Experience the land Down Under with Miami University Alumni Association on a 14-day adventure that includes snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef, visiting Sydney’s iconic landmarks, and exploring the wildlife and way of life in the Outback.

Compared to other continents, Australia has remained geographically isolated for a much longer period of time, and as a result, most of the plants and animals are found nowhere else on Earth. Come see these unique wonders and experience the cultures that settled in this most distant land.

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

- Go snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef, the world’s largest coral reef system at 1,400 miles long and the only living thing visible from space.
- Interact with students from Miami University associated with the Earth Expeditions and Project Dragonfly programs.
- Visit Magnetic Island, a refuge for Australia’s unique wildlife including an estimated 800 koalas, the northernmost population in the country.
- Experience Reef monitoring at Reef HQ, the world’s largest living coral reef aquarium and the Australian Government’s National Education Centre for the Great Barrier Reef.
- Sail along Sydney Harbor and see firsthand one of the most famous skylines in the world with visits to Sydney Opera House, Royal Botanic Gardens, Taronga Zoo, Government House, Fort Denison and much more.

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**ITINERARY**

**JULY 31 - DEPART**
Depart on your overnight flight to Sydney, Australia.

**AUGUST 1 - EN ROUTE**
Cross the international dateline today.

**AUGUST 2 - SYDNEY**
Upon arrival at Sydney International Airport, and after completing Immigration and Customs formalities, please exit into the Arrivals Hall to meet the driver for the private transfer to the hotel. Settle in and relax after the long journey. Lunch is on your own today; there are a variety of cafés near the hotel. This afternoon, meet in the hotel and then board a private coach for a guided excursion in the city. Explore the historic precinct of The Rocks, stunning views of Sydney Harbor Bridge, and travel through Chinatown with its bustling restaurants and noodle bars, before arriving at Mrs. Macquarie’s Chair, which sits high on a peninsula of sandstone rock overlooking the Sydney Harbor Bridge. Continue east to the cliffs of the Pacific Ocean and view the dramatic ocean cliff called The Gap, then on to famous Bondi Beach, one of the most famous beaches in the world. Return to the hotel to freshen up and later in the evening, enjoy a welcome dinner. **Overnight at Ville Resort & Casino. (BLD)**

**AUGUST 3 - SYDNEY**
Enjoy a full buffet breakfast at leisure today and adjust to the time change or go explore Sydney at your own pace. Lunch is not included today. Later this evening, gather in the lobby for the private transfer to Sydney Harbor for a Captain Cook Cruise in one of the most beautiful harbors in the world. Every cruise includes Sydney’s iconic landmarks such as the Sydney Opera House, Sydney Harbor Bridge, Royal Botanic Gardens, Garden Island Naval base, Taronga Zoo, Government House, palatial waterfront homes, Fort Denison and much more. Have dinner on board while enjoying the sights and later, return to the hotel. **Overnight at Grace Hotel. (BD)**

**AUGUST 4 - TOWNSVILLE**
This morning, visit Reef HQ Aquarium, the world’s largest living coral reef aquarium and the Australian Government’s National Education Centre for the Great Barrier Reef. Join the Education Team at Reef HQ Aquarium on a journey of discovery starting with a behind the scenes tour of the Turtle Hospital where marine turtles are cared for and rehabilitated. Explore the many living exhibits and learn how the staff keeps them clean and healthy. Also learn about this state-of-the-art aquarium's captive breeding and coral propagation programs. After the tour, participate in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority’s citizen science rapid monitoring program. Begin with in-water training within Reef HQ Aquarium’s Coral Reef Exhibition, with instruction in simplified steps and use of diagrams on underwater slates. The Rapid Monitoring Program is easily adopted to people who may not have a scientific background; however, the data collected provides enough detail to be of scientific value for reef managers. Have lunch and then this afternoon discover the history of Tropical Queensland and experience an amazing and engaging behind-the-scenes tour of the Museum of Tropical Queensland. The “White Glove Tour” offers an exclusive glimpse into the collection, research and interpretation of the museum’s world-renowned natural, cultural and maritime history artefacts. Specialized presentations can be scheduled on any number of the museum’s research focuses, including Maritime Archaeology, Corals, and Tropical Natural History. This evening return to the hotel for a buffet dinner with students as guests at the hotel to meet prior to the snorkeling excursion in the morning. **Overnight at Ville Resort & Casino. (BLD)**

**AUGUST 5 - AUSSIE OUTBACK**
This morning kick start your day with a classic buffet breakfast offering everything from eggs cooked to order, grilled bacon, sausages, tomatoes, hash browns, fresh fruit, cereals, pastries, fresh juices and more. After breakfast, board the private coach to explore the nearby mountains and Australian outback that surround Townsville. Visit the Hervey’s Range Tea Rooms and enjoy lunch in one of North Queensland’s oldest buildings. Constructed in 1865, this heritage listed building still stands and the internal hand-adzed hardwood can still be enjoyed today. Then travel to the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS), Australia’s premiere tropical marine research agency. AIMS plays a pivotal role in providing large-scale, long-term and world-class research that helps governments, industry and the wider community make informed decisions about the management of Australia’s marine environments. While at AIMS, have the opportunity to meet some of Australia’s eminent marine researchers and visit the National Sea Simulator (SeaSim), a world-class marine research aquarium facility for tropical marine organisms in which scientists can conduct cutting edge research not previously possible in Australia. Return to Townsville for an evening at Australia’s international award-winning brewery. Tour of the micro brewery and presentation from the master brewers, then relax while sampling an ice cold beer which has been brewed and bottled only a few feet away. Have dinner at the brewery and then return to the hotel. **Overnight at Ville Resort & Casino. (BLD)**

**AUGUST 6 - TOWNSVILLE**
This morning, visit Reef HQ Aquarium, the world’s largest living coral reef aquarium and the Australian Government’s National Education Centre for the Great Barrier Reef. Join the Education Team at Reef HQ Aquarium on a journey of discovery starting with a behind the scenes tour of the Turtle Hospital where marine turtles are cared for and rehabilitated. Explore the many living exhibits and learn how the staff keeps them clean and healthy. Also learn about this state-of-the-art aquarium’s captive breeding and coral propagation programs. After the tour, participate in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority’s citizen science rapid monitoring program. Begin with in-water training within Reef HQ Aquarium’s Coral Reef Exhibition, with instruction in simplified steps and use of diagrams on underwater slates. The Rapid Monitoring Program is easily adopted to people who may not have a scientific background; however, the data collected provides enough detail to be of scientific value for reef managers. Have lunch and then this afternoon discover the history of Tropical Queensland and experience an amazing and engaging behind-the-scenes tour of the Museum of Tropical Queensland. The “White Glove Tour” offers an exclusive glimpse into the collection, research and interpretation of the museum’s world-renowned natural, cultural and maritime history artefacts. Specialized presentations can be scheduled on any number of the museum’s research focuses, including Maritime Archaeology, Corals, and Tropical Natural History. This evening return to the hotel for a buffet dinner with students as guests at the hotel to meet prior to the snorkeling excursion in the morning. **Overnight at Ville Resort & Casino. (BLD)**

**AUGUST 7 - GREAT BARRIER REEF**
This morning after breakfast have the opportunity to put your Citizen Science Reef Health Assessment training into practice with students from Miami University and Project Dragonfly’s Earth Expeditions program. The “Australia: Great Barrier Reef” course is offered jointly with Reef HQ Aquarium and is a part of the University’s Earth Expeditions global program where travel to key conservation sites worldwide provides students with the opportunity to engage in inquiry and action projects while developing new approaches to address the vital conservation issues of our time. All aboard Miamians for a cruise out to the Central Section of the Great Barrier Reef to explore some of the best sites for diving and snorkeling. Cruise aboard the custom-built vessel, the M.V. Adrenalin, which was designed with comfort in mind, with fully shaded areas, sun deck, stabilizers,
toilet, and shower, along with easy access in and out of the water. The preferred reef for day trips is Lodestone Reef, chosen for its diversity of sites, great coral cover, fish life and reasonable protection. Features include large coral bommies with white coral sandy sea floor, large gutters running through the coral occupied by hundreds of reef fish, and colorful coral walls occupied by innumerable marine animals in crystal clear water. Depths at Lodestone range from 3-60 feet, making it ideal for both snorkelers and experienced divers. Large schools of trevally and bait fish are common, as well as a myriad of colorful reef fish, including parrot fish, angel fish, Maori wrasse, and clownfish. Turtles, stingrays, whitetip and blacktip reef sharks are often sighted. All snorkeling equipment is included. Scuba diving is an optional extra and can be determined by individuals according to their desires and skill levels. Later this afternoon return to the hotel for buffet dinner. Overnight at Ville Resort & Casino. (BLD)

AUGUST 8 - HIDDEN VALLEY
This morning, after breakfast, check out of the hotel and then meet local expert, a Wet Tropics Certified Guide, and then transfer by private coach to Girringun National Park, the largest national park within the Heritage Listed Wet Tropics Rainforest of North Queensland and one of the oldest continual surviving rainforests on earth. The highlight of the park is Wallaman Falls with its dramatic, continuous cascade that drops a staggering 859 feet into a pool below that is almost 70 feet deep. After the park visit, continue driving through the beautiful Paluma Range National Park to Hidden Valley Cabins. Designed to blend into the natural environment, the accommodation is built from locally sourced recycled timber, creating a rustic appearance while still delivering a high standard of quality and comfort. Each building within the resort is built entirely from local timber, and the majority of the furniture was handcrafted from local timber. Check into your cabin and then receive an orientation to the facilities. Have dinner and hear the story of the McLennan Family, who own the cabins, and their 28-year history in the region. Overnight at Hidden Valley Cabins. (BLD)

AUGUST 9 - HIDDEN VALLEY
Following breakfast spend the morning birdwatching in Hidden Valley and Paluma Range National Park. Expert guides have recorded more than 130 species of birds in the area. This afternoon, enjoy hiking along the river, voted by Australia Geographic to be the number one spot to view a Platypus in the wild. This wonder of nature combines many unusual features such as a bill and webbed feet, yet is covered in fur and is an egg-laying mammal known as a Monotreme. Hidden Valley boasts a population of 300 along a seven-mile stretch of Running River; with a 98 percent sighting success rate, seeing a platypus is almost guaranteed. This evening, plunder the nocturnal riches of Hidden Valley and the Australian bush that surrounds it, which boasts an abundance of mammals and other animal species commonly seen after dark. Common sightings include owls, spiders, pretty-faced wallabies, bettongs, rock wallabies, brush tail possums and greater gliders. Squirrel, sugar and feather tail gliders can be seen when the trees are in blossom. Overnight at Hidden Valley Cabins. (BLD)

AUGUST 10 - MUNGALLA
This morning has an optional early morning bird walk followed by breakfast. Check out of Hidden Valley and spend the day immersed in culture during a full day visit with the Nywagi Aboriginal people and traditional owners of the lands around Ingham in North Queensland. Be amazed by the story of the Aboriginal people from Mungalla Station and surrounding areas that were exhibited as cannibals and savages in the 19th century circuses and sideshows of Europe and America. This powerful story is told through an internationally renowned pictorial exhibition housed permanently in the historic homestead. Try throwing a boomerang and making it come back, feast on a special meal featuring an underground cooking method called a “Kup Murri” and also visit the Mungalla wetlands, which have been restored from the depredation of introduced weeds and now are home to the magnificent aquatic birdlife of North Queensland. Return to Townsville later this afternoon and have dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Ville Resort & Casino. (BLD)

AUGUST 11 - MAGNETIC ISLAND
This morning after breakfast transfer to Magnetic Island via SeaLink Ferry. The stunning landscapes of this World Heritage-listed island make this natural destination truly distinctive. The rocky granite headlands endemic to the area provide a basis to an array of ecosystems that merge with the 23 bays and beaches surrounding its coastline. Visit koalas in the wild on “The Forts,” the country’s northernmost population of wild koalas. Discover Magnetic Island firsthand with local rangers from Bungalow Bay Koala Village, introducing the island’s history and colorful characters. They’ll put you up close and personal with crocodiles, wombats and koalas. Fresh, local produce will be showcased through the day while enjoying an intimate island experience in the heart of the Great Barrier Reef. Cap off the day with nature, Champagne cocktails with the koalas and a tapas-style menu to introduce the native products indigenous to the area. Enjoy good wine, good friends and a chance to see what makes North Queensland a lifestyle by the sea. Return back to Townsville via ferry. Overnight at Ville Resort & Casino. (BLD)

AUGUST 12 - SYDNEY
After breakfast, transfer to the airport for the flight to Sydney. Arrive at Sydney Domestic Airport and meet your guide in the Baggage Claim area. You will transfer by private coach to your hotel close to Sydney Airport. Meals in Sydney on own today. Overnight at Rydges Sydney Airport. (B)

AUGUST 13 - SYDNEY
Independent transfers to the airport for flights back to the U.S. (B)

LAND COST
$6,850 (10 participants)

Includes accommodations, meals, entrance fees, and activities listed in itinerary, private vehicle transportation unless otherwise noted in itinerary, non-alcoholic beverages with meals, internal flights, and full time guide for duration of program.

Does not include international airfare, gratuities, or items of a personal nature. Round-trip airfare from Cincinnati (via Dallas/Ft. Worth) is estimated at $1,725.

THE FINE PRINT
For 10-plus participants the land cost is $6,850 per person. Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room add $1700. A $200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to secure your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable until April 27, 2017 excluding a $100 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than April 27, 2017; cancellations received after this date are not refundable. Holbrook Travel’s agency number is 15849.
FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL
Visit holbrook.travel/miamialum17 or contact Stephanie Kowacz at 800-451-7111 x309 or stephanie@holbrooktravel.com