

Episode 238 Saturday 14 June 2008

'The Gulf' Special

Dean and Scotty visit a few destinations around the Gulf of Carpentaria, including Normanton, Karumba, Burketown and a tiny island called Sweers. It's a region jam packed with options for the off road adventurer, the keen angler, or the traveller in search of tales of our early pioneers.



Karumba

From Normanton to Karumba it's a 70-kilometre drive through the Savannah grasslands and wetlands, coastal saltpans and mangrove fringed river systems. This is wild countryside. Harsh, unpredictable, vast and beautiful.



The road is bitumen all the way to Karumba but with such unstable and changeable weather in these parts, particularly during the wet, it's wise to call ahead or visit RACQ's website for their road conditions report before you tackle any of the roads in these parts.

The town of Karumba sits at the mouth of the Norman River and its part of the reason they call this area barramundi country. There are a number of fishing charters and cruising vessels that operate out of Karumba, all of which are a great way to experience and appreciate the area.

Contact

Allan Gurney Fishing Charters

Ph: 0429 459 133

Croc & Crab Tours

crocandcrab.com.au

Ph: (07) 4745 9009

Normanton

One of Normanton's most distinctive landmarks is the railway station and the railway line. It was originally established to service the beef industry by running from Normanton to Cloncurry.



These days, the main attraction at Normanton Station is The Gulflander. The old tin hare was built at the Ipswich Workshops back in 1931 and worked from 1960 to 1964. She's powered by a 45 hp petrol hand cranked engine and after some tender loving care she works now just as good as she back then.

The Gulflander departs at 8:30am every Wednesday for her weekly mail run to Croydon Station. She moves at 24 miles per hour so it's a leisurely journey which includes a morning tea stop at Blackbull Station. She makes the return journey from Croyden back to Normanton every Thursday at 8:30am.

Contact

Queensland Rail

traveltrain.com.au

Ph: 1300 131 722

Sweers Island

Sweers is the most southerly island of the Wellesley Group, situated in the South East corner of the Gulf of Carpentaria. It has the added attraction of being virtually untouched by anglers with river, estuary, reef and game fishing all possible.



A 15-minute private charter from Burketown to Sweers Island return with Savannah Aviation will cost you from \$1034, depending on how many people you're travelling with.

Sweers Island is perfect for the person with a sense of adventure and a love of fishing and bird watching. It's about seven kilometres long, virtually surrounded by rock reef, flat with scrub and grassy fields, and a real fishing paradise with species such as Sweetlip, Coral Trout and Red Emperor up for grabs.

As part of your package, guests are allocated their own boat to enjoy this remote paradise at whatever pace. A guided fishing charter with an experienced skipper is also an option.

If you'd like more information about Sweers Island give the owners, Tex and Lynn, a call or visit their website. It'll cost you \$295 per person per night that includes your accommodation, meals, boat, bait, fuel and handlines.

Contact

Sweers Island Resort

sweers.com.au

Ph: (07) 4748 5544

Savannah Aviation

savannah-aviation.com

Ph: (07) 4745 5177