

HOWE DELIGHTFUL

Lose the mobile phone, leave the laptop at home and put an out-of-office message on your email. You're on Lord Howe Island now, a place where bare feet are part of the uniform and a bicycle is the best way to get around. It's Australia's very own Pacific paradise

Aerial view of Lord Howe Island.



DANI ROURKE

Executive manager, Pinetrees Lodge
LIVES Lord Howe Island

DANI ROURKE HAS A SPECIAL BOND WITH LORD HOWE ISLAND. THE MOTHER OF TWO YOUNG GIRLS, ELSIE (PICTURED) AND PIXIE, WHO MANAGES PINETREES LODGE WITH HER HUSBAND LUKE HANSON, IS THE SIXTH GENERATION OF HER FAMILY TO BE BORN AND RAISED ON THE PACIFIC ISLAND THAT'S JUST A TWO-HOUR FLIGHT FROM SYDNEY AND BRISBANE.

It's an important link that makes Dani appreciate the island for more than just the pristine environment and natural beauty that draws hundreds of visitors to the World Heritage destination every year.

"Lord Howe Island is famous for its landscape, and it's a gorgeous place to visit, but one of the things I value about the place is its people. That's something that comes from having so much family history here," she explains.

"I appreciate the link I have to the land. It's nice to feel such a deep connection to a place, and I still find it amazing that I went to the same school as my mum, my grandfather and my great-grandfather."

Dani says the island, just 11km long and 2km wide, has changed a lot since she was young, with a supply ship visiting every fortnight these days compared to the six-week schedule when she was growing up.

"We didn't have phones when I was a kid. The internet has brought the outside world a lot closer — even though the internet speed is woeful and we still use faxes because they're more reliable — and there are more cars around now.

"Food used to consist of tinned beetroot and tinned pineapple, but cuisine is a big part of the holiday experience now and we include all meals, from breakfast and lunch to afternoon tea and dinner, in a stay at Pinetrees. We'll also pack a picnic for people who want to go out for the day.

"We drop the Esky at the beach so our guests can have a swim before barbecuing some fresh kingfish. One of the best things about Lord Howe Island is it's so relaxed and crime-free — it's perfectly possible to drop a hamper at a beach and know it will be where we left it."

Dani says the best spots to picnic depend on the season, but with 11 stretches of sand it's always easy to find a location that's out of the wind and bathed in sunshine.

"Ned's Beach is the place to go during winter with the coral coming right to the sand. You can snorkel or feed the fish," she explains.

"In summer the best place is Old Settlement — there's a secret spot around the corner from Main Beach with a view across the lagoon to the mountains, and you'll feel like you're the only person in paradise."

THERE'S NOTHING
LIKE AUSTRALIA





Howe about accommodation?

CAPELLA LODGE

The ultimate in luxury lodging.
lordhowe.com

EARL'S ANCHORAGE

Spacious self-contained bungalows.
earlsanchorage.com

HOWEANA APARTMENTS

A beach house near Ned's Beach.
howeana.com.au

MARY CHALLIS COTTAGES

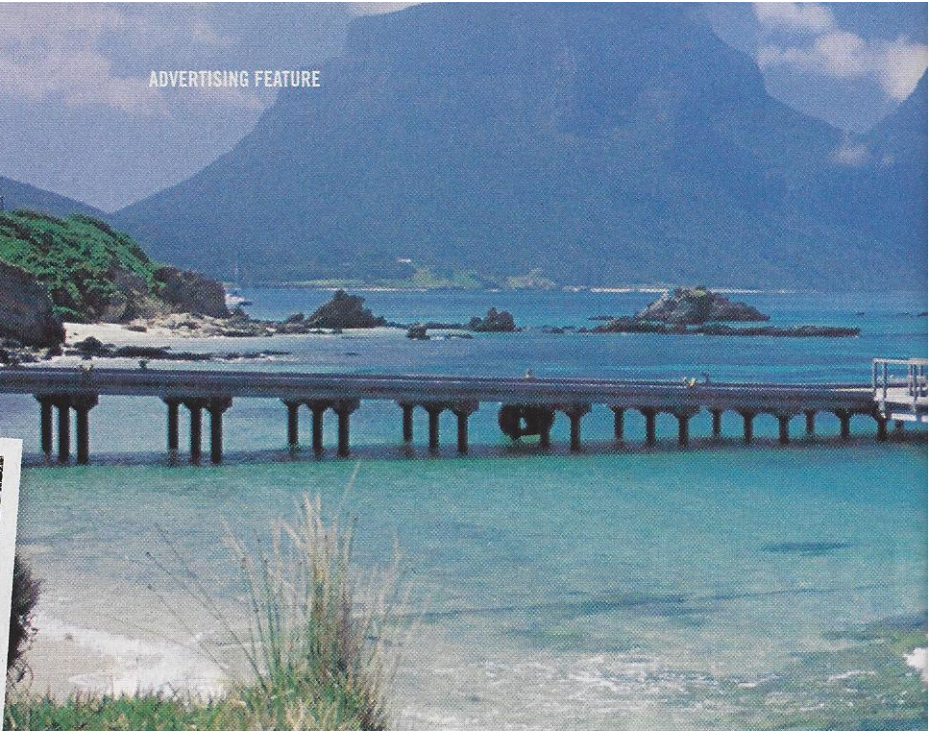
Cottages close to the best swimming spot.
lordhoweisland.info

PINETREES LODGE

Waterfront location, perfect for families.
pinetrees.com.au

BLUE LAGOON LODGE

Set in lush gardens close to The Lagoon.
bluelagoonlodge.com



DAY ONE

HOWE NOW

Welcome to Lord Howe Island, the Pacific Ocean paradise where no more than 400 visitors are allowed to holiday at any time.

There's no mobile reception, the few cars on the roads aren't permitted to drive faster than 25km/h, there are no high-rise buildings, the locals don't lock the doors, and bare feet are part of the official school uniform.

The first item on the agenda is to visit **Wilson's Hire Service** to rent a bicycle to use during your stay, before calling into the **Lord Howe Island Museum & Visitors Information Centre** to learn more about this destination.

Find a table at the **Anchorage Restaurant** for a lunchtime bite and then walk to Malabar Hills and Kim's Lookout to enjoy views across the island.

Join legendary island storyteller Peter Phillipps from **Chase 'n' Thyme** for a tour of Lord Howe, with the itinerary designed to get visitors under the skin of this remote destination, before retreating to Middle Beach to indulge in some pre-dinner snorkelling or swimming.

When you've had your fill of coral and coloured fish – Lord Howe is home to more than 90 coral varieties and 500 species of fish – use the free firewood supplied by the Lord Howe Island Board to barbecue beside the sand and watch day gently turn to night.

DAY TWO

RELAX AND UNWIND

Fishing is one of Lord Howe's most popular activities, with kingfish, yellow fin tuna and wahoo fish swimming the water around the 11km-long island.

Join **Greenback Fishing Tours** or **MV Carina Fishing and Sightseeing Cruises** for a voyage to the deep water. Longer trips venture to the spectacular Ball's Pyramid to discover where the big fish dwell.

If you prefer to keep your feet on land, take a trek to Mt Gower, the island's highest peak at 875m. **Sea To Summit** and **Lord Howe Island Environmental Tours** all offer guided expeditions.

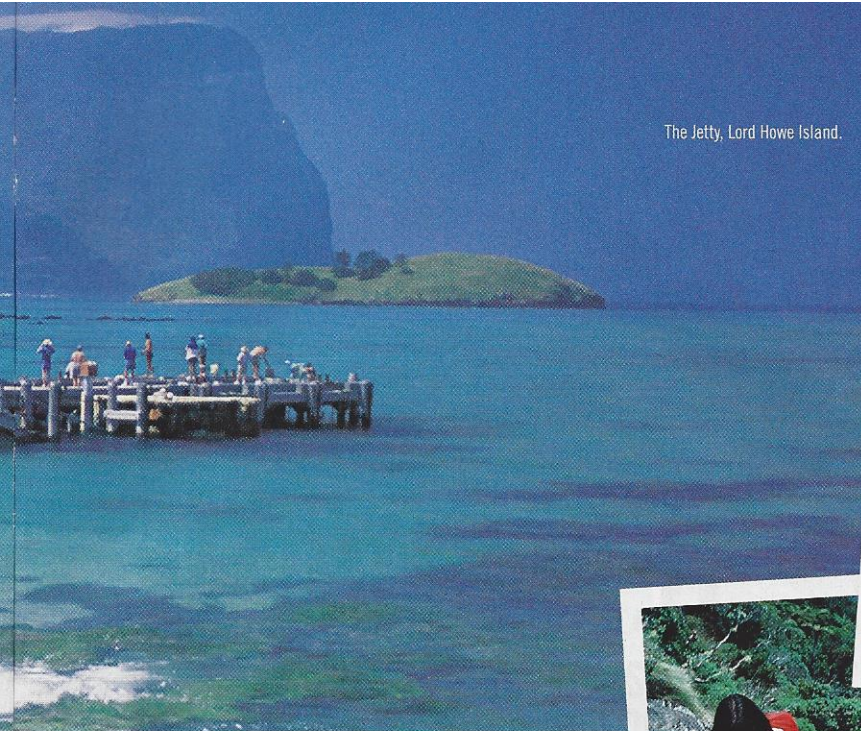
For something a little more relaxed, start the day with a stroll along the sand at Blinky Beach, Lord Howe's top surfing spot, then rendezvous with **Marine Adventures** for the Turtle Tour.

Hire a stand-up paddle board from **Lord Howe Island Windsports** to explore the lagoon before withdrawing to one of the island's day spas – try **Arajilla Retreat, Capella Lodge** or **Pinetrees Lodge** – to indulge in a massage or facial.

Finish the afternoon with a lesson at **Greenback Cooking School**. Learn how to handle fish from hook to cook, or simply chill out at **Greenback Eatery** to feast on fresh local seafood.



The Jetty, Lord Howe Island.



DAY THREE PARADISE FOUND

Start your third day on this World Heritage haven with a visit to Ned's Beach and feed the fish that venture close to the sand to nibble food from your fingers.

Lord Howe Island is one of Australia's best bird-watching destinations – 14 species of seabirds visit to breed – so grab your binoculars and follow the tracks to Clear Place, Muttonbird Point, Mt Eliza or North Bay to spot these feathered friends.

If you're visiting during autumn and winter, hike or bike to Little Island at the base of Mt Gower to spy the Providence petrels that nest on the cliffs of Lord Howe's Everest, and try calling the inquisitive birds to see if they land at your feet.

Those in town on a Friday should pop into the **Kentia Palm Nursery** for the morning tour to learn more about the island's top export, before finding an empty patch of sand at Lover's Beach or Old Settlement Beach to take a dip in the clear water and picnic below the pines.

Take to the waves with Dean Hiscox from Lord Howe Island Environmental Tours for more aquatic exploring – try the Admiralty Islands Ocean Kayak Tour or a guided paddle around a quiet cove – before watching the sun sink towards the horizon on **Islander Cruises** sunset voyage.

Hit the **Lord Howe Island Golf Club** for dinner on Friday night when the locals gather to feast on steak and salads.



See for free SURVEY THE REEF

Don sandals to explore the coral at low tide.

SUN, SEA AND SAND

Flop on one of Lord Howe's 11 beautiful beaches.

THE FAVOURITE

Peer into the wreck of The Favourite at North Bay.

TRANSIT HILL

Climb this central peak to get a 360-degree view.

ERSCOTTS HOLE

See coral gardens at one of the safe snorkel spots.

NED'S BEACH

Feed the fish and be part of a Lord Howe ritual.

For more information on Lord Howe Island activities, visit lordhoweisland.info

HOW TO GET THERE

Getting to Lord Howe Island is easy. Lord Howe Island is less than two hours by air from Sydney and Brisbane, with Qantas flying daily from the NSW capital during the peak season and offering regular weekend flights from Queensland's biggest city. There are also weekly Qantas flights from Port Macquarie on the NSW north coast during spring and autumn.

qantas.com.au

WHERE TO STAY

Lord Howe Island offers a wide range of accommodation to suit every budget.

expedia.com.au
wotif.com
tripadvisor.com.au
hotelclub.com.au
booking.com

WANT TO STAY LONGER?

Feel like spending more than three days on Lord Howe Island? That's easy, because there's so much more to do. Just check out the Lord Howe Island website lordhoweisland.info for more holiday ideas.



PHOTOGRAPHY: DESTINATION NSW

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE AUSTRALIA

