

## THE GREAT AUSSIE OUTBACK

Picturesque waterfalls, striking scenery through dry savannah and small townships, coffee plantations and wineries – the inland route makes for an easy drive on paved roads as far as the Bloomfield Track.

Distance 331km

Total driving time approx 4hrs

### CAIRNS TO MAREEBA

65km

1 hour



Heading north from Cairns, Highway 1 takes you over the Kuranda range away from the coast and through the rainforest where the skyrail passes overhead. Several lookouts along the way offer expansive vistas of lush valleys and sparsely vegetated hillsides. Kuranda is a quaint market village of many facets, including wildlife parks and butterfly farms. The Barron River Falls thunder behind the township driving the power station that supplies the north. As you leave Kuranda and the rainforest behind the countryside opens to eucalypts and grasslands.

On reaching Mareeba drive through the main street, this was originally a tobacco farming area but is now renowned for its wineries, chocolates and coffee. Many self serve fruit stalls dot the roadside, maybe stop and try what is in season. Local attractions here include Jacques Coffee Plantation and Coffee World, the Golden Pride Winery, Australia's largest mango plantation and the Beck Museum – privately owned with an impressive aviation and military collection.



### MAREEBA TO LAKELAND

185kms

2 hours

Leaving Mareeba (and the general population) northwards on Highway 81, the coastal hills give way to rolling plains and open savannah. Keep an eye out for wildlife and livestock along the roadsides as some sections are unfenced. Small townships typical of the Lower Cape



York zip by, including Mt Molloy where copper was found in 1880 and Mt Carbine known for its Tungsten Mine. Bobs Lookout at the top of the Desaiely Range is awe inspiring, giving a glimpse of the vastness of the outback and definitely worth a stop.

A small museum can be found at the Palmer River Roadhouse. The discovery of alluvial gold in the Palmer River in 1872 led to Queensland's largest gold rush, it became legendary for its hardships and the large numbers of Chinese miners which peaked at 17,000 in 1877. A place of significant national heritage, the Palmer area is rich in the artifacts of early Chinese mining and lifestyle and the relics of pioneer technology and settlement.

eco LODGES  
OF AUSTRALIA

eco  
CERTIFIED  
Advanced  
Ecotourism

Certificate of  
Excellence  
Bloomfield Lodge  
tripadvisor







At Lakeland there is a BP service station just off the main highway with fuel, a cafe and store which serves excellent local coffee. Lakeland Downs lies in a natural basin formed by volcanic activity millions of years ago. The fertile earth found in this part of the Laura River Valley provides a wealth of agriculture, particularly the production of Laura Valley Coffee.

### LAKELAND TO BLOOMFIELD TRACK

50kms

30mins

The highway here meanders back toward the east traversing more cattle and farming land, the area here is inhabited by many species of birds, especially colourful parrots and occasionally wedge-tailed eagles with their



majestic 2.5m wingspan. If you have time, stop at the Annan River Gorge, a deep cleft cut by the river through a rocky wilderness. The turn off to Bloomfield Track is 2kms further down the road on the right, signposted Helenvale and Shiptons Flat Rd.

### BLOOMFIELD TRACK TO PORT BLOOMFIELD

35kms

1 hour

From here the drive is on gravel road and will take you past the iconic Lions Den Hotel, still much the same as when it served cold beer to the tin miners. Definitely a quick stop off here is recommended to quench the thirst but try not to stay too long as did old Tom who's been there 40 years.

The rest of the track is a drive through pristine rainforest alongside crystal streams. You pass through Rossville and onto Ayton, 200m past the general store is the Bloomfield Lodge departure area, well sign posted on the left. Here the driveway takes you to our wharf landing area where you can leave your vehicle in our secure storage unit. You will be met by a boat and guide at a pre-arranged time for the short boat journey across Weary Bay to the lodge.

**Enjoy the drive!**

### IMPORTANT NOTES

- Please be aware that parts of the Bloomfield Track and the Mulligan Highway can become impassable even in a 4WD in wet weather. Road conditions should be checked prior to journey. Information on road conditions can be found on [www.racq.com.au](http://www.racq.com.au) or **1300 130 595**.
- As access to Bloomfield Lodge is affected by low tides guests will need to contact the lodge to arrange a precise pick up time from the Bloomfield Wharf the day before arriving. **Please call the Lodge direct on (07) 4060 8166.**