

## GO FISHING



## A weekend at Port Douglas

A PASSION for fishing and golfing is all that's needed to enjoy Far North Sports Fishing's new long weekend.

The weekend starts in Port Douglas and includes a full-day blue-water charter and a world-class golf experience at the Links Golf Course with a choice of luxury accommodation. Prices start from \$1400 per person for a three-day escape.

Call (07) 4099 3188 or visit [www.farnorthsportsfishing.com](http://www.farnorthsportsfishing.com).

## ON YA BIKE



## Book for two and save cash

AUSTRALIAN-based cruising, boating and cycling holiday specialist Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd is offering savings on popular bike and barge cycling cruises.

Book two people in a twin-share cabin for the price of one on these packages, which include a one-week itinerary in Burgundy in France or from Amsterdam to Bruges on selected departures.

Cycle and cruise along the canals of Europe from Amsterdam to the beautiful city of Bruges in Belgium. Call 1800 331 582 or visit [www.outdoortravel.com.au](http://www.outdoortravel.com.au).

## FLYING HIGH: Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, but you may as well be Superman

## You'll soar like an eagle

■ Sarah Rex

YOUR pulse thunders through your veins and your mouth is dry.

The engine roars and you can feel yourself taking flight. Your feet leave the deck of the boat or beach and you fly higher.

The old phrase, bird's eye view, comes to mind as a vista of coastline, white caps, turquoise waters and beachgoers as small as ants unfolds in front of your eyes.

You are a bird. You are a plane.

You may as well be Superman because you are parasailing above pristine waters and you know what it feels like to be flying.

Parasailing is the perfect pastime for people who want to fly without having to jump out of a plane.

Parasailing is a recreational watersport: a person is towed behind a boat secured by a harness and towline.

The harness is attached to a canopy wing, similar to a parachute. Once the boat starts,

## SOME PLACES TO PARASAIL

■ QUEENSLAND: If the thought of parasailing gets your blood pumping, Queensland Tourism recommends visiting Island Parasail in Airlie Beach. Island Parasail offers a daily service from the jetty at Coral Sea Resort. For more information about Island Parasail visit the Queensland Tourism website: [qldtourism.com/attractions/parasailing](http://qldtourism.com/attractions/parasailing)

■ NSW: NSW Tourism site, Visit NSW, recommends visiting Port Stephens Parasailing. Port Stephens Parasail offers solo and tandem flights that last about 10 minutes. For more information about Port Stephens Parasail, visit the Visit NSW website: [visitnsw.com/things-to-do/tours/port-stephens-parasailing](http://visitnsw.com/things-to-do/tours/port-stephens-parasailing)

the engine and picks up speed and it is time to take off and enjoy the ride.

Sharon Bell is one of those who have taken the leap of faith into the air during a tandem parasailing experience off Airlie Beach.

"It was a birthday present for my 37th. I had always wanted to give it a try," Sharon said.

She said the experience was

brehtaking and something she would gladly do again.

"Parasailing requires no experience at all," Sharon said.

"The instructor strapped us in, gave us instructions on how to make the most of our time in the air and made sure we made it back to the boat in one piece, but not before dipping us in the ocean first."

Sharon said the feeling of parasailing was like no

other. "It was the most exhilarating experience," she said.

"When the parasail took us up into the air, I was scared and excited at the same time.

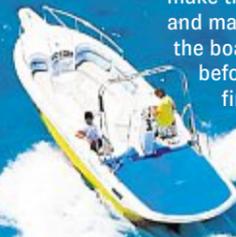
"Once we were up in the air, we enjoyed the ultimate freeing sensation.

"I encourage anyone to give this a go. It truly was one of the most memorable experiences.

"It was an amazing view. You only live once. Why not enjoy it?"

For parasail safety information, visit the Queensland Government website: [legislation.qld.gov.au](http://legislation.qld.gov.au).

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED



## Set sail on a new course of adventure

THE setting is the stuff of daydreams and Hollywood movies ... imagine trying to catch the breeze and heading towards a deserted island, where you and your friends can sip pina colodas while watching the sunset.

Learning to sail is the first step towards making the vision a reality.

And Sunsail can set you on

the course to find your own tropical island when you learn to sail in any of the company's sailing schools in Australia, Thailand, Croatia, Greece and the British Virgin Islands.

Sunsail's Australian sailing school, based on Hamilton Island in the Whitsundays, is an ideal place to learn to catch the wind. Courses cover everything from the basics of

boat handling to advanced sailing skills. Courses available in the Whitsundays:

- RYA Competent Crew Course – Level 1
- RYA Day Skipper Practical Course – Level 2
- RYA Coastal Skipper Practical Course – Level 3.

For details, phone 1800 803 988 or visit [www.sunsail.com.au](http://www.sunsail.com.au).

## SAILING NEWS | with Tracey Johnstone

## Etchells world championships beckon Maroochydore's Bucky

ETCHELLS class world champion Bucky Smith is getting back in the racing saddle next month after a year off from competitive sailing.

The Maroochydore sailor has been absent from the racing scene while he built his business interests and spent time with his family, but the lure of a place on Mark Thornburrow's team for this year's Etchells World Championship has brought him out of his sabbatical and back into the game.

Smith has been on the Thornburrow team for a few years, but missed being on board when they won the Mooloolaba Etchells Australasian Winter Championship last year.

"We were going to Italy (worlds) last year as well, but it all got too much with getting time off," Smith said.

This year's World Championship is at the home of Etchells class sailing, at Newport, Rhode Island. A fleet of 95 Etchells will be contesting the June 21-28 regatta.

Thornburrow's team will race under the Hong Kong flag which is his home fleet. Smith will be on the bow. On mainsheet will be New Zealand's Simon Cooke and on tactics and trim will be dual 470 class Olympic gold medallist and eight-time world champion, Australian Malcolm Page.

Smith's job will be trimming upwind and doing tactics downwind, but his primary job will be rig set-up and making the boat go fast.

The team will spend about two weeks in Newport before the main event preparing themselves and the boat.

"During our training we will be finalising our roles," Smith said.

"We will be doing the New York Yacht Club Invitational Regatta and then we have a whole week of training and testing between that regatta and the registration for the Worlds.

"It's the most amazing fleet I will have sailed in."

## IN DEEP | with Ian McKinnon of Scuba World

## Snorkel with humpbacks? Hmm

THE humpback whale watching season is soon to commence and for the first time some operators are promoting snorkelling with the whales.

It will be interesting to hear if Workplace Health and Safety Queensland has any concerns with this activity.

I know they see sharks as a risk to divers and snorkellers and it is a known fact that large sharks follow humpback whales on their yearly migrations.

Snorkelling with minke whales has proven a safe activity in the protected waters of the Great Barrier Reef for many years.

Humpback whales on the other hand are massive creatures when compared to the much smaller minke whales.



MASSIVE: Hervey Bay humpbacks  
PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

As well, moderate to strong winds blow constantly during the whale season and it is a rare occasion when the surface conditions are so calm as to allow safe snorkelling in the open ocean.