

## **4-Day Adventure Itinerary**

Our 4 day Heli-Rafting expedition on the North Johnstone River is set in the beautiful Palmerston National Park in Tropical Far North Queensland, just inland from Innisfail.

The North Johnstone is a steep, natural flowing river that carves its way through a spectacular volcanic gorge. Limited frequency of departures, restricted group sizes and stringent National Park permits have been instated to ensure that the North Johnstone River and the surrounding ancient rainforests are preserved for all time; enabling our rafters a rare glimpse of a very precious and untouched part of North Queensland's World Heritage Listed Rainforests.

Our guides take great pride in communicating the surrounding geology, flora, fauna and history to rafters during quieter moments on the river and during their guided walks along crystal clear creeks.

We provide cooking facilities at each campsite; the crews making sure everyone eats well. We can cater for any special dietary requirements providing we are notified in advance. Cameras, personal gear and food are stored and carried in waterproof barrels, although it is worth mentioning that as each raft has limited space it is important that personal gear be kept to minimum.

All meals are supplied from Day 1 to afternoon tea on Day 4. RnR Rafting provides all transport including an exciting helicopter flight as access to the river, all rafting and camping equipment. Sleeping bags are available if required. On request we can arrange wetsuit hire (\$10 per day hire fee from ProDive), although only rafters from very hot climates normally use them.

The trip is suitable for anyone with a reasonable level of fitness and swimming ability, and has a sense of adventure. Although nobody with a serious medical condition should attempt an extended rafting trip.

### **1 Day prior to Travel**

We intend to have a pre-trip meeting at 7pm on the day prior to travel to answer any questions and tell you all about the trip.

### **DAY 1**

Pick-ups in Cairns are between 6am and 6:30am depending on accommodation. Pick-ups can be arranged on route to Innisfail. The scenic drive finishes at Mungalli Falls where we enjoy a cooked breakfast. Personal gear is sorted and packed into waterproof barrels. Helmets and life jackets are distributed and fitted. With the arrival of the helicopter the group moves to the 'One Tree Hill' helipad to await their turn to fly into the North Johnstone gorge and dense rainforest and waterfalls cascading down immense basalt cliffs. This is one of the highlights of the trip. "Amazing", "breathtaking" and "magical" are some of the adjectives that describe this rugged country of lush growth and tumbling waterfalls. On the riverbanks the rafts are inflated and the cargo barrels strapped into metal frames. Guests are allocated a raft and a river guide who then provides comprehensive instruction on paddling techniques and safety procedures to his new 'crew'. With practice session over, the crews are eager to try their newly found skills; the river trip begins.

The river is steep and technical. The North Johnstone River is rated Grade 5 under internationally recognized rapid grading guidelines. There are plenty of challenges and excitement with the competent guides explaining maneuvers so rafters appreciate fully the achievement of completing rapids with the utmost control. Through the first day the gorge drops rapidly giving an abundance of excitement and a taste of the tropics. After 4 hours of rafting the comfortable campsite is reached.

*Highlights; Helicopter flight, Snake Falls and the Berlin Wall.*

## **DAY 2**

With the dawning of a new day the wonder of the surrounding virgin rainforest is magnificent to behold. With a big day ahead (6 hours) today is an early start. Exciting rapids provide a great arena for those keen to try newly acquired rafting skills amongst the boulders and lava flows on this steep section.

*Highlights; Lunchtime views of the Mineshaft rapid & a sidewalk to the 600ft Breccia Falls.*

## **DAY 3**

Any thirst for adventure will be quenched through the exciting section of the Moordoor rapids plunging between weird angular rock formations. Rafting crews are now feeling confident and rapids named Happy Corner, the Far Right and Spinal Flex add excitement. Teamwork is the order of the day and we'll be making white water rafting look easy.

It's a day for photography with wildlife being more apparent in these lower regions...freshwater turtles, platypus, fish and yabbies below while eagles, heron and egrets soar above. At night an astounding luminous fungus can be seen growing on the rocks and dancing fireflies visible through the forest canopy. The many incoming streams form waterfalls as they fall from the towering columns of basalt.

*Highlights; Each of the Moordoor rapids is a highlight today. Great Rafting. In the rainforest magnificent Kauri trees line the cliffs, immense King Ferns line the riverbanks and pythons can sometimes be seen sunning themselves on the rocks.*

## **DAY 4**

Camp breaks early and, time permitting, there's a trek up the creek next to camp leading to waterfalls high up in the gorge. Then it's another big day on the lower sections of the river with no let up in whitewater excitement. The first limited evidence of man can now be detected as people view the river system from the Palmerston National Parks walking tracks high above. Kayakers often make their way down the river via difficult access tracks from here to challenge some great white water.

*Highlights; Mushroom rapid, Champagne Falls, Rooster Tail rapid.*

The coach is waiting at the 'take out' with a dry change of clothes and once everything is packed into the trailer it's time to go home. If you have a thirst to quench, the Mirriwinni Hotel is the place to relax and chat about the great adventure just encountered. Arrival back to Cairns accommodation is approximately 7:30pm.

Rafting the magnificent North Johnstone River through pristine World Heritage listed rainforest is an adventure experience you will never forget!

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