

Too much fun in the sun/is it even possible to make strong-enough sunscreen for snorkeling?

Two days ago we did the BIG Great Barrier Reef gig, the one where you head out on a boat for 2 hours to the company's secret spot (never mind that they tell you the reef's name...). A formal, well-orchestrated affair with as much time out of the water as in.

Yesterday we stuck to land, heading by tourist train to a faux village (Kuranda) selling a faux rainforest experience and a chance to hold a Koala.

That left us with one full day to fill. And since this trip was for my wife, and the main point was to see the Great Barrier Reef, well, you just can't get too much of a good thing, right?

This time a bit less formal though, and a bit closer. Fitzroy Island is just 40 minutes away (by boat); an island in the middle of the inner section of the reef, so plenty of snorkeling opportunities without being tethered (figuratively) to a big boat. You just pick up your gear and explore.

So figure 4 solid hours, face down, back, back of arms, back of legs, back of ankles, and any part of your head which, for whatever reason, is more exposed than it used to be... all those areas are testing the limits of SPF 50 sunscreen.

Why wasn't this an issue on our first snorkeling adventure? Mostly because we were in open seas where the greater likelihood of painful jellyfish stings meant we were wearing wetsuits over most of the areas the sun could try to get to.

We had a great time, but we're paying for it now. It actually looks worse than it feels. A good thing, that!