

Media Information

Silky Oaks Lodge

Neighbouring the World Heritage-listed wilderness of the Daintree National Park, Silky Oaks Lodge offers guests a stylish rainforest escape.

Long regarded as Tropical North Queensland's luxury bolt-hole, Silky Oaks Lodge is ideally located for access to the region's spectacular natural attractions, including the Daintree Rainforest, Mossman Gorge, the Great Barrier Reef and Cape Tribulation. It's also an easy transfer to the stylish restaurant and shopping precinct at nearby Port Douglas.

Silky Oaks Lodge is set on 32 hectares (80 acres) of pristine rainforest above the gently flowing Mossman River, approximately 60 minutes' drive from Cairns and 20 minutes from Port Douglas, the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef.

With views over the crystal-clear Mossman River and enveloped by the lush rainforest, guests relax in one of forty private treehouse rooms, each a luxurious retreat complete with generous balcony and hammock ready to sway in the afternoon breeze.

Dining in the open-air restaurant welcomes the sights and sounds of the rainforest, with menus designed to be light and refreshing in contemporary Australian style with Asian influences. Premium Australian wines make a perfect accompaniment to meals, while a range of local craft beers and small-batch spirits are on offer to wind down after a day's exploring.

Adventures abound for all, with complimentary experiences at Silky Oaks Lodge including yoga, snorkelling in the Mossman River, rainforest hikes and mountain bikes. Driving safaris in the Daintree, indigenous guided walks, snorkelling and diving the Great Barrier Reef and helicopter tours are available at an additional cost.

The renowned Healing Waters Spa offers a range of treatments featuring the natural Australian Sodashi skincare range and inspired by ancient beliefs that water is a renewing and life-giving force. Seven treatment rooms are available with rainforest or river views, including couples' rooms and Vichy showers.

Nestled in Indigenous Kuku Yalangi country, Silky Oaks Lodge has a strong connection with the land's traditional owners and cultural heritage. Guests can learn about Indigenous culture through story-telling, guided walks, bush flavours on the menu and in spa treatments at the Healing Waters Spa.

Silky Oaks Lodge offers an opportunity for guests to leave behind the busyness of everyday in a stylish rainforest retreat to discover the magnificent Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef. Guests connect with the indigenous heritage of the land, enjoy the fruits of Tropical North Queensland's rich food bowl and at the end of the visit, leave with a reinvigorated perspective on life.

Silky Oaks Lodge is a member of the Luxury Lodges of Australia collection.

Daintree Rainforest

At an estimated 180 million years old, the Daintree Rainforest is regarded as the world's oldest living rainforest. It is one of the most complex ecosystems on earth, containing living examples of ancient plants unique to the area as well as hundreds of species of birds, animals and reptiles. Spanning 120,000 hectares (approx. 297,000 acres), the Daintree Rainforest is the largest portion of tropical rainforest in Australia.

The Daintree Rainforest was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1988. Mossman Gorge forms the southern sector of the rainforest. Located 80km north of Cairns, the Daintree region remains mostly in pristine condition, affording visitors to Mossman Gorge and surrounding Daintree Rainforest chance to revel in its beauty and take in every aspect of the region.

Around 3,000 plant species from over 210 families are found within the Daintree Rainforest and extended wet tropics region. Twelve out of the world's 19 families of primitive flowering plants grow within the region and within these at least 50 species are found only within the tropics. From the forest floor right up to its towering canopy, the surroundings spellbind with the beauty of plant life. The diverse range of plants includes primitive cycads, ferns and mosses and forms a natural archive of evolution in Australia.

Thriving among the lush vegetation are some of Australia's rarest wildlife species. One third of Australia's 315 mammal species call the Daintree Rainforest home. Thirteen of these species cannot be found anywhere else in the world, including unique green possums, ringtail possums, fierce marsupial cats, rare bats, tree kangaroos and the shy Boyd Forest Dragon. The endangered spotted-tail quolls which inhabit the rainforest are another rare sight, distinguished by their red-brown, white spots and long slender tails.

More than 430 bird species have been spotted at Mossman Gorge including the Australian Pelican, Little Pied Cormorant, Great Egret and the endangered Southern Cassowary.

The region is home to a quarter of Australia's frog population, a little over a third of the country's freshwater fish and one of the largest butterfly colonies in existence.

Great Barrier Reef

At 348,000 square kilometres, the Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest and most diverse coral reef ecosystem.

Within the Great Barrier Reef are some 2,500 individual reefs and more than 900 islands, ranging from small sandy cays to larger continental islands. Collectively these land and seascapes provide some of the most spectacular maritime scenery in the world.

As the world's most complex expanse of coral reefs, the Great Barrier Reef contains some 400 species of corals. The waters also provide significant feeding grounds for one of the world's largest populations of dugong, while at least 30 species of whales and dolphins are found here, and it is a popular spot for humpback whale calving. Six of the world's seven species of marine turtle are found in the Great Barrier Reef.

Indigenous Local Culture

The Kuku Yalanji people are the indigenous inhabitants of the Daintree Rainforest whose history dates around 50,000 years. They are true rainforest people, living in harmony with their natural environment. The Kuku Yalanji culture is built around a deep respect for nature and an intimate knowledge of its cycles. Their knowledge has been passed down through the generations.

The rainforest is part of them and they part of it, a notion that is brought to life during an indigenous guided walking tour of Mossman Gorge, where guides share their dreamtime legends, explain the history of cave paintings and provide a compelling narrative of the rainforest.

One of the most popular legends is a tale about *Manjal Dimbi* or Mount Demi, the most prominent mountain in the region. Roughly translated, *Manjal Dimbi* means 'mountain holding back'. According to Aboriginal dreamtime stories, the large humanoid rock represents *Kubirri*, who came to the aid of the Kuku Yalanji when they were persecuted by the evil spirit, *Wurrumbu*. *Kubirri* is known as the 'Good Shepherd'.

Kuku Yalanji country extends from south of Mossman to Cooktown in the north and Palmer River in the west.

At a Glance

- Silky Oaks Lodge is nestled between two World Heritage-listed destinations, the Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef, and is an ideal base from which to explore Far North Queensland.
- The lodge is set on 80 acres of rainforest bordering the Daintree National Park and overlooking the crystal-clear Mossman River downstream from Mossman Gorge.
- Owned and operated by Baillie Lodges, a collection which also includes Capella Lodge on Lord Howe Island, Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo Island and Longitude 131° at Uluru Kata-Tjuta.
- Silky Oaks Lodge was first opened in 1985, and joined the Baillie Lodges collection in 2019, the first property acquired under a new joint venture between Baillie Lodges and KSL Capital Partners.
- Forty guest treehouses offer private views of the lush Daintree Rainforest and pristine Mossman River.
- Communal guest areas include the Treehouse restaurant and bar, the Jungle Perch and Kubirri Lounge, while the Daintree Pavilion overlooks the Mossman River and is ideal for group events and the lodge's complimentary yoga classes.
- Lighter contemporary Australian style dining with Asian influences is well suited to the tropical climate, with local ingredients including seafood, salads and tropical fruits a highlight.

- The Healing Waters Spa is located within the rainforest and offers an indulgent menu of treatments inspired by the healing properties of the Mossman River
- Breakfast at Silky Oaks Lodge is included in the tariff, while lunch and dinner are available at additional cost.
- Silky Oaks Lodge works with a number of premium local operators whose tours – from helicopter flights to diving the Great Barrier Reef – offer a more tailored experience of Tropical North Queensland.
- Silky Oaks Lodge welcomes children ten years and over.

Getting There

Silky Oaks Lodge is easily accessed from Cairns Airport, an international gateway with flights to Europe via Asia and flights to North America via New Zealand or Asia. Domestic carriers offer direct daily flights to and from main gateways including Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Darwin. A range of charter flight options is also available to and from Cairns Airport from most capital cities and to selected Great Barrier Reef islands.

Self-driving is a popular option, with the journey by road meandering through Queensland's trademark cane fields and winding along the coast overlooking the sparkling Coral Sea. The lodge is 20 minutes' drive from Port Douglas and 60 minutes' drive north of Cairns Airport. An extensive choice of car hire options is available at Cairns Airport and Cairns central business district.

Private vehicle and helicopter transfers between Cairns Airport and the lodge may be arranged with preferred operators. Additional costs apply for all private road and air transfers.

Rates & Packages

Rates are per person per night and include breakfast, along with lodge-based experiences like morning yoga, use of kayaks, snorkel gear, mountain bikes and the gym, yoga and scheduled daily transfer to Port Douglas. Current rates are available at silkyoakslodge.com.au/rates

Accommodation

Forty guest treehouses offer a peaceful retreat and views of the Mossman River or the Daintree Rainforest, styled with contemporary furnishings and local timbers. All suites feature king beds dressed in premium linens, ensuite bathroom with shower and private balcony with lounge and hammock for enjoying the cool outdoors.

Two **Daintree Treehouses** are nestled amongst the rainforest, with an open-plan design, king or twin bedding and bathroom with bath and shower. A private balcony with leafy rainforest views invites guests outdoors.

Twelve **Garden Treehouses** overlook tropical gardens and offer king or twin bedding and bathroom with large spa bath for soaking in the views. Floor to ceiling windows open to a private balcony with hammock, the perfect place to lie back and relax.

Eleven **Deluxe Treehouses** are set high among the rainforest canopy, enveloped in lush greenery. The Deluxe Treehouse offers king or twin beds and ensuite bathroom with spa bath. Guests immerse in the sounds of the forest from the private veranda, complete with hammock ready to sway in the breeze.

Eleven **River Treehouses** welcome spectacular views of the Mossman River with spacious surrounds comprising a bedroom with king or twin beds and bathroom offering uninterrupted rainforest panoramas best enjoyed from the large spa bath.

For families and friends travelling together, two **Lodge Suites** each feature a large private balcony overlooking the rainforest and a luxurious four poster day bed. The ensuite offers a bath big enough for two and spacious walk-in shower, while bedding includes a king bed and two single daybeds.

Two premium **Billabong Suites** feature a lounge with dining setting and king sleeping area, both opening onto a double balcony with hammock and day bed. The large bathroom offers a spa bath overlooking the Mossman River, completing the sense of being in and amongst the rainforest.

Design

Silky Oaks Lodge is designed to offer guests a real immersion in the cool calm of the Daintree Rainforest. Set above the gently flowing Mossman River and among the rainforest canopy, the lodge restaurant and bar envelope guests in the sights and sounds of the rainforest. Guest treehouse suites feature local timbers and wide verandas complete with hammocks to offer a relaxing tropical retreat.

Arriving along the grand ocean drive from Cairns to the north, through iconic Queensland cane fields and across the Daintree River into the rainforest, guests have a sense of leaving the busyness of the everyday world behind. On entering Silky Oaks Lodge, guests are immediately welcomed to a new theatre, with only the rainforest and river as backdrop.

Signature Experiences

Situated among Tropical North Queensland's world-renowned natural attractions including the Daintree Rainforest, Great Barrier Reef and Cape Tribulation, Silky Oaks is a luxurious base from which guests can plan their adventures. A range of signature experiences allows guests to relax and discover Silky Oaks Lodge, the surrounding rainforest and Mossman River at their own pace.

Complimentary activities include guided walks, river swimming and snorkelling, yoga and access to mountain bikes, river kayaks and the gymnasium. The lodge offers a daily shuttle transfer to Port Douglas.

Bespoke Experiences

A selection of Bespoke Experiences is also available with premium local tour operators for an additional cost, allowing guests to tailor their itinerary to their particular interests. The team at Silky Oaks Lodge is adept at recommending and booking externally operated tours to fit with guests' interests and itineraries making it an ideal base to explore all that Tropical North Queensland has to offer.

The team at reception can arrange trips to the Great Barrier Reef, visiting both the Outer Reef with its submersibles, snorkelling, diving and underwater viewing platforms and the glorious Low Isles, a group of uninhabited coral cays where a yacht from Port Douglas sails visitors to picnic, snorkel and view the coral.

Guided or self-guided driving safaris through the rainforest or north to Cape Tribulation may be arranged, as well as helicopter adventures, horse riding and hot air ballooning over the magnificent Daintree region. Walks with indigenous Kuku Yalanji guides in Mossman Gorge and further afield take in story lines of living along the coast or uncover the secrets of bush foods and medicine. A visit to the Janbal Gallery to discover local Aboriginal art completes a fascinating cultural exchange with the region's traditional owners.

Food & Wine

Dining at Silky Oaks Lodge is designed to be refreshing and light, ideal fare in tropical temperatures. Contemporary Australian in style, menus have an Asian influence and incorporate traditional indigenous flavours as well as ingredients from the region's tropical food bowl. A daily changing menu celebrates the bounty of local seafood, nuts, chocolate, coffee and tropical fruits.

Drinks at Silky Oaks include a range of premium Australian wines with a selection from south-west Queensland's Granite Belt, a swagger of locally-brewed craft beers as well as the states iconic XXXX beer for true local flavour. Baillies 9 gin with crafted mixers is on offer at Silky Oaks as at the sister lodges.

A menu of locally produced small batch rums – including Mount Uncle Distillery's Botanic Australis gin - provides a local flavour and reference to the sugar cane fields seen on arrival. French Champagne is also available for purchase on the Cellarmasters menu.

Environment

Baillie Lodges operates all its properties under a detailed Sustainable Management Policy, setting new benchmarks for sustainable tourism development in Australia. Each lodge has been designed to minimise their impact on the local environment and utilise the best available technology to reduce energy consumption and waste.

Silky Oaks Lodge works to an Environmental Management Plan (EMP), an overarching document that outlines how Silky Oaks Lodge operates to efficiently manage resources, details the responsibilities of all employees, and meets targets designed to improve environmental management.

The EMP offers a summary of how Silky Oaks manages compliance, sustainability, resource usage and minimisation, risk and ecosystems. Specific management plans provide the details for each of these aspects and prescribes the resort's activities and systems relating to the environment, from water and waste management to energy conservation.

Silky Oaks Lodge has a dedicated energy management plan, designed to improve the efficient use and conservation of energy. Silky Oaks operates on mains power supplied from the Mossman power grid, with a generator onsite for use in times of power loss. Energy efficient equipment reduces energy consumption including low wattage light globes and 'daylight switches'. Guest treehouses are set high above the Mossman River and among the rainforest canopy, with deep verandas and wide doors allowing cool breezes to flow to guest areas, reducing the need for air-conditioning.

A Waste Management plan has also been developed to reduce products brought into the resort and improve the reuse and recycling of waste materials. Recycled materials include glass, aluminium and plastics, paper and cardboard, cooking oil, printer cartridges and vehicle batteries.

All waste water at Silky Oaks Lodge is sent to the property's own waste water management plant, a gated facility located 200 metres from the resort. Waste water is processed through a sand filter system and used to irrigate the property's forested areas via a sprinkler system.

Local History

The Daintree Rainforest region was originally home to the Kuku Yalanji Aboriginal people who lived well on the rich array of plants and animals on their traditional land.

British explorer Captain James Cook discovered the region as part of his world voyage in 1770 and named Cape Tribulation because 'here began all our troubles' after his ship, the Endeavour, ran aground on a reef. The ship made port in subsequently named Cooktown as repairs were made, and it was the first time Europeans had settled, albeit briefly, on the east coast of Australia.

In 1873 George Elphinstone Dalrymple led the first exploration deep into the Daintree River valley, naming the river after Richard Daintree, a prominent geologist and Queensland's Agent-General in London.

During the voyage, Dalrymple noted extensive areas of land suitable for agriculture but more importantly, he found huge stands of the valuable red cedar tree, commonly referred to as 'red gold'. European settlers, attracted by the discovery, as well as the potential for mineral mining soon arrived in the area. Unfortunately this ultimately led to the eradication of the red cedars from the area, and was the catalyst for environmental protections to be put in place.

The Daintree River played an important part in establishing the Mossman Village as this was the only access point until 1933 when the road to Mossman was completed.

In 1967, the Mossman Gorge section of the Daintree was declared a National Park by the Queensland State Government. In 1988 the Daintree National Park received World Heritage listing by UNESCO in recognition of its universal natural values and is now part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (WTWHA).

The Silky Oaks Lodge concept was created as recently as 1985, when hoteliers Moss and Theresa Hunt bought the 80 hectare block, which, like much of the rainforest of North Queensland, had been heavily logged throughout the 1800's and 1900's. It wasn't until after 1993, when P&O Resorts purchased the property, that around 200 endangered native rainforest species were gradually reintroduced. Inevitably these new plants attracted many of the fauna from the surrounding national park so that today, Silky Oaks can boast 74 species of mammal, 150 species of reptile and 330 species of bird. In 2009 tennis champion Paul van Min purchased the property with his wife Barbara. The couple owned and operated Silky Oaks Lodge until 2019 when it was bought by Baillie Lodges.

Weather

Part of the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area, the Daintree climate is characterised by two distinct seasons: the dry season from April to November offers warm days and cool nights with low humidity ranging in temperature from 19-30°C; December to March is considered the green season as the days and nights are hotter with more frequent restorative showers and temperatures between 22-32°C. This is a spectacular time to visit as waterfalls and creeks are in full flow.

Regardless of the time of year, guests should ensure they include sunscreen and a hat when packing.

Photography

High quality photographs are available for download via the Silky Oaks Lodge [image library](#). Additional images along specific themes are also available on request.

A Commercial Activity Permit (CAP) is required for commercial photography and filming in Queensland's National Parks if the activity involves 11 or more people and is with or without prescribed structures. Filming and photography activities involving up to 10 people without prescribed structures do not require a CAP.

Baillie Lodges

Baillie Lodges is an intimate portfolio of luxury lodges setting new benchmarks for premium experiential travel in Australian style. Set in exclusive locations of unique natural or cultural significance, the boutique properties appeal to the discerning global traveller seeking a remarkable experience. Baillie Lodges was founded in 2003 by life and business partners James and Hayley Baillie, who together bring a wealth of high-end tourism experience to this dynamic venture. In 2019, KSL Capital Partners entered into a joint venture partnership with James and Hayley, with the aim to further expand Australia's most unique collection of luxury lodges. For more information, please visit baillielodges.com.au

Luxury Lodges of Australia

Luxury Lodges of Australia is a collection of independent luxury lodges offering unforgettable experiences in Australia's most inspiring and extraordinary locations. Capella Lodge, Silky Oaks Lodge, Southern Ocean Lodge and Longitude 131° are honoured among the founding members of this prestigious collection, designed to celebrate a new era of Australian luxury accommodation and adventure. See luxurylodgesofaustralia.com.au

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