LEICHHARDT WAY

GOONDIWINDI TO YEPPOON

Duration: 4 days / 703 km

It is the fastest route between the hustle and bustle of Melbourne and the calm beauty of the tropics. The Leichhardt Highway, named after the courageous explorer Ludwig Leichhardt, is an inland road that passes through the Queensland border town of Goondiwindi and then on to the coastal town of Yeppoon. Leave the 'big smoke' behind as you drive through friendly country towns, past picturesque rivers where you can stop for a picnic or spot of fishing. There are so many things to do along this inland route – from bush-walks in National Parks, to historic museums full of artefacts and fun facts. Enjoy the changing scenery as you venture closer to the seaside. There are many affordable places to stay – from highway Motels to quaint Bed and Breakfasts.

Experiences: Major Drive Routes

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Goondiwindi to Miles

Day: 1

Start: **Goondiwindi** End: **Miles**

Start your sightseeing around this picturesque town at the border precinct - with its statue tribute to legend racehorse Gunsynd, Customs House, old border bridge, and river walk. The Botanic Gardens and Natural Heritage Water Park are both good places to pull in the van for lunch. Through Moonie, the oil capital of Australia, the Leichhardt takes you to tiny settlements where from each extraordinary attractions wait to be explored. Caliguel Lagoon, seven kilometres south of Condamine is one. At this top free camping spot - great for fishing - during late summer and autumn rare purple water lilies bloom.

Miles to Theodore

Day: 2

Start: **Miles** End: **Theodore**

During late summer and early autumn, prolific blooms of rare pink water lilies can be seen on Chinaman's Lagoon when arriving in Miles. Walk the peaceful Dogwood Creek Walking Track, visit the outstanding Miles Historical Village Museum with its streetscape of authentically restored heritage buildings, or follow a wildflower trail during spring when native blossoms carpet the countryside. At Taroom, Leichhardt blazed his initials into a coolabah located in Yaldwyn Street in 1844. Although the bark has now grown over the blaze, many photos still exist to prove its existence. The 300 year old tree has become an iconic landmark. Visit Gilberts Lookout and stand in the footsteps of Leichhardt and Gilbert who thought the view was the 'most pleasing natural picture' they had seen. For the next 150 kilometres, take your pick from lakes and pristine rivers to camp and fish. Sweet Isla Gorge's lookout is perfect for sunset.

Theodore to Rockhampton

Day: 3

Start: **Theodore** End: **Rockhampton**

A pretty place, Theodore is shaped like a point between the Dawson River and Castle Creek, its palm lined streets give a tropical feel to the place. Neville Hewitt Park surrounds the water tower and is a great spot for a picnic lunch or if you'd prefer a river view, Rotary Park in 5th Avenue overlooks Castle Creek. Don't be surprised to find not a single banana growing anywhere near the township of Banana. It's actually named after a famous dun coloured bullock from back in the 1800's. Baralaba is another great fishing gem for those that like to cast a line. The Leichhardt Highway then takes you to the historic township of Mount Morgan. Once the home to the richest and largest gold mine in the world, it has a few secrets worth discovering. Next is Rockhampton, Capital of the Capricorn, and worthy as base for a night or two with so much to do.

Rockhampton to Yeppoon

Day: 4

Start: **Rockhampton** End: **Yeppoon**

Now officially right on top of the Tropic of Capricorn, in Rocky as the locals call Rockhampton, take the time to visit heritage-listed gardens, historic Quay Street, intriguing caves and the largest livestock-selling facility in Australia, Gracemere Sale Yards. Alternatively, relax and unwind on the banks of the Fitzroy River and wait for a Barramundi to 'have a chew.' Yeppoon, 38 kilometres east of Rockhampton, is the end of the celebrated Leichhardt Highway. On the doorstep to The Great Barrier Reef, this exquisite area boasts long sweeping beaches and unspoilt National Parks. You may never want to leave!
