

LANDMARK POSTCODE

4820



The Charters Towers Stock Exchange Arcade, built in 1888. Image courtesy of Charters Towers Visitor Information Centre.

Story: Sheryl Allen

LOCATION: Charters Towers
1.5 hours south west of
Townsville

POPULATION: 7,800

INDUSTRIES: Mining, beef, education

CLIMATE: Sub-tropical
Summer: 21.9°C – 33.7°C
Winter: 11.0°C – 24.5°C
Rainfall: 659mm

Charters Towers is a picturesque North Queensland gold mining city with a vigorous history and a unique character.

With the chance discovery of gold in 1871, Charters Towers lured throngs of hopeful prospectors from around the world and quickly exploded into a bustling hub of more than 30,000 people.

At the time, Queensland's only bigger town was Brisbane. Charters Towers was so well-appointed it was known as 'The World', where everything one desired in the world could be had.

Charters Towers was destined to be Australia's richest major goldfield. The record-making boom is reflected in its grand and elegant Victorian-style buildings, many of which are heritage listed.

When gold mining eventually became uneconomical, the population diminished and Charters Towers settled into a quieter pace of life as the rural centre for an extensive catchment area stretching along the coastal hinterland.

"Today, it offers a modern country lifestyle within reach of North Queensland's best

attractions," says Landmark's Tony Bowen. "It's still well-appointed with supermarkets, great specialty shops, health services and arts and sporting facilities – everything you need in a regional centre of this size, even a drive-in theatre."

Education is a big emphasis here, with four high schools. Charters Towers is known as a boarding school centre with many rural Queensland families sending their children here to learn.

From its headquarters in the township, the Charters Towers Regional Council employs approximately 240 people and administers an expansive rural area of up to 70,000 kilometres – roughly equating to the size of Tasmania.

"The beef cattle industry is king here. There are around two hundred and fifty commercial beef properties that run some 600,000 head of cattle."

Charters Towers' Dalrymple Saleyards puts through more than 100,000 head per annum of store and prime cattle and also hosts North Queensland's premier bull and horse sales.

"The surrounding country here is very diverse," reports Landmark's Alan Bodman. "It's difficult to categorise the property into one or two types. Many are large family-held stations that don't turnover often."

"A substantial beef grazing property which did recently change hands is 'Panhandle' in the Collinsville district."

"It covers almost 80,000 acres, mostly iron bark and bloodwood country with heavily grassed creeks and some assessable range country. 'Panhandle' was sold to nearby neighbours along

with 3,000 branded cattle and a well-maintained homestead complex."

"Well-watered by dams and electric/solar powered bores, the property achieved something in the seven million dollar range."

Many visitors come to Charters Towers to 'dig into' the gold era and discover the secrets of the mining past via the self-guided Ghosts of Gold Heritage Trail, which takes in the Venus Battery and many more fascinating highlights.

The Citigold Corporation has its sights firmly on the future. The enterprise has reinvigorated Charters Towers' gold mining operations, buying up and amalgamating smaller mine leases in the 1970s and 1980s.

Mines have reopened and have been producing gold again since 2006, with plans for ongoing future development of the resource.

Once again, the Charters Towers story looks set to take a new twist with a golden chapter.

CONTACT:

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PROPERTY GUIDE:

Residential: three bedroom block home
\$295,000

Rural: substantial and improved cattle grazing
property \$80 – \$90 acre