



## Discover a New Adventure...

Been a while since you've traveled north? It's time to re-discover the beauty and attractions of Miriam Vale Shire – The Discovery Coast.

Remember when the road to Agnes Water and Round Hill entailed an adventurous trek not unlike crossing the Himalayas on elephant or traversing the outback by camel? Cars came to grief and the surrounding scenery was often lost in a cloud of dust or behind mud splatter across your car windscreen.

The area offered a true getaway and for many years – really was one of the east coast's 'best keep secrets'.

A secret no longer, today the Discover Coast still offers that unique getaway – with all the comforts of a destination rapidly becoming civilized and well marked on the Queensland holiday trail. Luxury accommodation, comfortable camping sites, restaurants and café's, guided tours to the Great Barrier Reef and

nearby wilderness areas, 4WDrive and fishing tours – all combine to offer the visitor – whether staying a week or just a day, as much or as little to do as you'd like.

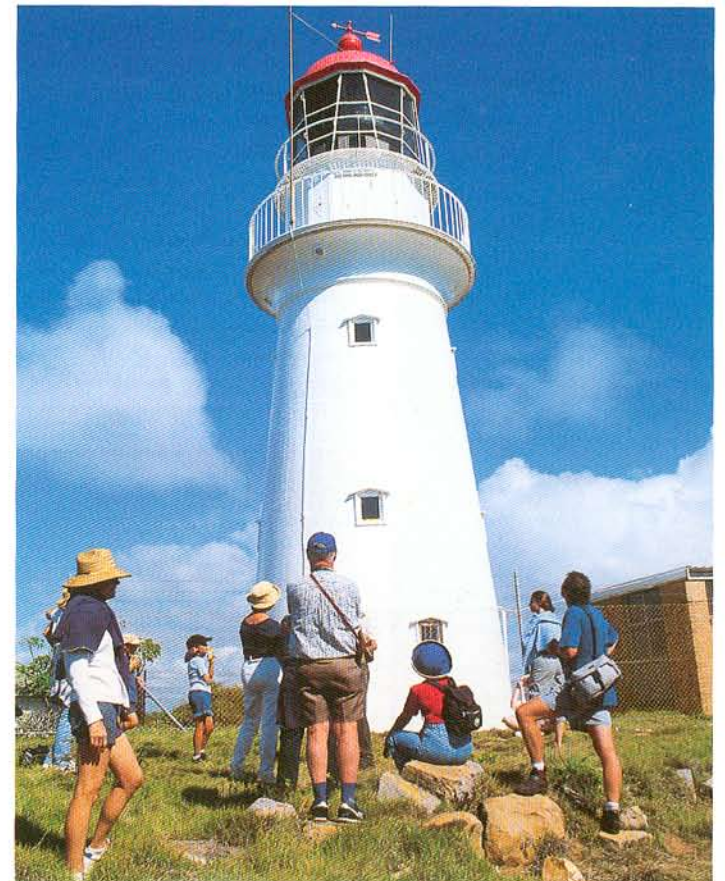
Traveling north from Bundaberg, the Discover Coast starts at the Baffle Creek – one of Queensland's largest tidal estuaries. It's tributaries provide many kilometers of waterways for fishing, crabbing and boating, Bundaberg was only a twinkle in

history's eye when small coastal steamers called at the Port of Baffle Creek picking up casks of tallow and bringing stores for the surrounding cattle stations. Back on the Lowmead Road is the small rural center of Rosedale. The 1 km detour into the township takes in the classic country pub and charming historic chapel. Nearby Watalgan State Forest offers 4WDrive self-drive and bush walking opportunities via permits. Some 8 kms north of the Rosedale is the turnoff to the north side of



the Baffle. The road is partially gravel and generally in very good condition. Baffle Creek – Wartburg has 2 caravan/camping parks, an attractive camp stay, general store, country golf club and boat ramp. The Flat Rock picnic area has to offer one of the prettiest water views in the region. From here you head to stunning Rules Beach for a ride aboard the ship of the desert –

albeit through the bush and beach at Camelot Camel Park or jump in your 4x4 and travel up to the isolated and beautiful Broadwater Conservation Park and Deepwater National Park. For conventional vehicles take the normal route back and branch off to Lowmead on the beautiful upper reaches of the Baffle and enjoy a beer at the friendly local pub! Mt Maria on the





Story: Sue Fuller  
Images courtesy of Tourism Queensland

1770 road has a community centre that welcomes visitors to the rugged beauty of the area.

Agnes Water on the oceanfront has the most northerly surfing beach in Queensland. If you haven't visited for a while, you'll notice some remarkable changes – not the least being the sealing of the road from Bundaberg.

The area's great weather, tavern and convenience stores, casual restaurants and services and "get away from it all" ambience make it a perfect holiday location.

The district's history and connection to Cook's landing is showcased at the town's museum. A full range of accommodation is available – from caravan and camping sites, through to cabins, motel, apartments and luxury B&B's – suiting all tastes and budgets. The pale curve of Agnes Water beach is a magic spot and secret gems like Workman's Beach set amidst towering cliffs offer a secluded option nearby.

Just 5kms north is the Town of 1770 – so named after the visit of Lt. James Cook and the crew of the Endeavour in May 1770. This was Cook's third landfall in Australia – the first in Queensland – so giving rise to the area's claim to be the "birthplace" of Queensland.

Bustard Bay's white beaches, crystal clear water and natural landscape have changed little since that day over 230 years ago. One difference now is the luxurious homes and holiday accommodation overlooking Round Hill Creek and offers a scenic 4WDrive campsite & rugged trails for the keen off-road enthusiast up to Middle Creek.

Back to Highway One past the dense slopes of Mount Colosseum National Park brings you to Miriam Vale – the administrative center of the shire and a well-known stopover with its charming main street.



Further north, Bororen straddles the main highway, with both stops known for crab sandwiches. Or for the more adventurous – take a drive west through the Many Peaks range and discover tiny villages nestled in rugged mountain scenery.

action packed day. Eurimbula National Park cloaks the north shore of Round Hill Creek and offers a scenic 4WDrive campsite & rugged trails for the keen off-road enthusiast up to Middle Creek.

Today's tourists are more likely to explore 1770 and surrounds in a bright pink Lighter Amphibious Resupply Cargo (LARC) which looks like a cross between a boat and bus. We joined 1770 Holidays on a full day tour, which sets off from the marina on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays at 9am. With a splash, the LARC surged across the creek to the beach opposite for the drive to Bustard Head. Along the way, the guides share the area's colourful history, flora and fauna before we set up camp in the shade of coastal rainforest.

## An explorer in your own right

Boasting Captain James Cook and Lieutenant Matthew Flinders as its first 'tourists', the town of 1770 is known as the site where the weary explorers first set foot in Queensland.

After a cup of tea, homemade bickies and freshly-made damper, a group of us headed up to the historic Bustard Head Lighthouse, the oldest light station on the Queensland coast which has its own fascinating old cemetery. At the end of the 25-minute walk, you're rewarded with spectacular

views before heading back for a gourmet sandwich lunch and billy tea. Then with a squeal of fear, it was time for my first attempt at sand tobogganing on the steep sandy slopes nearby. Eyes tightly shut, fingers gripping the board and away you go! You can choose whether or not to end your ride in the cool waters of the creek. Splashdown!

On the return trip, we stopped off at one of the most magical places I've ever seen - a beautiful sea cave site where pandanus palms grow out of a rock garden by the sea. 1770 Holidays also offers a one hour sunset cruise.

In 1770, there's plenty of other accommodation, including a caravan park right on the beach which attracts an interesting blend of international backpackers on their Cairns coastal odyssey and grey Aussie nomads.

Heading north, there are excellent opportunities to get off the beaten track by four wheel drive into Eurimbula National Park before rejoining the Bruce Highway for the 120km drive to Gladstone.

Nearby Agnes Water is the last surfing beach before the Great Barrier Reef. Day tours with Captain Cook Great Barrier Reef Cruise sail to Lady Musgrave Island for sensational snorkelling and diving. There's a P&O Resort on nearby Heron Island if you'd prefer to stay longer on the Reef.

### For more information:

Gladstone Visitor Information Centre  
Tel: 07 4972 9000

1770 Holidays (LARC tours)  
Tel: 07 4974 7555

Captain Cook Great Barrier Reef Cruise. Tel: 07 4974 9077

Gecko Valley Winery  
Tel: 07 4979 0400

Baffle Bob's Caravan & Camping Park  
Coast Road, Baffle Creek: 07 4156 6421

Baffle Creek Caravan Park  
Coast Road, Baffle Creek: 07 4156 6205

Camelot Camel Park  
Lindy Drive, via Rules Beach  
Ph: 07 4156 6267

Bush camping – access via 4X4 only – is also allowed at both the Mouth of the Baffle Creek Conservation Park and the Broadwater Conservation Park – contact the Rules Beach General Store on 07 4156 6380.

National Park camping is available within Deepwater National Park – 4X4 vehicle recommended – at Wreck Rock and Middle Rocks – Book online at: [www.epa.qld.gov.au](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au)