



## Sample Itinerary for AUIP New Zealand & Australia Service Learning Program

*Please note: This itinerary is a sample of potential program activities, based on previous years' programs. Deviations from this plan may be expected.*

### **Day 1: Depart U.S. for New Zealand**

### **Day 2: En route to New Zealand**

(lose a day crossing the International Dateline)

### **Day 3: Auckland to Tauranga**

Arrive into Auckland, New Zealand's largest city, and then travel down the coast to Tauranga, located on the beautiful Bay of Plenty. We'll have a chance to settle into our hostel near the beach before it's time for orientation. We round off the day with a delicious Welcome Dinner before your first night's sleep under the stars of the Southern Cross.

### **Day 4: Tauranga**

Today we begin in-country lectures with presentations from local experts on topics such as New Zealand's unique flora and fauna, watershed management, and conservation. After lunch we'll have a guided tour of one of the largest wetland restoration projects in the southern hemisphere, before we're turned loose for dinner to sample some of the local restaurants of your choosing.

### **Day 5: Tauranga**

After lectures on sustainability issues, we head to the beach to learn coastal care techniques. In the afternoon, we'll pass along our new skills when we work alongside groups of local elementary school pupils to restore native plant communities in the coastal dunes. It's a great chance to get involved with the local community and help the environment.

### **Day 6: Tauranga**

We'll get our hands dirty today as we aid an environmental restoration program and help plant native trees in vulnerable areas. We'll also begin our exploration of the worldview of the Māori people, which is quite different from that found in western culture. Visiting a local marae (Māori meeting house), we'll be welcomed with the appropriate formal protocols. Then it's time for a hearty dinner followed by an evening of Māori presentations.

### **Day 7: Tauranga to Rotorua**

This morning's tree planting will not only improve local habitats for native birds and insects, it's a good way to help offset our carbon footprint. In the afternoon, we'll drive a few hours south toward the Rotorua region.

### **Day 8: Rotorua**

The smell of sulphur hangs over Rotorua, making it clear we're in a volcanically active region. Here we'll explore an endangered species breeding program and learn about the

efforts being made to conserve New Zealand's unique bird life. This afternoon provides free time to explore Rotorua – the tourism capital of the North Island.

#### **Day 9: Rotorua to Auckland**

After a group discussion, we head west to the 'mainland island' of Maungatautiri. This extinct volcano surrounded by farmland has been carefully fenced to keep out cats, ferrets, rats, and other introduced predators that are the scourge of New Zealand's native bird life. We'll have a guided tour of the area within the enclosure and see first-hand how active management can make a difference to conservation. We'll also assist this conservation effort by conducting vegetation surveys in the protected area. By nightfall, we'll be back in Auckland and celebrating the conclusion of the New Zealand portion of our program with a group dinner in the heart of the city.

#### **Day 10: Auckland to Brisbane**

There's time for some last-minute souvenir shopping before we depart for Auckland International Airport, and then we're off to Australia. We'll spend one night in Brisbane, the capital city of the state of Queensland, before moving north tomorrow.

#### **Day 11: Brisbane to Townsville to Paluma**

Tropical North Queensland provides a warm welcome as we travel by chartered coach to the rainforest of Paluma National Park before arriving at our accommodation among the dry forest of the Queensland bush. We'll settle in before a lecture on the traditional owners of the land here, followed by a group dinner in front of a bonfire.

#### **Day 12: Paluma**

We'll tour a solar power plant and learn about Australian energy politics before the afternoon sees us get back to unspoiled nature with a guided hike through a rocky gorge. Give in to the temptation of a cooling swim in the river in this dramatic landscape, before rounding the day off with a platypus safari and a hearty dinner.

#### **Day 13: Paluma to Mission Beach**

Today we move back to the coast, arriving by mid-afternoon at the small community of Mission Beach. There's some free time this afternoon before we close the evening with a group module discussion.

#### **Day 14: Mission Beach**

Join our local Aboriginal guides for a leisurely kayaking trip down the beautiful Bulgan River. Your guides will share their indigenous views on the environment and provide a new perspective on this wild landscape. We'll also take some time to contribute to the restoration of local wetlands. The project is a joint venture between the government and the Nywaigi people, the Aboriginal culture that has existed in the area for tens of thousands of years.

#### **Day 15: Mission Beach to Port Douglas**



We participate in service learning this morning as we aid the Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation by lending a hand with vegetation surveys in a critical wildlife corridor. Here we measure rainforest trees and monitor restoration efforts. Then it's off to the tourist town of Port Douglas, where we'll be based for a few days.

#### **Day 16: Port Douglas**

We begin preparing for our visit to the Great Barrier Reef with lectures about the ecology and management of this amazing natural structure. In the afternoon, we visit The Wildlife Habitat, a small zoo with lots of local wildlife. Join us tonight for a pizza dinner and a chance to get familiar with your snorkeling gear in the hotel swimming pool.

#### **Day 17: Port Douglas / Great Barrier Reef**

Today we journey out to the Great Barrier Reef for guided snorkeling and data collection on your reef module assignment.

#### **Day 18: Port Douglas / Great Barrier Reef**

Now that you have the hang of it, we'll investigate even more of the Great Barrier Reef on our all-day outing.

#### **Day 19: Port Douglas**

After two days in the water, today we'll work in the classroom to discuss your project data and issues of marine resource management. There will be some free time to work on your module assignments.

#### **Day 20: Port Douglas to Cape Tribulation**

We travel further north today to reach the Daintree Rainforest and the tiny hamlet of Cape Tribulation. We will hear from our local guide about rainforests and mangroves and get out into the forest for some interpretive hikes.

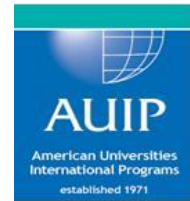
#### **Day 21: Cape Tribulation**

Our rainforest exploration continues with a visit to the Daintree Discovery Centre, where we can access the canopy's layers via steel walkways. The afternoon is free for individual course work or your own activities. We'll also make an interpretive hike into the forest at night, when a whole different range of creatures are active.

#### **Day 22: Cape Tribulation**

We have a further service learning opportunity this morning as we visit the Daintree Rainforest Observatory. We'll contribute to their data set of tree growth rates by measuring plots of regenerating forest here, plus we'll have the opportunity to go up in the crane that allows researchers to access the flora and fauna of the rainforest canopy. In the afternoon, we'll bring together all of our experiences as part of a group discussion and final exam preparation.

#### **Day 23: Cape Tribulation to Cairns**



We'll travel back south to the city of Cairns, the largest city in the tropical north. Here we'll put the finishing touches on preparations for the final exam and work on our final paper.

**Day 24: Cairns**

This morning we have the final exam before using our last afternoon for exploring the city. There's time for some last-minute souvenir shopping before we complete the program with a gala Farewell Dinner.

**Day 25: Cairns to U.S.**

After breakfast, we are off to the airport and then homeward-bound with the shared memories and new perspectives that can only be gained by studying abroad!

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