



Cosmos Centre, Charleville
Image courtesy of Tourism Queensland
Photographer John Elliot

LOCATION: Charleville
8 hours west of Brisbane

POPULATION: 3,600

INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, government services, abattoirs, tourism.

CLIMATE: Sub-tropical continental
Summer 21.5C – 35.9C
Winter 4.1C – 19.6C
Avg. annual rainfall 498.7mm

For well over a century, Charleville has been one of outback Queensland's great meeting places, a town where plentiful water was a welcome sight for those travelling long distances across the state's vast south-west.

Bullock teams laden with wool rested at its billabongs on their way to the Roma railhead. Cobb and Co opened a factory after realising the dry climate was ideal for coach building. In 1922, the town cemented its iconic status when the first Qantas flight took off from Charleville bound for Cloncurry.

Fast-forward nearly 100 years and this vibrant and friendly town remains an important regional base, housing the Royal Flying Doctor Service and School of Distance Education. It is the last stop for rail passengers from Brisbane and has a local airport with daily flights to the coast.

Charleville's prosperity was traditionally driven by the wool industry. During the past 20 years cattle numbers have grown, particularly along the Warrego River. Sheep still predominate in the mulga country where the search for new markets

has seen goat farming develop into a lucrative enterprise.

Charleville is home to a multi-million dollar sheep and goat export abattoir. A second abattoir processes kangaroo meat for export.

Skilled workers are in short supply across the southwest and central parts of the state because of Queensland's booming resources sector. In Charleville, the abattoirs employ several dozen Vietnamese workers on 457 visas and the town's economy is enjoying spin-offs from a growing population mix, as new cafes and restaurants open.

Charleville is a mecca for tourists wanting an authentic outback experience. It is the heart of Queensland's mulga country and the self-proclaimed Bilby capital of Australia. Clear nights and a low horizon are perfect for stargazing and the Cosmos Centre and Observatory is a popular local attraction.

Landmark's Darryl Langton says Charleville is well serviced and has plenty to offer families.

"It is safe and close knit and children have freedom they don't get in larger cities," he says.

"It is especially appealing to people living in parts of Queensland where water is scarce."

Charleville is on the Warrego River and has bore supplies from the Great Artesian Basin. Abundant water isn't always a blessing and the flood-prone Warrego has devastated the town twice in 20 years. A newly constructed levee bank has given the town a renewed sense of optimism, especially within the business sector.

Newly developed rural residential sites are being snapped up as quickly as they are released.

A third estate is in the pipeline.

Darryl says rural land in the northern Warrego region has tripled in value in less than a decade.

"We're getting buyers from higher value areas looking for more land to run breeding cattle. We also appeal to growers from up north wanting land to grow out younger stock," says Darryl.

"Values are continuing to rise here despite the market steadying off in other parts of the state."

"The country is good quality and still very affordable. There's plenty of scope for further growth, that's for sure."

Contact:

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PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: 3 BR home from \$180,000

Lifestyle: 5 acres with town water \$78,000

Larger acreage: Cattle country in northern Warrego area – at least \$200 per acre

Mulga lands: \$10 – \$30 per acre