

The jewel in the Whitsundays crown – Whitehaven Beach



The crystal clear aqua waters and pristine silica sand of world famous Whitehaven Beach stretch over seven kilometres along Whitsunday Island, the largest of the 74 islands in the Whitsundays. It defines nature at its best and provides an amazing sense of relaxation and escape.

As soon as you arrive it's easy to see why it is the most photographed beach in Australia and has been named Queensland's Most Beautiful Beach, a title that has never before been bestowed upon a beach in Queensland.

At the northern end of Whitehaven Beach is Hill Inlet, a stunning cove where the tide shifts the sand and water to create a beautiful fusion of colours. Don't miss a walk to the lookout on Whitsunday Island where you can take advantage of the best views of both Whitehaven Beach and Hill Inlet.

Even geologists cannot be sure where the silica sand on Whitehaven Beach comes from although there are several unproven theories. One theory even includes a sunken volcano. However, they generally agree that Whitehaven's quartz-rich sand has not come from a local source, because rocks in the area do not contain large quantities of quartz. The most likely explanation is that the sand drifted north, up the Queensland coast, carried by prevailing sea currents, millions of years ago. Trapped by rocks and headlands, some sand accumulated to form the dunes of Whitehaven Beach. Sea levels rose and fell around the dunes as Ice Ages came and went. Over time, impurities were leached from the sand by fresh water, leaving it the fine white silica you see today. The most recent rise in sea levels, about 10,000 years ago, brought the sea to the foot of these now pristine dunes, creating Whitehaven Beach.

Whitehaven Beach can be experienced in several ways. Ferries and luxury cruising yachts offer day trips that depart from Airlie Beach and some of the island resorts. A variety of sailing companies offer multi-day charters that include a memorable visit to Whitehaven Beach in addition to stops to the outer Great Barrier Reef.

The more adventurous can try ocean rafting, sea kayaking or a jet boat trip out to the island. Or you can travel by seaplane or helicopter for a spectacular aerial view over the iconic beach, Whitsunday Island and Hill Inlet, and indulge in a champagne picnic on your own private part of the beach.

However you choose to explore Whitehaven Beach, it will be an experience that you will remember for a lifetime.

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FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES, CONTACT:

Deborah Friend – PR & Communications Specialist

PH: (07) 4948 5917 M: 0417 765 736 E: pr@tourismwhitsundays.com.au