

# CHRISTMAS ISLAND – A NATURAL WONDER

*Rising majestically from the tropical depths of the vast Indian ocean lies a stunning natural wonder – Christmas Island*

Venture to this awe-inspiring island for an unforgettable getaway. Experience a rich biodiversity and a welcoming culture whilst immersing in a breathtaking natural world.



## THE JOURNEY

**Nearest major city** Perth / Flying Fish Cove

**Distance** 7 days

**Mode/s of transport** Self Drive

## DAY ONE

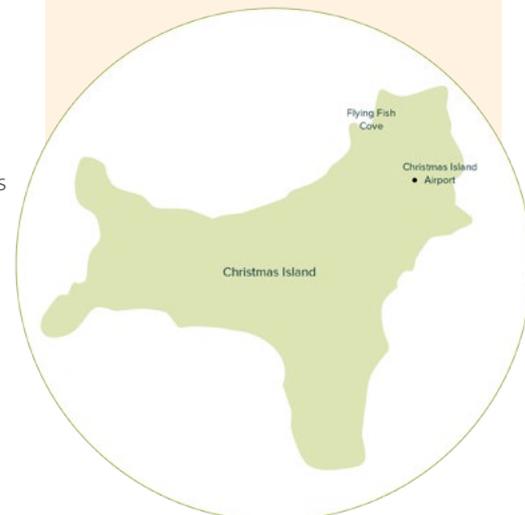
Take a walking tour of Settlement, taking in the Christmas Island Exhibition at Tai Jin House, following the historical trail. After lunch, drive to the Blowholes via the North South Baseline then the East West Baseline. Spectacular blowholes spray seawater high into the air when large swells pound against the shore cliffs and there are panoramic views of the rugged southern coastline. Finish at Martin Point for a spectacular sunset. Martin Point is an ideal spot to take a broader view of the island's geographic formation – sit back with a cool drink and watch the sun go down – it is truly spectacular.

### Highlights:

- Tai Jin House was originally the British Administrator's residence, a beautiful historic residence which now houses a historical exhibition
- The Blowholes formed over countless years as pounding waves and gushing water etched their way across the southern cliffs, eroding many fissures and tunnels
- The Martin Point viewing platform is located on the edge of the sea cliff, providing excellent views along the western coast. Red-footed boobied roost and nest in the trees above and see brown boobies nesting on the sea cliffs.

## AT A GLANCE

- Be spellbound at the annual mass migration of red land crabs
- Marvel at massive whale sharks gliding past
- Get up close to beautiful birds – seen nowhere else in the world
- Meander in amazement through the rich rainforest
- Soak up inspiration in the warm turquoise waters surrounding the Island
- Feast the senses on the sights and tastes of cultural harmony





## DAY TWO

Drive to Territory Day Park and complete the Territory Day Park Nature Trail, possibly extending the walk to the Smith Point Nature Trail. Following the walks, immerse in the cool waters of the Grotto – a beautiful sea cave with a sea and fresh water pool. Visit Mar Chor Nui Nui Temple – facing out to sea which commands a lofty position and then finish the afternoon with a snorkel and barbecue at Flying Fish Cove.

Flying Fish Cove is perfect for a snorkel in the crystal clear waters that encapsulate the Island. Sitting at the base of a soaring, semicircle of jungle clad walls, this natural harbour allows the chance to see corals that encrust the shallower waters and the outstanding reef fish which inhabit this cove.

### Highlights:

- Explore and experience Christmas Island's unique rainforests on the Territory Day Park
- Local legend tells that the Grotto is home to an ancient sea dragon. Listen for the dragon's roar on approach to the cave
- Flying Fish Cove is an easily accessible beach for swimming, snorkelling and diving, which also has picnic and barbecue facilities.

## DAY THREE

Pack a picnic lunch then drive to Greta and Dolly Beaches, enjoying the trek through the rainforest to Dolly Beach. If possible to draw an almost perfect Robinson Crusoe style beach, Dolly would definitely be a contender. It's an isolated and picturesque sandy beach with a coral reef and freshwater stream. Robber crabs inhabit the area above the beach and turtles nest all year round here. Return to Settlement via the stunning Margaret Knoll lookout for Birdwatching. Remember the binoculars and camera.

### Highlights:

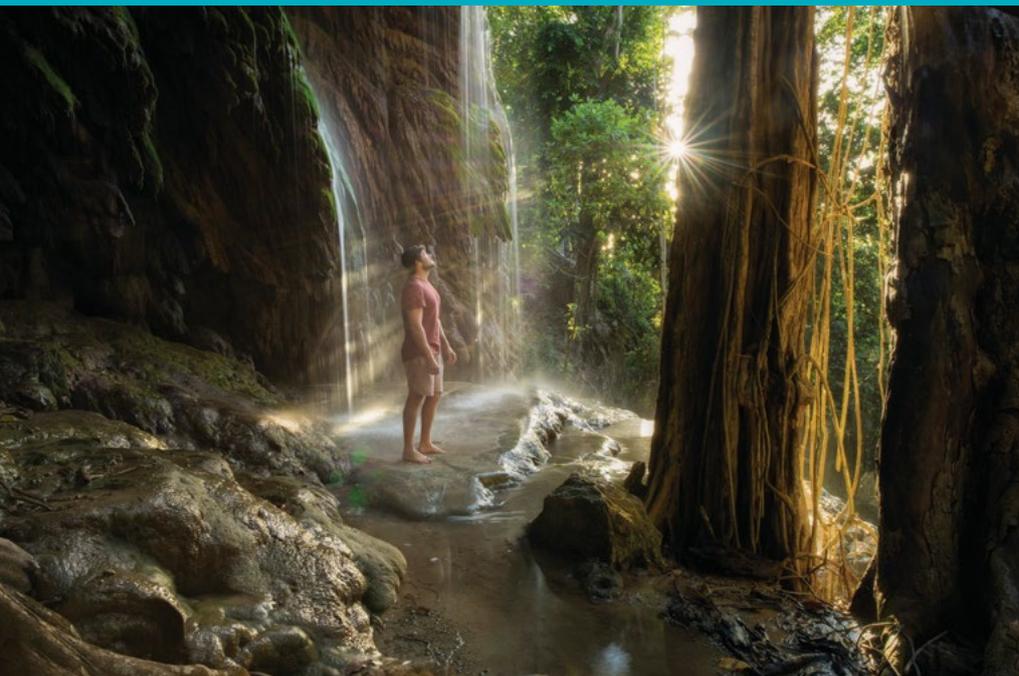
- Dolly Beach is a picturesque palm-fringed sandy beach accessible via a boardwalk through the Island's rainforest
- Margaret Knoll lookout provides dramatic panoramic views of the land and sea scapes of the east coast – it's one of the better sites to observe seabirds soaring at head height.

## DAY FOUR

Drive to Lily Beach and stroll along the boardwalk to Ethel Beach. Take the swimmers and enjoy a paddle in the shallows. One of the island's most accessible beaches, Lily is a picture of icy white coral rubble and rippling shallows that lead to the deepest blue seas. After lunch, drive to South Point, taking in the historical railway station, temple and stay to catch the sunset. The remains of the town at South Point are just that. The building that once formed this thriving community of mine workers and their families, are now little more than a distant memory. The Soon Tien Kong Temple, also known as the South Point Temple, is one of the island's most significant. Return to town to grab a romantic dinner at one of the Cliffside restaurants

### Highlights:

- Lily Beach is surrounded on both sides by rising cliffs so protected from strong beaches. At low tide, take advantage of the geology and explore the rocks pools. On a calm day, Lily Beach is a beautiful shallow swimming spot.
- A cluster of diverse faiths came to Christmas Island in much the same way as the population. The Soon Tien Kong Oriental Temple is a living example of the Chinese Taoism philosophy which exists on the Island today.



## DAY FIVE

Enjoy some birdwatching from the Golf Course lookout, adding to the already growing list of sightings of Christmas Island's endemic species.

A short but rugged and steep walk in the Island's north east leads down to a cliff perched above the golf course. This site provides spectacular views of the island's north east coast and is a great place to watch red footed boobies, frigatebirds and golden bosuns as they soar past. After lunch, drive to the Dales and walk to Anderson's Dale via beautiful Hugh's Dale waterfall. The Dales is one of Christmas Island's iconic sites and one of the few places with permanent flowing water, providing significant habitat for endemic blue crabs and impressive stands of Tahitian chestnut trees.

### Highlights:

- 80,000 seabirds nest on Christmas Island annually, with 23 breeding or resident species
- Hugh's Dale waterfall is one of 2 RAMSAR protected wetlands on Christmas Island, an international convention that focuses on the conservation of wetland habitats
- For the more adventurous, a second trail leads on from Hugh's Dale to Anderson's Dale, a small gorge with a small stream that flows to the sea.

## DAY SIX

Pack a hearty picnic lunch then drive to Winifred Beach (tide dependant) or West White Beach, and take time to walk the nature trail to the coast. Depending on sea conditions, enjoy a leisurely snorkel at either Winifred or West White Beach. Spend time to check the rock pools for small fish, like tiny blennies that play, mate and chase each other, or the crabs that run to and fro in the wash. The snorkelling around the rock pools can be spectacular too – the dramatic scenery at both of these beaches are well worth the adventurous walks.

### Highlights:

- Tackling the 4WD track to Winifred is only half the fun on this day trip. The real challenge comes in the walk through to rainforest to the beach access
- The first glimpse of West White Beach will probably be across the water from accommodation providers but despite its idyllic appearance, this trip is more than a little adventurous. To avoid the long walk through the jungle, arrange to be taken and collected from West White by boat, allowing time to simply enjoy the beauty of the beach for a few hours.

## DAY SEVEN

There's so much to do on Christmas Island, so be sure to make time to go scuba diving, deep sea fishing, play a round of golf, do some serious photography and birdwatching plus enjoy the fresh and tantalising cuisine representing the different cultural offerings. Christmas Island's narrow fringing reef supports bountiful marine life, including 88 coral species and more than 600 species of fish – it's an underwater wonderland for divers.

Lush fairways of the 9-hole Christmas Island Golf Course are watched over by towering cliffs where frigatebirds circle. And, with its diverse cultural mix, there always seems to be a celebration of some description where visitors are always welcome to join in the festivities.

### Highlights:

- Dive into a warm, welcoming ocean and enjoy the thrill as magnificent creatures glide gracefully by, like the whale shark which migrates through from November to April
- Plan to travel around November/ December to see the breathtaking vision of the annual red crab migration as the crabs march en-masse from their rainforest burrows to the ocean to breed
- Enjoy an organised photo tour or safari – it's hard to imagine a more visually tantalising place to photograph than Christmas Island.



#### USEFUL LINKS

- › [Christmas Island Tourism](#)
- › [Indian Ocean Experiences](#)
- › [The Sunset](#)
- › [VQ3 Lodge](#)
- › [Cocos Padang Lodge](#)
- › [The Sanctuary](#)
- › [Broome, Kimberley and Beyond](#)
- › [Chris Bray Photography Christmas Island Safaris](#)
- › [Extra Divers Worldwide](#)