

Bloomfield Lodge

BEAUTIFULLY REMOTE

Jungle River Cruise

Relaxing on the River (with maybe the odd shiver).

By Shayne Marks – Tour Guide

Most days at Bloomfield Lodge after breakfast or lunch has settled, you get the opportunity to board one of the Ferryman's for a cruise along the jungle fringed Bloomfield River.

Gently motoring out across Weary Bay, if you gaze north as the boat skips easily over the shallows into the calm tributaries of the river mouth you will experience a panoramic view virtually as Captain James Cook would have seen it all those years ago, totally pristine with no development or human impact visible.

Here the soft sand and mud banks are lined with the amazing stilt rooted, saltwater tolerant mangroves trees, creating a rich food chain from tiny crabs and shrimp up to the prehistoric estuarine crocodile. There is only a short distance from the coast to the foothills and you quickly leave the mangroves behind as the rainforest envelopes the rocky shores.



A short distance up river is Port Bloomfield, not much of the original Port remains visible today, but your guide will tell a tale or two of 10,000 people in the heyday of avid tin miners, Chinese gardeners, steam locomotives carting sugar cane, and sweating timber cutters hauling red cedar, only to have most traces of their existence gobbled by the forest when they left.

Rounding the next bend lying on his sandbar is the ‘shiver maker’ no matter how many times you’ve seen or drifted close to 7’-15’ saltwater crocodiles, these modern day dinosaurs still give you the jitters. On a good clear winters day you have the best chance of seeing our resident population of 8 or 9 crocs, from little babies to ugly big uns. In summer they are a bit scarcer with breeding season and potential flooding, though one girl successfully nested last year with our guests lucky enough to see the young on hatching day!

Croc’s are not the only things to see or smell or hear, how about a colony of 5,000 transient fruit bats squabbling in their roost. Abundant species of birds vary their visit depending on seasons. A keen eye is needed to spot the tiny azure kingfishers and shining fly catchers while no one could miss the 5’ Jabiru or the white bellied sea eagle with his 6’ wing span.



When you reach the Bloomfield causeway, often under water road crossing the river at the aboriginal community of Wujal Wujal we pause for some cool water, whilst we float around many things are discussed including the lives and lifestyles of the locals. Thirst quenched its back down river to the lodge, often spotting something else exciting, unusual or unique to top off a thoroughly enjoyable few hours!

