



DESTINATION: *Cocos Keeling Islands*

GENERAL INFORMATION

The islands form 2 atolls, consisting of 27 coral islands encircling a lagoon. Located 2700 km's North West of Perth, in the Indian Ocean. There are only two inhabited islands, West Island and Home Island. Most visitors stay on West Island, where the airport, supermarket and most accommodation is located. Home Island is a short ferry from West Island and is where the local Cocos Malay community live. Visitors can visit Home Island as a day trip, or visit for several days, staying at the historic Oceania House.

The Cocos Keeling Islands offer crisp blue skies, fine white beaches all set in a lush tropical environment. You can explore the surrounding reefs and get close and personal with the amazing marine life or while away your time relaxing in privacy on many of the beautiful deserted beaches. Enjoy the space and opportunity to escape to your own island for a day!

With a population of around 650, this destination will not offer hustle and bustle, nor attract the shop-a-holic but if you are interested in an unspoiled, quiet, safe, relaxed and friendly place, you cannot find a better place than the Cocos Keeling Islands!

All Cocos Keeling Islands accommodation are rooms, mostly self-contained or holiday homes – you won't find resorts or large hotels chains here. Most accommodation includes access to a kitchen as dining options on the island are limited.

IMMIGRATION AND INSURANCE

The flights departing Perth all leave from the International Airport. Australian citizens can travel on valid Australian photo identification such as a driver's license but a passport with 6 months validity is the recommended form of identification. Normal immigration procedures apply and passengers may make duty free purchases.

Travel insurance is strongly recommended including cover for medical evacuation for International passengers. Speak to us for details.

WEATHER

The temperature rarely exceeds 32 degrees or falls below 20 degrees Celsius. The climate is tropical with a balmy heat; the dry season tends to run from May to November, with higher winds experienced in July to September. The wet season is usually December to April and often the rain fall (on average 2m per year) occurs during the night.

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THINGS TO DO

For those looking for an active getaway, the Cocos Keeling Islands is the ideal place that can accommodate you with a variety of water sport activities.

DIVING Cocos offers some of the best diving, with pristine warm waters and visibility, often in excess of 30 meters. With more than 20 uncrowded dive sites to visit, it boasts an abundant and diverse marine life including over 100 different coral species, barracuda, grey reef sharks, black and white tip reef sharks are seen on nearly every dive, dolphins, manta rays, dog tooth and yellow fin tuna, sailfish fish, butterfly fish and the endemic Cocos Angelfish.

SNORKELLING is as easy as walking into the water. Bring your own gear or hire what you require from the local Visitor Centre. Reef shoes are important as the corals can be sharp in some areas.

WINDSURFING and **KITESURFING** is common from July through to September, as the south east trade winds pick up. With waist deep warm water and continuous breezes, the lagoon on Cocos is the perfect place to play and improve your skills.

SURFING is quietly becoming popular with several surf breaks available.

STAND UP PADDLE BOARDS can be hired on Island

KAYAKS can be hired on island. Make your own adventure to explore other uninhabited islands in the lagoon

BIKE RIDING | SCOOTER HIRE is available on West Island although some accommodation properties provide bike hire for free. As the islands are flat, both are an easy relaxing way to get around and see the sights. Bookings can be made at the Visitor Centre.

CAR HIRE West Island where most of the accommodation is located is a long strip of land around 15KMS in length. All the accommodations are in the middle of the strip. The best swimming beaches are at either end of the strip and the beaches close to the accommodations are very shallow with sharp corals so are no good for swimming. We would recommend a car on Cocos. The cars are mostly all utes so handy for carrying all your gear and eskies to the beach.

SWIMMING There are only two swimming beaches on West Island - one is located about 5km north of the main settlement area and the other is 5km south of the main settlement area. Direction Island offers great swimming and isolation to fully relax.

GOLF COURSE is available for use and clubs are available for hire. The tranquil 9 hole course is located next to the airport overlooking the lagoon. Please note that permission is required through the airport as golfers need to cross the runway. Scroungers golf is played on a Thursday Tee-off 3.30pm all are welcome. A fun afternoon hitting the ball across the International runway. No golfing experience needed. Clubs can be hired at the golf club \$10 hire and \$10 game fee

MOTORISED CANOE SAFARI TOUR is very popular and pre-booking is recommended. Visit the shallow crystal clear waters of the Southern end of the lagoon in a motorized canoe. Depending on the tides you can experience a sun rise, daytime or sunset cruise around the lagoon at a relaxing pace. You will have time to stop in the lagoon and chill out with some drinks and nibbles.

VISIT DIRECTION ISLAND home to Cossies Beach, ranked number 1 on the list of Australia's Best Beaches. With long, white beaches to relax on and "The Rip" to snorkel, it's a relaxing day. The ferry from West Island to Direction Island (or DI to locals) usually runs on Thursday and Saturdays – check with Broome, Kimberley & Beyond for the latest information. DI does not have any shops or fresh water, so be sure to pack an esky and bring plenty of drinking water.

VISIT HOME ISLAND by ferry where the Cocos Malay community live. Take a Home Island tour, where you will learn about the history of the island and the local culture. Or you can stay at Oceania House, built in 1887 and on 12 acres of botanical gardens. Dine at the restaurant on Home Island on a Wednesday evening, bookings are essential, get to sample some tasty home-made Cocos Malay food. This restaurant is not licensed.

FISHING two new fishing tours are now available, land based for fly, bait and lure or fishing trips by boat. The tours are full day with lunch.

COOKERY CLASSES the local school runs a weekly cookery class and specialises in Malay cooking. Join the class, and enjoy the food you have cooked for your lunch.



ISLAND SERVICES

SUPERMARKETS There is a small supermarket on West Island selling most essential items. Prices can be higher than the mainland as everything on Cocos has to be flown in, or shipped in. If you have special dietary requirements or would like to take a few of your favorite items with you, you can pack them in your hold luggage allowance of 1 bag up to 23kgs. You do need to take a receipt with you to show you have bought the items in WA in case you are asked to show this on entry to Cocos. Alternatively you can book an extra bag and take an esky with some of your favourite foods.

BOTTLE SHOP a well-stocked bottle shop is attached to the Cocos club and has a large selection of drinks

DINING OUT There is a restaurant serving breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. Maxi's by the sea Café serves breakfasts and lunches, it is open some evenings but bookings are essential, so please check with the café. Try fish and Chips on a Friday from Flying Fish Café from 5.00pm. Pizza night at The Cocos club on a Sunday night. The Early bird bakery is open on Saturdays 7am to 11am. All dining is BYO

COCOS MEDICAL CLINIC is open Monday to Friday only with restricted opening hours although a nurse is on call 24 hours a day. Australian Medicare cards can be used as on the mainland. The RAAF and the Royal Flying Doctors offer support for any real emergency. Appointments are necessary.

COCOS ISLAND POST OFFICE has an office on West Island and Home Island. Both have restricted opening hours and are not open weekends

ATM - WEST ISLAND There is one ATM on island which is located in the Community Resource Centre. The ATM machine has a \$100.00 limit per transaction, which you can use as many times as you like, however there is a charge of \$2.50 per transaction.

COMMONWEALTH BANK agency is located in the CO-OP Duty Free shop which is open on Wednesday mornings. Withdrawal facilities are only available for Commonwealth Bank customers and Travelers Cheques or cards from other banks are not accepted

MOBILE & INTERNET No mainland phone networks are available on the island. You can hire phones from the Resource Centre that are connected to the CIIA network or purchase wireless vouchers to be used at hotspots across the island.

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