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Learn a new skill on your Queensland holiday

More and more travellers are combining the opportunity to learn a new skill or gain a qualification while on holiday. Choose from the amazing range of courses on offer in Queensland from learning to scuba dive in the underwater wonderland of the Great Barrier Reef to learning to 4WD, skydive solo or how to play golf!

Learn to scuba dive

How about learning to scuba dive in the tropical waters of the World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef? Pro Dive Cairns recently issued its 100,000th PADI dive certification last year and this eco-certified operator offers a five day learn to dive course on the world's largest coral reef system. The course comprises two days of classroom/pool training and a three day, two night live-aboard diving trip. It includes nine dives to some of the best sites on the Outer Great Barrier Reef, including the famous Cod Hole, giving you the opportunity to learn more about the marine flora and fauna and the importance of protecting this precious and unique environment. At the end of the five days, participants will have completed their open water certification. www.prodive-cairns.com.au

Learn to surf

Every Australian has tried to surf at some time and now it's your turn to conquer the balancing act between wave and surf board in the ideal surfing conditions of the Gold and Sunshine Coasts. Let the gentle waves pull you ashore as you learn a new skill that will leave you feeling like you're walking on water. At Noosa on the Sunshine Coast, former World Pro-Am Surfing Champion Merrick Davis provides you with all the skills and style you need, while on the Gold Coast, another surfing world champion Cheyne Horan can teach you all the secrets of the famous beaches through his surf school's extended courses and daily one-off lessons. www.cheynehoran.com.au and www.learntosurf.com.au

Learn to paddle surf

A traditional Hawaiian sport is proving a popular take on an age old favourite on the Sunshine Coast. Stand Up Paddle Surfing has hit the waters at Noosa and Caloundra, offering 90 minute lessons and tours for people to learn all about the sport; the boards, paddles and proper technique. This form of surfing is suitable for both surfers and non-surfers and is a fun way to promote balance, strength and general fitness. Enjoy the beautiful surrounds of the Sunshine Coast as you stand up and paddle your way along the Noosa River and in the gentle waves. Stand Up Paddle Surfing tailor lessons to the individual and can supply paddles and specialised boards for all skill levels. www.standuppaddlesurf.com.au

Learn to sail

Take the wheel, hoist the sails and grind the winches as you learn to sail in Australia's premier sailing playground, the Whitsundays. The 74 islands, fringing reefs and stunning beaches that make up the region provide the perfect 'classroom' conditions for the Whitsunday Marine Academy's range of courses. Enjoy the adventure and discovery of a three or six day cruise through the magnificent waters in one of the academy's approved training vessels. Numbers are limited (maximum six students) and the focus is on the course syllabus and learning to sail. Courses available are from Introductory through to Yachtmaster and the more adventurous might wish to enquire about the regular mile building coastal passages. And once you've mastered your sailing skills in the Whitsundays, why not explore some of Queensland's glorious coastal areas and other islands of the Great Barrier Reef at your own pace. www.whitsundaysailtraining.com

Learn to skydive solo

If being thrown out of a plane at 14,000 feet is your idea of fun, then head to Cairns in Tropical North Queensland where you can learn how to skydive without the 'hassle' of having someone attached to your back. For one off thrill-seekers, Sky Dive Cairns offers regular tandem skydives over the picturesque islands, rainforests and beaches of the area. But if you'd like to take it one step further and learn how to skydive solo, Sky Dive Cairns also run an Accelerated Freefall Course which is the most advanced method of learning to skydive. The course consists of nine supervised stages which provide you with all the skills and knowledge for solo freefall and canopy control. Courses start on Tuesdays and Saturdays only and generally take about 10 days to complete, depending on the weather. www.skydivecairns.com.au

The International School @ Hotel Palazzo Versace

Located in the opulent Palazzo Versace on Queensland's Gold Coast, The International Hotel School @ Palazzo Versace offers a unique opportunity to forge a career in hospitality. Learn from industry professionals including Palazzo Versace's hand-selected instructors and mentors and receive practical 'on-the-job' training in various departments of a world-renowned, multi award-winning hotel. With opportunities of work experience and paid employment, the International Hotel School @ Palazzo Versace's Diploma of Hospitality Management is offered in conjunction with The Bremer Institute of TAFE. For people short on time but still wanting to learn the ropes of the world's first fashion branded hotel, there are also a range of 'behind the scenes' programs from morning teas to overnight stays. www.palazzoversace.com

Learn how to cook an Aussie BBQ

Queenslanders love a good Aussie barbeque, jumping at any excuse to throw a few "snags" (sausages) and steaks on the barbie! And now Brisbane's Bar-Be School offers BBQ Cooking Courses so you can get the most out of cooking more confidently on your BBQ back home. Get some professional tips on the classics and learn some new recipes to amaze your family and friends. The Beer & BBQ Class is a favourite with a menu of half shell scallops, hood roasted scotch fillet, pumpkin salad and chocolate hotcakes all matched with James Squire beers, while the Perfect BBQ Breakfast in Bed class, BBQ Seafood, couples classes and Christmas BBQ are also some of the highlights. www.bbqschool.com.au

Learn to 4WD

How about learning to 4WD so you can safely explore magnificent off-road locations like Fraser and Moreton Island or parts of the Queensland Outback? A number of operators offer training courses, but Brisbane Hinterland 4WD Tours is particularly convenient for international visitors flying into Queensland's capital city. They offer a range of courses including an introductory 4WD training course recommended for the recreational driver who wants to learn the capabilities and limitations of their vehicle. The 4WD sand driving course covers the basics of sand driving including sand driving techniques, vehicle recovery and beach driving rules. Also available are 4X4 training weekends which are designed for those who are likely to find themselves off the beaten track or are planning extended travel. The off road towing course is recommended if you are going to be towing an off road camper for the first time or want to improve your off road towing skills. Advance courses are also available. www.brishint4wd.com.au

Learn how to play golf

The Sunshine Coast's 300 days of sunshine creates a year-round paradise for golfers on a selection of courses ranging from international standard resort courses to local clubs and par-three courses. Training centres like the Twin Waters Golf Academy offer the latest in coaching knowledge for all aspects of the game from putting and chipping to sorting out your swing under the guidance of Australian PGA Professionals. Get comfortable with the game and then try out your new skills on the Twin Waters course which has been rated one of the best resort courses in Australia. The world-class 18 hole, par 72 championship course was designed by two of the world's leading golf course architects; five times British Open Champion, Peter Thomson and renowned international golf course designer Mike Wolderidge. www.twinwatersgolfacademy.com

Learn to make paper indigenous-style

This fledgling paper-making business is located in the Queensland Outback town of Mount Isa. Arilla Paper brings together women, the plants and the spirit of the land to make unique indigenous paper in a mill located in the Old Mining Museum. The local indigenous women share their creative energies and knowledge to make the fine paper products from regional grasses, reeds and eucalypts. All paper products made at Arilla are available for sale including office and decorative stationery and art mediums. Entry to Arilla Paper is free. www.mountisa.biz/community/artists.php