



Recommended Anchorages

For 7 night charters

We hope this document will provide some great ideas for anchorages and activities you can experience whilst chartering the Whitsunday Islands with Whitsunday Rent A Yacht. This is by no means an exhaustive list and we encourage you to plot your own adventure and let the wind guide you throughout your charter experience.

It is important to note that any proposed itinerary needs to be open to a great deal of flexibility taking into account changing weather and wind conditions. The most important thing to remember is to set achievable daily goals, considering weather, wind, tide and most of all, passenger and crew comfort and safety.

An excellent tool to use when planning your trip and to gain some idea of distances when exploring the Whitsundays is **Google Earth**. Simply go to Google and download Google Earth for free. Once you have the software, the rest is easy – zoom in on Australia and the Whitsunday Region – from there you can gain a idea of orientation in relation to the WRAY base at Shute Harbour, distances between anchorages and fabulous up-to-date photos of anchorages and landmarks.

Follow this link to download Google Earth for free:
www.google.com/earth

We also recommend you discuss ideas you have for your itinerary with your briefer during the briefing and they will assist you plotting the best course for the weather conditions throughout your charter. Be flexible with your plans. Most of all, have fun!

Shute Harbour

Charter Base: Mainland – 20° 17.544' 148° 47.405'

Arrive at **Whitsunday Rent A Yacht's** base at **Shute Harbour**, gateway to the Whitsunday Islands, where you will be prepared for charter with a 3- 4 hour briefing. You will meet and greet your briefer in our comfortable reception area and then be guided to your vessel to load your personal belongings prior to your briefing.

Anchorage Points

If you arrive early or are having a pre-charter sleep-aboard take a walk up to the Lion's look out and take in the majestic view over the harbour and out to the islands. Watch the playful dolphins swim past your vessel, drop a line in off the back deck or take a swim off Snow's Beach at high tide.

The pre-charter briefing consists of an area brief, followed by a briefing on the operation of the vessel and its equipment. Your briefer will take you for a test run on your vessel to ensure you and your crew are confident in its handling. Once your briefer is satisfied you can handle your vessel, it's time to embark on your charter.

You will then head off to your first anchorage which, depending on the weather and the start time of your briefing, could be one of many amazing locations. You will be required to call in on the afternoon radio sched with your proposed overnight anchorage and if you are still in transit, then it is a good idea to call base again once safely moored for the evening. Fleet vessels must be anchored for the evening by 4pm.

Nara Inlet

Anchorage One: Hook Island – 20° 09.955' 148° 54.048'

Nara Inlet is a narrow 3 kilometre inlet, very protected and suitable as an overnight anchorage in all weather conditions. The fishing conditions are excellent and there are lots of oysters to gather from the rocky shores at low tide, which can make for the perfect freshly caught seafood dinner on the deck of your boat as the sun sets over the Whitsundays.

Anchorage Points

The inlet offers several great anchorages, however we recommend anchorage 1 or 3 right at the top of the inlet if there is space available, as they are the most protected and really quite beautiful. The anchorages are surrounded on three sides by steep rocky faces with ferns, hoop pines, palms and varieties of other rainforest plants and wildlife.

Nara is a deep and fiord-like inlet with steep, heavily wooded embankments. If there have been recent showers, small waterfalls tumble down the rocky face to the shore and provide a refreshing bath. There is a track up to the Ngaro Cultural Site, which is easily accessible for anyone with reasonable health and adequate footwear. With aboriginal cave paintings and an interpretive centre explaining the history of the traditional owners of the Whitsundays, this cultural site and bush walk make a great activity in any weather.

Take a short walk past the caves to the flat rocky outcrop and you will get the chance to take stunning photos of your vessel looking back down the inlet. The friendly resident cockatoos are likely to pay a visit at meal times. Being very inquisitive and used to visiting yachts, the interaction with these birds makes for a great photo opportunity.

Cid Harbour

Anchorage Two: Whitsunday Island - 20° 14.899' 148° 55.962'

Head to one of the area's most popular anchorages, **Cid Harbour**, on the western side of Whitsunday Island. It is often chosen as a great first night anchorage as it is approximately a 2 hour, leisurely sail from our base. One of the great all-weather anchorages, it was used by the Australian Navy and allied navies during World War II.

Anchorage Points

Enjoy the serenity the next morning by taking your dinghy ashore and enjoying a bushwalk through the lush forest throbbing with bird song. Then be enticed back onboard with the aroma of a sizzling BBQ cooking on the rear deck. All our vessels are equipped with a gas BBQ on the rear deck for al fresco dining Whitsunday-style.

The main anchorage at **Sawmill Beach** is off a shoaling sandy beach edged with coral reef. If you are feeling adventurous, climb through the rainforest over spring-fed streams and palm forests to the top of **Whitsunday Peak** (437m). Make sure you allow plenty of time before the sun sets and take plenty of water and sun screen. Watch for the majestic sea eagles that swoop the waves for small fish and take stunning photos of your vessel from the peak.

For the less energetic, the bush walk from **Sawmill Beach** to **Dugong Inlet** is a must-do. This leisurely walk offers a beautiful secluded beach and is well worthwhile. Expect to encounter large, lazy goannas, wallabies and lots of bird life on the way. Don't forget your water, sunscreen and cameras.

Langford Island

Anchorage Three: Langford Island – 20° 04.775' 148° 52.393'

From both Nara Inlet and Cid Harbour take a leisurely cruise along the western side of Hook Island, heading north to **Langford Island**. This is a delightful daytime stop-over with the coral reef and sand spit emerging at low tide and disappearing at high tide.

Anchorage Points

The five-star world class **One and Only Hayman** Island lies to the north of Langford Island. Visitation is allowed for a berthing fee and via pre-arrangement, so you can enjoy a sophisticated lunch time experience. No overnight berthing in the marina unless you have accommodation booked on the island. Dress codes apply.

Langford Island, with its coral sand beach, has vegetation which gives the feeling of both a continental island and a true coral quay. The long sand spit is interesting to explore - a great daytime choice for all the family. Beachcombing is a must on the sand spit with a world of hidden treasures washed up with each tide.

It's a great area for picnicking at low tide and the vast array of tropical fish seething amongst the coral bommies makes it one of the best snorkeling spots in the area.

There is a very high chance of spotting a friendly turtle whilst snorkeling amongst the coral or enjoying a bite to eat back on the boat before heading elsewhere for the evening. As navigation can be tricky through the reefs, especially in this area, always refer to your chart and the '100 Magic Miles' guide book which shows how to enter and exit the area safely.

Stonehaven

Anchorage Four: Stonehaven – 20° 05.808' 148° 53.908'

The best overnight anchorages in this area are at **Stonehaven** to the east of Langford Reef on Hook Island or **Blue Pearl Bay** on the western side of Hayman Island. **Stonehaven** is an expansive 3km long open bay with a 400 metre mountain range on the eastern side and the best sunsets in the Whitsundays to the western side.

Anchorage Points

Yes, Elvis is still alive! Watch for a glimpse of Whitsunday marine life celebrity, Elvis the Maori Wrasse, who calls **Blue Pearl Bay** home. He is thought to be about 50 years old and is very friendly to snorkelers. Remember - don't touch the wildlife!

Be sure to sit back on the deck with a refreshing drink and your camera at the ready as the sunsets are not to be missed. There are three main anchorage areas to choose from and the northernmost anchorage has a very nice beach, with good fishing from the rocks to the south.

Stonehaven can be a little gusty in very strong winds but is a very secure anchorage and well worth the visit.

Blue Pearl Bay on the western side of Hayman Island offers another superb overnight anchorage in easterly conditions and some of the Whitsundays' best snorkeling and diving opportunities. What better way to end the perfect day than with a snorkel in the warm, turquoise waters and the chance of spotting a school of brightly-coloured tropical fish. Wake up and dive back in for another snorkel, being ready to leave after breakfast when the commercial charter vessels start to arrive and bring the crowds.

Hook Island (North)

Anchorage Five: Hook Island (North) – 20° 04.004' 148° 55.684'

The northern side of **Hook Island** is where you need to be if you want to experience the Great Barrier Reef and all it has to offer. The numerous bays which line the northern end of Hook Island such as **Butterfly Bay**, **Maureen's Cove**, **Luncheon Bay**, **Manta Ray Bay** and **Pinnacle Bay** provide some of the best snorkeling conditions in our tropical waters and in the right conditions the visibility is superb.

Anchorage Points

There are 9 public moorings in **Butterfly Bay**, which are aimed at minimizing the human impact on the coral and the risk of damage to the reef, as this is a very sensitive ecological area. Remember to never stand on the coral or touch it when swimming past and always observe marine life from a distance.

When snorkeling and diving around this group, you can expect to see an amazing variety of coral species and marine creatures including enormous clams, huge groppers, sea turtles, dolphins, sting rays and large schools of colourful tropical fish. Remember to always snorkel with a buddy and we recommend wet suits in all seasons for sun protection.

After a day of underwater activity make your way to either **North Mackerel Bay** on the eastern side of Hook Island or **Butterfly Bay** on the northern side for overnight anchorage – your choice will be guided by the wind direction. **Butterfly Bay** is a 1km long cozy bay, which offers great protection from our south-east trade winds. If you venture ashore at **Butterfly Bay** and explore the creeks at certain times of the year, the bushland is clouded with thousands of blue butterflies.

Tongue Bay

Anchorage Six: Whitsunday Island - 20° 14.067' 149° 00.996'

From the top of Hook Island take a gentle cruise south to **Border Island** and enjoy a light lunch on board before walking to the top of this grassy little island ridge which offers a 360-degree view of the area. Anchor up in **Cateran Bay** to the north, as it is well protected from our trade winds and offers excellent coral reef and marine life to explore for a mid-morning snorkel and lunch.

Anchorage Points

Get the cameras ready!

It is here at Hill Inlet that you will experience for yourself the picture-perfect turquoise waters and white silica sand that has become the trademark of the Whitsunday Islands. This vista has to be the most iconic and photographed all Whitsunday vistas and it won't disappoint.

After a relaxing lunch stop at Border Island, head to **Tongue Bay** for overnight anchorage. This is where you will find access to the lookout loop and viewing platform with views of the amazing **Hill Inlet**, with its pure white sandy shoals and pristine beaches. Here you are likely to see an array of lagoon rays and green sea turtles bobbing in the clear blue seas, so don't forget your camera.

Take the time to descend the walking track onto **Betty's Beach** and experience for yourself what it is like to feel the tropical warm waters on your toes whilst gazing out over the inlet and off to Whitehaven Beach in the distance. If the tides are in your favour you may even be lucky enough to catch this amazing vista at sunset and take home photos your friends and family will be jealous of!

Whitehaven Beach

Anchorage Seven: Whitsunday Island -20° 16.937' 149° 03.527'

A calm day the northern end of **Whitehaven Beach** can provide a suitable anchorage for you to explore the beach and **Hill Inlet** from a different angle.

Anchorage Points

Included in Trip Advisor's top ten beaches in the world, this famous beach is must-see. The sand is made up of 98 per cent silica, producing the sand's pure white appearance. Unlike normal sand, the sand on Whitehaven Beach does not retain heat, which makes it a dream to stroll along even on a hot summer's day!

At your leisure make the trip along the length of Whitehaven Beach where you will get stunning views of Australia's most famous beach, with its 6 kilometres of pure white silica sand and clear turquoise seas. The best overnight anchorage is off the rocky point at the south end of the beach. Spend the day relaxing on the beach itself, take a picnic and enjoy a game of beach cricket, a swim in the shallows or an hour of peace and quiet before returning to the vessel for a delicious dinner with one of the best views in the world.

For an alternative overnight anchorage or day time stop in certain wind conditions, head east to **Haselwood Island** and anchor at **Chalkies Beach** on the western side. Some call **Chalkies Beach** a mini Whitehaven as it too is blessed with that pure white silica sand, which when combined with the calm turquoise waters helps to create the perfect Whitsunday anchorage.

Conclusion

There are 74 islands in the Whitsunday area.

There are approximately 120 approved overnight anchorages, the majority of which are not connected to an island resort and will provide you with the peace, tranquility and beauty which is part of the boating experience.

The most important factor to remember when choosing an anchorage is the weather forecast. By using the 100 Magic Miles as a source of reference, the navigation chart and advice from the VHF radio operator at WRAY base, you will be able to make informed decisions at the start of each day as to what your plans for the day are and which overnight anchorage you will end up in. It is a good idea to have a suitable 'back up' overnight anchorage in case you cannot reach your proposed destination by the scheduled radio call.

Some people will try and fit as many different locations into their charter as possible, whereas others may stay in the same spot for days on end. There are no set guidelines for where you should go and what you should do whilst out on the water and we offer this itinerary as a suggestion only.

The beauty of the suggestions made in this document is that you can travel clockwise or anticlockwise around the islands depending on the wind and tide and you will not miss a thing.

Always remember - each anchorage has its own individual charm and no two are the same!