

Australia Summer Program



Volunteering, cultural immersion and
adventure travel

pacific discovery
insightful small group adventures

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Australia Summer Program Overview

This summer program gives you the chance to experience Australia's incredible environment and unique culture. During this one-month program we spend a week doing rewarding volunteer conservation work on an island in Keppel Bay Islands National Park, based from an environmental education centre. A further three weeks of insight, exploration and adventure take us canyoning in the Blue Mountains, learning to surf over 3 days in coastal national parks, kayaking with dolphins in Byron Bay, hiking on beautiful Fraser Island and exploring the Whitsunday Islands by boat. There's also time to explore vibrant Sydney, Brisbane and Cairns. Throughout your time in Australia you'll learn an enormous amount about Australia's environmental and ecological history and how that unique history has shaped Australia's flora, fauna and people.

This travel-study abroad summer or gap year program is suitable for students, graduates and non-students, ideally 18 – 25 years.

Program Dates

Summer 2011: July 2 – 29

Summer 2012: July 7 – August 3

Program Start / Finish

Start: Sydney / Finish: Cairns

Program Cost

Program cost for July 2011 is USD\$4,450.00

Highlights

- Rewarding week-long volunteer conservation project in Keppel Bay Islands National Park
- Exploring Sydney - harbor, beaches, museums
- Thrilling Tiger Snake Canyon in the Blue Mountains - rappelling, scrambling and hiking
- 3-day learn to surf safari at secluded coastal national parks
- Soaking up the ambience of Byron Bay
- Ocean kayaking to see wild dolphins
- Visit amazing Australia Zoo and learn about wildlife and the conservation initiatives of founder, Steve Irwin, the Crocodile Hunter
- 3-day hiking and 4WD trip on Fraser Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- A day island hopping among the spectacular Whitsunday Islands
- Snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef
- Rainforest walks and beach-time at stunning palm-fringed Mission Beach
- Informal lectures and discussions on history, culture, society and environment
- Very personalized small group experience – maximum of 11 participants (compare with other programs of up to 40 students)
- Fantastic program leader/s supported by local guides

“Traveling with Pacific Discovery has been one of the most personally rewarding things I have ever done. The program's small group sizes and focus on responsible travel allows you to interact with a country's local culture, customs, and environment on a much deeper level. I had the time of my life on the trip!” Mauri Lowrey

Pacific Discovery Program Content

Our programs are more than simply a travel or study abroad experience. We deliberately use an overseas adventure-travel environment to maximize the educational and life-skills potential for our participants. Each of our programs is designed to combine the following six interdependent components.

1. Educational component

Our programs are experiential education programs, meaning that learning is hands-on and tangible. For example, students will learn about a country's history and culture by immersing themselves in it - meeting local people and hearing life stories, first hand.

Experience on its own does not translate into learning. But learning from your experiences is important. To encourage 'learning from experience' our program leaders facilitate opportunities for participants to regularly reflect upon their experiences, and provide historical, cultural, geographical and environmental background so that personal experience can be connected with a broader understanding of place.

The educational component of our programs is multi-disciplinary and covers:

- ◆ Host country: history, politics, culture, geography, environment, environmental and social issues.
- ◆ Broader themes: globalization, development, environmentalism, religion, ethics and sustainability.
- ◆ How to travel: how to plan and safe, the realities of life on the road, ethical and sustainable travel.
- ◆ Outdoor education: where relevant, learning the soft and hard skills of a number of outdoor activities, such as backpacking, climbing, mountain biking, kayaking (varies by program).
- ◆ Group skills: how to work with a group, communication and trust.
- ◆ Development of personal leadership skills.

2. Volunteer component

Volunteer and community service elements built into our program itineraries allow participants to really immerse themselves in a place and share an experience with local people - bridging the gap that often exists between visitor and host. The rewards are tangible and often unexpected. Volunteer work helps build self confidence and self belief through participants having to learn new skills and take on new roles. Volunteer components vary by program. Examples of volunteer work undertaken by participants are building simple homes for marginalized poor, being a big brother/sister to an orphan, habitat restoration, species monitoring.

3. Cultural immersion component

Small groups mean that our participants are not travelling in a 'bubble' separated from local people. Instead we immerse participants in the local culture, through home-stays, volunteer projects, language study etc. Participants learn empathy for other cultures and build bridges of cultural understanding.

4. Travel component

Travel and the realities of 'life on the road' teaches a lot of valuable lessons - how to communicate and relate to people from different cultures, how to be happy with few possessions and a simple life, how to overcome temporary discomfort. Travel ultimately exposes participants to the myriad possibilities in the world and their lives and allows for personal growth free from the expectations of family, peers and co-workers.

Our goal is that participants will learn the 'art of travel' - what to take, how to plan, how to keep safe, how to find what you need in an unfamiliar place, the realities of life on the road. By the end of a program, we expect most participants will have learned the skills necessary to travel safely anywhere on earth.

5. Adventure education / Outdoor education component

Our programs are one long adventure. Aside from the fact that adventure can be a whole lot of fun, our programs are adventurous because personal growth occurs through challenge. We challenge participants at their own level, so that they can gain confidence through overcoming obstacles and challenges during the program.

A variety of outdoor or adventure activities are included in our programs, such as back packing, whitewater rafting, kayaking, rock climbing, mountain biking etc. These activities require physical effort, mastery of technique, teamwork and trust between members of the group, and immersion in the outdoor environment.

Pacific Discovery takes a 'challenge by choice' approach to the adventure components of our programs. We have had people from all levels of fitness and experience on our programs. Adventure activities and instruction are aimed at the novice/beginner level, however we are able to facilitate more challenge for people who are experienced in a particular discipline. Generally participants do need to have fitness at a level that they are able to comfortably walk for 2-3 hours with a small back pack.

6. Personal and leadership development component

By taking participants out of their comfort zone and challenging them physically, culturally and mentally, we encourage students to gain confidence in their abilities and provide a supportive group environment where they can grow.

All of the components provide an enormous opportunity for participants to learn about themselves, to push their boundaries, question their assumptions, to stimulate problem solving and inquiry skills.

By giving participants responsibilities and freedom within the framework and safety of a well designed and carefully managed program, participants are empowered, helping them become more capable and self-reliant.

"I learned so much about culture, eco-tourism and being conscious. I felt proud to be part of a group that was also learning about responsible travel. This program pushed us to think critically about tourism and culture and gave me the building blocks I need to work overseas someday." Heather Bugni

Australia Summer Program Details

Suitability

Open to students, graduates and non-students, ideally 18-25 years. This program is suitable for anyone of average fitness with an enthusiasm for conservation and new experiences. You need to be committed to, and prepared for, some physical work whilst on the volunteer component of the program i.e. trail building, tree planting or painting. You don't need to have had previous experience with travel or any of the activities offered.

Group Size

The group is limited to 11 participants, with a Pacific Discovery program leader. Local guides join us to assist with interpretation of historical sites, cultural experiences and activities.

Accommodation

Our accommodation will be a mixture of comfortable and clean hostels and lodges, and 3 nights camping (tents supplied). Laundry, postal, telephone and email facilities will be available most days, except while in the field on the first volunteer project and on Fraser Island. Accommodation is diverse, comfortable and carefully chosen to fit our needs.

Meals

Food is a highlight when traveling. Special dietary requirements and vegetarians are catered for. More than two thirds of meals are included in the program cost. Meals are fresh, tasty, healthy and varied. Food preparation, shared by all participants, is fun, social and often a highlight. For the meals not included, you will have the option of dining out, or self-catering with others in the group. We recommend you budget the sum of \$200 for meals not included in the program cost and snacks.

Transport

For most travel we will use our own private van with trailer.

Free Days

During the trip, we have free days reasonably spaced (approximately one per week), in towns or cities where there are sufficient facilities to allow you to catch up on personal needs such as resting, laundry, shopping, email etc.

Attitude

The program is a shared group experiences. We expect you to join the program with an open mind and a willingness to work together with your group mates to make the program an amazing experience for the whole group. Additionally, the program will be as much about the inner journey of personal growth and learning about yourself as it is about what you will experience in the outer physical journey. We expect you to be open to learning and challenging your ideas and assumptions.

Program Cost

Program cost is USD\$4,450.00

\$400 deposit due when you register; balance of program cost (\$4050) to be paid by May 1.

Included in Program Cost: Visa (with optional group flight only); All in-country travel and transport; All accommodation; More than two thirds of meals (see 'meals' above); All activities, excursions, entry fees and adventure travel as described in the itinerary; Week-long volunteer conservation project; Informal lectures from resident experts on conservation and eco-tourism; Experienced program leader/s and local guides; Online image library for your program.

Not included in Program Cost: Travel (international flights) between your home and Sydney/Cairns, Australia (refer international flights below); Some meals (approx. \$200); Travel insurance (approx. \$150).

International Flights (refer also page 18)

Flights from North America to Australia, return

Our travel agent can assist you to arrange international flights from the your nearest regional airport in the USA or Canada, to Sydney or Cairns, and return from Cairns or Sydney. You have the option of utilizing the flights recommended for this program, or arranging your own travel to/from Australia. If you choose to buy your international tickets through our travel agent, you will generally be travelling with other participants in the group. The ticket cost is approximately USD\$1200 and includes your Australian visa. Pacific Discovery does not charge any fee or commission for assisting with flights – this is a free service that we offer to simplify program arrangements for you. Refer page 18.

Flights from other countries to / from Australia

Our travel agent will be able to assist you with flights from your country. You are also welcome to arrange your own flights/travel to program start and from program finish. Please note that it is essential that you arrive in Sydney or Cairns for program start and a briefing/orientation. Please refer to page 18 for requirements of the dates/times to arrive and depart for program start and finish.

Optional Extensions

Our program will surely have whet your appetite for further travel, and you may like to continue your adventures independently or with others in your group. At the time you make your international flight bookings, enquire about the options for a stopover elsewhere on your way home.

“You will come back inspired in ways you never thought possible. I came back inspired about life. The people you meet will share stories and experiences that change the way you think about the world - to really gain knowledge and understanding of something, you have to experience it firsthand. I was challenged socially, mentally, physically, spiritually and came back a much happier, stronger person because of it. I have some of the best memories of my life on that trip and I am fortunate enough to have shared them with incredible people. For once in my life, I threw away logic, emptied out my savings account and did the one thing in my life I really wanted to do. You just have to open your mind and go after your dreams. The best of luck to all of you.” Kelli Barnett

Academic Credit Options

Academic credit is an optional, but integral component of our semester, summer and gap year travel study abroad programs. Hands-on, out-of-class educational opportunities can be a more effective way of learning than following a conventional classroom routine. The value of these educational experiences is continually being recognized and credit opportunities are made available to the participants on our programs through the cooperative efforts of supporting faculty. If you are interested in earning credit while on a Pacific Discovery program, please review the credit available for this program (as shown below). If you have further questions, don't hesitate to contact us.

Seattle Central Community College (www.pacificdiscovery.org/credit-information.aspx)

Credit is available through the Seattle Central Community College Office of Cooperative Education and Service Learning, for individuals who wish to earn credit for a variety of travel experiences. Whether you are from the US, Canada, or elsewhere, you are able to undertake this optional independent-study credit while on a Pacific Discovery program. Most courses can be taken for 5 or 10 quarter credits (3 or 6 semester credits) and a maximum of 20 credits can be taken per quarter. This credit is available to any participant (worldwide) on any of our programs and is a particularly good option for gap-year students, under-grads and students wanting an economical credit option. Seattle Central is an accredited institution and credit may be transferable to your university or college – please check this with your academic advisor.

Courses of Study (print course outlines from the website)

EDU 291: Using the World As a Classroom (5 or 10 credits)

SSC 297: Travel/Study Experience (5 or 10 credits)

ITL 197: International Cooperative Education (5 credits)

ITL 198: International Cooperative Education (5 credits)

Volunteer Overview

North Keppel Island National Park

The project will be run in conjunction with North Keppel Island Environmental Education Centre. Project work may include planting trees, controlling introduced pests, managing visitor impacts, species preservation and monitoring. You do not need any experience to undertake this work – just an interest in conservation and some enthusiasm!

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park surrounds the Keppel Bay islands. Together they form part of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, the world's largest reef and island system. North Keppel Island is the national park's largest island and aside from the environmental education center is otherwise uninhabited. Fringing reefs, nine beaches and a varied landscape of rugged cliffs, steep grass-clad hills, forests and palm groves provide a stimulating and idyllic environment for our volunteer work. Our work will be facilitated by centre staff and the week will be an awesome opportunity to learn about Australia's unique flora, fauna and Aboriginal culture.

"I felt that our conservation work actually did help to improve the environment." Erica Petrofsky.

Program Itinerary

Day 1-2, Sydney. Bold, brash and beautiful, Sydney is arguably the world's most vibrant city. Settle into our downtown accommodation near Sydney Cove, where the first European settlement in Australia was established, over 200 years ago. A detailed program briefing takes place before we explore Sydney's famous harbor and beaches by ferry, visit the Opera House and check out the local shopping areas.

Day 3-4, Blue Mountains National Park. Just two hours from Sydney but a world away, are the rugged sandstone escarpments of the Blue Mountains. We base ourselves from the main township, Katoomba, where we'll watch an IMAX documentary on what makes the Blue Mountains so special, then get outdoors to discover for ourselves. We have a full-on day canyoning in Tiger Snake canyon, involving hiking, scrambling and four rappels.

Day 5-7, Surf Camp. We journey north to an isolated section of coast where we stay in a surf-camp and learn to surf on the myriad breaks in the area. We'll be staying right on a beach and have surfing gurus as instructors. Spend evenings around a campfire debriefing each day and hearing the instructor's wild stories before going to sleep to the sound of the waves pounding the beach.

Day 8-9, Byron Bay, beaches and kayaking. On a sensational section of coastline, Byron Bay has been a hippy hang-out since the 1970s and is today, the quintessential surfing town. Tie-dyed hippies mix with bronzed surfers, artists and large numbers of local and international tourists, there to enjoy its beaches, boutiques and cafes. While here, we'll do a half-day ocean kayaking trip to see wild dolphins.

Day 10-11, Sunshine Coast and Australia Zoo. From Byron Bay we drive north into Queensland, exploring Brisbane before continuing on to the Sunshine Coast to stay beside yet another gorgeous beach. The next day at Australia Zoo we'll learn about the zoo's wildlife and the conservation initiatives of founder, Steve Irwin – the Crocodile Hunter, before continuing north to Hervey Bay, gateway to Fraser Island.

Day 12-15, Fraser Island National Park. Our favorite place in Australia! We head off on a three-day 4WD trip across Fraser Island...turtles, dingoes, diverse forests and stunning freshwater lakes lapping white sand beaches. Fraser Island is the largest sand island on earth. We'll take short hikes through beautiful forests and stay in cabins near the coast each night. After coming off Fraser Island we make our way north to the Great Barrier Reef and our volunteer conservation project.

Day 16-21, Volunteer Project – Keppel Bay Islands National Park. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park surrounds the Keppel Bay islands. Together they form part of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, the world's largest reef and island system. North Keppel Island is the national park's largest island and aside from the environmental education center is otherwise uninhabited. Fringing reefs, nine beaches and a varied landscape of rugged cliffs, steep grass-clad hills, forests and palm groves provide a stimulating and idyllic environment for our volunteer work. Our work will be facilitated by staff from the North Keppel Island Environmental Education Centre. The week will be an awesome opportunity to learn about Australia's unique flora, fauna and Aboriginal culture.

Day 22-23, Airlie Beach and Whitsunday Islands. From the township of Airlie Beach we spend an action-packed day island hopping among the Whitsunday Islands aboard an eco-certified motor boat. Enjoy snorkeling and visit spectacular Whitehaven beach, often voted 'best beach in the world'.

Day 24-26, Mission Beach and Great Barrier Reef. A long travel day brings us to palm fringed Mission Beach, where the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area meets the rainforests of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Serious beach time, rainforest hikes and a multitude of optional adventure activities are on offer – a fantastically relaxing place to spend our last days together.

Day 27-28, Cairns. It's a short drive to Cairns for the last day of the program. We'll explore the city and you'll have time to catch up on laundry, and last minute souvenir shopping before an evening program wrap. Depart Australia with an immense sense of satisfaction from the work you've completed, challenges you've overcome, and an increased knowledge and understanding of Australia's complex biodiversity.

Program Route Map



Country Information

Australia's warm climate, friendly people, unusual wildlife and dramatic natural beauty make it a fantastic destination. With a landmass comparable to the United States, but a population of only 20 million people, Australia is sparsely populated, yet home to some of the world's most vibrant cities. Australia's natural diversity is staggering - the world's largest coral reef, lush rainforests, and the most beautiful beaches. Wildlife is abundant, colorful and visible - kangaroos, koalas, flocks of raucous parrots, sea turtles and colourful reef fish.

Climate

July is a fantastic time to travel the East Coast of Australia. The weather is mild and settled with very little rainfall. July temperature: day time average 60-80°F; night time average 50-60°F

Leadership

Our programs succeed because we put a lot of thought into choosing our program leaders. We have selected a dynamic team of supportive, resourceful, experienced and highly organized people to lead our trips. Our program leaders are people in whom you can trust and confide, who remain objective whatever the circumstances and who take a genuine interest in your welfare and safety. They implicitly understand the importance of balancing the needs of individuals with group objectives, facilitating a high level of group cohesion, inspiring a genuine appreciation for the areas visited and an awareness of minimum impact travel ethics. All our leaders are trained in wilderness or remote travel first aid, group leadership and risk assessment/management.

Peace of Mind

Since its inception, in 2001, Pacific Discovery has taken over 1000 students, graduates, faculty, family and special interest groups, on experiential travel and volunteer tours, utilizing a staff of experienced and qualified program leaders. We have an excellent safety record, comprehensive Risk Management Systems and a database of alumni who are happy to be contacted for feedback. The program carries public liability insurance, and participant payments are held in trust account until disbursement. Bank, accountant and faculty contacts are available on request.

Registration Information & Checklist

- ☑ Register online for the program and pay \$400 deposit (www.pacificdiscovery.org)
- ☑ Review the pre-departure information for this program in this booklet
- ☑ Obtain a passport, or check your existing passport is valid 6 months beyond program end
- ☑ Arrange your travel insurance (page 12) and flights or travel to/from Australia (page 18)
- ☑ **Before May 1st:**
 - Complete the online medical and passport form:
www.pacificdiscovery.org/bookings/medical-form.aspx
 - Submit your final payment. An invoice will be emailed to you one month before. If you register after this date, your final payment is due within 14 days of registering.
- ☑ Decide if you will take credit on the program and register for this:
www.pacificdiscovery.org/credit-information.aspx
- ☑ Start a fitness program – you'll want to be doing at least ½ - 1 hour of exercise, 3 times a week. Anything is good...swimming, running, walking, biking, hiking, sport, dancing. The fitter you are the more you'll get out of the program.
- ☑ Review the gear list and gear tips in this booklet, and start packing
- ☑ To make the most of your time in Australia, read/watch some of the books or movies recommended in this booklet

Any Questions?

Please don't hesitate to contact us.

Pacific Discovery

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"I pushed myself to new heights, tried new things, took new risks. I made amazing friends that I shared some incredible experiences with. I came away from the program overwhelmed by the beauty of the countries we visited, and full of a new confidence in myself and a thirst for adventure. I really mean it when I say you have changed my life. Thank you!" Katie Lane

"The adventures and new experiences were amazing, but the friendships I've gained outweigh everything else put together!" Ginny Coyle

Pre-departure Information for Registered Participants

Travel Insurance

Pacific Discovery requires all participants to have a comprehensive travel insurance policy for the duration of the program. Details of your policy must be supplied to Pacific Discovery when you complete your online medical form. It is recommended that you purchase this within 14 days of registering for your program, to be eligible for maximum benefits.

What's the difference between health/medical insurance and travel insurance?

A travel insurance policy will cover you for more than just medical treatment. Most travel insurance policies should cover you for loss/damage of baggage; trip cancellation/curtailment; personal liability.

When selecting a travel insurance policy, ensure you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation, loss or theft of your personal belongings, personal liability and default of an airline.

Please be aware that most insurance policies do not cover expenses resulting from pre-existing medical conditions of which the insurance company has not been informed. If you have a pre-existing condition, it is essential that you inform both the insurance company and Pacific Discovery before traveling, for the safety of the group and yourself, and to avoid the possibility of having to meet emergency evacuation costs which can amount to tens of thousands of dollars.

The cost should be around \$150 for 1 month and the majority of program participants purchase travel insurance online from either:

STA - Student Travel (www.statravel.com > insurance)

Travel Guard International (www.travelguard.com/travelinsurance/)

Passports and Visas

Travel abroad requires a passport. If you don't have one, you need to apply for one as soon as possible. Passport application forms are available at either your central post office or county courthouse. Link to the US Government Passport website:
http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

If you already have a passport, make sure it is not within 6 months of expiring at program end. If it will expire within 6 months of program end you will need to get a new one issued at least 3 months prior to joining this program, so please do this as soon as possible.

If travelling on a US or Canadian passport and purchasing the suggested group flight through our travel agent, Sue Lai of Avia Travel, a 90-day visa will be arranged for you prior to departure, and emailed to you. You will print the visa approval and carry this with your passport.

If travelling on another nationality passport, or arranging your flights independently of our travel agent, you must arrange your own Australia visa prior to leaving your country. Please contact us for information on how to do this.

Prior to program start we send out comprehensive pre-departure information that clearly explains the arrival and rendezvous procedure.

Health

There are no specific health requirements to participate in the Australia Summer Program.

We recommend that you carry a personal first-aid kit as well as any personal medication. Please be aware that for legal reasons, our program leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug. Please ensure that you are adequately prepared.

If you have any queries regarding health recommendations for travel, please contact your doctor to discuss this.

Spending Money

Spending money usually goes towards meals not included with the program, personal shopping, email and entertainment. We recommend you budget approximately \$200 for meals not provided and snacks. You need to bring this money yourself, for meals. Shopping in Australia is comparable to the US. We think you could easily get by on \$200 – so in addition to your meal money of \$200, this is approximately \$400 total. The amount of spending money you bring really depends on your budget and shopping habits.

We recommend bringing most of your spending money on two Debit/Credit cards (essential to have a back-up in case your first card gets lost or damaged). Visa or MasterCard with the star or cirrus symbol on the back can be used most places to withdraw currency from an ATM. If you are not sure about your bank card, then contact your bank to find out if their cards are accepted in other countries.

You don't need to buy any foreign currency before you leave home.

Keeping In Touch

The easiest way to keep in touch with family and friends while in Australia is by email and travel blog.

Pacific Discovery travel blog - www.pacificdiscovery.org/blog.aspx

This is available for everyone in the group to post to, and for friends and family to read. Details of how to post to the blog will be outlined at the program orientation in Sydney. You are welcome to give this blog address to anyone who might be interested in reading about your adventures!

Make sure you can access you email account from any computer in the world - if you can't, a free Yahoo or Gmail account works well. You will have access to internet cafes in many places, and costs are approximately \$5/hour. Phone calls can be made easily and cheaply using locally bought calling cards. Call charges are about USD\$0.10 per minute. Don't bother bringing a phone card from the US – they often don't work. By all means bring your cell phone (contact your provider to set it up for use in Australia) but be aware that call costs can be very expensive.

Gear List

Traveling light is the 'ideal'. Everything you bring should fit into a medium sized backpack. Bring only what is on the list below and remember, the more space you have, the more you can take home.

Outdoor Clothing

This is clothing that you will use for work in the outdoors, and for outdoor activities and excursions. Make sure this is clothing that is comfortable, practical and that you are happy to get dirty.

- Work/gardening gloves
- Comfortable 'worn-in' sturdy hiking shoes or boots - essential that they be well worn-in
- Hiking socks x 3 pairs
- Work pants/track pants x 2
- Fleece pants
- Work shirts x 2 (t-shirts or similar)
- Jumper, jersey, or fleece top
- Fleece jacket
- Waterproof rain jacket and pants
- Warm/woolen hat (ski hat)
- Sunhat & Sunglasses

Regular/Casual Clothing

- Swimsuit
- Comfortable shoes (casual or running)
- 2 x jeans/trousers
- 2 x warm tops
- 2 x warm socks
- 3 x cotton T-shirt/shirt/tank tops
- 5 x underwear
- 1 x pack-towel or lightweight bath towel.

Equipment

- Backpack to bring everything in and for the backpacking trip.
- Small daypack to use while working
- Sleeping bag
- Sleeping pad
- Sleeping sheet

Accessories

- A camping mug, plate, bowl, cutlery
- Pocket knife
- Flashlight/headlamp (compact)
- Watch with an alarm/ travel alarm clock
- Camera
- Water bottle (min. 1 litre)
- One good book to share
- Personal first aid kit (refer below)
- Discman/iPod (optional)

Paperwork etc

- Passport & photocopy of same
- Air tickets & photocopies of same
- Travel Insurance policy details
- Debit/credit card, cash
- Travel journal (optional)
- Texts, syllabi, etc if taking credit
- Small flip photo album of friends, family, your home life, to show your trip mates and local people you meet

Toiletries

- General toiletries (toothbrush, tooth paste, soap, shampoo, sanitary needs etc.)
- Disposable contact lenses and solution
- Sunscreen and lip balm

Personal first aid kit (should contain)

- Any prescribed medications
- Blister tape/moleskin for feet
- Pain relief (Tylenol, Ibuprofen etc)
- Antihistamine (for hay fever, bites, allergies)
- Eye drops
- Sting/bite relief spray or cream (for insect bites)
- Tweezers
- Band-aids
- Antiseptic solution or powder
- Scissors
- Non-adhesive dressing
- Motion sickness pills (non-drowsy)

Do not bring: Hairdryers; electric razors; laptops; expensive, irreplaceable jewellery.

Gear Tips

Please refer to the gear list and gear tips when you are packing for the trip. There's quite a lot of information here, so take your time and read through this carefully.

First of all, you don't need to go out and spend lots of money on the latest gear. In fact it's best to bring clothing and footwear that is comfortable and well worn in.

Clothing tips...

Washing/laundry: You will be able to wash and dry clothes on most days of the trip (except while on Keppel and Fraser Islands). Because of this you don't need to bring a month's supply of clothing. You will get sick of wearing the same clothes all the time but don't worry because everyone else will be doing the same and it is much better if all of our bags actually fit into our transport.

Work clothing: This needs to be clothing that you don't mind getting dirty/roughed up. Please don't bring your brand new \$300 jacket to work in. Make sure that you can move/work in the work clothing you bring.

Temperatures can vary during the day. Early in the morning you'll probably be bundled up in jacket, and hat but by the middle of the day you'll be stripped down to t-shirt. Because of this, layered clothing is best, so you can adjust your clothing as the temperature changes. For example, against the skin you might have a t-shirt, then a fleece, then an unlined shell jacket. Plan for layered clothing like this example, rather than a t-shirt topped with a heavy lined winter jacket, because you'll either be too hot or too cold.

Rain jacket and pants: Unlined shell rainwear is best to avoid overheating. Make sure that your rain jacket and pants are substantial, rather than the disposable plastic rain jacket and pants sold in a little packet as they are really only designed to be worn in an emergency and will not stand up to a day of work let alone a week.

Casual clothing: This is what you'll wear in the evenings after work and when we're travelling. Anything you want to wear is OK.

Buying clothing in Australia: Please bring the gear you need with you (ie. everything on the gear list). Clothing in Australia is more expensive than at home so don't assume that you can pick up a wardrobe of outdoor clothing on arrival because you may be put off by the prices.

Other gear tips...

Backpack

For this program you only need a medium sized pack e.g. 4000 - 5000cu.in. You will want to buy/borrow a pack with an internal frame. Not only are internal frame packs more comfortable to carry, but they survive airlines much, much better than external.

Choosing a backpack: Smaller bodied people should make sure the pack and harness you buy or borrow is not too big for you. If borrowing one, try to borrow from a similar height/sized person.

Continued over...

The most important thing when selecting a pack is the **harness**. It should fit comfortably and be sized and adjusted to your body. Most manufacturers make each pack model with small, medium and large harnesses. The only way to check whether the pack fits properly is have someone in the store help you fit the pack with weight in it. **Shoulder straps** should sit comfortably on the shoulders. This is especially important if you have narrow shoulders as you will have to look for a pack that fits your shoulder width. **Hip belt** should sit comfortably on your hips - not on your waist or thighs! **The sternum strap** should be adjustable up or down and is important as it helps keep your shoulder straps sitting snugly on your shoulders and not riding out towards the edges.

Simple is good. The more bells and whistles a pack has, the more things there are that can break and the more the pack will weigh before you put anything into it. Weight is also something to consider when choosing a pack. Why carry 2lbs more weight because of extra features, when you don't need to. The pack you choose, should cinch down well when it's only half full. Look for side and top compression straps.

Some packs have a single compartment while others have a zipped sleeping bag compartment at the bottom. If you are looking at a pack with a separate sleeping bag compartment, check that the divider between the compartments is removable. If it is not removable the pack will sag in that area and be less comfortable to carry, unless totally full.

Here's an example of a great backpack...

REI Venus 75 Pack (women's backpack)

Volume 4,577 cu in

Weight 5 lbs 11 oz

\$199 (but last year's model may be available cheaper)

Great value backpack with excellent harness and a great zip under the flap on front which makes the pack very easy to load/unload. Internal sleeping bag compartment with removable divider. An excellent pack. Good pack manufacturers with packs readily available in the USA are: Arcteryx, Osprey, North Face, Lowe Alpine, Gregory, REI.



Daypack/small backpack: Similar to a backpacking pack but smaller. Must have two shoulder straps and have plenty of room for rain jacket, camera, sunscreen, sunglasses, water bottle, diary etc.

Sleeping bag: You will use your sleeping bag on roughly half the nights of the trip. A compact 3-season sleeping bag is best.

Sleeping pad: Either foam or Thermarest type. Oversize inflatable Pads are not good because they are heavy to hike with and get punctured easily if they don't fit inside packs. If you have an inflatable camping mat and it does not fit inside your pack, don't bring it, instead bring an inexpensive foam mat.

Sleeping sheet: A sleeping sheet is a roomy silk or cotton sleeping bag. It is useful to keep the inside of your sleeping bag clean and to use in Australia when it's too hot for your sleeping bag. If you don't already have one, take an old lightweight summer sheet, fold in half, sew along one side and one end.

Toiletries: You may not be able to get the same brand of contact lens solution, toothpaste or shampoo. If you are particular about which brands you use, bring enough to last till you return home.

Music: If you play a musical instrument you might like to bring it with you. iPods/MP3 players – good escapism.

Electrical Items: If you plan to bring an electrical item, look at the label on the item or its charger for the voltage information. If it says 100-240V it can be used in Australia. If it says 110V it will blow-up! You will also need to bring an outlet adaptor, as Australia has three prong outlets. You can buy one from most outdoor/travel and electrical stores and in Australia.

Once you've made a pile of everything you might bring, double check to see if you can leave anything behind...but make sure you DO bring the required gear. Honestly...everyone on our trips thinks they bring too much clothing.

Your International Flights to from Australia

Once you have registered for this program, please go ahead and arrange your international flights to Australia and return. You can contact our travel agent, Sue Lai at Avia Travel, who arranges group flights for our programs. Our agent will work with you to find the best routing and fare for you. You may choose to fly from your nearest regional airport, or to depart from a major hub such as Los Angeles or New York. You will confirm your flight arrangements with the agent and pay the travel agent directly for your flights. Once you have confirmed and paid for your flights, you will enter your flight details into our online medical/passport form, so that your program leader can meet you at the airport on arrival in Sydney or Cairns.

July 2011 Program Participants:

Arrive Sydney on Saturday 2 July, anytime (usual departure from US, 2 days prior)*

Depart Cairns on Friday 29 July, anytime (usual arrival to the US, same day)

**Arrival in time for program start is mandatory, to participate in a comprehensive program briefing.*

Arrival before program start: You may arrive earlier than program start if you wish, or depart later than program finish. You will need to cover your own accommodation costs and transfers until program start/after finish. We can assist with accommodation and transfer bookings. Please contact us about this once you have confirmed your flights.

Pacific Discovery travel agent for flight bookings

Sue Lai

Avia Travel

760-A Gilman St

Berkeley, CA 94710

Tel: (800) 950 2842, Tel: (510) 558 2150

Fax: (510) 558 2158

Email: sue@aviatravel.com

Alternatively, you are welcome to make your own travel arrangements to/from Sydney or Cairns. If you do make your own arrangements, please ensure you book flights to arrive and depart as shown above. If you have any questions about your itinerary, please contact us to discuss this before you book your flights. If you arrange your own flights, you are responsible for your own visa and transfer arrangements and costs. Please notify us and we will give you clear information regarding the Australia visa and arrival procedure, and how to rendezvous with the group on arrival in Australia.

Important Australia visa note to all participants: Your Australia visa must be arranged prior to leaving your country. If purchasing your flights through Avia Travel, and travelling on a US or Canadian passport, your Australia visa will be arranged for you. Your visa is valid for 90-days, so you have plenty of time to travel independently in Australia on this visa after program finish.

Extensions: When buying your international flights, it may be possible to buy additional flights within Australia very cheaply (Qantas offer a 'boomerang pass'). This is a good option if wanting to visit other places within Australia such as Uluru / Ayers Rock, or Perth.

Recommended Books

The Future Eaters by Tim Flannery

An excellent and very readable ecological history of the Australian land and people...

Dirt Music by Tim Winton

Excellent page turner of a novel set in Western Australia.

Songlines by Bruce Chatwin

Fascinating insight into aboriginal culture by traveling writer Bruce Chatwin.

The True History of the Kelly Gang by Peter Carey

Booker Prize winning novel. Recreation of the life of Australia's most famous outlaw.

In a Sunburned Country by Bill Bryson

Veteran travel writer Bill Bryson's at times hilarious take on Australia.

Oscar and Lucinda by Peter Carey

Another Booker prize winning novel about early Australian settlers.

Cloudstreet by Tim Winton

Excellent novel about an unusual Perth family. I loved this book.

The Fatal Shore by Robert Hughes

The definitive history of Australia's convict settlement.

Any of Bryce Courtney's novels set in Australia:

The Potato Factory, Tomo & Hawk, April Fool

Tracks by Robyn Davidson

An amazing adventure story of one woman's journey by camel across the Australian deserts from Alice Springs to the ocean.

Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence by Doris Pilkington, Nugi Garimara

True story of young aboriginal girls taken from their family to be raised in an oppressive orphanage. The girls ran away and walked 1000 miles home across Australia's inhospitable Western Deserts. Recently made into a feature film. It's a strong condemnation of Australia's past racist policies.

A Secret Country: The Hidden Australia by John Pilger

A fascinating book...*A desanitized view of Australia from a veteran Australian journalist, ranging from its founding as a penal colony in 1788 to the machinations of modern politics.*

Recommended Movies

About, or made in, Australia

Ned Kelly (2003) US release 2004 Gregor Jordan

Stars: Heath Ledger, Orlando Bloom, Geoffrey Rush, Naomi Watts

In the late 19th century, Edward 'Ned' Kelly, the son of Irish immigrants, became the world's most wanted man, with an unprecedented bounty on his head. Ned Kelly, the movie, charts the turbulent life of Ned (Heath Ledger) as he progresses from part-time horse thief to full-time enemy of the state and folk hero.

Rabbit Proof Fence(released 2002) Philip Noyce

Set in Australia in 1931, RABBIT-PROOF FENCE tells the story of a government policy that required "half-caste" children (whose mothers were Aboriginal and whose fathers were white) to be taken from their homes by the authorities to be trained to work as servants. Based on the true story of Molly Craig, Philip Noyce's film of small gestures and few words follows the odyssey of three young girls who escaped from the government's training facility and, using the country's long stretches of rabbit-proof fences as their guide, walked 1500 miles to get back home.

The Dish (2001) Rob Sitch

In July 1969, the eyes of the world were on the Apollo 11 moon landing--but the world would have watched blank television screens if not for the hard work of a group of Australians manning the Parkes Radio Telescope, one of the largest dishes in the world. In THE DISH, a dramatization of the events surrounding the telecast of the space mission, Cliff Buxton (Sam Neill) and Al Burnett (Patrick Warburton) try to hold their crew together through calamities and crises ranging from dangerously high winds to a sudden power failure that cuts off contact with the distant astronauts, forcing the team to impersonate Neil Armstrong for the benefit of the visiting American ambassador. THE DISH is a rousing, feel-good movie that succeeds both because of its perfectly formed characters and because of a heartwarming tone that illustrates that working for a common goal is the highest calling in life.

The Castle (1997) Rob Sitch

Hilarious Australian comedy. The Kerrigan family of Coolaroo, Australia live in a modest house. Never mind that it's built on a toxic landfill- adjacent to the constant hum of high-power lines- and sits on the landing path of a nearby airport. For the happy-go-lucky Kerrigans consider their home as their castle!

The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (1994) Stephan Elliot

Starring: Terence Stamp, Hugo Weaving, Guy Pearce

Three cabaret drag queens trek across Australia's outback in an unreliable bus christened Priscilla in this highly acclaimed comedy. When they break down in the middle of nowhere, the colorful trio does what they do best--they put on a show!

Muriel's Wedding (1995) P.J Hogan

Muriel (Toni Collette) is a young misfit adrift in a small Australian town called Porpoise Spit. She loves attending weddings just to witness two people starting new lives -- although it seems likely that Muriel herself will never have one. Finally, however, she gets fed up with being an onlooker and decides to take some action: she accepts a blank check from her mother that's supposed to start her off on a career selling makeup, and cashes it in for her parents' life savings.

Flush with mad money, she goes on a tropical vacation and then hightails it to Sydney to avoid the shame of possible jail time. There, Muriel renews her acquaintance with the vivacious Rhonda, who

introduces her to new possibilities and adventures. But Muriel still lacks one important thing: a husband. How far will she go to get one?

Lantana (2001) Ray Lawrence

LANTANA is an intelligent, well-written, well-acted film that is much more than just another cop thriller. Anthony LaPaglia stars as Leon, a Sydney police detective who is cheating on his wife, Sonja (Kerry Armstrong), with a married woman from their dance class (Rachael Blake), even though he still loves his wife. There's something missing from his life, but he's not sure what. His relationship with his son is strained, and even his partner, Claudia (Leah Purcell), knows something is wrong. But as his affair heats up and a murder mystery that seems to involve all of the people in his life begins to consume his attentions, he is forced to reexamine his future both as a family man and a cop.

Strictly Ballroom (1992) Baz Luhrmann

Scott Hastings is an ambitious, athletic dancer eager to break with the Australian Dance Federation's stodgy traditions and choreograph his own steps for the upcoming Ballroom Dancing Championship. Scott's mother Shirley, his prissy partner Liz and coach Les are up in arms over his brash attitude towards ballroom conventions. Angry at Scott's new passionate refusal to follow the rules, Liz quits, leaving him without a partner. When Fran, a klutzy beginner, approaches him, Scott doesn't believe she can make the grade. But once Fran and her family introduce Scott to the vivacious Spanish rhythms and sharply sensuous moves that are part of their culture, he realizes this is the very outlet he's needed for his talents. Together, Fran and Scott boldly challenge the Federation's provincial attitudes, making everyone green with envy.

Shine (1996) Scott Hicks

Shine tells the dramatic story of Australian musical prodigy, David Helfgott. Helfgott shone as a pianist from an early age and was intensely nurtured and guided by his musically-frustrated father, a Holocaust survivor. Told in flashback, the film chronicles how this relationship traumatises the young, socially awkward boy until he has a mental breakdown while studying in London. The second half of the film follows Helfgott's slow recovery in Australia and his eventual comeback under the care of his wife and other supporters. Nominated for seven Academy Awards, winning the Oscar for Best Actor (Geoffery Rush).

Booking Conditions and Liability Release for Pacific Discovery Programs

Payment Schedule & Booking Conditions

Prices in brochures and on website are correct at the time of publishing.

Pacific Discovery reserves the right to alter these prices at any time. The price of your program is guaranteed when you have paid in full.

All program participants must acknowledge reading and agreement with Booking Conditions and Liability Release, at the time of registration. A Medical Form must be completed once final payment is made. By advancing deposit to Pacific Discovery, the depositor thereby agrees to be bound by the booking conditions and payment schedule.

Upon receiving your forms and confirming space on the program of your choice, we will contact you with pre-travel information covering gear to bring, health & vaccinations, travel insurance, climate, spending money, cultural tips, and a list of recommended books and films.

If the program date you request is already full we will not process your deposit, but will contact you and add you to the waiting list.

The final payment covering balance of program cost and optional group flights is due 90 days before program departure, unless late booking. Master Card or Visa accepted.

Bookings accepted less than 90 days prior to departure can be secured with the deposit; full payment must then reach us within a further 14 days.

If the balance is not received by the specified date, we reserve the right to cancel your booking and your deposit may be forfeited.

Cancellations

If you decide to cancel your program, the following fees apply at the time (prior to departure) we receive written notice of your cancellation: More than 91 days before departure - loss of deposit; 31 to 90 days before departure - 50% of program cost; 0 to 30 days before departure - 100% of program cost.

If you fail to join the program, join after its departure or leave prior to its completion, Pacific Discovery reserves the right to set the amount of refund (if any). Such terms are adopted in a similar form throughout the travel industry. They are usually covered by your trip cancellation/travel insurance, provided the reason for cancellation falls within the terms of the policy.

If we cancel a program

Pacific Discovery reserves the right to cancel any program if sign-up is inadequate to make the program economically feasible for us to operate. If this happens, we give a full refund of program cost paid. However, Pacific Discovery is not responsible for additional expenses incurred by you in preparing for the trip (e.g. non-refundable air tickets, gear or medical expenses). If a program is under-booked we will inform you before final payment is due.

Liability Release

Pacific Discovery Limited is a private New Zealand NGO formed to promote experiential education and sustainable tourism. Our incorporation number is WN/1148326.

Medical Considerations

Pacific Discovery is not a medical facility and therefore is unable to accept any responsibility regarding medical advice, medications or inoculations that you or your doctor deem necessary for your safe participation. Pacific Discovery assumes no liability regarding provision of medical care.

Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all program participants. Your travel insurance must provide cover against personal accident, medical expenses, emergency repatriation and personal liability. We also recommend it covers cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

Responsibility

By participating in a Pacific Discovery program, you assume certain obligations to Pacific Discovery and the other program members. It is your responsibility to:

- Understand the conditions implied in the Pacific Discovery itinerary and trip suitability description.
- Select a program (with the help of the Pacific Discovery staff) that is appropriate to your interests and abilities.
- Prepare for the program by familiarizing yourself with the itinerary and program dossier sent by Pacific Discovery.
- Bring appropriate gear and clothing as advised by Pacific Discovery.
- Follow considerate standards of personal hygiene in order to reduce risk of contracting diseases.
- Follow considerate social behavior with other program participants and respect their habits.
- Act in an appropriate and courteous manner befitting the customs of countries you visit.
- Complete the program itinerary as scheduled (or as adjusted by your program leader as necessary).
- Respect the countries we visit by using environmentally safe products, staying on established routes of travel and not littering.

You are aware that travel within a group may involve compromise to accommodate the diverse desires and physical abilities of group members. Your program leader will do their utmost to ensure that any problems are solved for the benefit of the group as a whole. Signing this Liability Release Form signifies your acceptance of the leader's authority to make decisions affecting the group or individuals. For instance, he/she may require an individual to leave the group if he/she believes that a person's health is at risk, if an illegal act is committed, or their behavior becomes detrimental to the safety, enjoyment and well-being of the group. Should the leader take such action, that person would not be entitled to any refund. Similarly, a participant leaving a program en-route will not be entitled to any refund. Under these circumstances Pacific Discovery reserves the right to set the amount of refund (if any).

Pacific Discovery will not accept responsibility or liability for any program participant who contravenes any law or regulation of any country visited.

You acknowledge that travel on a Pacific Discovery program requires a degree of flexibility, and understand that the route, accommodation and modes of transport are subject to change without prior notice due to local circumstances. We reserve the right to make reasonable changes in the itinerary where deemed advisable for the comfort and well-being of program members. These changes are

binding and additional expenses will be charged to you if the reason for any alteration is outside the control of Pacific Discovery.

You acknowledge that Pacific Discovery contracts with a network of companies, government agencies and individuals to assist in the running of its programs. To the best of Pacific Discovery's knowledge, these third parties are qualified to perform the duties they are contracted to perform. However Pacific Discovery will not be held liable for any injury, damage, loss, delay or irregularity that may occur due to the behavior of these third parties.

Any air travel that is part of any program is subject to the conditions as stipulated by the airline concerned and liability is limited in accordance with International Convention.

No employee, servant or agent of Pacific Discovery has authority to vary these conditions.

The terms and conditions of all agreements made with Pacific Discovery shall be subject to, and governed by, New Zealand law. You agree New Zealand will be the forum for resolution of any dispute related to your participation in this program.

If a dispute arises, you will try to resolve it directly with Pacific Discovery. If you cannot resolve the dispute you agree to go to mediation first. You will agree the mediator with Pacific Discovery within 10 days of notification of the dispute. If a mediator is not agreed or appointed, you and Pacific Discovery agree to participate in arbitration under the Arbitration Act 1996 (NZ).

The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and assumption of risk binding on your heirs, executor, administrator and all members of your family.

You understand that traveling with Pacific Discovery may involve risks (and rewards) above and beyond those encountered on a more conventional holiday, and that you are undertaking an adventure program with inherent dangers. You understand that you are traveling to geographical areas where, amongst other things, the standard of accommodation, transport, safety, hygiene, cleanliness, medical facilities, telecommunications and infrastructure development may not be of the standard you are used to at home or would find on a conventional holiday. You have read and understood the itinerary and suitability for this program you are undertaking and have provided details of any pre-existing medical conditions. You accept these risks and obligations and you fully assume the risks of travel. You release Pacific Discovery from any liabilities connected to these risks to the maximum extent permitted by law.

I understand that this is a release of liability and a contract between me and Pacific Discovery Limited and/or its contracted tour operators or affiliated organizations, and I sign this agreement of my own free will. If any part of this agreement is deemed unenforceable, all other parts shall remain in full force and effect.

Please contact us with any questions.
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