

Australia's Igloo on the Beach: Cool, Right?

Article by Patti Morrow & Photos Kary Kern

This igloo on the beach will melt...your heart.

The unique curved structures – referred to as igloos, shells, or domes – are constructed in the most unlikely place, directly across from Trinity Beach in Australia's tropical northeastern Queensland.

"It looks like an igloo, but we call it a dome," said Georgia. Georgia and her husband Adam are the owners and hosts of the unique vacation rental property, known as Beach Dome #4.

They purchased the 1970's home in July 2016 and gutted it. They replaced the old, worn carpet tiles with polished concrete floors for an updated look in the main living area, and installed designer black and white patterned tiles in the refurbished bathroom.

"Georgia did the interior design work; I just did the labor, like jackhammering the tiles," laughed Adam. "We hired contractors to do the kitchen and bathroom, but we both did the painting and that sort of work. It was a big job, and we had many late nights, but we got there in the end."

Indeed they did. Georgia works from home as an interior decorator, and it shows. The interior has a cheerful, relaxed, beachy feel to it, from the aqua-green color palate to the comfy furnishings and carefully selected themed accessories and artwork.

The Ultimate in Green Technology

The igloos were the brainchild of Italian architect Dante Bini in 1965. The domes are constructed by inflating a membrane which lifts steel reinforcement bars threaded through the middle and wet concrete into the desired shape by controlling the air pressure inside the membrane. The "Binishells" may be the most eco-friendly building method ever invented because they use air to create their form. The process is fundamentally green because of the highly efficient building casings created, which are also naturally strong and flexible. They are also affordable because they use less material and labor than traditional construction.

"In terms of cyclones and storms, the domes are resilient," said Adam, who works in environmental management with the local



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government. "That's one reason why Bini built them, to be stormproof."

Location, Location, Location

Outside the dome is just as interesting. The home is in a community of only ten domes, so they're a novelty. The location is perfect, with all of the domes perched directly across from Trinity Beach. The community has a small pool, and an Italian restaurant overlooking the beach.

Trinity Beach is considered a suburb of Cairns, just ten miles from the city center, stretching a mile along the Coral Sea. It is one of the better beaches in the area with white sand instead of the rough coral typical of the area.

"It's a gorgeous little community," said Georgia. "All the owners know each other. Everyone puts in an effort to make sure everything looks good and works properly so that our guests can have the best possible experience."

There's also more development going on in small, quaint Trinity Beach. They're adding a few more restaurants, cafes and pubs for an expanded range of dining options.

All the activities of the Cairns area are within an hour's drive (see [Food and Fun - Cairns Style](#) on the next page). In addition, close to Trinity Beach, there are water sports such as boating, snorkeling and diving. The landscape and climate are conducive to outdoor land activities. Nearby tablelands provide an abundance of hills and freshwater creeks, great for hiking, swimming and camping.

"It's an adventure destination," said Adam. "In addition to the best-known and longest reef in the world, we have the International Iron Man competition in June, which is a big event. There's world-class mountain biking, and we host the Master's games."



"We love taking our seven-year-old daughter, India and our Australian Shepherd, Bindi down to the Trinity Beach and eating great local, quality food," said Georgia. "Living in such a gorgeous place that we call Paradise and waking up every day with a bikini on means feeling alive and happy on holiday whilst still working."

It is in our best interest and highest priority to share the same feelings with those that we meet along the way."

Reservations for Australia's Beach Dome #4 are just a click away...make your plans today.

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Food and Fun -

Cairns, on the Coral Sea in tropical northeast Australia, is considered to be the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef – one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World. The city is stylish and laid-back, and a central location for exploring an area pulsing with adventure and culture.

The Great Barrier Reef



No visit to Cairns is complete without seeing the Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest coral reef system, made up of nearly 3,000 individual reefs stretching out 1800 miles. It's even visible from outer space. You can dive, snorkel, or just enjoy a boating excursion out to the reef system with operators such as Deep Sea Divers Den.

The Esplanade

The Esplanade is the waterside boardwalk on Cairns Bay. It has a festive vibe with restaurants, cafes

and shops. The night markets are the best place for variety and price to find your Australian souvenirs.

There are no beaches in Cairns, but there is a large, open-air, man-made saltwater swimming lagoon on the Esplanade. The lagoon is surrounded by a sandy beach and tropical gardens, and looks out to the Great Barrier Reef.



The Food

While Cairns is not known for having fabulous food, there are a few things you should try. The Raw Prawn on the Esplanade serves an "all-in-one" dish called "Hop, Skip, Jump, and Swim" which consists of kangaroo, crocodile, emu and barramundi. Other Australian favorites to look for are fish and chips, meat pie, the famous Tim Tam chocolate candy, and of course, vegemite. And for the very daring, there's locally-grown durian fruit, which has been described as "eating custard out of a toilet."

The Culture

Cairns lays claim to hosting the oldest living Aboriginal culture, dating back over 40,000 years. Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park is an educational, authentic Australian Indigenous experience, combining live performances of music, dance and storytelling. Visitors can also learn how to throw a boomerang and spear or play the Didgeridoo – the ancient natural wooden trumpet.



Cairns Style

The Island

Stunning Fitzroy Island is reachable by a 45-minute ferry from mainland Cairns. The 833-acre private island is freely accessible to the public. Visitors can snorkel in crystal clear Welcome Bay, hike in the island's tropical rainforest, or take a sea kayak to explore hidden beaches and coves along the calm shoreline.

The Rainforest

Experience Cairns' pristine ancient rainforest from a gondola on the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, gliding over the tropical canopy. You can get off the gondola at various points to explore hiking paths through the lush vegetation.

The Kuranda Scenic Railway treats passengers to a bird's eye view of old bridges, mountain vistas and Barron Gorge on the iconic restored historic train.

Grab Perry from Rainforest Journeys, whose family has lived in the rainforest for generations. Hop on one of his ATV's (all-terrain vehicles) and follow him into the rainforest to explore the incredible wetlands. If you're lucky, you'll see a cassowary.

Kuranda is the colorful little village at the top of the rainforest with markets, restaurants, walking paths, a butterfly sanctuary and a wildlife exhibit. The rich indigenous Djabugay culture survives there, showcased in the art, pottery, paintings, woodcarving, jewelry and handcrafts in the marketplace.

