introducing the paluma region

The Paluma region is located approximately 70km north of Townsville, nestled in the Paluma Range National Park at the southwestern end of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Paluma is famous for its lush tropical rainforest, lakes, walking tracks and spectacular lookout. An abundance of native flora and fauna, cool mountain climate and a tranquil setting makes the Paluma region the perfect weekend escape.

The Paluma region boasts a range of accommodation options from units and self contained cottages to cabins, camping grounds and dormitory accommodation. A small number of licensed restaurants and a café are open for meals; however opening times should be checked prior to arrival. You won't want to miss out on packing a packed lunch and enjoy one of the region's many beautiful picnic spots.

Big Crystal Creek and Little Crystal Creek are the most popular recreation spots in the Paluma region, with established amenities including wheelchair accessible facilities. Big Crystal Creek features a large deep swimming hole, picnic area and camping ground. Little Crystal Creek is one of the best swimming holes in the region and it's famous for its heritage listed, masonry stone arch bridge and the crystal clear water which flows into the gorge.

Paluma Village can be accessed by either of two turn-offs from the Bruce Highway, approximately 60km north of Townsville or 9km south of Ingham. The northern turn-off is to the south-west of Townsville, while the southern turn-off is to the north of Ingham.

Another gem in the area is the small community of Hidden Valley and its surrounding Eucalyptus grandis forest. Located just a 2km drive from Paluma Village, Hidden Valley boasts attractions such as Australia's first 100% carbon neutral resort and the elusive Platypus.

On your way to Hidden Valley you will pass the turn-off to the beautiful Lake Paluma. With camping and various other activities available, Lake Paluma is a popular destination, so book your camping spot early with the Townsville City Council.

The Paluma region boasts diverse environments and is home to an abundance of native flora and fauna. Some of the region's most rare and endangered species can be found in the area.

Paluma is home to a wide array of impressive native rainforest bird species, including the rare Golden Bowerbird, Victoria's Riflebird and the Broad-billed Bowerbirds. The track is home to an unusual population of native birds and is often seen nesting itself on rocks in local waterways. Lace Monitors are also commonly seen in this part of North Queensland.

Paluma Village is home to a unique wood-fir potted, open 7 days.

View the local crafts Paluma Village is home to a unique wood-fir potted, open 7 days.

Visit Lake Paluma Located 8km past Paluma, the lake offers ample recreational opportunities, although motorised vessels are not permitted. Book camping sites via the Townsville City Council website or by phoning 4727 9000.

Discover history Learn more about the stories and characters of Paluma by discovering the historic interpretive signs located throughout the village.

Go for a scenic drive The Paluma region is blessed with a vast diversity of environments which makes it ideal for a relaxing scenic drive. Take care when travelling on unsealed roads, check the suitability of your vehicle before departure and be sure to fuel up before driving up the range.

Go camping Big Crystal Creek, offers day use and longer term camping facilities which must be pre-booked with the Department of Environment and Resource Management. Lake Paluma is another popular recreational camping destination. Pre-book through Townsville City Council.

Let a local show you around! Guided half day, full day and longer two or three day tours are available departing from either Townsville or Hidden Valley.

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short walking tracks

MicClennell's lookout

This lookout forms part of the Paluma Range National Park (Mt Spec section), located just beside Paluma Village with views to the coast and beyond. The lookout offers fine panoramic views over the valley.

Witts lookout

This 3km walk offers birdwatchers the opportunity to spot the rare Golden and Tooth-billed Bowerbirds. The track is home to unspoil rainforest and sweeping views over the valley.

The “H” track

This 20km circuit has two departure points; one from the rear of Little Crystal Creek, and one from Whalley’s Creek. The “H” track runs along the alignment of a former logging road, or ‘trig track’, used by the Whalley family of timber cutters.

Witts lookout

This 3km walk is an extension of the Witt's Lookout track, about 10km from Witt's Lookout. The track to Cloudy Creek is steep, so more strenuous than other tracks around Paluma. Allow two hours for a return trip.

Cloudy creek track

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The Paluma region enjoys a rich and colourful history, which is still evident today. Paluma was first settled when alluvial tin was discovered in the Mt Spec region in 1873. From around this time the country came a period of intense mining activity in the region using sluices, races, sluicing and dredging methods.

Charles Furber, of Ensignleigh, originally purchased Hidden Valley Station in 1935. His wife and sons ran the station while Charlie drove many thousands of bullocks to Townsville over some 40 years. Furber's descendants still run Hidden Valley Station today.

The rainforest and adjacent eucalypt forests of the district were logged for both hardwoods and cabinet softwoods for many years. Like the miners, many of the timber cutters worked in the area from 1932 to 1935 and one family’s hut on Birthday Creek still remains today. During the late 1960’s a change swept through the Paluma and Hidden Valley area; the price of tin collapsed and timber cutting was dealt a blow with the introduction of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

Hidden Valley history

Paluma history

The history of the Paluma area has been captured in a series of interpretive signs, located through the village at sites of historical significance including interpretive signs at the Gumburu Environmental Education Centre. The sign locations are indicated on the map inside this brochure.

Let's local show you around! Guided half day, full day and longer two or three day tours are available departing from either Townsville or Hidden Valley.

Take a walk in the woods The Paluma region offers a number of amazing walking tracks through the spectacular Wet Tropics Rainforest with breathtaking views. Picnic at McClennell’s Lookout Offering panoramic views to the coast and beyond this is an ideal place for a picnic lunch. Picnic facilities also exist at Big Crystal Creek, Little Crystal Creek, Paluma Village Green and Lake Paluma.

Spot some local birds Paluma is internationally acclaimed for its assembly of birds including the rare Golden Bowerbird, Victoria’s Riflebird and the Southern Cassowary. The drier Eucalyptus forests accommodate Black Kites, Wedge-tailed Eagles and Red tailed Cockatoos.

Swim at Little Crystal Creek The crystal clear waters of this freshwater creek are ideal for a refreshing swim. The mountain water cascades under a picturesque stone arch bridge built in the 1930s depression.

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**Suggested Trip Paluma Experience Itinerary**

8.00am Depart Townsville.
9.30am Stop at Little Crystal Creek.
10.15am Visit McClelland’s Lookout.
10.30am Stop for a coffee and light refreshment at a local restaurant in Paluma Village.
11.30am Take a walk to Birthday Creek Falls, home of the elusive Golden Bowerbird.
12.30pm Picnic lunch at Lake Paluma.
1.15pm Take a scenic drive from Lake Paluma to the open eucalypt forests of Hidden Valley.
2.00pm Tour Australia’s first fully solar powered and 100% carbon neutral resort.
3.00pm Visit pottery and craft shops in Paluma Village.
4.00pm Depart Paluma for your return journey.
5.30pm Arrive Townsville.

**Suggested 2 Day Paluma Experience Itinerary**

**Day 1**
9.00am Depart Townsville.
10.30am Stop at Little Crystal Creek for a swim.
12.00pm Lunch at a local restaurant in Paluma Village.
1.00pm Visit McClelland’s Lookout.
1.15pm Depart McClelland’s lookout for Witt’s Lookout track.
2.15pm Visit the craft shops in Paluma Village.
3.15pm Check into your accommodation at Paluma or Hidden Valley, or pitch your tent at Lake Paluma.
4.00pm From Paluma, depart for Hidden Valley for your dusk Platypus tour.
6.00pm Stay on at Hidden Valley for an evening meal, or dine out in Paluma Village.

**Day 2**
9.00am Head to Birthday Creek Falls and seek out elusive Golden Bowerbird.
10.30am Stop at Lake Paluma for a picnic morning tea.
11.30am Depart for Paluma village. Park near either Lennox or Whalley Crescent to complete the ‘H’ track walking trail.
12.00pm Lunch at a restaurant or café or have a picnic at the Paluma Village Green, where playground facilities are available.
1.00pm Depart Paluma.
2.00pm Turn north towards Ingham. Stop to swim at Big Crystal Creek and continue to the Bruce Highway.
3.30pm Seek out delicious tropical fruit ice-cream on your return journey.
5.30pm Arrive Townsville.