

LORD HOWE ISLAND

the last paradise | lordhoweisland.info

MEDIA RELEASE

Lord Howe Island Celebrates 25 Years of World Heritage Status

Lord Howe Island is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the island's placement on the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage list. Billed as the most beautiful island in the Pacific, Lord Howe was awarded the World Heritage honour in December, 1982, based on its exceptional natural beauty and its collection of rare and endangered plants, birds, and marine life.

Located 600 km north-east of Sydney – less than two hours flying time from Sydney or Brisbane – Lord Howe has the same jaw-dropping beauty of Bora Bora, but without the hugely expensive price tag. The crescent-shaped island lies on the world's southern-most coral reef, where visitors can snorkel and SCUBA-dive straight off the beach, any time of year.

The two towering peaks of Mount Gower (875m) and Mount Lidgbird (777m) have remained from Lord Howe's volcanic origins some seven million years ago. Climbing Mount Gower has been rated as one of Australia's best day hikes, and the rest of the island is criss-crossed by scenic bushwalking trails through a wide variety of terrain, including lush natural forests and rocky headlands.

The island is home to vast numbers of nesting seabirds, many of which are so unafraid of humans that they lay their eggs in the open and allow visitors a close-up look without so much as a sideways glance. The island is the only nesting place of the Providence petrel. One of the world's rarest birds – the Lord Howe Island woodhen – has been brought back from the brink of extinction via a captive breeding program and can now be readily seen around the island.

The waters surrounding the island are included in a Marine Park and are some of the cleanest and clearest on the planet. They offer surfers both reef and beach breaks, and amateur fishermen are spoilt for choice. Lord Howe is known for some of the world's best fishing – available from the beach, rocks, jetty or from the professionally-equipped fishing boats, ready to take visitors for half or full day fishing expeditions.

With only 350 residents and no more than 400 visitors at any one time, the island retains a small-town charm that appeals to families and couples alike. All budgets are catered for on Lord Howe, with 18 accommodation choices ranging from budget units, to high-quality fully-equipped apartments, to luxury lodges. QantasLink has daily flights to Lord Howe Island from Sydney, and weekend flights from Brisbane.

With 11 pristine beaches (Neds Beach was voted Australia's cleanest in 2004) – on an island that is only 11 km long and two km wide – Lord Howe is a refuge not only for seabirds but also for tourists seeking sun, sand and un-touched natural beauty. It's not hard to see why Lord Howe was bestowed the honour of a World Heritage listing. For further information, visit www.lordhoweisland.info.

END.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Kerry Lorimer, Splash Communications +61 2 9929 2844 or +61 0 411 550 329, kerry@splashcomm.com