

# H U M A N S

## of T H E

### R E E F



Lisa Sampson - Owner/Operator  
Big Mama Sailing

#### What does a day working at the reef look like for you?

Sailing and sharing our home with small groups of 12 guests maximum based on the Great Barrier Reef is alive with diversity in what we see & what close encounters we enjoy with the local marine life- Humpback Whales through the migration season, turtles, dugong, manta ray, a few species of dolphins and of course all the delightful & colourful reef fish, reef sharks, stingray, batfish and more, while we snorkel.

#### What questions do people always ask you about the reef?

We are always asked about the condition of the reef, our concerns, coral bleaching? We are also asked about general information, facts and interesting experiences we have enjoyed on the GBR, for example snorkelling with a pod of 70 dolphins on the GBR North East off Port Douglas and snorkelling with a pod of Manta Ray on Feather Reef off Mourilyan Harbour.

#### In your opinion, what is the state of the reef?

There is areas of the GBR struggling more than other areas-especially areas that have been affected by cyclones, the warmer water temps and human impact & 'crown of thorns'. We are lucky we can explore the GBR and we have some amazing spots we visit off the coast of Townsville & other areas too. The GBR is like a rainforest or bushland-some areas of a rainforest/bushland is in pristine condition and others are struggling & not so beautiful-The GBR also has areas that are in great condition & other areas are not healthy.

#### What is your favourite reef critter?

Nudi-branch, Humbugs, sea horse & Giant Clam.

#### What can people do to help preserve and protect the reef?

Stop over-fishing( catch fish to eat only), do not anchor on the GBR(anchor in sand and Reef Anchors should be banned), when snorkelling/diving be mindful of not hitting the reef with fins& tanks, look but do not touch, commercial vessels need more snorkel guidance and floating devices for weak swimmers/ beginner snorkellers especially on the larger volume vessels carrying large numbers of guests.

#### What is your favourite part about working at the reef?

Everyday is different. Working so close with marine life & nature, there is no guarantee of what is going to happen, what we are going to see and the overall reef experience is different for everyone and it is great when everyone gets the chance to share their experience once they are back on board Big Mama.

