

MEDIA RELEASE



THE HEART OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

For Immediate Release
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\$200 Travel Vouchers to Explore The Whitsundays

The Palaszczuk Government will expand the state's popular 'Holiday Dollars' travel voucher scheme to The Whitsundays next month, in a move set to boost the region's tourism industry.

Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk said the government has partnered with Tourism Whitsundays to offer Whitsundays Holiday Dollars of up to \$200 (incl GST), to a total of \$1.2 million, which will be made available to Queensland residents over 18 years of age to enjoy tourism experiences in The Whitsundays. The vouchers can be used to claim 50 per cent off any eligible tourism experience booked, up to a maximum of \$200.00 (inc. GST) per adult.

"This will pump millions of dollars back into our economy and help tourism operators doing it tough," the Premier said.

"Today's announcement will support local jobs and give Queenslanders an even bigger incentive to holiday at home and support their mates.

"The Whitsundays is one of the most beautiful destinations in the world.

"The Holiday Dollars program will give Queenslanders an opportunity to experience more.

"There's so much to do in this region. I encourage all visitors to explore the reef, beaches, islands and the Whitsunday coast.

"It's been a challenging 12 months for tourism businesses in The Whitsundays – many of which are geared primarily towards the international market.

"The extension of the Holiday Dollars program could generate more than \$5 million in visitor spend for local tourism operators.

"With our pilot program in Cairns we've seen how successful this program has been in driving bookings into local businesses at a time they need it most.

"The extension of the Holiday Dollars program into The Whitsundays will support tourism operators and local jobs and will give Queenslanders another reason to get out and explore their own backyard."

Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe said The Whitsundays Holiday Dollars vouchers had been tailored to visitors already in The Whitsundays and locals from 4 May.

"We've worked closely with The Whitsundays to come up with vouchers that work best for them," Mr Hinchliffe said.

"There are positive reports of strong forward bookings for accommodation in The Whitsundays.

"Whitsundays Holiday Dollars will focus on getting visitors out on the water and into tours.

"There is so much to explore with 74 islands just offshore and stunning world-class visitor experiences.

"From Great Barrier Reef tours and Whitehaven Beach to scenic flights and wildlife, these experiences will stay with you for a lifetime.

"If you've booked a stay in The Whitsundays, you owe it to yourself to claim a voucher and start making holiday memories."

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**Tourism
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Mr Hinchliffe said the \$1.2 million expansion of Holiday Dollars into The Whitsundays would benefit tourism operators.

“We know areas that relied on international tourism have been hit hardest by the pandemic,” he said.

“Experiences like overnight sailing trips are favourites with overseas travellers.

“We’ve customised Whitsundays Holiday Dollars to encourage domestic visitors and locals to try experiences they might previously not considered.”

Holiday Dollars have been announced for Brisbane and The Whitsundays following the program’s success in Cairns.

The Palaszczuk Government is working with Gold Coast tourism operators to develop a similar program in coming weeks.

“Holiday Dollars is one part of the Palaszczuk Government’s comprehensive \$800 million strategy to support Queensland’s tourism industry to rebuild and rebuild better for the future,” Mr Hinchliffe said.

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer, Tash Wheeler said The Whitsundays Holiday Dollars Program is a welcomed and exciting opportunity for the region.

“The Whitsunday region offers residents and visitors an abundance of experiences to explore right on our doorstep from award winning beaches to spectacular coral reefs and lush rainforests, there’s never been a better time to soak up the Queensland sunshine in the Heart of the Great Barrier Reef,” Ms Wheeler said.

“With direct access to the 74 Whitsunday Islands we look forward to welcoming and showcasing visitors to the region very soon with their Whitsundays Holiday Dollars.”

The Whitsundays Holiday Dollars

- The Whitsundays Holiday Dollars campaign will launch on 4 May 2021, with holidaymakers (and locals) already in the region able to claim a voucher for use during their stay.
- The vouchers will cover 50 per cent of the cost of the booking with eligible tourism experience operators, up to a maximum of \$200.00.

For more information, please visit www.whitsundaysholidaydollars.com.au.

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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.*

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