

MEDIA RELEASE



CRUISE WHITSUNDAYS
GREAT BARRIER
REEF FESTIVAL
WHITSUNDAYS • QUEENSLAND • AUG 4-7 2022

THE HEART
The Whitsundays
OF EVENTS

For Immediate Release
26 July 2022

Heart to Heart on the Great Barrier Reef Festival offers opportunity of a lifetime with Master Reef Guides

Eleven of Australia's most passionate advocates for the Great Barrier Reef, with a whopping 129 years of combined work experience and an impressive 41,701 scuba dives on the World-Heritage-listed icon, will gather for a one-day cruise to Hardy Reef off the coast of Airlie Beach as part of the 2022 Cruise Whitsundays Great Barrier Reef Festival on Thursday August 4.

With members of the public invited to jump on board, this is thought to be the first time that marine lovers and eco-conscious travellers will have heart-to-heart access to such a range of world-leading reef guides on any single bookable day tour.

Known as Master Reef Guides, these 11 highly trained guides will use their expertise to deliver an immersive, story-telling experience, that is crafted around the skillset of each particular guide and tailored to the interests of the day's guests.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Assistant Director Reef Stewardship and Master Reef Guide program co-founder, Fiona Merida, said by personalising the experience, each guest would gain a greater appreciation of the beauty of the reef and a deeper understanding of the difference each of us can make to its survival for generations to come.

"Through taking part in interactive educational activities led by these Master Reef Guides, guests will be able to explore our World Heritage Natural Wonder and discover the foundation of life on the reef and its incredible symbiotic relationships," she said.

"They will be able to come on a journey, piecing together the puzzle of the Reef with world-leading interpreters.

"Ultimately, we want these guests to leave as ambassadors for Australia's greatest natural treasure, spreading these messages from their hearts to yours."

Averaging 40 minutes for each of their combined 41,701 dives, the Master Reef Guides leading the day have spent 27,800 hours or 3.17 years engaged in underwater observation and activity and have relayed the story of the Great Barrier Reef to around 2,334,000 visitors.

Great Barrier Reef Festival chairwoman, Margie Murphy, said for these reasons alone the trip to Hardy Reef would be unmissable.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit the Great Barrier Reef enjoying unprecedented access to its most ardent ambassadors and reaping the benefits of the shared knowledge and passion that this entails," she said.

The Cruise Whitsundays Outer Great Barrier Reef trip is the launch activity for the annual Great Barrier Reef Festival to be held in Airlie Beach from August 4–7.

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer, Rick Hamilton, said this year's festival aims to build a connection between humanity and the Reef.

"And what better way to do that than by having a true 'heart-to-heart' with a Master Reef Guide, and in the Great Barrier Reef's physical and spiritual heart," he said.

With numbers onboard to be capped at just 200 guests, members of the public interested in the trip are advised to book imminently.

Tourism Whitsundays

PO Box 479 | Cannonvale QLD 4802

1/5 Carlo Drive | Cannonvale QLD 4802

+617 4948 5900

www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au

Tourism
Whitsundays

Destination Marketing | Industry Development | Visitor Services

MEDIA RELEASE



CRUISE WHITSUNDAYS
GREAT BARRIER
REEF FESTIVAL
WHITSUNDAYS • QUEENSLAND • AUG 4-7 2022

THE HEART
The Whitsundays
OF EVENTS

Tickets cost \$220 per adult and include lunch, morning and afternoon tea, and all activities excluding scuba diving.

Guests will be invited to sign up to Master Reef Guide-led activities including Eye on the Reef monitoring experiences, snorkel safaris, semi-submersible adventures, and practical, in-water photography and videography sessions.

The trip will depart Port of Airlie at 9am and return at 5pm, providing a full four hours at the mature platform reef dominated by hard corals, large pelagic species and an abundance of marine life.

For more information or to book tickets, visit www.greatbarrierreeffestival.com.au.

- ENDS -

To view a Word Document of this release and supporting images, [click here](#).

To view the 2022 Whitsundays Heart of Events video, [click here](#).

About Tourism Whitsundays: Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is the organisation responsible for destination marketing and visitor attraction for the Whitsunday region. It is the lead agency recognised by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Whitsunday Regional Council to lead the promotion of the region as a tourism destination. Tourism Whitsundays markets all aspects of the region including the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and Coast, accommodation, boating and sailing, fishing, touring, recreational activities, adventure, dining, shopping, weddings and honeymoons, conferencing and business events.

FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES, CONTACT:

Donna van 't Hoff

Marketing Manager

Tourism Whitsundays

Ph: +61 417 765 736

Email: pr@tourismwhitsundays.com.au

To access the Tourism Whitsundays Media Centre [click here](#).