

A bone shuddering ringing and a 'BANG' had me bolt upright with a pounding chest. It was 1.0am and another alarm clock lay in a heap on the floor. Revenge is sweet. I automatically headed to the kitchen to make "Dearly Beloved" her cup of tea whilst still wondering why I was actually up at this most un-holy of hours. That was until our beautiful 4 year old daughter Leilani, sauntered in and hugged my leg proclaiming "We going to the top of straylia today, arnt we Dad?"
 "Yes, sweet-heart, we're off to Cape York . . ."

Ah, It's Time to Hit the Road . . .



Special report & pics for F&B by Gary Rooks

Over the past few months we had been planning a family trip to Cape York with another couple, close friends Darren and Kylie Simpson, who share with my wife Marilyn and myself, the same love of the great outdoors.

Unfortunately, our son Sam couldn't come on this trip, as he was off to NZ with his lovely girlfriend, Tamara, for the school holidays.

Part of our planning involved

ensuring previous Cape disasters that I have experienced wouldn't happen this time . . . *hopefully*.

Heading up our plan though, was to explore areas of the Cape that were interesting for not only the fisherman in us, but for the families as a whole, so comfortable camping was the order of the day.

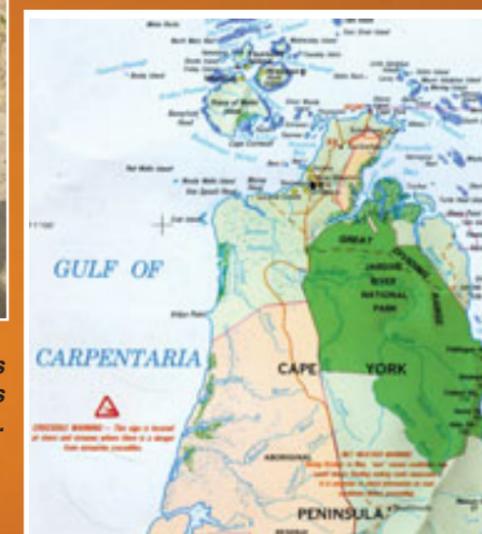
Experience has also told us not to jam too many places into our itinerary, as all we would be doing is

packing, driving and un-packing. So we decided on just 3 places to visit, Cooktown, Pennefather River and Seisa.

We also kept our fishing gear to a minimum, consisting of 2 boats, 18 rods and enough lures to open a shop. Sorry girls!

So..... back to that bloody alarm. It was early June and we were to meet at the Simpson's place at 2am. This we managed.

With a quick cuppa put away,



This spread scarcely requires comment or captions as the pics speak for themselves.

our little convoy started its long journey north from Yeppoon to the very tip of . . . *straylia!*

I made a self-proclaimed rule a number of years ago not to drive past 4pm on long trips, and to have a break every 2 to 3 hours or so during the day. This is to do with managing fatigue and heighten safety for my family. With this in mind, and along with sharing the driving, we managed to make Innisfail for our first night

stop-over.

Our plan from here was to head inland through Atherton and onto Cooktown. To me, this is where the adventure begins, as the drive takes on new and beautiful scenery.

We left Innisfail at dawn and took in the misty beauty this mountainous environment displays in early June. A far better option than battling the traffic of the coastal highway.

We arrived in Atherton around 9am and decided to enjoy a hot drink at the local barista. It was at this point that Marilyn informed me that wandering around in bare feet, I looked like a Bogan, and should go and purchase a pair of Pluggers whilst I could. I rejected her claims of Boganism and insisted on my bare foot attire.

As we were returning to our convoy, and me wearing a grin and bare feet, knowing I had (Cont)