










the Reef on Green Island include:

-  A walk with Skywalker
-  A wander over the jetty
-  Snorkelling from the sa
-  Walking in the shallows
-  A scenic helicopter fligh
-  Parasailing
-  Scuba diving
-  Glass-bottom boat ride
-  Underwater observatory

walk this way

fact file:

HERE: Great Adventures (under the Quicksilver group of companies) travels daily to the Reef on its Green Island and Day Adventure trip (\$102 adult, \$51 child) from 8.30am departure) and the last return trip at 4.30pm.

A Skywalker is \$134 per person (105 child) for about 20 minutes underwater.

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Walking effortlessly across the sandy floor of the Great Barrier Reef is a different way to experience one of the world's natural beauties, as ALANA DAVISON discovers.

As I lowered myself from the pontoon's ladder into the water off Green Island, fear of the unknown almost cheated me of the most natural way to see the Reef – surrounded by air in a helmet.

Sure, I panicked for a split second, but then I breathed just like I do on land. Thank goodness I had a go and now I can see why it has been a hit since exclusively introduced to the Cairns market by the Quicksilver group three years ago.

Known as a helmet dive, it is easy to see why the Seawalker (off Green Island and Ocean Walker off Agincourt Reef) experience is like stepping on the moon.

It is so easy to do and you don't even have to get your hair wet!

First, a white bowl that resembles a toilet seat is placed on your neck, ready to hold the 30–40kg helmet. But, when you ease into the water, you forget the helmet (which weighs only 3kg under water) is even there. Connected to a hose on the surface, the air is pumped into your circle of oxygen, keeping

an unfogged and dry casement for you to see from. At a depth of just a few meters under the surface, the helmet does not make you feel claustrophobic and in between smiling and widening your eyes to the amazing underwater world all you have to do is inhale and exhale.

Adhering to a few simple hand instructions (including a few high fives to let out the elation) and remembering to decompress our ears with a yawn or two, we leaped around the ocean floor seeing coral, giant clams, clown fish and the best of all – a fish-feeding extravaganza right in our faces.

Flashes of silver, blue and yellow from the yellow tail fusilier fish dash by your helmet, allowing you to truly feel you a part of their aquatic environment.

While Seawalker may not give you the freedom of discovering wider areas as you do when scuba diving, it's certainly a quirky and satisfying medium of getting closer to this natural wonder – particularly if you're not confident enough to try diving.

And based just 40 minutes from Cairns on the picturesque Green Island, you can fill your day with as little or as much as you like. Even stepping off the Great Adventures boat on to the jetty, you look down into the water and see multi-coloured parrotfish and coral calling you in to explore, but it's just as satisfying to watch from above as schools of fish hover in the shallows or a small stingray shuffles under the sand.

You could have a big buffet lunch at the Canopy Grill after which you could then choose a glass bottom boat ride, a dip in the island pool or a splash in the sea to explore. To enhance my experience of the Seawalker, I opted for a snorkel on the shore and paddled about the jetty looking for hours.

Boy, I wish I was staying the night at the octagonal-shaped Green Island Resort – but I am lucky enough to travel out here any day of the year.

There goes my savings plan, but why not – I am so lucky to live so close to such greatness.