

Thoughts on planning and preparing for a trip to a remote fishing paradise - Are you up for it?



Image Courtesy of Tourism Queensland

Dave Carroll & Bronwyn McNeill are *Lady Musgrave Dreaming . .*

My partner Dave and I have undertaken some fabulous fishing holidays, but it wasn't until we purchased our most recent boat, a 6.0m Marlin Broadbill, that we started thinking about doing some seriously adventurous fishing holidays in our own boat.

One of the places we had been to in the past was Lady Musgrave Island, in a 6.0m Quintrex with 3 other people. That time we camped on the island and fell in love with the place. So for us, it's the obvious choice in destination for a live aboard trip.

This island is pure fishing heaven. Being southerners it was our first time encountering some of the most prized fish from the tropics. The ones that we had only ever read about. Coral trout, cobia, red emperor, sweetlip to name a few. You can see by the photos that the fish we caught were exceptional.

Lady Musgrave is an uninhabited coral cay, part of the Capricornia Cays, and a National Park, approx 37 nautical miles from the logical start point on the mainland, the Town of 1770. To stay out there you need to take absolutely everything: food,

water, fuel, etc. But it's definitely worth the hard yards to get there – apart from the exceptional fishing, the snorkeling is simply amazing!

Our plan is to take the month of April off work, tow our boat to 1770 and spend as much time out on the island as we can manage, maybe two trips, with the rest spent in the local caravan park using the boat as our "caravan".

So, we thought we would share what we have discovered so far about planning for a trip such as this. F&B have published some great articles on this very subject which we have found really helpful.

Remembering some of the weather we encountered on our previous trip, I confess I was a little bit nervous about attempting the 60 km crossing from 1770 to the island on our own.

It's a long way from anywhere if the seas get a bit rough, therefore you need a decent sized boat. Further, we decided to write to F&B for help, to put the idea out there and see if any other intrepid fishos wanted to "tag along" for some safety in numbers. Maybe you saw our letter in the August issue?

Anyway, to date we have 2 other boats and crew, one from our local

area and one from Brisbane who have put their hand up to join in. Any one else who wants to tag along can get in touch with me - see contact details at the end of this article. I must say, I am really looking forward to some girl company on the trip. As most fishing ladies know, far too often it's just you and the "lads".

That said, being a fishing lady, suddenly Dave had to really think about how to set up our boat to suit my needs. Yes, to 'live aboard' we do need a 'loo, a shower and a way of preparing a decent meal!

When we first picked up our Broadbill, she was bare bones, with no accessories, but tons of room. Perfect for our needs.

Therefore we had to start fitting her out with this trip in mind. Luckily Dave works at Bias Boating's West Gosford store, so we had access to everything we could possibly want to fit out our boat. (Very tempting!) Firstly we needed a decent sounder and chart plotter.....in goes a Lowrance HDS7. Next came the radios, GME- 27 Meg and VHF. We need music, so Dave put in a CD player with iPod connection as well. LP gas cookers (plus saucepans, frypan, etc) were also required.

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