

Episode 265 Saturday 3 January 2008

Gorges of Central Queensland Special

Central QLD is filled with beautiful national parks that showcase some of the best natural sights QLD has to offer. Dean Miller and Martin Bowerman took off from Gladstone to explore some of the most spectacular gorges of Central Queensland.

For more information on anything in the Capricorn Region, get in touch with Capricorn Tourism.

Contact Capricorn Tourism

www.capricorntourism.com.au

1800 676 701

Monto and Cania Gorge National Park

Martin and Dean's first stop was the town of Monto, which is Cania Gorge's nearest town.

Monto is one of the newest towns in Capricornia. It only came into existence in 1924. It's a charming little town where hikers should stock up on food and supplies before heading out to Cania Gorge National Park.



While in Monto visitors can meet up with Ken Gleadhill, better known as the Monto Magic Man. He acts as a kind of ambassador for the town of Monto. In the days of Playstation and Wii, Ken loves to make the Monto experience an unforgettable one, the old fashioned way. That includes card tricks, word games and a host of tricks he's made with his own hands.

It's only a short drive from Monto to Cania Gorge National Park. There's no camping in the national park itself, but there's accommodation nearby. Cania Gorge Tourist Retreat has a wide range of accommodation options from unpowered camping sites to comfortable cabins.

Cania Gorge National Park is spread out over 3000 hectares and has a range of walks catering to all levels of fitness. The toughest walk is the 22 kilometre return hike to Castle Mountain Lookout. It's a solid day's walk, but the views at the lookout are breathtaking.

Lake Cania is a popular destination for fishermen. Over the years it has been stocked up with fish like Bass and Saratoga. There is a picnic and recreation area.

Contact Monto Shire Council

monto.qld.gov.au; 07 4166 9999

Contact Cania Gorge Retreat

caniagorgetreat.com.au; 07 4167 8110

Contact Cania Gorge National Park

epa.qld.gov.au

Theodore and Isla Gorge National Park

Theodore's a town that likes to do things differently. It actually began as Castle Creek; then the locals changed the name to honour one of Australia's most controversial politicians, 'Red Ted' Theodore.



The Theodore Hotel is owned by the local community. The profits are pumped back into local worthy causes like Theodore's school, the local show and the Dawson Folk Museum. The locals claim that it's the only co-op pub anywhere in QLD. It offers a comfortable place to stay, with the options on offer including cabin-style accommodation that's great for people who want to explore Isla Gorge, and not camp out.

Just 30 kilometres down the road from Theodore is Isla Gorge National Park. It's a striking and unspoilt gorge that is a great spot for a quick stopover as you make your way deeper inland. There's a campground run by national parks that has basic facilities and plenty of space.

Contact Theodore Co-operative Hotel Motel

07 4993 1244

Contact Isla Gorge National Park epa.qld.gov.au

Carnarvon National Park

A few hours drive from Theodore is Rolleston, where drivers should stock up on food and fuel before continuing on to Carnarvon Gorge.



Carnarvon Gorge is rich in cultural and natural history. It's home to the Aboriginal Art Gallery where walkers can see more than 2,000 engravings.

There are many highlights for walkers to experience such as Ward's Canyon, the Moss Garden and the newly opened Amphitheatre. There a range of walks, big and small, so visitors will need more than one day to see it all.

There's camping at the day use area during school holidays, or nearby there's Takarakka Bush Resort. It's got a range of accommodation options and facilities including a general store.

There's also Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Lodge. It has cosy cabin accommodation and there's also a pool, restaurant and bar onsite.

Contact Carnarvon National Park epa.qld.gov.au

Contact Takarakka Bush Resort takaru.com.au 07 4984 4535

Contact Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Lodge carnarvon-gorge.com 07 4984 4503