

# — Backpackers provide \$81m shopping boost —



**Big spenders:** Lynsey Schouten and Martijn Amendt agree with the results of research that shows backpackers spend up to \$400 a week on shopping.

Picture: ELENOR TEDENBORG

A NEW report shows shopping by backpackers visiting Cairns not only contributes \$81 million to the region's economy but adds to its appeal.

James Cook University researchers have found that the average backpacker expects to spend about \$400 a week on shopping during their visit.

Report co-author Professor Bruce Prideaux said while Cairns's natural attractions were

the reason for most arrivals more than two-thirds of backpackers agreed shopping was important.

Prof Prideaux said men spent an average of \$445 and were more likely to buy gifts for others, while women, who spent \$365, were more likely to spend on indulgent items.

Prof Prideaux said the research would not necessarily help increase the amount spent overall but it could allow

businesses to improve sales by targeting backpackers' needs.

He said it also showed that a positive shopping experience was good for the long-term growth of Cairns.

It found supermarkets were one of the main shopping spots and that value was more important than Australian branding.

Dutch backpackers Lynsey Schouten, 30, and Martijn Amendt, 31, backed-up much of

the researcher's findings.

They said they spent about \$30 a day on food in the supermarket as well as spending money in cafes and bakeries.

"We buy the home brands," Mr Amendt said.

Ms Schouten said most backpackers would spend more money on drinks and partying than they would on buying food and groceries.