

The Art of Cooktown

Galleries

1. cooktown creative arts centre

Feast your eyes on a comprehensive display of woodwork, jewellery, pottery, painting, lead-lighting, textiles, indigenous art and more in this roomy art and craft gallery, located in the beautiful historic railway building.

You'll find the gallery manned by the artists' themselves, so visitors can often speak to the creator of items which range from small inexpensive mementos to larger, more expensive pieces.

Opening hours:
Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

2. cooktown community events centre

Stunning views provide a backdrop to the newly completed Community Events Centre, nestled against the base of beautiful Mount Cook. Public artworks decorate the exterior of the building. Changing exhibitions feature a mixture of photography, printmaking, painting, drawing and mixed media works presented by students of Cooktown State School, along with the work of other emerging and professional artists in the region.

3. elizabeth guszely gallery

In the light, airy Elizabeth Guszely Gallery, you will get a sense of what Cooktown is all about as you view works ranging from traditional photo-realistic to contemporary abstract styles, all produced by local artists.

Opening hours:
Monday to Saturday
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
(hours may vary)



Trevor Maudsley

4. vera scarth-johnson gallery

Beautiful botanic gardens envelop the Vera Scarth-Johnson Gallery nestled amongst an outcrop of impressive granite boulders. This lovely bush setting at Nature's Powerhouse Visitor Information Centre sets the scene for a stunning collection of botanical illustrations painted by the late Vera Scarth-Johnson.

The Vera Scarth-Johnson Gallery also houses a collection of Banks Florilegium botanical engravings showing plants collected here at the Endeavour River by Joseph Banks during Captain James Cook's first Pacific voyage. These engravings are based on original sketches produced on board the Endeavour by botanical artist Sydney Parkinson.

Opening hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily



Vera Scarth-Johnson

Festivals

5. cooktown's annual art exhibition

Held for over 30 years and coinciding with the June long weekend, there's always a guarantee of something for every taste when you visit this bubbling arts extravaganza featuring both local artists and those from around Australia. Awards in categories of contemporary and traditional painting, pen and ink, sculpture, textiles, indigenous art and more, lure a range of artists and artforms.

Public Art

6. the friendly python

Keep an eye out for a very friendly Amethystine Python who watches over the grounds of the Botanic Gardens at Nature's

Powerhouse. This 6.5 metre-long sculpture is expertly carved out of Cooktown Ironwood, a species which is one of the hardest and densest timbers in the world.

It's very easy to fall in love with this very sleek, smooth sculpture...a great photo opportunity.

7. river of life

Take a meander along Cooktown's scenic foreshore to discover the beautiful artworks that combine to form the River of Life Walkway. At 500 metres long the winding pathway features hand-painted and carved ceramic tiles that depict the diversity of Cooktown's present-day identity, contrasted against that of its cultural history.

8. milbi wall

Nearly 500 hand-painted and carved tiles adorn the 12 metre long curved Milbi Wall interpretive sculpture, placed at the very location where in 1770, Captain James Cook and his crew first set foot on land. Constructed in three sections, this reconciliation wall explains in both image and text the Creation Stories and how the Endeavour River and Cooktown were made. Don't rush by this sculptural book, take time to enjoy the beautiful art and unravel its stories!



Art in the Park

9. cooktown markets

The Cooktown Markets feature a variety of local artists' hand-made works that showcase the talents of the region, including beautiful timber pieces by master woodcarver Mark Berg and indigenous work by Conrad Michael and Helen Gordon - meet and talk to the artists and hear the stories behind their works.

Markets held every Saturday on the waterfront from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.



10. grassy hill

In 2010 a major re-development project enhanced Grassy Hill with improved access, new recreation facilities, public artworks and disabled access in the shape of a serpent winding up from the car park to the lighthouse. Don't miss the 360 degree views from this iconic landmark!

11. musical ship

Climb aboard Cooktown's Musical ship, a unique musical playground created for young and old...no need to worry about getting seasick on this vessel! Set against the beautiful foreshore of the Endeavour River, a visit to this unique 8.5 metre sculptural installation is a must!



Live Music

Cooktown showcases music for just about every taste and occasion. There is an enthusiastic regional music scene and several local bands have achieved national acclaim. Several restaurants and venues in town host live music every week - check the local listings for updated events.

12. nature's powerhouse

Concerts at Nature's Powerhouse Botanic Gardens feature top musicians from around the world. Contact Nature's Powerhouse & Accredited Visitor Information Centre to find out more.

13. cook shire community events centre

The purpose-built stage and amphitheatre of the Cook Shire Community Events Centre comes alive with a host of performances reflecting the vibrancy of arts and culture within the Shire.



