Moreton Island Tours Accessibility Guide

Did you know that Moreton Island is the 3rd largest sand island in the world? As we service remote islands with their own unique accessibility challenges, we encourage you to reach out to our friendly team before booking (info@trailblazertours.com.au or 07 3180 0888) so we may assess your individual needs to determine if we can facilitate visit care plans and risk assessments.

Trailblazer Tours brings a wealth of knowledge and 23+ years' experience in delivering unforgettable adventures on stunning remote islands for students and teachers experiencing various disabilities on the spectrum and impairments. Our welcoming guides are first aid trained and experienced in working collaboratively with teachers, carers and support workers to cater for some impairments. Please note that our itineraries do require some mobility (or a carer to assist in lifting) for transfers onto our shuttle buses, 4WD tough bus and transparent kayaks.

If you (or someone travelling with you) require a beach wheelchair, as standard wheelchairs will become bogged in very soft sand on Moreton

Island, please liaise with a local supplier to **hire**. Here are a couple of options;

- Recommended for Moreton Island (Mulgumpin) – Gold Coast Recreation & Sport Inc (Ph: 0755313312)

Check-In Walkthrough

Pick up Options

- **GOLD COAST**

Departs 5:30 am from in front of the Mantra on View Hotel (22 View Avenue Surfers Paradise)
Visit here to access a photo album of your check-in point.
Our shuttle bus driver will assist you with check-in, collect any outstanding payments (national park and ferry fees – small surcharge applies for card transactions, cash also accepted) and will provide you with a wristband. You can then board the bus and enjoy the view!

- **BRISBANE COACH TERMINAL**

Departs 7 am Brisbane Coach Terminal (Bus Stop E), Parkland Crescent QLD 4000
Visit here to access a photo album of your check-in point.
A tour guide or our bus driver will assist you with check-in, collect any outstanding payments (national park and ferry fees – small surcharge applies for card transactions, cash also accepted) and will provide you with a wristband. You can then board the bus and enjoy the view!
Parking can be found at the adjacent Parkland Crescent, however, there are more convenient drop off loading zones closer to Bus Stop E (not parking).

ACCESSABILITY NOTE

Both of the above check-in options include shuttle bus transportation. Students will require some mobility (or a carer to assist in lifting) to board and disembark from the bus). If this isn't suitable to your needs, we recommend the below Port of Brisbane (self-driving) option.

Shuttle Bus Safety

- It is law in the state of Queensland that all passengers must wear their seatbelts whenever the bus is in motion.
- In the event of an accident, please follow the directions of your tour guide. If they are not able to

respond or help, please note that bus can be exited from the main entry/exit (if unable to be opened, use the small red hammers located near the windows marked as emergency exit. Smash the windows marked emergency exit using hammer to exit the bus)

- **PORT OF BRISBANE (SELF-DRIVE OPTION)**

Departs 7.30 am Port of Brisbane, 14 Howard Smith Drive QLD 4178
Visit here to access a photo album of your check-in point.
Limited parking ($20 a day) is available at the Port of Brisbane, we recommend arriving earlier as parking can't be pre-booked and is often very busy, especially in Summer. Alternatively, there is free parking with plenty of available spots at a service station 500m down the road (5-10min walk to Port). Visit here for directions.
A tour guide will assist you with check-in, collect any outstanding payments (national park and ferry fees – small surcharge applies for card transactions, cash also accepted) and will provide you with a wristband.

A toilet at the Port of Brisbane is available with ramp access. If you (or someone travelling with you) needs wheelchair ramp access, we recommend using the toilet here as remote Moreton Island has less accessible facilities.

Ferry Cruise

MICAT Ferry ***Tangalooma Shipwrecks***

Once you have arrived at the Port of Brisbane and checked-in, our welcoming tour guides will escort you onto the ferry vessel to enjoy a beautiful cruise across the magnificent Moreton Bay on the MiCat Ferry with air-conditioned comfort with cafe and bar facilities.

ACCESSABILITY NOTE

Although there is disabled access to the vehicle deck as a passenger on our shuttle bus, the MICAT ferry has 48 stairs between the vehicle deck and the saloon deck (where toilets, café and seating is located). Students will require some mobility (or a carer to assist in lifting) to explore these decks, or alternatively, you are most welcome to make yourself comfortable on our shuttle bus for the 90 minute journey (we recommend using the disability access

toilet at the Port of Brisbane before boarding).
If you would prefer to bring your own vehicle to travel in on the ferry, please let our team know and we can refer you to MICAT to purchase a vehicle ticket.

We recommend you to either wear your swimwear underneath your clothing upon arrival or changing into them whilst on the ferry.

Arriving on Moreton Island

Once the ferry has landed, our guides will escort you off the vessel and across the golden sands to our snorkel truck. Other vehicles also drive on this section of beach so please watch for oncoming vehicles and keep close to our tour guides. You will be guided to a large mat on the sand where you can leave your belongings during activities. Please note that we don't recommend bringing valuables and you will be responsible for your belongings throughout the tour.

Depending on which coloured wristband you were provided upon check-in, you will either start with water activities (transparent kayaking & snorkeling) at the Tangalooma Shipwrecks or begin with an adventure into the desert to experience the thrills of sandboarding!

ACCESSABILITY NOTE

A bathroom is available on the beach that can be located by following the track and turning right at the 20km/h speed sign. These toilets unfortunately do not have ramp access and students will require some mobility (or a carer to assist in lifting and transfers).

Water Safety Overview

You will be provided with a pair of gloves and a wetsuit (available in a wide range of sizes), please put these on. Our tour guides can assist you in finding the correct size.

You must remain with your guides at all times. Please do not swim off on your own. Our guides know the best and safest way through the wrecks. We also know where to find all the good stuff. We may not be the only group in the water so be aware and remain with your guide. There are also other vessels in the water. Please be aware of your surroundings.

While in the water, you will be accompanied by a tour guide in the water and another as a rescue ski operator and lookout. Please familiarise yourself with the below water safety signals to ensure safety and ongoing communication with our guides while enjoying activities in the water;

Figure 1: International Life Saving Federation

Our guides will also use the 'ok' hand signal pictured below to check in with you throughout your experience;

- **If you are in IMMEDIATE DANGER** – please use the above signal 1 (arm up, waving back and forth) and shout (if able) to alert guides to rescue
- **If you are OK** – you can use the same 'ok' signal back to communicate this
- **If something is bothering you (e.g. nervous, mask not fitting)** – you can use the 'so so' signal (hand face down and rocked slightly) pictured below and a guide will assist

Wet Suits, Gloves and Lifejackets

Our wetsuits, while they do keep us warm, the main reason why we wear them is to protect your skin. The wrecks are rusty, covered in hard corals and barnacles. When touched it will cut your skin. So, it is very important that if you find yourself travelling into the wrecks that we use any part of our body that is covered, to push us away from the wrecks. These wetsuits are available in a wide range of sizes and our guides can assist you in locating the correct size. We also have gloves which must be worn throughout the duration of the tour.

As mentioned, the wrecks are very rusty and covered in hard corals and barnacles. So, it is important that we do not touch, stand on or lean against the wrecks at any stage throughout the tour. Please watch where you are going at all times, look out for any parts of the wrecks that may stick out. If you are wanting to shallow dive, please let your guide know your intentions and always be aware of your position underwater.

Lifejackets must be worn by anyone who doesn't meet our swimming criteria. They are a floatation device and will keep you afloat.

Snorkeling at Tangalooma Shipwrecks

During your experience, please keep close to our guides and use the safety signals demonstrated in Figure 1 above to signal if help is required. Each of the guides will always

have an orange life ring with them. The life ring is there to assist you throughout the tour if needed.

Fitting Your Mask

To put on your mask, we place the mask on our face (making sure there is no hair within the seal) and we then pull the strap to the back, it must sit on the crown of our head. If we have the strap too low, it will not seal the mask and it will leak. Other reasons our mask may leak are, facial hair and smile lines. If we do get water in our mask, please do not take your mask off completely. All you need to do is lift the bottom of the mask and allow the water to escape. If your mask fogs up, let a little bit of water in the top of the mask, then lift the bottom of the mask to let the water out.

Using Your Snorkel

To use your snorkel simply place the mouthpiece into your mouth and firmly close your lips around the mouth piece. This creates a seal to allow you to breathe as normal. Remember to breathe through your mouth only. Be careful not to place your head too far into the water. This will cause your snorkel to turn into a giant drinking straw. If you do get water in your snorkel, just take the snorkel piece out of your mouth and empty out the water. Or blow hard into the snorkel and the water will shoot out of the top. If you have any trouble, ask your guides for assistance.

Using Your Fins

To use our fins, keep your legs straight out behind you with your knees slightly bent and kick. Try to kick under the water so we do not splash other people. Please do not frog kick or ride an underwater imaginary bicycle. Our guides will help to demonstrate the most effective, easiest and safest way.

Transparent Kayaking at Tangalooma Shipwrecks

You will be provided with a safety vest, please clip this on and wear for the entirety of your kayaking experience along with your wetsuit and gloves. Our transparent kayaks seat two people each and we recommend that the smallest person sits in the front seat to assist with balance and floatation during your adventure.

You will be provided with a paddle which should be held with the curved side facing you when you are paddling forwards. Once the kayak has entered the water, you can begin a forward stroke by dipping the paddle most of the way into the water and pulling the paddle along the side of the kayak with your arms relaxed and rotating your torso for power by engaging your core. To turn, paddle in a sweeping motion on the opposite side of the direction that you are wishing to turn.

As described in above Water Safety Overview section, please use water safety signals to communicate with our guides throughout your experience and our rescue ski operator will be available for assistance where needed.

Our guides will lead the way and disperse food into the water for you to enjoy an unforgettable feeding frenzy of hundreds of fish, all visible through our iconic transparent kayaks! If you find that your kayak is drifting close to the wrecks, please very gently push off the wrecks using your paddle or gloves.

ACCESSABILITY NOTE

Students will require some mobility (or a carer to assist in lifting and transfers) to board and disembark kayaks.

Sandboarding and 4WD 'Tough Bus' Desert Adventure

Sandboarding ***4WD 'Tough Bus'***

Now it's time to board our 4WD 'Tough Bus' and venture across the rugged 4WD tracks of Moreton Island to "The Desert"! Please ensure your seatbelts are buckled for the entirety of the journey and enjoy the amazing views!

Our tour guides will escort you off the bus upon arrival at the sand dunes and will lead uphill to get started with sandboarding. To ensure an easier climb and to minimise disturbance to the sand dunes on our adventure, please walk up the slope by stepping on the footsteps of the people ahead of you.

Our guides will then demonstrate the above pictured position, noting the following;

- Hold the front of the board slightly lifted using both hands, with elbows up
- Keep knees bent with your feet lifted slightly

After this demonstration, please form a line for our guides to assist you to launch down the sand dunes at speeds of up to 70km/h!

You are welcome to enjoy several glides down the sands and our guides will advise when the bus will need to be boarded again to ensure sufficient time to enjoy other activities.

ACCESSABILITY NOTE

Students will require some mobility (or a carer to assist in lifting) to board and disembark from the 4WD bus. Before sliding down the steep sand dunes, there is a fairly steep incline to climb in soft sands, which may not be suitable for individuals with limited mobility. If this isn't suitable, please reach out to our team more than 24 hours before your booking and we can assist in arranging alternative activities (for example, a double snorkeling or kayaking session).

Fresh Lunch & Snacks

After completing either water activities or sandboarding first, our guides will escort you back to our snorkel truck on the sand for our fresh DIY wrap station lunch and snacks (often fruit and potato chips/crisps). If you have any dietary requirements, please advise our team no less than 24 hours prior to departure to allow us to prepare alternatives. If preferrable, you are also welcome to bring your own snacks (no alcohol permitted).

To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to try everything available, please start by preparing one wrap at the station and step away to enjoy on the beach. Once everyone has been served, our guides will welcome students back to the station to enjoy more food until everyone is fueled with delicious food and ready for more adventures!

CONDITIONS OF BOOKING

All prices are subject to change without notice & at the discretion of Trailblazer Tours. All information stated in this publication is true & correct at the time of publication. Due to traffic, & the extreme conditions experienced on Moreton Island to buses & the environment, Trailblazer Tours reserves the right to alter or cancel any section of the itinerary which may result from road, traffic, weather, mechanical, or any other condition or failure or delay of an operational nature ***without penalty***, & such conditions will be considered as a **Force Majeure Event**. Trailblazer Tours will take all reasonable steps to rectify the situation during any such event, however no liability will be accepted by Trailblazer Tours in circumstances outside of Trailblazer Tours' control. No responsibility or liability will be taken in the event of injury from pre-existing medical conditions (eg: bad back), accident, injury, loss or damage to persons or property due to persons own negligence. These booking conditions do not waive Trailblazer Tours from any of its obligations according to law. Minimum booking numbers & cancellation fees apply.