

## **Pioneer Valley Driving Itinerary**

### *Sarina - Finch Hatton - Eungella National Park*

Time to complete itinerary: 1 day

Distance travelled: Approximately 136km one-way

Total walking time: Approximately 2-4 hours (Optional)

#### *Start in Sarina*

- Travel north into Mackay, turn left at the traffic lights where the Bruce Highway meets the Peak Downs Highway.
- Follow the Peak Downs Highway 6km west towards Walkerston
- Turn right onto the Mackay-Eungella rd. towards Eungella National Park.

#### *A Road trip Through the Valley*

- Travelling along the Mackay-Eungella Road, you will pass through the townships of **Marian, Mirani, Garget, Pinnacle and Finch Hatton** before the drive up the range to **Eungella**.
- The **Melba House Visitor Information Centre** just before the Marian township (20km west from Mackay). Stop in and explore the former house of opera singer Dame Nellie Melba. Open 7 days, 9am to 3pm.
- The **Pinnacle Hotel** is world famous for its huge, tasty pies. The hotel is located just past the sign for Pinnacle (50km west from Mackay), around the bend and on the left. Open 7 days for lunch.

#### *Finch Hatton Gorge*

- From the Pinnacle Pub, there's only 5km until the turn off to **Finch Hatton Gorge\***. Watch for the signs to turn right on to Owens Creek Loop Road. There's the option to swim just under the bridge or continue on.
- If continuing, you'll need to follow Owens Creek Loop Road and then turn left after 500m and then right after 700m. Follow Gorge Road for another 1.3km before taking another left and then right after 500m. Gorge Road will continue on for 5.7km until you reach parking spots for Finch Hatton Gorge.

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#### *Finch Hatton Gorge (cont'd)*

- Take a refreshing swim at one of the many clear rock pools found in the rainforest and watch the water cascade over the large boulders upstream.
- There are two bushwalks at Finch Hatton Gorge. Take the well-formed track to the **Araluen Cascades** (allow 45 minutes each way) or continue between great granite boulders to the lookout above **Wheel of Fire Waterfall** (a further 1.4 kilometres). This walk includes a number of stairs but the views are well worth the effort.
- After the swim at the Gorge, return to the main road (Mackay-Eungella Road) and pass through the quaint town of Finch Hatton.

#### *Eungella National Park*

- Continue along the Mackay-Eungella Road and travel up the range to the Eungella township (approximately 16km). At the top of the range, take the first turn right for the great view over the Pioneer Valley.
- **Great place to stop: Eungella Chalet** is at the top of the range on the left. It has great views right across the Valley and is open 7 days for lunch and dinner.
- Follow the main road around the bend left and continue to Broken River via Eungella Dam Road.
- **Great place to stop: The Sky Window Walk** is a short 250m walk from the road to spectacular views across the Pioneer Valley and signs along the way will give insight into Indigenous culture.
- Venture onto Broken River where you will find the Visitor Information Centre and the viewing platform. This is your chance to see platypus, eels, fish and turtles in the wild.
- Try a Yodel Burger at **Platypus Lodge Restaurant and Café** or have morning tea in the Rainforest!
- Most of the **short walks** leave from Broken River, which are signposted.

*Overnighting in the rainforest? Mackay Tourism can make your booking. Call 48371228*