



HARVARD
Alumni Association

EXPLORING AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

JANUARY 23–FEBRUARY 13, 2019

Begin in Cairns, Australia, and ride the historic railway to the mountain village of Kuranda, then descend via gondola. Board a boat for a daylong excursion to the Great Barrier Reef, where you can swim, snorkel, or view the reef from a semi-submersible vessel. Take an Aboriginal “dreamtime” tour and learn about the ancient culture of the Walpiri. Watch the sun set over fabled Ayers Rock. Tour the highlights of Sydney and enjoy ample leisure time. Then fly to New Zealand and explore Mount Cook National Park over a two-night stay. Cruise through the breathtaking fjords of Milford Sound, visit geothermal Rotorua, and experience the Maori culture at a traditional *hangi* dinner and performance. Conclude in Auckland.

GROUP SIZE: 12-22 guests

PRICING (Per person double occupancy):

- \$11,184- Air inclusive from Los Angeles (includes airline taxes and fees)
- \$11,584- Air inclusive from Boston (includes airline taxes and fees)
- \$10,095 - Land only
- \$1,995- Single supplement

STUDY LEADER: DAVID A. AGUILAR, former director of public affairs and science information at the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, is an internationally recognized author, lecturer, astronomy expert, naturalist, and space artist whose expertise lies in explaining the fascinating connections between the universe and ourselves. He is a Random House/Smithsonian and National Geographic author and illustrator, and the television host of the Science Channel’s NASA’s Unexplained Files and the History Channel’s The Universe series. He has been featured on the BBC, ABC News, CNN, and NPR, and in Time magazine, the New York Times, USA Today, National Geographic, Sky & Telescope, and Scientific American. David is also past director of special media for NASA’s historic New Horizons mission to Pluto. Asteroid 1990A was named to honor his outstanding achievements in science education, and he has the added distinction of being a Grammy-nominated musician.

SCHEDULE BY DAY

B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23

DEPART THE U.S. FOR CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24

IN TRANSIT

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25

ARRIVE CAIRNS

Arrive in Cairns this afternoon. Transfer to the hotel where you will enjoy a briefing and welcome dinner tonight.

Overnight: *Pullman Reef Hotel Casino (D)*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26

CAIRNS / KURANDA

After breakfast, take an orientation tour of Cairns. Board a historic, century-old railway for the thrilling 1½-hour ride to the picturesque mountain village of Kuranda. Spend time wandering through the shops and markets showcasing Aboriginal handicrafts.

Later, descend along the famed Skyrail Rainforest Cableway. Gliding just feet above the rainforest canopy, enjoy 360-degree views encompassing both the dense rainforest and the deep blue Pacific. Following this adventure, enjoy lunch on your own before returning to the hotel.

The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure. Dinner tonight is on your own.

Overnight: *Pullman Reef Hotel Casino (B)*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27

GREAT BARRIER REEF

This morning, board a boat for your day-long excursion to the Great Barrier Reef, a

UNESCO World Heritage Site and true wonder of nature that runs along the coast of Queensland for more than 1,400 miles.

Sail to Michaelmas Cay, where you will have the opportunity to swim, snorkel, and view the reef from an air-conditioned, semi-submersible vessel. The Cay is a protected seabird sanctuary playing host to migratory seabirds as one of the most important nesting sites in the Southern Hemisphere. Please remember that the Great Barrier Reef is a delicate living organism, protected by law. Dinner tonight is at leisure.

Please note: *Weather conditions may affect your marine life-viewing experience. On rare occasions, strong winds or severe weather may prevent your visit to the Great Barrier Reef.*

Overnight: *Pullman Reef Hotel Casino (B, L)*

MONDAY, JANUARY 28

CAIRNS / ALICE SPRINGS

Take an early morning flight to Alice Springs, capital of Australia's Outback. Upon arrival, visit several highlights of "The Alice," including the ANZAC (Australia and New Zealand Army Corps) Hill Monument to soldiers who fought in both World Wars; the Royal Flying Doctor Service, an organization providing medical services to remote swaths of Australia's Outback; and School of the Air, which provides schooling to widely scattered Outback children.

Tonight enjoy a traditional "bush" dinner, relaxing under the stars as an entertainer performs Aussie ballads and points out constellations of the southern sky.

Overnight: *DoubleTree by Hilton (B, D)*

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29

ALICE SPRINGS

This morning embark on an Aboriginal "dreamtime" where you will learn about the ancient culture in a natural bush setting and meet Warlpiri tribespeople.

Later, explore the Outback, including Simpsons Gap, a prominent waterhole and Aboriginal spiritual site, and Standley Chasm, a thin canyon between two sandstone slopes. Stop at the Chasm for a picnic lunch and to see the sheer rock walls aglow in reflected sunlight.

Return to the hotel late this afternoon. The rest of the day is at leisure.

Overnight: *DoubleTree by Hilton (B, L)*

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30

ALICE SPRINGS / AYERS ROCK (ULURU)

After breakfast, depart by motor coach for Ayers Rock (known as Uluru in the local Aboriginal dialect), reaching the hotel early this afternoon.

After time to relax and have lunch on your own, set out for Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site that is the traditional land of the Anangu Aboriginal peoples. In addition to its world-famous namesake, the park also boasts the unusual Olgas rock formations, where you will take a walking tour. Late today, watch the sun set over this fabled sandstone monolith that rises to a height of 1,114 feet above the flat plain.

Return to the hotel for dinner tonight.

Overnight: *Sails in the Desert (B, D)*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31

AYERS ROCK (ULURU) / SYDNEY

This morning visit the base of Uluru for an up-close look at this natural wonder. Rising abruptly from the flat, low-lying plain, the rock holds a sacred place in the culture of the local Pitjantjatjara Anangu Aboriginals. Pay a visit to the Aboriginal Cultural Centre here to learn more about how Ayers Rock was formed, the local plants and animals, and the Aboriginal inhabitants of this part of Australia.

Mid-day, fly to Sydney, arriving late this afternoon. Transfer to the hotel, where you will enjoy dinner tonight.

Overnight: *Sir Stamford at Circular Quay (B, D)*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1

SYDNEY

Today tour Sydney, capital of New South Wales and Australia's oldest English-inhabited city. Start at the Royal Botanic Gardens, featuring a profusion of different varieties of flowers, trees, and native plants. Next, visit Mrs. Macquarie's Chair, the enormous hand-carved stone bench set on a promontory reaching out into Sydney Harbour. After taking in the views, drive through Darling Harbour, the city's commercial center.

Head to the exclusive suburbs of Double Bay, Rose Bay, and Watson's Bay for more stunning views, this time of the Tasman Sea. Continue on to famed Bondi Beach, before returning to the city center where you will board a catamaran for a sail around Sydney Harbour. Enjoy a buffet lunch on board along with commentary about this natural waterway.

After disembarking, return to the hotel for an optional presentation on opals, which are almost exclusively produced in Australia.

For dinner tonight you are on your own to explore Sydney's wide selection of restaurants featuring cuisine of all types.

Overnight: *Sir Stamford at Circular Quay (B, L)*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2

SYDNEY

This morning visit Featherdale Wildlife Park for a guided tour through the grounds – home to koalas, kangaroo, dingo, wallaby, and a variety of native birds. The park provides a true hands-on wildlife experience and boasts a collection of over 1,700 native Australian animals.

After your visit, return to Sydney for an afternoon at leisure in this fascinating city. Some options include visiting the Taronga Zoo, accessible by boat from the Circular Quay; touring the Sydney Aquarium, one of the world's best; or strolling along Macquarie Street, one of Sydney's most elegant thoroughfares.

Tonight dinner is at a local restaurant.

Overnight: *Sir Stamford at Circular Quay (B, D)*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3

SYDNEY / CHRISTCHURCH

Embark on a late morning tour of Sydney's iconic Opera House, the country's premier performing arts center. Opened in 1973 and designed by famed Danish architect Jorn Utzon, the building's uniquely shaped white roof is an instantly recognizable of the city of Sydney. Enjoy lunch on your own and further independent exploration of Sydney.

This evening, board a flight to Christchurch, New Zealand's "Garden City" and the largest city on New Zealand's South Island. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel.

Overnight: *Rydges Latimer Christchurch (B)*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4

CHRISTCHURCH / MOUNT COOK NATIONAL PARK

Today's full day begins with English-accented Christchurch, boasting its own River Avon and many parks and gardens. Visit the Botanic Gardens, and take time to explore the center of the city. Later, board a motor coach for the journey south to Mount Cook, stopping en route for lunch on your own.

This evening, reach stunning Mount Cook National Park in the Southern Alps, New Zealand's great alpine preserve of turquoise lakes and snow-topped mountains (and a UNESCO World Heritage park). The park boasts 19 peaks reaching over 9,842 feet and glaciers comprise some 40 percent of its area. Enjoy dinner tonight at the hotel.

Overnight: *Hermitage Hotel (B, D)*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

MOUNT COOK

This morning's tour of Mount Cook Village includes a visit to the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre, which showcases the region and its people. Both educational and entertaining, the center also features the Hillary Gallery commemorating Sir Edmund's achievements, including the first ascent of

Mount Cook's difficult South face. At 12,316 feet, Mount Cook (*Aoraki* in native Maori) stands as New Zealand's highest peak.

After lunch on your own, return to your hotel in the heart of the national park where the afternoon is at leisure for independent exploration in this breathtaking swath of nature. Optional activities include hiking and scenic flights (approximately \$500NZD at time of printing).

Dinner is at the hotel tonight.

Overnight: *Hermitage Hotel (B, D)*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

MOUNT COOK / QUEENSTOWN

This morning, continue on to Queenstown, stopping along the way in historic Arrowtown, then at the famed Kawarau Bridge Bungy, the world's first bungy operation open to the public.

Late this afternoon arrive in Queenstown, New Zealand's "adventure capital" blessed with a supremely scenic location nestled between The Remarkables, a jagged range of snowcapped mountains, and glacial Lake Wakatipu.

Dinner tonight is at the hotel.

Overnight: *Millennium Queenstown (B, D)*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7

MILFORD SOUND

Early today, leave Queenstown by motor coach on a full-day excursion to Fjordland National Park and Milford Sound, described by Rudyard Kipling as the "eighth wonder of the world." Formed by giant glaciers, Milford Sound boasts vertical cliffs that rise thousands of feet from the sea. Admire this spectacle of nature on a 2½-hour cruise past cascading waterfalls, rainforest, sheer rock walls, and such landmarks as 5,560-foot Mitre Peak, which dominates the pristine waterway. Enjoy lunch on board then have the opportunity to return to Queenstown on an optional scenic flight (weather permitting and

approximately \$400NZD at time of printing). Those not wishing to take the scenic flight will return to Queenstown by motor coach later this evening. Dinner tonight is on your own in Queenstown.

Please note that while this will be a long day—Milford Sound is a four-to-five-hour coach ride each way from Queenstown—the beauty of the scenery both along the way and at Milford Sound itself make it well worth the journey.

Overnight: *Millennium Queenstown (B, L)*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8

QUEENSTOWN

This morning board a boat and cruise to Mt. Nicholas High Country Farm, a family-run merino sheep farm that produces wool for the clothing company Icebreaker. Sitting in high country, the 100,000 acres of farm land spans through the mountains and down to the shores of the lake. Disembark and take a walking tour of the farm, watch the sheep being moved by the farm guide and sheep dogs, and meet working animals including horses, pigs, and cattle.

Board a 4WD vehicle and journey further into the high country where you will have unbeatable views of the surrounding landscape. Return to Queenstown with the rest of the afternoon at leisure. From bungy jumping, jet boating, river rafting, and kayaking, to wineries, art galleries, and scenic trails, activities abound. Lunch and dinner today are on your own.

Overnight: *Millennium Queenstown (B)*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9

QUEENSTOWN / ROTORUA

Depart today by plane for Rotorua, spiritual home of New Zealand's native Maori people and also home to dramatic geysers, bubbling mud pools, and thermal hot springs.

Once in Rotorua visit the Te Puia Thermal Reserve and Maori Cultural Centre for a traditional *hangi* dinner and performance. A time-honored Maori cooking technique, *hangi*

involves covering food in an earthen pit filled with hot rocks, allowing it to steam and cook in its own juices.

Overnight: *Regent of Rotorua (B, D)*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10

ROTORUA

This morning visit the acclaimed Rainbow Springs Nature Park, offering an up-close look at New Zealand's biodiversity. Here, visit the state-sponsored National Kiwi Trust, New Zealand's largest kiwi hatchery, where guests can watch the country's famous birds as they are nurtured before being released into the wild. After time to explore here, spend the rest of the day at leisure exploring Rotorua as you wish. A host of activities present themselves, from bathing in the thermal hot springs to zip-lining over a native forest. Your tour director will be happy to offer restaurant suggestions for both lunch and dinner on your own.

Overnight: *Regent of Rotorua (B)*

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11

ROTORUA / AUCKLAND

Your full-day journey to Auckland begins with a stop this morning at Ruakuri Caves, where you enjoy a guided subterranean experience of elaborate limestone formations, hidden waterfalls, underground rivers, sacred Maori sites, and unique glowworms that illuminate the caves. The tour begins with a spiral descent from ground level via an incredible drum entrance and walkway, then continues through the underground grotto for one mile. Following the tour, resume the journey to Auckland, arriving late afternoon in the "City of Sails," New Zealand's largest city. Enjoy dinner on your own tonight in this multicultural city known especially for its world-class Pacific Rim cuisine and wines.

Overnight: *Stamford Plaza Auckland (B)*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12

AUCKLAND

Your half-day panoramic tour of this city set atop 48 volcanic hills features Auckland Harbour. Built in 1959, the harbor's iconic bridge stretches three quarters of a mile and stands 15 stories above the water. "Clip-on" lanes doubled the bridge's capacity in 1969 and currently an average of 165,000 commuters cross it (or bungee jump from it) daily. Visit the Auckland War Memorial Museum, founded in 1852 and moved to the location constructed on this site in 1929 as New Zealand's first museum. Along with several prized Maori and Pacific Islander collections, the elegant Neoclassical building hosts a number of exhibits showcasing New Zealanders' efforts in overseas conflicts, and also serves as a memorial to New Zealand soldiers who lost their lives in the First and Second World Wars.

Tonight, celebrate your journey at a farewell dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: *Stamford Plaza Auckland (B, D)*

wineries; or visit the Maritime Museum with numerous exhibits devoted to New Zealand boating and yachting.

Overnight: *Stamford Plaza Auckland (B)*

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15

DEPART FOR U.S.

Very early this morning transfer to the Auckland airport for the flight to Los Angeles (via Sydney), where you will connect with your return flights home (B).

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13

DEPART FOR U.S.

Very early this morning transfer to the Auckland airport for the flight to Los Angeles (via Sydney), where you will connect with your return flights home (B).

Optional Extension:

AUCKLAND ON YOUR OWN

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13 & THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14

AUCKLAND

Spend the next two nights at the Stamford Plaza, your base for exploring Auckland to your heart's delight. You may wish to take a ferry to one of the nearby islands with their abundant natural beauty, history—even