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Market Insights

Queensland's lifestyle market values soar

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Port Douglas is among Queensland's key lifestyle markets which have seen housing values soar over the past year. Image – Canva

- Housing values have surged in several of Queensland's key lifestyle market, in some areas more than doubling the growth seen in the two previous years combined
- Place Projects director Bruce Goddard said population change is not a main driver, with demand more closely related to area appeal
- Port Douglas, the Whitsundays and Bargara proved most popular with buyers

New research from Place Advisory has revealed Queensland's lifestyle regions north of the Sunshine Coast have come out on top this year with the sharpest price gains.

The surprising revelation comes despite the more popular coastal markets of the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast experiencing an influx of new residents during the pandemic.

The Place Advisory analysed the latest sales data from areas spanning from the Sunshine Coast up to Port Douglas. The findings indicated that property prices are continuing to rise despite softening in the national market.

The research compared the latest annual price movements of houses, apartments and vacant land in the coastal markets of Sunshine Coast, Fraser Coast, Bargaara, Yeppoon, Whitsundays, Palm Cove and Port Douglas.

House prices rose by up to 21.5% in the two years to June 2021, before rapidly accelerating in the following 12 months.

Population change not a driver of price growth

Home prices in Port Douglas, the Whitsundays and Bargaara saw the most significant gains, rising by more than twice the rate of the previous two years combined.

Houses in Port Douglas recorded a price increase of 21.2% in the two years to June 2021, before soaring by 45.3% by June 2022.

The Whitsundays saw a similar surge with price growth rising from 13.3% to 28.4% in the same period, while Bargaara's price growth spiked from 9.1% to 25.4%.

**Price growth between
June 2019 and June**

**Price growth between
June 2021 and June**

**Population growth
between 2016 and 2021**

	2021	2022	
Sunshine Coast	21.5%	31.6%	16%
Fraser Coast	17.2%	30.8%	9%
Bargara	9.1%	25.4%	NA
Yeppoon	15.3%	28.5%	11%
Whitsundays	13.3%	28.4%	NA
Palm Cove	21.5%	20.2%	19%
Port Douglas	21.2%	45.3%	4%

Place Projects director Bruce Goddard said the analysis indicated sustained price growth in Queensland's key lifestyle markets, amid a spate of exceptional price increases.

According to Mr Goddard, the significant price growth recorded in these markets is unlikely to be due to population change.

"Compared with the Sunshine Coast, which we all know has benefitted from strong interstate and intrastate migration, most of the coastal markets to the north experienced a solid upswing in house values that did not necessarily reflect an equivalent gain in their respective populations."

"This shows that demand for lifestyle properties is more closely aligned with the idyllic appeal of each of the regions and the amenity they offer buyers."

Bruce Goddard, Place Projects

He added that demand in these key markets has been exceptionally strong despite national housing values softening, particularly in the capital cities.

“Strong price growth in these niche markets over the past year shows a high level of perceived value by the market that might well have been overlooked previously,” Mr Goddard concluded.

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