

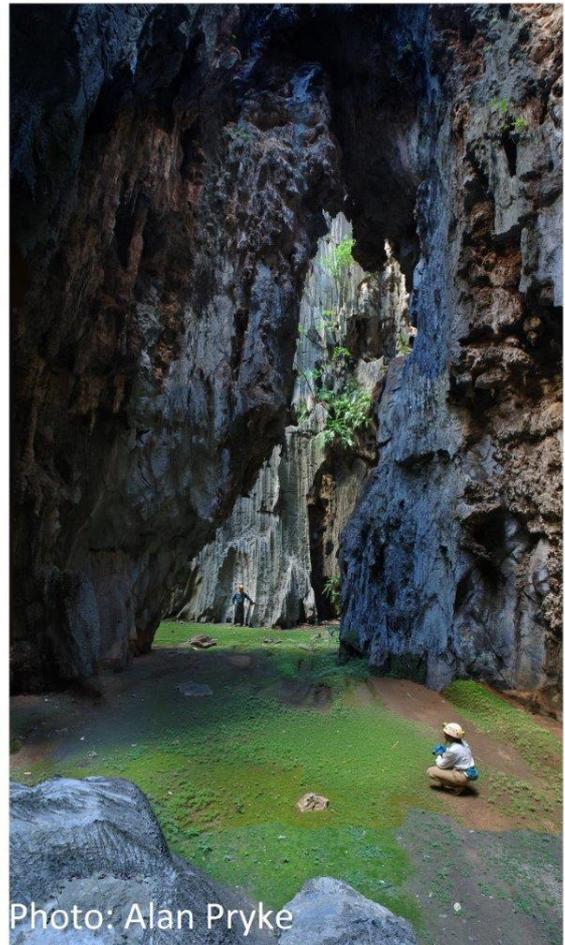


A5.CHC

Chillagoe—far north Queensland

Combine your flight out of Australia with Cairns, the Great Barrier Reef and caving amidst the tower karst at Chillagoe. August is an ideal time to visit the area; it is the dry season. Rain is rare, humidity low and temperatures enjoyable.

Chillagoe is a small outback town, of about 300 people, about 230 km west of Cairns. The Chillagoe tower karst comprises nearly 600 documented cave entrances and the caves vary in difficulty from easy-horizontal to difficult SRT.



While not part of any congress-organised excursion the Undara Lava Caves can also be accessed from Cairns.

Summary:

Starting place, date and time.	End place, date and approx. time.	Number of participants.	Sleeping bags required.	Camping gear (tents) required.	Included meals.	SRT required.	Cost A\$ Incl. GST
Cairns 1 August 7.00 a.m.	Cairns 3 August Late afternoon	Min: 5 Max: 20	Depends on accommodation selected.	No	None, but plenty of options in the town.	Not essential, but there will be vertical options.	\$255

Details:

Name of excursion.	A5.CHC Chillagoe—far north Queensland.
Contact person.	Paul Osborne: p1953@bigpond.com Phone: + 61 417 713 166
Overview of excursion.	<p>The trip starts from the tropical coastal city of Cairns where you can spend a few days before or after the excursion enjoying the adjacent World Heritage areas of the Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics. There will be an early–morning mini-bus pick-up for transport to Chillagoe, two and a half days of caving at Chillagoe and return mini-bus transport to Cairns on the third afternoon.</p> <p>The Chillagoe tower karst comprises nearly 600 documented entrances and the caves vary in difficulty from easy, mostly horizontal to difficult SRT. Very few of the caves are straight walk easy ‘walk-ins’. There is usually some climbing, use of wire ladders and squeezing and crawling in dust (as it will be the dry season). The more difficult caves require use of specialist technical equipment. You will need a reasonable standard of fitness.</p> <p>Most cave visits will take between four to six hours allowing a second cave to be visited or other activity. The caves feature a variety of life including swiftlets, bats, snakes and insects.</p> <p>There are a wide number of caving options and participants will be split into groups according to level of proficiency, fitness and desired caving experience.</p> <p>There are also four show caves.</p>
Starting place, date and time.	Cairns, Queensland, Tuesday 1 August, approximately 7.00 a.m. (Exact pick-up location to be determined when we know what hotels participants are staying at.)
Finishing place, date and time.	Cairns, Thursday 3 August late afternoon.
Min and max no of participants.	Minimum: 5 People Maximum: 20 People
Cost of excursion and what is included.	A\$255 per person. This covers mini-bus hire and organisational expenses. Transport from Cairns and return, and locally to caving sites at Cairns.
Transport.	Mini-bus for transport between Cairns and Chillagoe (approximately 230 km). Private vehicles locally.
Accommodation options.	<p>Accommodation is not included in the excursion cost. Some options are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chillagoe Caving Clubhouse dormitory, no linen supplied, A\$12 per person/per night. Contact Paul Osborne p1953@bigpond.com • Chillagoe Eco Lodge www.coel.com.au • Chillagoe Cabins www.chillagoe.com <p>As this is a popular time of the year for travel in the area, we recommend that you book accommodation early. If you are self-</p>

	<p>sufficient you are welcome to stay at the clubhouse with the local cavers.</p> <p>The Eco lodge is a nice, rustic outback experience with bar and restaurant facilities and is ideal for most people and nightly socialising. Chillagoe Cabins is quite a bit more up-market and very nice. All venues are within walking distance of each other.</p>								
Bedding requirements.	If you stay at the Chillagoe Caving Clubhouse, you will need your own bedding, pillow and towel. At all other accommodation venues, bedding is supplied.								
What meals are included?	None.								
Arrangements for meals not covered and anticipated costs	<p>There are several options in Chillagoe where you can buy a sit-down or take-away meal and a store for groceries.</p> <p>There are facilities for cooking and preparing meals at the clubhouse.</p>								
Is SRT required?	Not necessary. But there will be vertical caving options available to suitably skilled cavers. Either bring your own SRT equipment or it can be hired from the Chillagoe Caving Club for A\$15 per day.								
Clothing requirements.	<p>Long pants and long-sleeved shirts for caving (or cotton overalls). Gloves, knee-pads, head-torch, backpack and water bottle. Helmets can be supplied. Light jacket for evenings.</p> <p>Average temperature in the caves is about 20° C.</p>								
Average weather details for August (Mareeba).	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Min temp</th> <th>Max temp</th> <th>Rainfall</th> <th>Daylight hours</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>14° C</td> <td>26° C</td> <td>9 mm</td> <td>11.5 hrs</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Min temp	Max temp	Rainfall	Daylight hours	14° C	26° C	9 mm	11.5 hrs
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Travel considerations: remote area, phone coverage, medical access, money access, local quarantine issues.	<p>Telstra mobile phone access within 10 km of the town.</p> <p>Chillagoe has a hospital with resident nurse and access to the Flying Doctor Service. There are two pubs (hotels) and a post office. ATMs are available but it is recommended to get cash out while in Cairns.</p> <p>For quarantine requirements for entering Queensland check: www.quarantinedomestic.gov.au</p>								



Photo: Peter Bannick