Magnetic Island Fishing and Boating

Heading out for a fish? From the beaches, rocky points and inshore waters, you can catch species such as bream, flathead, giant trevally, barramundi, queenfish, mangrove jack, fingermark, golden and tealeaf trevally, threadfin-salmon, tarpon, grunter, cobia and sharks just to name a few. Fresh bait is best, using prawns, pilchards, squid or herring. Alternatively, sit back and enjoy a relaxing or adventurous cruise.

ONSHORE FISHING SPOTS

1. Picnic Bay Jetty

Picnic Bay jetty is a favourite for relaxed fishing. Mid way down the jetty you will find coral bommies and rocks. This area provides excellent fun for young kids to catch and release juvenile grassy sweetlip, redthroat emperor, cod and yellow stripey amongst dozens of smaller to mid species. Bait is usually small prawns and squid. At the end of the jetty is a desert bottom with the jetty pylons. This area harbours schools of herring, sardine, hardyhead and some yakka. These bait fish can be caught on a jig rig without bait or by cast net. They make great live bait for catching large pelagic species which stalk the jetty. These include trevally, turrum mackerel, barracuda, coral trout, cod, cobia, queenfish and various sharks.

The largest non-shark caught here in the last couple of years was a 37 kg spanish mackerel. Use a jig rig from FNF. The kids will have a ball jigging for herring. The jetty has sun cover wind protection.

2. Picnic Bay Surf Club Area

The rocks at the northern end of Picnic Bay afford some interesting fishing. Around the corner to the north is Cockle Bay which is the start of the mud flats and the mangroves. This area can get you flathead, grunter, mangrove jack, fingermark, catfish, parrot and sweetlip. Use prawn, worm and pilchard bait.

3. Nelly Bay Harbour Rock Wall

The harbor rock wall affords relaxed fishing for trout, cod and reef species. Try to float a line or use a paternoster style rig to fish, (sinker on the bottom and hook higher up). Favourite baits are pilchard, poddy mullet, mullet fillet, squid and prawn.

4. Nelly Bay Beach

Nelly Bay beach is fairly shallow so fishing high tide will usually get the best results. Reef type fish and reef sharks are most commonly caught, along with flathead, bream and trevally on the harbor end whilst reef fish and bream are caught at the Base Backpackers end. Favourite baits are pilchard, poddy mullet, mullet fillet, squid and prawn.

5. Nelly Bay Harbour

You are not allowed to fish on the ferry docking side of the harbor but you can fish in many other places. The public boat ramp, bridge and beaches plus rock walls and Gustav Creek are all good fishing spots. As a safe place the harbor has a huge range of juvenile fish plus predator fish sweeping through. Also prevalent are trevally, queenfish cod, and barramundi. Smaller fish schools include dart, bream, sweetlip emperor and many others. The harbor is a good place for kids and out of the winds. Favourite baits are pilchard, squid and prawn.

6. West Point

West Point is a wonderful place to fish at any time. It is especially beautiful and productive at night time when the sun sets over the mainland across the water. West Point is popular for a great range of species from flathead, whiting, salmon, grunter and bream to big barra, cobia, shark, mackerel, trevally and many other large predators.

Beach fishing is fun and relaxing and West Point is nearly always calm water. Fish with live bait - mullet and gar can often be caught with a cast net near the creeks and points and are great bait. Check road conditions in the wet season as a 4WD may be necessary to access West Point.

NB: PLEASE OBSERVE BAG LIMITS AND RESPECT MARINE PARK AREAS.

Check out the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) Zoning Map on What’s On.
FISHING & BOATING TRIPS

1. Aquascene Charters
   Departs: Nelly Bay Harbour
   Enjoy some great fishing trips for 8 people for the day, plus snorkel trips to some amazing corals at Acheron Island. A professional and licensed fisherman hosts the reef trips. Per person trips are also available.
   Call 07 4778 5911 or 0427 900 028

2. Awesome Sport Fishing Charters
   Departs: Nelly Bay Harbour
   Looking for that fishing trip of a lifetime? Awesome Sport Fishing Charters provide the ultimate offshore sport fishing experience with half, full day and customised charters for up to six people.
   Call 0408 785 195

3. Barnacle Bill Fishing Tours
   Departs: Horseshoe Bay
   2 and 4 hour trips. Fishing Horseshoe Bay area daily for bottom fish and pelagics.
   Call (07) 4758 1837 or 0438 165 581

4. Blue Parrot Sunset Cruise
   Departs: Horseshoe Bay Boat Ramp
   Join us on the Blue Parrot for our sunset sailing. Take in the spectacular natural landscape of Five Beach Bay, or Radical and Balding Bays. Bring your camera for photos of the famous Horseshoe Bay Sunset.
   Call 07 4758 1336 or 0448 581 330

5. Get Around Magnetic Island Boat Tours
   Departs: Nelly Bay Harbour or get picked up elsewhere
   Hire a large boat for up to eight people with 60HP and have a great day fishing by yourselves. Alternatively, you can have a guided fishing and snorkelling trip with Cliff with all your gear and bait provided.
   Call Cliff 07 4778 5909 or 0448 434 292

6. Northern Conquest Charters
   Departs: Nelly Bay Harbour & Townsville
   These esky filling reef trips and coral viewing snorkel trips goes to the good reefs and provides all your meals and bunking in a large 64ft ex, cray boat including meals for 24 people.
   Call Cliff on 0428 745 388

7. Reef Eco Tours
   Departs: Nelly Bay Harbour
   Call Andy 0419 712 579

8. Tropic Sail
   Departs: Nelly Bay Harbour & Townsville
   Tropic Sail offers bareboat and skippered sailing holidays for you to discover Magnetic Island, and 13 other unspoiled and secluded islands of The Palms group, aboard your own luxury charter yacht. Lush tropical rainforests, deserted sun drenched beaches, pristine fringing coral reefs.
   Call Shaun or Wendy 07 4772 4773

9. Utopia Charters
   Departs: Nelly Bay Harbour
   Come aboard Utopia Charters to either fish, cruise or simply experience Magnetic Island and the Great Barrier Reef in luxury aboard our 50ft Riviera Packages to suit your personal needs with a friendly and professional crew. You will be assured of a great time.
   Call Tom 07 4758 1000

Hire Boats - Tinny

Grab your bait and tackle, fill up the esky and head off in your own tinny to fish at your leisure - half day or full day.
   Call Tim 0409 163 012 (Horseshoe Bay)

Bait, Tackle & All The Gear You Need

Whatever you need, whether it’s bait and tackle, snorkelling or dive gear, stop in at Magnetic Island’s only water sports and adventure retailer to buy or hire.
   Fish’n Fuel’n, 36 Mandalay Ave, Nelly Bay
   Open 7am to 7pm, 7 days a week or call 07 4778 5126.

We hope you enjoy your stay on Magnetic Island!

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Check out the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) Zoning Map on What's On, for the Activities Guide with protection zoning and the types of fishing, crabbing and netting that are allowed in each zone.