

Accessible Holiday Destination Guide

Fraser Coast



Whale Bay Marina

The Fraser Coast lies 250 kilometres north of Brisbane and is the whale watching capital of Australia. It includes the UNESCO World Heritage listed K’gari, the largest sand island in the world.

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HERVEY BAY

Hervey Bay is the commercial and tourist centre for the Fraser Coast. It is widely known as a site for observing humpback whales. Whale watching boats operate during the July to November migration season. It is one of two entry points for tours to nearby K’gari. Hervey Bay was named the first Whale Heritage Site in the world by the World Cetacean Alliance, for its commitment to and practices of sustainable whale and dolphin watching.

Beaches and Parks

Hervey Bay has over 14 kilometres of coastline to the bay dotted with numerous beaches, parks, playgrounds and jetties.

ESA Park

ESA Park is situated on the Esplanade between Aplin and Flinders Streets, Point Vernon. It contains designated disabled parking, a playground, picnic shelters with accessible picnic tables and an accessible toilet. Access to the beach is via a short but sandy pathway. This area of the coast is rocky with numerous rock pools.



Queensland
Government

Black Stump Park

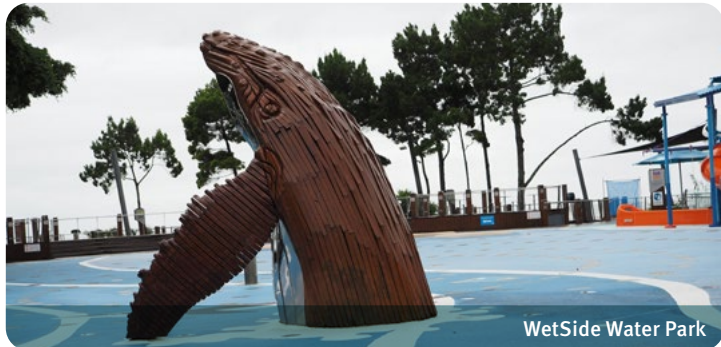
Black Stump Park is located on the Hervey Bay Esplanade in Point Vernon. The undercover picnic shelter is situated overlooking the beach. It contains an accessible picnic table on a concrete base and is complimented by onsite barbecue facilities, an accessible public toilet, an accessible shower with a fold-down seat, and a playground. Paved or concrete paths lead through the park. The playground contains cognitive play elements.

WetSide Water Park

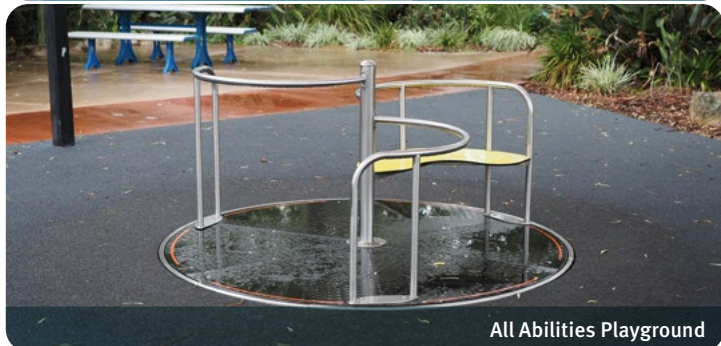
WetSide Water Park is located on the foreshore at the junction of Main Street and the Esplanade, Pialba, Hervey Bay and is an ideal location for family fun. The park contains waterslides, a water play area and TotSide for under fives. A coffee shop, fish and chip shop and restaurant are on-site. The park is entered via a gently sloping ramp from the car park. The main water play area has level entry from the surrounds and is suitable for people of all abilities. There is a short ramp leading down into the TotSide area.

Seafront All Abilities Playground

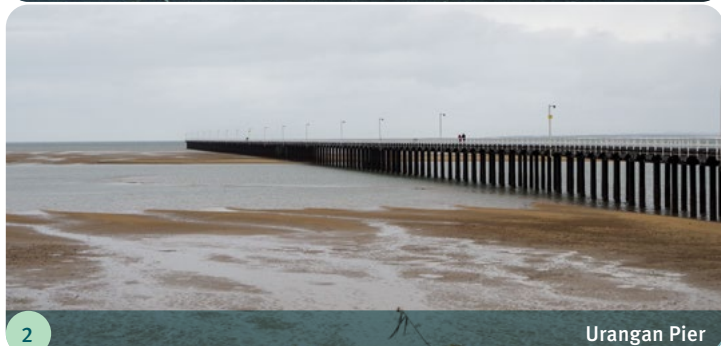
The Seafront All Abilities Playground is situated on the edge of Pialba Beach. The Seafront All Abilities Playground is one of 16 developed as part of the state government's Queensland All Abilities Playground



WetSide Water Park



All Abilities Playground



Urangan Pier

Project – enabling participation in play. The playground features a wide variety of accessible, inclusive play equipment and experiences including a custom-built shipwreck, a swirling maze, and swings to suit all abilities. The park has seven designated disabled parking bays, an accessible toilet and an accessible shower with a fold-down seat. A full Changing Places adult change facility is on-site accessed with an MLAK key. The surface throughout the park is rubberised with no raised borders or steps. The park includes shaded accessible picnic tables and accessible drinking fountains.

NEOS Playground

Between the Seafront All Abilities Playground and the adventure hub is the NEOS Playground. NEOS electronic playground systems are designed to help children improve their strength and stamina via games that are both competitive and fun. Each playground system promotes peripheral, auditory and spatial awareness with its design, LED lights and sound effects. The playground has the same rubberised surface as the All Abilities Playground allowing children of all abilities to participate.

Scarness Park

Scarness Park is located in the heart of Scarness. It enjoys great uninterrupted views of Hervey Bay. Facilities provided within the park include a pavilion with ramped access, shade shelters with accessible picnic tables, an accessible BBQ, an observation deck with level access from the park and a nautical-themed playground with a level rubberised surface and cognitive play panels.

A pier extends out into the bay from the middle of the park, making it a perfect place to wet a line. The pier has two platforms at its midpoint and a larger area at the end. The pier has level access from the park. A paved access ramp to the beach is located on the southern side of Enzo's café.

Urangan Pier

One of the Fraser Coast's landmark attractions is the famous and historic Urangan Pier. Stretching almost a kilometre into the bay, it is one of Australia's longest piers. A walk to the end will reward with spectacular views of Hervey Bay and the chance to see schools of fish, stingrays or pods of dolphins just metres off the jetty. It is another great place to fish. The Urangan precinct contains a number of cafés and boutique shops, as well as a coastal boardwalk and picnic facilities. Level access is provided throughout the park with a ramp from the boardwalk down to the street at the northern end. Accessible picnic tables are available in the park. Accessible toilets are also available. Designated disabled parking is located in front of the toilet block.



Dayman Park

Dayman Park

Located at the end of Dayman Street, Urangan, Dayman Park offers BBQ and picnic facilities, a playground which contains a variety of musical activities, and accessible toilet facilities, however, the tables do not have accessible seating. Designated disabled parking is provided. On the southern side of Reef World is a concrete path to the beach. A gently sloping path leads to the upper section of the park which contains the Matthew Flinders and Krait Memorials and the Matthew Flinders Lookout which affords great views across the Great Sandy Strait to K'gari. Embedded into the paving of the upper level is an Indigenous interpretative trail.

Cafés and restaurants

Enzo's on the Beach

Located at 351A The Charlton Esplanade, in Scarness Park, Enzo's is situated right on the beach. It is open for breakfast and lunch every day and dinner Thursday to Sunday. There is level entry from Scarness Park on the northern side of the building. The menu includes vegan, gluten-free and dairy-free options.

Aquavue Café

Aquavue Café is located right on the beach in Torquay. The café is open for breakfast and lunch every day and dinner from Friday to Sunday. The menu includes vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options. Level entry is provided on the northern side of the building with good seating options both inside and on the front terrace.

Migaloo's Seafood

Migaloo's is located in Urangan, just up from the jetty. It offers great seafood either to dine in or take away. Access is level and food can be pre-ordered if collecting for takeaway. Disabled parking is available almost directly in front. Access is via level entry and wide doors.



Hervey Bay Boat Club Marina

Bayswater Bar and Grill

The Bayswater Bar and Grill is located on the Esplanade, Urangan, just north of the jetty and directly opposite the end of the boardwalk. A curved ramp leads from the footpath to the upper concourse. The restaurant has great views across the Sandy Strait to K'gari and offers a wide choice of eating options. It has vegan and gluten-free choices.

Salt Café

Located in the same complex as the Bayswater Bar and Grill, Salt Café has equally stunning views of the Great Sandy Strait. It is open for breakfast and lunch seven days a week. Access is via the curved ramp in front of the Bayswater Bar and Grill. Gluten-free and vegetarian options are available.

The Boat Club

Located in the Hervey Bay Marina, the Boat Club has stunning views across the marina and the Great Sandy Bay Marine Park. The restaurant boasts a comprehensive menu to suit all tastes, including the freshest local seafood, tender meat dishes and quality vegetarian and vegan options. Disabled parking is available in the main marina car park. Entry is level from the footpath.

Whale Bay Asian Cuisine

The Whale Bay Asian Cuisine is a fusion of Asian culinary delights with a mixture of Malaysian, Thai, Singaporean and Chinese dishes. In addition to dining in, the restaurant offers a takeaway alternative. Both menus offer gluten-free and vegetarian options. Entry is level via the main marina concourse.

Bella's Chit Chat Café

Located on the edge of the harbour, Bella's offers both indoor and alfresco dining overlooking the marina. Access is from the main marina concourse with level, wide entry to both the indoor and outdoor dining sections. The restaurant is open daily for breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea.

Café Balena

Located on the northern edge of the marina, in the tourist terminal, Café Balena offers great views over the harbour. Its menu is comprehensive and includes vegetarian and gluten-free options. Entry is from the main walkway to the charter boat wharf. Accessible toilets are located in the terminal building.

Whale watching and boat tours

Hervey Bay was recognised as a Whale Heritage Site by the World Cetacean Alliance at the World Whale Conference in 2019. The sheltered waters around K'gari act as a nursery for humpback calves on their migration from Antarctica. There are a number of options available to view these magnificent creatures, all of which operate from the Hervey Bay Marina.

Whalesong

Whalesong is a locally owned and family-run business holding an Advanced Ecotourism Certificate. The vessel is a medium-sized, modern catamaran that is family and wheelchair friendly. Due to its size, it is a small group tour. During the season, June to November, Whalesong operates two tours a day, a five hour extended morning cruise and a four hour afternoon and sunset cruise. Whalesong docks at the floating jetty beyond the transit terminal. The main gangway is wide and gently sloping, although the actual steepness of the ramp is tide dependent. The vessel is boarded via two ramps giving access to the main saloon. An accessible toilet is located on the aft deck just outside the saloon door.

Spirit of Hervey Bay

The Spirit of Hervey Bay is the largest vessel in the fleet with six viewing decks over three levels. It operates a morning and afternoon cruise. The vessel is not suitable for wheelchair users. Only the main deck is accessible from the gangplank. There is a lip into the toilets. The toilets are equipped with handrails so the boat is suitable for ambulant people with limited mobility.

Quick Cat II

Quick Cat II is an award-winning, purpose-built whale watching vessel and one of the few in the fleet that is truly wheelchair and pram accessible. Wheelchair access is available to the main and fore decks. It offers half-day whale watching cruises during the whale season, from mid July to the end of October. Quick Cat II was launched in 2003 and has been recently refurbished. It has been accredited with Advanced Ecotourism certification.



Calypso Sunset Cruises



Tasman Venture

Calypso Sunset Cruises

Calypso is a purpose-built, custom 10 metre landing barge. It is an open design with wide side loading doors and ample space on the main deck for wheelchair users. The front ramp lowers for beach access and would be suitable for beach wheelchair use. Calypso offers up to three cruises a day and includes inshore fishing, K'gari beach experiences and a sunset cruise.

Glass Bottom Boat Eco Tours

The Milbi is one of only two vessels in Hervey Bay that offers direct beach landings. Its unique glass bottom allows guests to enjoy the ocean without getting wet. It is the only tour to offer an Indigenous experience in Hervey Bay combined with marine adventures and fun dreamtime stories delivered directly by Butchulla people. The vessel has a wide front gangplank but there is a 300mm step down onto the main boat deck. Wheelchair users would require assistance from the crew. While there are toilets on board, the door is narrow.

Tasman Venture

The Tasman Venture offers both whale watching and water sports adventures. The boat has its own gangway directly off the terminal concourse in front of the terminal building. The gangway leads directly to the main deck.

Tasman Venture is equipped with a platform that lowers guests directly into the water for swimming or kayaking. The platform, in its raised position, is level with the main deck, making it ideal for guests with limited mobility or wheelchair users. The toilets on the main deck have wide doors.

Attractions

Hervey Bay Regional Gallery

The Hervey Bay Regional Gallery opened in May 1997 and has just undergone a major refurbishment. It is located in City Park right in the heart of Hervey Bay's commercial district. The gallery has an established art collection that focuses on contemporary Australian art including a rich representation from local artists from the region. The gallery also hosts national touring exhibitions. Created by local artist Emma Thorp, the park features an art walk sculpture garden. Accessible parking is available in the gallery's car park. The exhibition spaces and shop are all large spaces that are easily navigated by anyone using a mobility aid or device. The gallery is all on a single level. Accessible toilets are located off the main reception area. The Art Walk is all on paved pathways. Entry to the gallery is free.

Hervey Bay Botanic Gardens and Orchid House

The Hervey Bay Botanic Gardens is located in Elizabeth Street, Urangan. The gardens feature plants of the Wide Bay and Great Sandy regions in a mixture of natural bushland, formal gardens, rainforest and wetlands. The gardens cover an area of 26 hectares and were established in 1974. The garden includes a number of zones. The Valley has large grassed areas and shade trees, together with a lagoon and fountain. Bridges and observation decks give visitors a good view of the wildlife including the native turtles. The native Bush Tucker Garden features plants of the indigenous Butchulla people. There is also a Bush Chapel in a rustic rainforest setting. An adjoining arbour links the chapel to the main pathways in the garden. Finally, there is the formal Chinese Garden with a moon gate leading to the Zen garden and reflection ponds. The main entrance is via Elizabeth Street.

The pathways through the Chinese Garden and down to the lagoon are all paved and level. There is a gentle slope to the lagoon bridge and observation decks. The paths through the Bush Tucker Garden are fine, hard-packed gravel. An accessible toilet is located at the rear of the Chinese Garden. The BBQ pavilion contains an accessible BBQ and accessible picnic table.



The Orchid House is located at the southern end of the garden. It has its own car park with a designated disabled parking bay. The Orchid House has over 5,500 orchids with two major seasonal displays, late summer and spring. The house has wide aisles giving access to the plants. This precinct has a deck that overlooks the lake with accessible tables. A BBQ area has a pavilion with an accessible table and BBQ. There is an accessible toilet next to the BBQ area.

Reef World Aquarium

Located in Dayman Park, right on the foreshore, Reef World is one of very few sand-filtered natural daylight-only aquariums in the world. Built in 1979, it is home to a variety of marine life including green sea turtles, colourful tropical fish, sharks and large reef fish, along with tubeworms and crabs. It also features a touch tank at a height suitable for children and wheelchair users. The main tank displays and touch tank are all easily accessible. The outdoor tank has limited access for wheelchair users due to the width of the access ways. An accessible toilet is located in the aquarium.

Accommodation

Emeraldene Inn & Eco-Lodge

The Emeraldene Inn & Eco-Lodge is a peaceful and relaxing eco-resort offering modern and impeccably presented accommodation. It features 14 rooms set amongst two magnificent acres of natural bushland and landscaped gardens and is located in the peaceful Pialba/Urraween region of Hervey Bay. Emeraldene has two purpose-built accessible rooms which connect with other rooms in case needed for carers. Emeraldene is Hervey Bay's foremost accessible accommodation and is preferred by Blue Care.

The Bay Apartments Holiday Resort

The five star, AAA-rated Bay Apartments Holiday Resort is situated directly opposite one of Hervey Bay's best beaches, right on the Esplanade with an array of restaurants, cafés and shops all within a short stroll. All of the fully self-contained apartments are spacious and contemporary with large bay-facing balconies or ground floor courtyards offering direct access to the pool.

Overall, The Bay Apartments have accessible areas such as entry/check-in, lifts and spacious rooms which may be suitable for wheelchair users. Rooms are not purpose-built for wheelchair access, there are no grabrails in the shower area and showers have a 10cm lip, making access only for those who can easily transfer to a chair.

K'GARI

Lying just across the Great Sandy Strait and dominating the coastal views from Hervey Bay is K'gari. K'gari is the largest sand island in the world and has a UNESCO World Heritage Listing. The island is 122 kilometres in length, and is covered in remnant tall rainforest and half of the world's perched freshwater dune lakes are found on the island. It is the combination of shifting sand dunes, tropical rainforests and lakes that earned K'gari its World Heritage Listing.



Accommodation on K'gari



75 Mile Beach on K'gari



The wreck of the SS Maheno on K'gari

Getting there

To fully explore the island, a 4WD and sand driving experience are required. Visitors can take a day trip to the Kingfisher resort without a vehicle.

There are three ferry/barge services that operate to K'gari.

Kingfisher Bay Ferry

The Kingfisher Bay Ferry has four return services which depart River Heads (20 minutes south of Hervey Bay) daily and land at Kingfisher Bay Resort on the western side of K'gari. This is the only ferry service available for people with a disability not bringing a 4WD vehicle to the island. Wheelchair access is available at River Heads and a sealed pathway leads from the Kingfisher Bay jetty to the Kingfisher Bay Resort. The paths within the resort are all sealed. Accessible accommodation and dining are available at the resort. The ferry also takes vehicles and is a starting point for a 4WD tour of the island.

The Fraser Venture

The Fraser Venture departs River Heads (20 minutes south of Hervey Bay) daily, landing at Wanggoolba Creek on the western side of K'gari. Crossing takes approximately 30 minutes. Wanggoolba Creek is the entry point to K'gari and is directly opposite K'gari Beach Resort (formerly Eurong Beach Resort) on the east coast of K'gari. It takes approximately 45 minutes (depending on the sand tracks) to access either Kingfisher Bay Resort or K'gari Beach Resort and the eastern beach attractions. There are no accessible facilities at Wanggoolba Creek.

Manta Ray Barges

Manta Ray Barges is a family owned and operated business. The departure point for Manta Ray K'gari Barge Services is Inskip Point, Rainbow Beach.

The service operates two barges daily from 6am to 5.15 pm (last barge to K'gari is at 5pm, last barge off K'gari is at 5.15 pm). The trip to K'gari takes approximately 10 minutes.

Driving on K'gari

All vehicles driving on K'gari, other than within the limits of the Kingfisher Bay Resort, must purchase and display a permit from the Queensland Department of Environment and Science. 75 Mile Beach, on the eastern side of the island, is regarded as a highway. Normal road rules apply. Tides play a big part in driving on 75 Mile Beach and it is best to avoid the two hours either side of the high tide.

K'gari sights

It must be remembered that K'gari is a sand island and most locations are surrounded by soft sand, however, many sights can be enjoyed from a 4WD vehicle including the wreck of the SS Maheno, The Pinnacles and Red Canyon, all located on 75 Mile Beach. At low tide, the sand is hard and can be enjoyed by wheelchair users, especially with the aid of a 'FreeWheel' attachment or with a beach wheelchair.

Accessible facilities

Kingfisher Bay Resort and K'gari Beach (formerly Eurong) on 75 Mile Beach are the only two locations where there are accessible facilities and paved parking and path areas. Both have accessible toilets, cafés and shops.



Rainbow Beach



Woodgate Beach



Banksia Boardwalk

RAINBOW BEACH

Rainbow Beach is a major entry point to the 41,000 hectare Cooloolo National Park and the southern gateway to World Heritage listed K'gari. According to the Kaby Dreaming, Yiningie, the spirit of the gods, often took the form of a rainbow. Yiningie was killed in a fight when he crashed into the cliffs and his spirit coloured the sands. Rainbow Beach is an hour and a half south of Hervey Bay (123km) and as well as being an entry point to K'gari is also a day trip or holiday destination in its own right. It has all of the essential supplies and fuel for an onward trip to K'gari. There are a variety of cafés including The Deck, with stunning views over the ocean. There is a wheelchair lift for access to the deck's ocean-facing balcony. Accessible picnic tables and BBQs are available in Lawrie Hanson Park. There are also accessible toilets in the park. The lower swimming beach car park gives access to the beach via a concrete path next to the lifesaving tower.

Burrum Coast National Park

Burrum Coast National Park is a showcase of protected coastal lowland vegetation types, paperbark swamps (with cabbage palms—especially in the Woodgate section), wallum heaths and mangroves. The Kinkuna section features a narrow picturesque beach, low coastal dunes, tea-coloured waterways and flat sandy plains.

The Woodgate section has a wheelchair accessible boardwalk on the Banksia Walking Track which crosses a melaleuca swamp. The track is located just behind the main township in Acacia Street. Ten kilometers south of the township is Walkers Point, which has walking tracks to viewing and fishing platforms and a bird hide. Accessible picnic tables are available at Walkers Point.

Woodgate Beach is a picturesque swimming beach. A ramp provides access to the top of the soft sand. Note access may be affected by beach erosion after severe weather. At the top of the ramp are an accessible toilet and accessible shower/change room with a fixed fold down shower bench. The beachside shelter has an accessible picnic table and BBQ



A barge to K'gari

USEFUL LINKS

Visit the Fraser Coast visitfrasercoast.com

Whalesong whalesong.com.au

Quick Cat II herveybaywhalewatch.com.au/quickcat-ii-and-crew

Hervey Bay Eco Marine Tours herveybayecomarinetours.com.au

Hervey Bay Botanic Gardens frasercoast.qld.gov.au/botanicgardens-orchid-house

Hervey Bay Art Gallery hbrg.ourfrasercoast.com.au

K'gari Ferries sealink.com.au/kgari-fraser-island/

Manta Ray Barges mantarayfraserislandbarge.com.au

Queensland Parks and Forests parks.des.qld.gov.au/management/managed-areas/recreation/vehicle-permits

SUGGESTED ITINERARIES

Whale watching stopover (2 nights 1 day)

Take a break on your trip north with two nights in Hervey Bay. Take a morning or afternoon cruise during whale season and admire the mighty humpbacks. Visit the historic Urangan Pier.



Tasman Venture

Adventure long weekend (3 nights 2 days)

Day 1

Spend the morning exploring the historic Urangan Pier before taking an afternoon sunset cruise.

Day 2

Take the ferry to Kingfisher Bay Resort and spend the day enjoying the facilities and beach or take your 4WD across on the barge and take in the sights and thrills of 75 Mile Beach.

A week with the family (7 nights 6 days)

Day 1

Spend the day exploring the esplanade taking in the All Abilities Playground and WetSide. Have fish and chips for lunch at Urangan and spend the afternoon fishing from the historic pier.

Day 2

Take a whale watching cruise in the morning and spend the afternoon learning about the local marine life at Reef World Aquarium.

Day 3

Take the ferry to Kingfisher Bay Resort and spend the day relaxing around the pool and on the beach.

Day 4

Take your own 4WD to Rainbow Beach and catch the ferry from Inskip Point. Drive 75 Mile Beach, stopping at K'gari Beach for lunch. Explore Red Canyon, the wreck of the SS Maheno and the Pinnacles.

Day 5

Explore the Botanic Gardens and Orchid House before a visit to the Hervey Bay Art Gallery. Walk the Art Trail with its colourful sculptures of sea creatures.

Day 6

Take a drive to Woodgate and walk the short Banksia Boardwalk through the melaleuca swamp. Drive to Walkers Point and take the bird hide walk. Spend the afternoon enjoying the ocean at Woodgate Beach.



4WDs on K'gari