



Media Statement

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Whitsundays beats out Fiji, Bora Bora to be voted best Island in Australia and the South Pacific

Australia's iconic Whitsunday Islands, off Queensland's Coral Coast, have topped the list of most desirable islands in the country and across the South Pacific, as voted by Condé Nast Traveler readers.

Condé Nast asked voters to rank the 30 best islands in the world outside the U.S. in the 2018 Readers' Choice Awards.

Whitsunday Islands beat out Bora Bora (2), Moorea (3) and Tahiti (4) in French Polynesia to be ranked the best island in Australia and the South Pacific while Fiji took fifth spot.

In announcing the winners, Condé Nast Traveler said the Whitsunday Islands were practically 'synonymous' with honeymoons and bucket lists, with Whitehaven Beach given a special mention.

"Australia's Whitsundays, a series of 74 islands off the coast of Queensland (in the heart of Great Barrier Reef scuba and snorkel territory), is home to Whitehaven Beach, where the sand is 98 percent pure silica, giving it its bright, white colour and keeping it cool (even in the hot sun)," the prestigious travel publication said.

Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ) Chief Executive Officer Leanne Coddington said recognition in Condé Nast Traveller Reader's Choice Awards was great news for the region.

"The Whitsunday Islands offer travellers the perfect holiday destination with crystal clear waters and access to Queensland's greatest natural wonder, the Great Barrier Reef," she said.

"To receive this international recognition is a wonderful achievement for the region and demonstrates the enormous international appeal of the Whitsundays, which attracted more than 240,000 international visitors over the past year.

"Congratulations also to qualia on Hamilton Island, which continues to dominate the world's luxury tourism offerings, leading the way with their customer-centric approach."

More than 429,000 people undertook the 2018 Readers' Choice Awards survey which ranks the best islands in the world by region, including the best in Asia, Australia and the South Pacific, Europe and the Caribbean and the Atlantic.



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Hamilton Island's luxury qualia resort in the Whitsundays was also named in Conde Naste Traveler's Top Resorts in Australia and The South Pacific: Readers' Choice Awards 2018. Readers gave the waterfront resort a score of 94.9 out of 100, helping qualia come in at 14th spot ahead of the Four Seasons Resort in Bora Bora.

“Since opening, the Oatley family’s vision for qualia has been to create a world-class resort, which pairs with the beauty of the Great Barrier Reef and celebrates a unique Australian expression of luxury,” Hamilton Island PR, Events and Sponsorship Manager Stephanie Maguire said.

“qualia is thrilled to be recognised by the readers of Condé Nast Traveler.”

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer Natassia Wheeler said it was fantastic to see the Whitsunday Islands being recognised by readers of such an esteemed travel publication.

“The Whitsunday Islands have so much beauty to offer so to know the islands have been recognised as the best in Australian and the South Pacific is a very significant endorsement of the Whitsundays as a leading travel destination,” she said.

“This recognition is another feather in the cap for the Whitsundays and we look forward to continuing to market the region as the most desirable island paradise around the world.”

It comes on the back of the Whitsundays being one of six destinations nominated for Australia’s Leading Destination 2018 which was taken out by Sydney, Australia.

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