

7 DAY & 7 NIGHT GREAT BARRIER REEF ITINERARY

# MY BELUGA

PORT DOUGLAS | GREAT BARRIER REEF | COOKTOWN | LIZARD ISLAND



## ***PORT DOUGLAS***

Port Douglas is a town on the Coral Sea in the tropical far north of Queensland, Australia. Located a scenic 50 minute drive north of Cairns International airport, It's known for its luxury beach resorts and as a base for visits to both the Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest reef system, and Daintree National Park, home to biodiverse rainforest. In town, Macrossan Street is lined with boutique shops and restaurants. Curving south is popular Four Mile Beach.

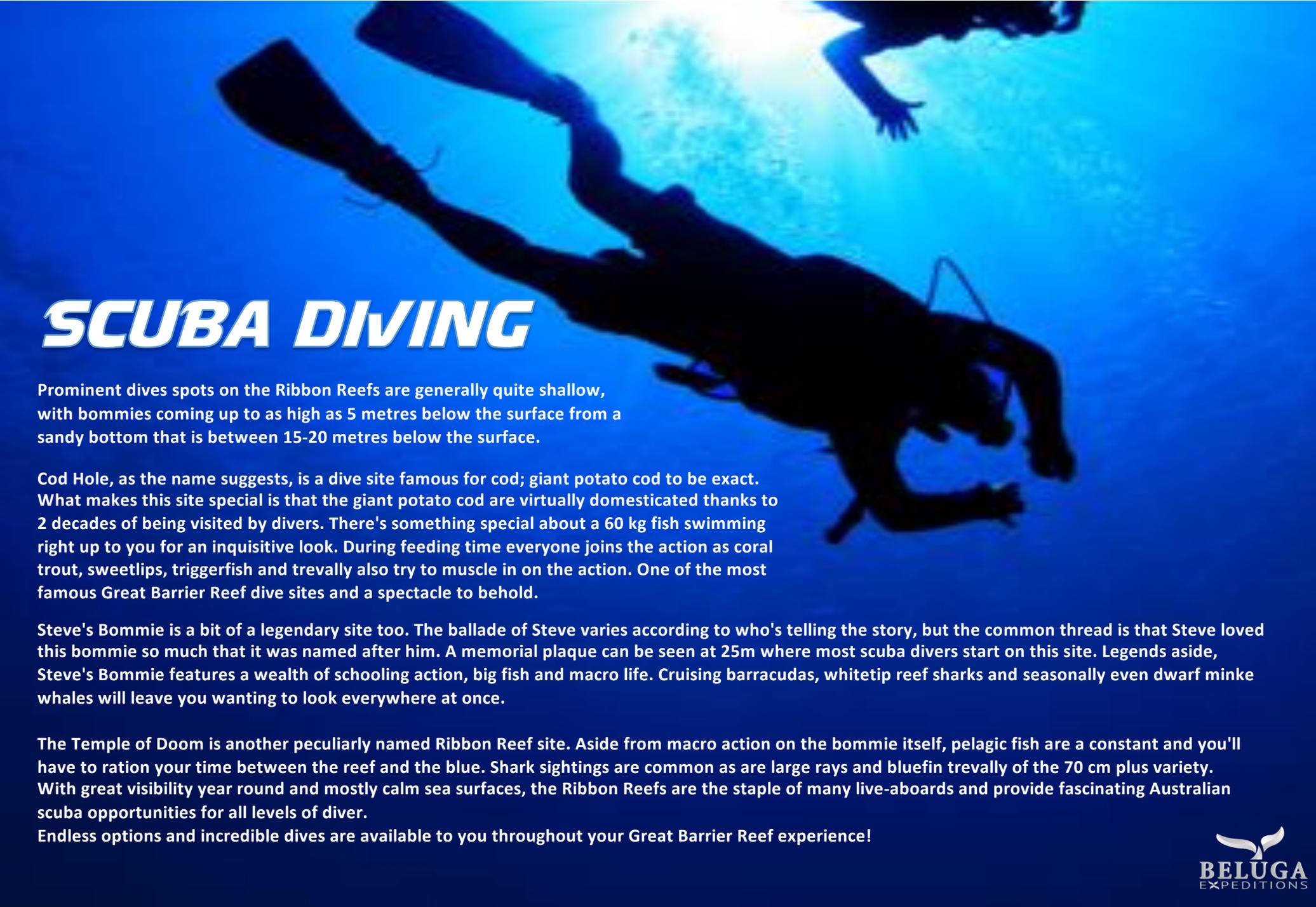
## ***THE RIBBON REEFS - GREAT BARRIER REEF -***

Characteristically no wider than 450m, the Ribbon Reefs are part of the Great Barrier Reef Marina Park and are covered in colorful corals that attract a plethora of reef life big and small, with sandy gullies separating them, themselves containing interesting critters. The Ribbons reef host several of Australia's most spectacular dive sites, as well as arguably the most prolific Black Marlin fishing in the world at certain times of year -with general fishing topping the list also.

## ***LIZARD ISLAND***

Lizard Island hosts Australia's northernmost island resort. It is located 150 miles north of Cairns and 57 miles north east off the coast from Cooktown. Lizard Island is an absolute tropical paradise, a haven of isolation, gratification and relaxation. Accessible by boat and small aircraft, this tropical haven is a bucket list destination.





# ***SCUBA DIVING***

Prominent dives spots on the Ribbon Reefs are generally quite shallow, with bommies coming up to as high as 5 metres below the surface from a sandy bottom that is between 15-20 metres below the surface.

Cod Hole, as the name suggests, is a dive site famous for cod; giant potato cod to be exact. What makes this site special is that the giant potato cod are virtually domesticated thanks to 2 decades of being visited by divers. There's something special about a 60 kg fish swimming right up to you for an inquisitive look. During feeding time everyone joins the action as coral trout, sweetlips, triggerfish and trevally also try to muscle in on the action. One of the most famous Great Barrier Reef dive sites and a spectacle to behold.

Steve's Bommie is a bit of a legendary site too. The ballade of Steve varies according to who's telling the story, but the common thread is that Steve loved this bommie so much that it was named after him. A memorial plaque can be seen at 25m where most scuba divers start on this site. Legends aside, Steve's Bommie features a wealth of schooling action, big fish and macro life. Cruising barracudas, whitetip reef sharks and seasonally even dwarf minke whales will leave you wanting to look everywhere at once.

The Temple of Doom is another peculiarly named Ribbon Reef site. Aside from macro action on the bommie itself, pelagic fish are a constant and you'll have to ration your time between the reef and the blue. Shark sightings are common as are large rays and bluefin trevally of the 70 cm plus variety. With great visibility year round and mostly calm sea surfaces, the Ribbon Reefs are the staple of many live-aboards and provide fascinating Australian scuba opportunities for all levels of diver.

Endless options and incredible dives are available to you throughout your Great Barrier Reef experience!

# ***FISHING THE GREAT BARRIER REEF***

The Ribbon Reefs are remote, majestic and thriving with sea life. Accessible predominantly by larger vessels with the knowledge to navigate this diverse terrain. These series of reefs are the Jurassic Park of fishing, containing the largest and most densely populated areas of reef and pelagic species found anywhere on earth. Fishing the Ribbon Reefs is something to tick off the bucket list!

## ***GAME & SPORTS FISHING***

Light tackle fishing for juvenile black marlin, sailfish and other pelagic species is ideal from late June to mid September. The heavy tackle marlin fishing season typically begins in September and runs through until December when giant black marlin (up to 1000lb+) migrate to the reef to spawn. Jigging & popper fishing for giant trevally, large coral trout and tuna is also popular during this time. We encourage catch & release of billfish however you can also expect to catch fantastic eating fish whilst trolling such as spanish mackerel, dogtooth and yellow fin tuna during this time – Anyone for sashimi?

## ***BOTTOM FISHING***

The Great Barrier Reef is active with sort-after reef species, such as coral trout, nannygai and red emperor to name a few. These tasty fish are great fun to fish for and an ideal activity for the whole family. Our experienced crew will take you to our tried and tested fishing spots guiding you through fishing techniques and we'll prepare your catch for dining on board BELUGA or to take home with you!

## ***DAY ONE***

Board Beluga at midday and steam to Opal Reef (approximately 3 hours travel) for an afternoon of snorkelling & swimming. Guests wishing to do an afternoon dive can board the chase boat with our knowledgeable dive master to dive the southern end of Opal Reef.

## ***DAY TWO***

Wake up to smell of freshly baked bread and scenic views as we cruise to St Crispin or Rachel Carlson Reef.

Guests who are keen to go fishing can board the chase boat for a few hours of bottom fishing on the reef – will you catch your dinner?

We will be anchored near some fantastic dives. A morning wall dive is an exhilarating start to your day. Expect to be greeted with an absolute myriad of fish, from huge schools of fusiliers and sergeant major fish, to the always lovely greetings of numerous sweetlips.

Unwind over a well deserved lunch on the deck before heading into dive two for the day at the southern end of St Crispin Reef, or just relax on the day bed with a great read and soak up the Australian sun.

# DAY THREE

Early morning cruise to Ribbon Reef #3 – Home of the world famous dive site *Steve's Bommie*.

Steve's Bommie is one of the best dive sites on the Great Barrier Reef. Incredible diversity and density of marine life. Macro life clings to the bommie while large schools of fish, drawn to the structure, circle around it. Expect to see reef sharks, rays, schools of trevally, anemone fish, stone fish, nudibranchs, colorful corals. This dive site has something for everyone!

Afternoon cruise into Cooktown for overnight docking.

## OPTIONAL SUNSET TOUR

Sunset cruise (2hr) – External tour.  
Experience the Endeavour River  
at its most special time of day.

Explore the harbor and it's local inhabitants  
then head upstream to watch the sunset over  
the distant ranges.

Navigate the maze way of smaller creeks whilst enjoying some champagne and canapes. After dark, spotlights add a whole new perspective to the impenetrable walls of mangrove that line the river. Listen to some stories about Captain Cook's infamous passage along the Cape, about devastating cyclones, about the glory days of pearling luggers and about the new Cooktown, gateway to the frontier. This sunset cruise can make for a wonderfully peaceful way to end the day.



# DAY FOUR

Adventure Day! – Aboriginal Historic Experience (land-based external tour)

7.45am – Guest pickup from Fishermans’s Wharf for an exclusive aboriginal discovery morning tour  
(Approx. 5 hours)

## **Rainbow Serpent Rock Art**

This tour takes you through a dramatic landscape to six rock art sites, including the Rainbow Serpent cave and an ancestral Birth Site where Willie's (tour guide) grandfather was born. You'll gain an understanding of the spiritual meanings and stories behind the paintings, and along the way learn some of the survival techniques of the Nugal-warra people - and maybe taste a green ant or two! Includes an estimated 30-minute bush walk; there is a short climb to two of the sites, but generally the terrain is easy.

Don't want to tour? No worries! Stretch your legs & check out Cooktowns rich history, hilltop lookout and the local botanical gardens.

Arrive back to Beluga approx. 1.30pm

Afternoon cruising out to the northern Ribbons Reefs . Time to relax and recharge your batteries whilst enjoying Beluga’s facilities and hospitality. Enjoy some downtime in the rooftop Jacuzzi as the sun sets over the ocean and settle in until we arrive at our next anchorage.

## DAY FIVE

Fishing, diving or water-sports today? The choice is up to you!

Try your luck trolling outside the reef's edge for a marlin & other pelagic species or if sports-fishing is more your thing cast for giant trevally on the reef with poppers and stick bait lures.

Alternatively, there are various scuba diving options for the adventurous. Have you tried our motorised sea bobs yet? Zoom your way around the shallow reefs but be warned, this is addictive fun for the whole family!

## DAY SIX

Early morning cruise up to Ribbon Reef 9 or 10.

Discover the GBR's most famous site, the *Cod Hole*.

Dive and snorkel with the large friendly cods and check out *shark alley*, then settle in for lunch whilst enjoying a leisurely afternoon cruise into beautiful Lizard Island.

Alternatively, board the chase boat and head out fishing for the afternoon, returning to meet Beluga in at Lizard Island later in the afternoon.

## ***DAY SEVEN***

Tender over to beautiful Lizard island to explore and hike up to the stunning Cook's lookout for a little exercise and some great photo opportunities! Back to Beluga for a late lunch, followed by an afternoon of swimming/snorkeling and relaxing in beautiful Mrs.Watson's Bay. Here the crew will set up a special beach BBQ complete with sunset views and memorable moments to enjoy your last evening on board.

Beluga will disembark Lizard Island late in the evening to begin your journey back to Port Douglas. Alternatively guests can opt for a one-way itinerary and fly out of Lizard Island by private air charter.

## ***DAY EIGHT***

Enjoy a sleep in and a late breakfast on the bridge deck whilst we continue cruising the beautiful coast and arrive back into Port Douglas for disembarkation by midday.

