

Bloomfield Lodge

BEAUTIFULLY REMOTE

How to have that fishing holiday of a lifetime and stay married. By Martin Salter

Like most anglers my ideal vacation would see me as far away from civilisation as possible, waking every sun-bathed morning by a fish filled water where the only people I see are friendly locals or fellow fisherman in search of similar levels of solitude and tranquillity, save only for the sound of the occasional screaming reel. However my wife, in common with most non-fishing partners, has somewhat different holiday priorities. These often require levels of comfort and no small amount of pampering that would be hard to find aboard a wave-tossed boat or in the isolated campsites that are, more often than not, the nearest available accommodation in easy reach of the world's great fishing spots.

Passionate anglers are inveterate dreamers and schemers. Those of us who want to catch that faraway fish of a lifetime, and yet still remain married and sane, often have to work long and hard to persuade our loved ones that they too could be happy participants in a foreign fishing trip that just has to be experienced. For any angler wanting some serious saltwater action with huge pelagic fish and monster reef dwellers in a stunning tropical setting, then Far North Queensland (FNQ) on Australia's east coast just has to be on that 'bucket list'. The oceans alongside the Coral Sea and the Great Barrier Reef are home to some of the world's largest marlin, tuna, wahoo, sailfish and Spanish mackerel. The reefs themselves hold massive populations of the whole 'red-fish' or 'Lutjanid' family of fishes including the beautifully marked Red and Spangled Emperors, large mouthed nanngai, mangrove jacks and Giant Trevally as well as rock cod of many types and that most highly prized eating fish - the Coral Trout. Closer inshore there are, amongst the crocodiles and wheeling ospreys, barramundi, queenfish, fingermark and threadfin salmon living in the estuaries, river mouths and amongst the prolific mangroves which line the many waterways which drain the Daintree Rainforest - one of the jewels in Queensland's crown.



So is there anywhere where we fishaholics can experience the type of holiday fishing all angler's dream of whilst still remaining happily hitched? I'm pleased to report that there is and it's a hideaway rainforest retreat called Bloomfield Lodge, if there is a more idyllic place on this earth for a fisherman and his loved one to enjoy a romantic yet adventurous holiday together then I have yet to find it. Situated close to the mouth of the Bloomfield river at the southern end of the stunning Weary Bay, the sheer beauty and isolation of this region, uniquely sandwiched between the two World Heritage sites of the Daintree and the Great Barrier Reef makes it a very special place indeed. Visitors to Bloomfield are flown in from Cairns on a 12 seater light aircraft. Believe me, landing on an airfield in the middle of a rainforest after a 30 minute flight over the turquoise blue waters of the Coral Sea is a great way to start a holiday, particularly when the pilot has to wait for the kangaroos to hop off the runway before landing!



From the diminutive Mount Louis airstrip guests are transported a short distance by minibus to the river and loaded, along with their baggage and supplies for the lodge, aboard a small barge and whisked downstream, out into the shallow bay and across to a private jetty. The accommodation at Bloomfield is very special and consists of 17 individual luxury cabins, many built on stilts in the traditional Queenslander style, spread out amongst the palm trees on the hillside, nearly all with breathtaking views over the bay.

It was as my wife, Natalie, enthused at the view, the facilities, the accommodation, the ambience and the sheer luxury of Bloomfield that I realised we had finally found the perfect holiday balance. Here was a place where I could go fishing almost as often as I liked with the complete blessing of my other half who was already planning which days she would be booking in for the extensive massage and beauty therapies that were on offer just a short walk away from the pool.

