
GEEO ITINERARY

Australia

Day 1: Cairns Arrive in Cairns at any time. Meet your group for a welcome meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m.

Arrive in Cairns at any time. Due to the potential for flight delays or cancellations, we recommend that you plan to arrive in Australia at least a day in advance. This will also give you time to adjust to the time difference and overcome any jetlag. We can book extra hotel nights for you in Cairns before the trip. Please note that check-in at the hotel is usually around 2:00-3:00 p.m. There are no planned activities until an intro meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m., usually in the hotel lobby. Check for a sign or ask at the reception desk about the exact time and location of the group meeting. Please make every effort to arrive in time for this meeting. If you are delayed and will arrive late, please inform us. Your tour leader will then leave you a message at the front desk informing you of where and when to meet up tomorrow. After the meeting, you might choose to get dinner at a nearby restaurant with your traveling companions and your tour leader to further get to know one another.

Day 2: Cairns/Cape Tribulation (B, L) Head north to Cape Tribulation. Stop en route to explore Mossman Gorge and take an interpretive walk through the Daintree Rainforest.

Today we head north to Cape Tribulation. We will stop en route to explore Mossman Gorge and take an interpretive walk through the Daintree Rainforest. Follow the Aboriginal guide and learn about bush food, medicinal plants and the lasting relationship of the Kuku Yalanji people with their natural environment. Find out how to make bush soap, watch an ochre painting demonstration, and sample some bush tea. Approximate travel time: 3.5 hrs by private vehicle

Day 3: Cape Tribulation (B) With a free day, opt for a trip to the Great Barrier Reef or to explore Daintree National Park.

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Day 4: Cape Tribulation/Cairns (B) Return to Cairns in the afternoon with free time to explore this laid-back city. En route, stop by Port Douglas and opt to have lunch at a local market.

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Day 5: Cairns/Airlie Beach (B) Depart early for a full day of travel to reach Airlie Beach, enjoying scenic views along the way.

Depart early for a full day of travel to reach Airlie Beach with time to explore the town. Airlie Beach is a relaxed Australian resort town on Queensland's Whitsunday Coast. It's a gateway to the Whitsunday Islands and the Great Barrier Reef. Approximate travel time: 9-10 hrs by private vehicle

Day 6: Airlie Beach (L) Spend the day out on the water boating around the Whitsunday Islands, visiting the Great Barrier Reef. Opt to swim or snorkel, and hike to an island lookout over Whitehaven Beach, known for its stunning white sand. Return to Airlie Beach for the night.

Enjoy a day out on the water amidst some of the 74 tropical islands that make up the Whitsunday

archipelago. The Whitsunday Islands are in the heart of the Great Barrier Reef. When it gets too hot, pull on a mask and snorkel (provided free of charge) and dive overboard to check out the variety of brightly colored marine plants, coral, and fish that thrive in these warm tropical waters. (Note that fins are not provided in order to adhere with local coral conservation efforts.)

Day 7: Airlie Beach/Byron Bay Fly to Brisbane and transfer to Byron Bay for two nights in this "hippie" paradise.

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Day 8: Byron Bay Spend the morning down at the beach for a surf lesson with a trained surf instructor. Enjoy a few hours of instruction before hitting the waves for some practice rides.

Spend the morning down at the beach for a surf lesson with a trained surf instructor. Spend some time in the water getting familiar with the waves, practice paddling, and then pop up to balance on the wider, softer beginner boards. You will have the afternoon free in Byron Bay. One option is to pre-book the "Byron Bay Ocean Kayaking" activity. Slice through the waters of the iconic Byron Bay on this half-day kayaking adventure. Paddle past the most easterly point of the Australian mainland, see the Julian Rocks Marine Reserve, and ride the waves into shore. On top of it all, keep a close eye out for dolphins and whales (in season) who call these waters home. You can book this by emailing GEE0 at least 60 days before departure. You could also take a walk to the Cape Byron Lighthouse, 3km (1.9 mi) northeast of Byron Bay. The popular white structure emits the most powerful light of all working lighthouses in the country, and it's also located at the most easterly point of the Australian continent. Head up to the top of the tower to scan the ocean for whales (the Southern Cross University's Whale Research Centre is located here).

Day 9: Byron Bay/Port Macquarie Spend the morning in Byron Bay before heading to the coastal township of Port Macquarie, featuring all the beauty of the beach set alongside gorgeous national parks.

Spend your free time in the morning at Byron Bay wandering the town to check out the local shops or have one last coffee on the beach. Then head to the coastal township of Port Macquarie, featuring all the beauty of the beach set alongside gorgeous national parks. Enjoy an evening in Port Macquarie. Approximate travel time: 5 hrs by private vehicle

Day 10: Port Macquarie/Blue Mountains (B) Travel from Port Macquarie to the Blue Mountains, passing by charming mountain towns, ancient Aboriginal rock art, lush green valleys, and loads of craggy cliffs.

Today we travel from Port Macquarie to the Blue Mountains. These mountains in Australia are best known for their soaring sandstone ridges. As you drive, pass by charming mountain towns, ancient Aboriginal rock art, lush green valleys, and loads of craggy cliffs. It doesn't matter if the journey is shrouded in clouds or glowing in the sinking sun, you'll still spot beauty around every turn. Approximate travel time: 6-7 hrs by private vehicle

Day 11: Blue Mountains Travel deeper into the majestic Blue Mountains and experience the natural beauty of this World Heritage Area. Explore the landscape around Leura and Katoomba, view the Three Sisters, take a walk in Jamison Valley, and ride on the Scenic Railway, the steepest railway in the world.

With charming Leura as our base, we will explore the major attractions of the Blue Mountains from sightseeing to bushwalking to cafés and more. As a group, we will take in some amazing lookouts over

the Jamison Valley, via the iconic Three Sisters. Descend down the 900-step giant staircase to the valley floor. Walk amongst the beautiful forest to the steepest incline railway in the world, the Katoomba Scenic Railway. This railway is steep and plunges into the rainforest and through the valley. Opt to ride its 52-degrees angle, or take the Scenic Cableway. If you're keen for more walking, and time permitting, take the 900 stairs back up.

Day 12: Blue Mountains/Sydney Continue onward to Sydney, where you'll have an orientation walk and some free time. Opt to rent a bike, stroll the botanical gardens, or visit the iconic Opera House.

This morning, leave the Blue Mountains behind and continue onward to Sydney. Once you arrive, head out for a group orientation walk before taking advantage of some free time to keep exploring. Opt to rent a bike, stroll the botanical gardens, or visit the iconic Opera House. Approximate travel time: 2 hrs by private vehicle

Day 13: Sydney Get a feel for the city. Relax seaside at Bondi Beach. Enjoy an optional final night out with the group.

You will have this whole day free to explore Sydney as you choose. See our optional activities list further below.

Day 14: Sydney Depart Sydney at any time.

There are no planned activities today, so you may depart Sydney at any time. If you wish to extend your stay in Sydney, consider booking post-tour accommodation with us. Please note that check-out time from the hotel is usually mid-morning, but luggage storage services are available at the reception desk. Want more adventure? Book two or more GEEO programs in the same school year and receive a discount! GEEO will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs per year). If you would like to extend your time abroad but don't see another GEEO program that interests you, let us know. We can work with you to find a trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Their tours are open to the general public and not designed specifically for educators, but we can still offer you and your travel companions a discounted educator price on any additional tours that you book.