

Bloomfield Lodge

BEAUTIFULLY REMOTE

Whale of a Time By Shayne Marks – Tour Guide

Taking a reef trip from Bloomfield Lodge during our winter months (June-Aug) you often encounter the majestic humpback whales. These behemoths travel north from Antarctica, calving on the way (around Sydney) and then spending the last couple of months not feeding but just frolicking and relaxing in their own tropical resort, albeit watery.

The humpback whales grow to 18m, weigh up to 30 tonnes and are of the genus megaptera meaning big wing, for they are the longest finned whale – this being one of the main identification features.



The English name humpback whale stems from their characteristic back bending (humping) before they dive, they are also one of the most boisterous and inquisitive whales with lots of breaching (jumping vertically and then falling back in with an almighty splash), tail slapping and fin waving as well as bobbing, which is hanging vertically and poking their noses and eyes out for a look around which is all fantastic to see.

On one of our trips a guest spotted three about ½ a mile off as we were en route to do a spot of fishing, we motored a bit closer and shut down the motors waiting for maybe another blow or a bit of a hump when one just appeared right beside us before diving again. Amid screams of look at that and whoa were questions of “did anyone get a photo”? Not one photo, all too quick and big! We need not have worried because for the next ½ to ¾ of an hour this beautiful, ugly, biggest, gentlest, monster of the sea amazed and entertained us in all whale routines at wonderfully close quarters.

It seemed like the whale was getting as much enjoyment as us and we agreed that it was seeing how much it could make everyone onboard squeak and squeal. Unfortunately we did have to return to the Lodge for dinner and with a last “awesome” we reluctantly idled away leaving it to tell its friends about its encounter and ours.

