

AUSTRALIA - QUEENSLAND

7 DAYS | **ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY**

PROGRAM ITINERARY

The protection and sustainability of our planet is the focus of this week-long tour which packs in hands-on learning in some of the most astounding landscapes on the planet. It begins and ends in Cairns, where students will become marine biologists for a day as they study the ecology, health and conservation issues affecting the world's largest coral reef. Heading inland they will venture into the astounding Atherton Tablelands, Daintree National Park and Cape Tribulation to see first-hand how the landscape is being conserved. Rainforest tours as well as trips to a wind farm, syntropic farm and an ocean plastic clean-up barely scratch the surface of the experiences awaiting students on this carefully-designed and highly rewarding tour.

1

DEPART AUSTRALIAN CITY – ARRIVE CAIRNS

Dinner included

The first day of our action-packed tour begins as we arrive in vibrant Cairns, sandwiched between the magnificent Great Barrier Reef on one side and the lush tropical rainforests of Atherton Tablelands on the other. We will head straight off to James Cook University (JCU), home to the world class EduQuarium, for a two hour guided tour. Students will not only get up close to astounding ocean creatures, but meet filmmakers and scientists who use this state-of-the-art facility for research and creating natural history documentaries.

2

CAIRNS – ATHERTON TABLELANDS

Breakfast at the hostel, lunch and dinner at the lodge

Atherton Tablelands is a vast highland region of rainforest, wetlands and savannahs in Northern Queensland, and has become a model for ecological and environmental sustainability. Today we set off from the city to explore this lush land and discover how man and nature can

coexist. Our first stop is the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway where students will soar above the Barron Gorge National Park – part of the Australia’s Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. A fun-filled guided tour on an amphibious army duck vehicle is next up, where students will be shown tropical plants and wildlife before spending some time cruising around the lake, stopping to plant a tree in a fruit orchard.

In the evening, we will settle into the Wallaby Eco Lodge, our home for the next two nights, before enjoying an authentic smoking ceremony with local indigenous rainforest people who will share their passion and knowledge on the traditional techniques used in caring for the landscape.

3

ATHERTON TABLELANDS

After a hearty breakfast at the lodge we venture further into the magnificent landscape of Atherton Tablelands to discover ecological sustainability in action. Our first stop is the Mt Emerald Wind Farm, where students will learn how the 53 wind turbines produce power for 75,000 homes, before carrying on to the Tolga Syntropic Farm. Farming is the backbone of the region’s economy and at this revolutionary farm students will discover a fascinating eco-farming practice where crops and trees are grown symbiotically in a method known as syntropic farming.

After a busy morning we venture into the rainforest for a nature walk, stopping for a swim and picnic at the crystal clear volcanic Lake Eacham. Our afternoon is spent paddling gently across the waters of Lake Tinaroo, keeping a look out for indigenous wildlife such as reptiles and barking owls.

Breakfast and dinner at the lodge

Picnic lunch provided

4

ATHERTON TABLELANDS – CAPE TRIBULATION

The world’s oldest rainforest is our destination today, and Daintree National Park and Cape Tribulation never fail to impress. We have a busy schedule planned, and we start at a rehabilitation centre home to a natural community of rock wallabies and birds. The owner will explain about the business, environment and animal behaviour before engaging in open discussions with students about the impacts of ventures such as this on

Breakfast and dinner at the lodge

Picnic lunch provided

the environment. We will take the beautiful Granite Gorge as a case study, discussing together landscape changes, the impact of rainfall and how dams help farmers irrigate their land, before taking a well-earned picnic rest.

Our afternoon will be packed with a trip to the jaw-dropping Alexandra Lookout for views across the entire landscape, as well as a stop at the Daintree Ice Cream Company, where ice creams and sorbets are handmade using artisan methods with quirky, tropical flavours, many of which come from their tropical fruit orchard. We then delve into a remote part of Daintree accessible only by 4WD vehicle to study the degradation of land without management at Emmagen Creek and learn about the measures put in place to protect rainforests. We end a fascinating day with a night walk in the rainforest to hear the sounds of the region's nocturnal wildlife in action before hunkering down in PK's Jungle Lodge.

5

CAPE TRIBULATION – CAIRNS

We head back to the city today but before we do it's time to meet some salt water crocodiles as the students set off on a croc-watching cruise to study estuarine habitat connections. They will also take part in a Parley Clean-Up activity, joining the fight against ocean plastics. It is a rewarding and educational experience to feel they have given back to the environment, and they will learn about the Parley Global Cleanup Network and how they can be ambassadors for it. We end our day back in Cairns where students will visit Reef Teach, a world leading platform for research and education of the Great Barrier Reef.

Breakfast at the Lodge

lunch included

6

CAIRNS

This intensive full-day experience sees students be guided by marine experts as they learn about reef ecology, climate change, marine life identification and predators on the Great Barrier Reef. They will set off on a guided snorkel safari by boat where they will conduct a survey on the health of the reef, collecting valuable information which is inputted into the Eye on the Reef programme run by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. This fun, immersive day builds both student's knowledge

Breakfast at the hostel

lunch included

base on the conservation issues of the reef and their role in its future protection.

7

CAIRNS – AUSTRALIAN CITY

After a week of immersive, boots-on-the-ground, hands on learning it is time to say goodbye to Northern Queensland and head back home armed with newfound knowledge and plenty of unforgettable memories.

Breakfast at the hostel

PROGRAM INCLUSIONS:

- A return economy airfare with a premier carrier
- Accommodation in a hostel in Cairns and eco lodge Atherton Tablelands and 3 star resort in Cape Tribulation
- Meals: Breakfast daily, 5 x lunches and 4 x dinners
- Local tour guide from day 2-5
- Private coach for sightseeing program

1 NIGHT CAIRNS

- Coach: Cairns airport – hostel
- James Cook University 2 hour EduQuarium Tour
- Skyrail: Cairns – Kuranda
- Coach: Kuranda – Atherton Tablelands
- Entrance fee: Rainforest Nature Park
- Sustainability Tour
- Army Duck Tour
- Tree Planting

2 NIGHTS ATHERTON TABLELANDS

- Welcome to country and smoking ceremony
- Mt Emerald Wind Farm tour and talk
- Syntropic Farm tour and talk
- Lake Eacham Rainforest Corridor Walk and swim
- Wildlife canoeing tour
- Coach: Atherton Tablelands – Cape Tribulation
- Granite Gorge Case Study

2 NIGHTS CAPE TRIBULATION

- Reef/Rainforest Connection – Alexandra Lookout
- Organic Tropical Fruit Orchard Visit - Daintree Ice Cream Co
- Rainforest Board Walk – Managed infrastructure in a National Park learning activity
- Emmagen Creek – Degradation of land without management learning activity
- Rainforest night walk
- Coach: Cape Tribulation – Cairns
- Parley cleanup and educational talk
- Croc Cruise - Estuarine Habitat connections learning activity
- Reef Teach Program

1 NIGHTS CAIRNS

- Sunlover Marine Biologist for a day reef trip
- Coach: hostel – Cairns Airport