also the number one employer, with one in five people working in the industry.

Tourism is a major contributor to the economy, responsible for around 20% of jobs and \$2.8 billion of gross regional product. The industry is a major catalyst for public and private infrastructure development in Far North Queensland.



“What I really love about the tourism industry is showcasing our fantastic region to visitors. Seeing how happy people are when they experience the many activities and natural beauty we have on our doorstep, is extremely rewarding.”



BEN WOODWARD
DIRECTOR OF SALES AND
MARKETING, CAPTA GROUP



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Tourism Research

Travelling with Dementia

When we think of tourism, most people don't naturally consider this from a different perspective however, for Dr Anja Pabel, Lecturer in Tourism at Central University Cairns, her attention is focused on those with dementia. By exploring ways in which tourism can be more dementia friendly, Anja is working towards producing a comprehensive set of guidelines aimed at making the tourism industry align more with the specific needs of those with dementia. Being based in Cairns enables Dr Pabel to have a multidisciplinary approach with access to tourism and airport operators, as well as industry academics.

Travel and Humour

Anja has also investigated the role of humour in tourism settings. More specifically she looked at the ways in which humour influences the tourist experience by making tourists feel comfortable, connected and more mindful. In recent years, she has become active in publishing work on student experience using qualitative data from social media, receiving awards for her commitment to teaching and learning.

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Education and Tourism Research

Pathways in Tourism

Dr Michelle Thompson is a lecturer in tourism at Central Queensland University, Cairns. As well as conducting research, part of her role is to work with students to kickstart their tourism careers and in particular, develop more sustainable management options within the industry more broadly.

Agritourism

Another focus for Dr Thompson is agritourism which has grown hugely in popularity over the years. Michelle's interests focus on regional tourism development which in Far North Queensland, is alive with food, wine and nature-based options. Michelle's research experience reflects her passion for regional tourism issues providing industry and community outcomes, benefitting the industry and visitors alike.

Drive Tourism

With so many people now opting for driving holidays, it is essential to get a better understanding of who drive tourists are, what they mean to the communities in terms of their social connections but also, their economic benefits as well. Dr Thompson applies her research to agritourism in the drive tourism market and food tourism, the two of which, often go hand in hand.



DR MICHELLE THOMPSON
LECTURER, TOURISM, CENTRAL
QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY

“We live in an area of the world that has the expertise and the ability to address the problem that the whole world is trying to solve in terms of these disruptive technologies.”

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A Wealth of Tourism Experiences

Ancient Lands

The World Heritage listed Rainforest is the oldest, continually surviving rainforest in the world and encompasses some 894,420 hectares. One of the best way to experience the rainforest is with Skyrail Rainforest Cableway which give visitors a unique perspective of the ancient landscape both above and below the canopy.

Natural Wonders

The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest living structure, is visible from space and consists of over 3,000 individual reefs. Reef trips operate daily, offering snorkeling and diving experiences on a day-trip or longer overnight experiences depending on how much you want to do. You can even experience the reef on a glass bottom boat.

Research Hub

Cairns is ideally situated to conduct research into tourism behaviour with the industry contributing to approximately 20% of jobs and \$2.8 billion gross regional product. By understanding more about tourism and how improvements can be made, the attractions in the region will be more accessible and the industry, more economically sustainable.

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