

M/V Nimrod Explorer

Itinerary #11: Ocean Outback Adventure

Lockhart River to Lockhart River

7 Nights / 8 Days – Up to 27 dives offered, conditions permitting

This expedition to the section of the Great Barrier Reef north of Lockhart River, on Queensland's Cape York Peninsula, offers an unparalleled opportunity to explore one of the most remote and pristine diving areas in the world! This special itinerary offers the best of the sites that we have found on previous expeditions, as well as the chance to experience reefs never before visited by divers.

Big animal fans won't be disappointed! Reef environment lovers will be astounded at the diversity and colour of the easily accessible, pristine coral reefs in shallow water.

Though we are normally able to do four to five dives daily (including night dives), the remoteness of the area means that weather and tidal considerations sometimes unexpectedly and adversely affect certain sites. **The following itinerary is an example only, and can and will change during the course of the trip.**

DAY 1 CAIRNS TO LOCKHART RIVER

- Guests meet at Explorer Ventures' Cairns office at 7 am
- Bus transfer to General Aviation airport for charter flight to Lockhart River, departing at 8:30 am
- Arrive at Lockhart River by approximately 10:30 am
- 4WD transfer from airstrip to M/V *Nimrod Explorer* at Portland Roads – brunch provided enroute
- Depart Portland Roads by 2:00 pm (*please note: the vessel must rendezvous with a Mothership to take on essential fuel and food supplies today. Delays due to weather and tides may sometimes be experienced, and may determine if the 2 scheduled dives today can be offered.*)
- Lunch served on way to the first dive site
- 2 dives are offered today, including the orientation dive, at *Lagoon Reef*
- After dinner, the boat will steam overnight, heading to Raine Island

DAY 2 RAINE ISLAND

- 4 to 5 dives offered today, including a night or dusk dive
- We spend all day diving around *Raine Island*. Raine Island is the world's largest green turtle rookery and is also an important nesting place for thousands of gannets, terns and frigate birds. You can expect to see green turtles, sharks and a huge variety of reef life.

DAY 3 GREAT DETACHED REEF

- 4 to 5 dives offered today, including a night or dusk dive
- Today we explore the *Great Detached Reef*, diving the walls and pinnacles of this unique reef system. The Great Detached Reef offers an ecosystem which is unlike the Great Barrier Reef and yet unlike the Coral Sea Atolls. It is an interesting blend of the two reef systems, and very exciting diving is found here.



DAY 4 GREAT DETACHED REEF

- 4 to 5 dives offered today, including night or dusk dives
- Today we will shift to the southern sector of the Great Detached Reef and then, weather permitting, on to the outer walls of *Wishbone Reef*. Here you can find caves and walls covered in soft corals and gorgonian fans, sharks, turtles and colourful reef life.

DAY 5

- 4 to 5 dives offered today, including night or dusk dives
- Dive around the deep walls of black rocks with the resident silvertip sharks and turtles, then over to *Lloyds Reef* for dives within its superb untouched coral gardens and more sharks.
- After the night dive, we move south to anchorage close to the next day's diving at *Southern Small Detached Reef*

DAY 6 SOUTHERN SMALL DETACHED REEF

- Southern Small Detached Reef is actually remnants of an undersea mountain. Rising from depths of over 1,200 meters, it is crowned by a beautiful coral atoll. Look for silvertip sharks and dogtooth tuna; in the shallow waters you will find the giant clams and puffer fishes
- 3 dives at Southern Small Detached Reef, then we must make our way back into the Barrier Reef for safe anchorage and a night dive at *Log Reef*.

DAY 7

- 3 day dives offered today, at sites such as *The Swimming Pool* and *Picasso's* at the beautiful *Hibernia Reef complex*. Rich coral growth with abundant and diverse fish life are found in this area.
- The last dive will be completed by 2:30 pm, and lunch is served on the way to Portland Roads, where we spend the night on board.

DAY 8 LOCKHART RIVER TO CAIRNS

- Guests disembark the M/V *Nimrod Explorer* by 8:30 am at Portland Roads
- 4WD transfer to the Lockhart River airstrip for charter flight to Cairns, departing at 11:00 am
- Arrive at Cairns General Aviation airport at approximately 1:00 pm