

LORD HOWE ISLAND

the last paradise | lordhoweisland.info

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New South Wales has its very own Pacific Island paradise and it's right on Sydney's doorstep. Only a two-hour flight from Sydney or Brisbane – on the same latitude as Port Macquarie, 600 kms to the east – Lord Howe Island is the most accessible Pacific island for Australian travellers.

Lord Howe has been described as the most beautiful island in the South Pacific (by *National Geographic* magazine) – and perhaps in the world. World Heritage listed, Lord Howe lies on the southernmost coral reef in the world, which is home to 500 species of fish and over 90 species of brilliantly coloured coral.

Born from a volcanic eruption some seven million years ago, the island is 11 kms long and barely two kms at its widest point. Two-thirds of the island is covered in lush, natural forests making it ideal for bushwalking, trekking, bike-riding and bird watching. And with 11 pristine beaches, there is plenty of space for each visitor to find their own untouched spot to laze the day away.

The island's crystalline lagoon and surrounding waters offer holiday-makers plenty of water-based activities, including swimming, snorkelling, SCUBA diving, glass-bottom boating, surfing and kayaking, right throughout the mild winter months.

There are around 350 residents and a limit of 400 tourists on the island at any one time. With just 18 accommodation choices ranging from self-contained budget units to fully-equipped apartments and boutique hotels and lodges, the island retains a peaceful, small-town charm and welcoming atmosphere. There are no large-scale developments – in fact the largest property on the island has around 85 beds, and most are much smaller. Virtually all are owned by local islanders.

There's a six-generation tradition of hospitality on the island, and a casual friendliness that is immediately apparent when your hosts greet you at the airport – often in bare feet! No-one locks their front doors and there are few cars (and a speed limit of 25 km/h) – with the main mode of transport being by bicycle or on foot.

For more information on Lord Howe Island visit www.lordhoweisland.info.

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