

MEDIA RELEASE



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

**THE HEART
OF EVENTS**
The Whitsundays

For Immediate Release
21 July 2022

That's Entertainment! Great Barrier Reef Festival experiences you won't want to miss

Behind the scenes a team of volunteers have been busily beavering away on an action-packed entertainment program for the 2022 Cruise Whitsundays Great Barrier Reef Festival from August 4-7.

"As well as paying homage to an iconic natural wonder of the world, it's important that the festival is fun," says event chairwoman Margie Murphy.

"Ultimately we're celebrating life and community at the Heart of the Great Barrier Reef and with a celebratory atmosphere you always need a soundtrack."

Composing that soundtrack for 2022 has led to the creation of a diverse activity schedule spread across four fun-filled days, offering something for everyone regardless of interests or age.

From laughing it up at the Comedy Gala to dancing the night away with eight-piece band 'Skunkhour', here is a snapshot of festival entertainment you won't want to miss.

The Reef Gateway Hotel – Ray White Whitsunday 'Comedy Gala'

Sounds of merriment are first on the line-up, with the annual Comedy Gala brought to you this year by Ray White Whitsunday and the Reef Gateway Hotel.

Featuring two of Australia's best comedians, Cam Knight, and Rory Lowe, guests at this festival opener on Thursday, August 4, are in for a side-splitting night.

Described by rockstar Tame Impala as "even funnier than he is insane", Lowe's storytelling ability and quick wit have sold out numerous festivals and solo theatre shows.

Five-star-reviewed Knight meanwhile, has lapped Australia attracting huge audiences with his live performances, as well as appearing on and hosting countless radio and television shows.

Master of Ceremonies for the evening is Brad Elliot, who along with his own brand of hosting humour has worked with top entertainers and comedians on NOVA, Fox FM and Triple M.

Tickets cost \$70, including a meal, with proceeds donated back to the not-for-profit festival.

Late entries will be able to buy tickets on the door until show time at 6.30pm, at a price of \$50 excluding food and table seating.

Foreshore Fireworks and Camira Twilight Cruise

The Great Barrier Reef Festival's Friday night won't just have a soundtrack but a literal bang – going off at 8pm, the traditional fireworks display is set to light up the Whitsunday skies for what Ms Murphy describes as "Airlie Beach's night of nights."

"It really is the night when the whole community comes out to celebrate where we live and when residents and visitors mingle to enjoy an electric atmosphere in one of the most beautiful beachfront locations of the world," she said.

For the second consecutive year, festival-goers will have the choice of soaking it all in either from the foreshore – complete with night markets, 'Eat Street', pop-up bar, carnival rides and 'Immerse' art installation – or from the water aboard Cruise Whitsundays' sailing flagship *Camira*.

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Ms Murphy said departing Port of Airlie at 5.45pm and returning at 8.30, the Twilight and Fireworks Cruise was an exceptionally popular addition to the festival program.

“We introduced this experience last year and it was a sell-out,” she said, “after all, stepping on board *Camira* drink in hand, and watching the fireworks burst in a sea of colour overhead, is the ultimate way to wind down after a day in paradise and kick start your Great Barrier Reef Festival night.”

Tickets cost \$120 per person and include drinks and charcuterie boards.

Live Music (Beats on the Beach / Foreshore Funk Party / Chill in the Park)

Providing the ‘Beats on the Beach’ on the foreshore stage for the rest of Friday, August 5, will be Juzzie Smith, Chris Ah Gee with JaZZella, and DJ Nina Sinclair.

Renowned for being a “ridiculously talented” one-man-band, with the ability to play up to six instruments at once and juggle percussion, Juzzie Smith has over 150 million views on social media and is an act not to be missed.

Initially meeting on their way to compete against each other in X Factor seven years ago, Chris Ah Gee and JaZZella have since combined to create a big band sound while bouncing off each other’s energy.

While the duo will return to the stage for the Foreshore Funk Party on Saturday, August 6, it is ‘90’s legends ‘Skunkhour’ who will bring the house down on the day’s festival events.

From their hit track ‘Up to Our Necks’ to the critically acclaimed album ‘The Go’, Skunkhour garnered a widespread international following and enduring legacy within Australian music.

Lead vocalist Aya Larkin said the band was very much looking forward to being “part of something that celebrates such a special part of the world”.

“After the fragmentation of the recent lockdown periods, a funk-centric gig in the perfect beachside location, bringing people together to dance and move is a good call,” he said.

“A Skunkhour performance is a sinuous, thumping, gliding, rollicking, pulsing beast of a thing – people can expect to hear favourites from all four albums and a possible slice or two of the forthcoming EP release – we can’t wait to get up north and lay it down”.

Anyone still keen for live music as the festival winds down, will be able to see Juzzie Smith perform again at the Sunday ‘Family Fun Day’ and ‘Chill in the Park’.

Diehard partygoers can rock on at the KC’s After Party featuring Jason Bull.

All live music is free to attend, with the exception of entry to the Pop-Up Bar, costing \$5-10.

Street Sounds

Think 1950’s rock ‘n’ roll as the background to the Fraser Ford Revvin’ the Reef car show and Miss Revvin’ the Reef pin-up competition on Saturday, August 6.

At this stage of the festival, from 10am-2pm, hot rods, muscle and classic cars take over the main street of Airlie Beach.

Car enthusiasts can display their pride and joy at a cost of \$15 per car and truck and \$10 per bike, with trophies awarded for the top 10 as voted by the public.

Those vying for the title of Miss Revvin’ the Reef will need to register and pay a \$10 entry fee, with great prizes up for grabs for first, second and third as judged.

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Style is vintage day or beach wear and true vintage or reproduction clothing; judging takes place at midday.

In the afternoon the mood shifts to soul music, with The Pub providing the perfect location to watch the Rotary Street Parade from, alongside the music of 'Dancing in the Shadows of Motown' from 2-5.30pm.

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer, Rick Hamilton, said with such an array of entertainment options, August 4-7 was shaping up as an optimum time to be in The Whitsundays.

"Any time is a good time to visit the community at the Heart of the Great Barrier Reef, but this is when you will hear and feel its heartbeat," he said.

For more information and to book tickets or register for festival events visit www.greatbarrierreeffestival.com.au.

This media release is in partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Festival.

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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.*

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