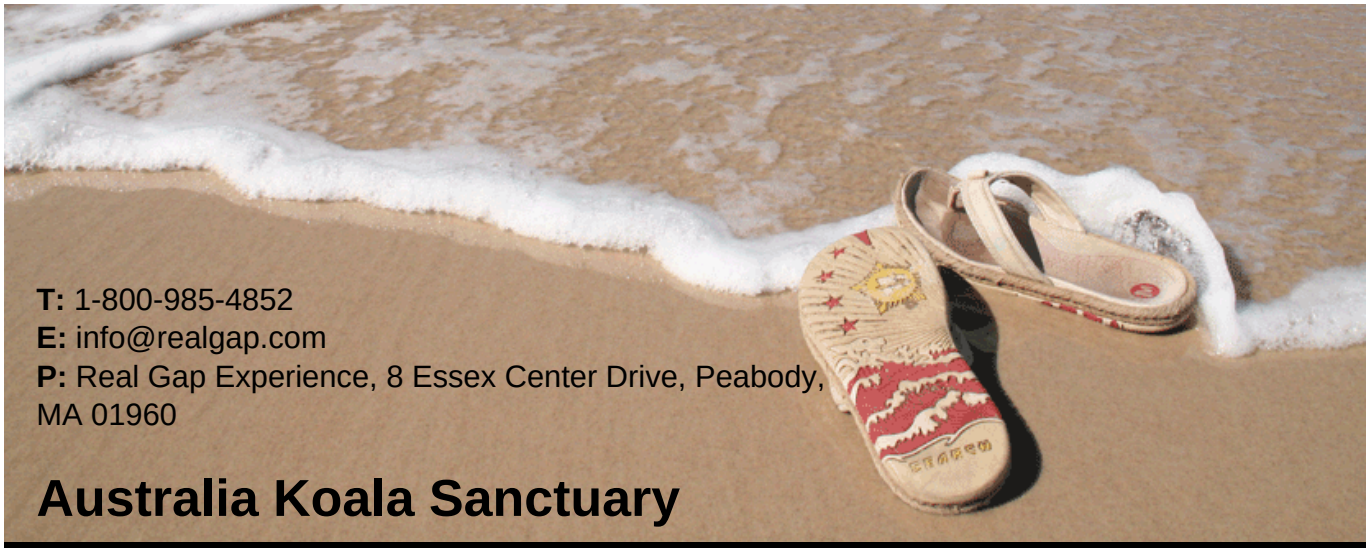

T: 1-800-985-4852
E: info@realgap.com
P: Real Gap Experience, 8 Essex Center Drive, Peabody, MA 01960

Australia Koala Sanctuary

Adventure Relaxation Culture

Trip Name: Australia Koala Sanctuary **Trip Code:** OZKS **Duration:** From 14 days

Trip Highlights

- Gain an indepth knowledge of koalas and other native creatures by helping with feeding, monitoring and much more.
- Lend a much needed hand at the sanctuary and get involved with extreme hands on and physical work.
- Enjoy the buzzing nightlife of Brisbane and, down the coast, beautiful sandy beaches.
- Share the passion to help endangered animals in Australia with the keepers.

Overview

Helping out endangered animals in Australia is totally rewarding as well as just an amazing Australasia experience! Not only will you gain experience working with Australia's native mammals, but you'll experience Oz city life in the buzzing city of Brisbane.

Destination Info

Australia's such a huge country, it has three time zones. There's a real diversity of landscapes and people, so you'll be well at home travelling, chilling and helping endangered animals in Australia.

Beautiful attractions and fantastic activities include surfing and white water rafting, trekking and skiing. As well as natural beauty, Australia's cosmopolitan cities offer shed loads of cultural attractions from sports to art.

The Koala Sanctuary's located in a remote suburb about 30 minutes from Brisbane city.

The hostel you'll be staying at is in the heart of the city of Brisbane. So you'll never be short of things to do in your free time – from chilling out in the botanic gardens to hitting the best nightlife north of the river in Fortitude Valley. Eat your heart out!

Beautiful sandy beaches are slightly further afield but totally accessible, as are many other sunny desinations along the East Coast.

Itinerary

The sanctuary houses a large variety of Australia's native species, and is divided into different sections: Birds, Mammals, Reptiles, Macropods, Koalas and the hospital. Each day you are at the sanctuary you will be assigned to one of the keepers and will assist them with the daily care and maintenance of the animals in their section. This allows you to experience working in different areas of the sanctuary and get to know all of the different species. Each morning you will be given a work plan so that you know what your responsibilities are for the day.

The work is extremely hands on and physical, with the majority of your time spent assisting keepers with the feeding of the animals and cleaning duties, however there is a whole range of activities for you to get involved in.

The tasks that you will be taking part in include:

- Preparing and collecting food for the animals
- Assisting with the cleaning and maintenance of animal enclosures
- Taking part in behavioural enrichment programmes
- Providing other general assistance to the keepers.

You will also be helping with a variety of other tasks around the sanctuary, which may include:

- Assisting the animal farm staff with cleaning, monitoring visitors and handing out food
- Interacting with the sanctuary's visitors and assisting them with any questions they might have
- Spending time in the kangaroo reserve monitoring visitors and kangaroo behaviour, cleaning and helping with visitor enquiries

- Assisting the garden and maintenance staff with various tasks around the sanctuary e.g. planting, weeding and cleaning

There are some animals at the sanctuary that you won't have any contact with as they are considered dangerous animals. These animals include Tasmanian Devil, Southern Cassowary, Flying Foxes, Wombats and Venomous reptiles. Although you will not be working with these animals at the sanctuary you will be able to visit them in your free time as often as you wish.

Volunteers stay in Brisbane, which is about a 30 minute bus ride from the sanctuary.

The working day starts at 8.30, when you'll be assigned your 'keeper' for the day. You then work with them for the rest of the day on various projects around the sanctuary.

In practice, helping out endangered animals in Australia means feeding the animals and cleaning their homes take place every day. But you could also find yourself monitoring kangaroo behavior, preparing food for the animals and helping with the sanctuary's visitors.

You get a 20 min morning tea break and an hour for lunch. And the day finishes at 3pm, when you're free to explore the sanctuary and chill out with the other volunteers, or head back home to hang out in buzzing Brisbane.

You can choose what days you want to work, which can include weekends (please note the availability of days when you can volunteer is dependent on how many volunteers the sanctuary have). Prior to your arrival we will find out from you what days you would like to work. However, these days can be changed and your volunteer schedule will be arranged for you during your orientation at the sanctuary.

Please note: Itineraries and activities are subject to change.

Accommodation

Your accommodation throughout the programme will be at a backpackers hostel in Brisbane. The hostel has great facilities, 24hr security card access, 24hr Internet, luggage storage, laundry, home theatre with surround sound and wide screen TV, a modern kitchen, roof terrace and a great lounge area. You will be staying in one of the dorm rooms, which are usually shared between 8 or 10 people. The best thing about the hostel is its location in the centre of the city, really nice and close to everything.

Programme Services and Facilities

Internet

You have access to 24 hour Internet facilities in the hostel! It will cost around AUD $4 per hour.

Telephone

The international telephone access code for Australia is +61.

To place an outgoing, direct dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164.

In the cities and more populated areas there will be mobile phone signal, however, as Australia is such a big place there is not service everywhere, and you may not get phone signal in some of the more rural areas.

We recommend that you purchase an international phone card, which you will allow you to use a regular payphone or the phone in the hostel.

Laundry

You will be able to do all your laundry in the facilities at the hostel, it will cost approx. AUD $3 per wash and AUD $3 to use the dryer. You might want to consider taking some travel wash, just in case there is anything that you want to wash by hand.

Security

At present, there are no storage facilties at the sanctuary for you to leave your valuables. We recommend that during your project work you leave your valuables at the hostel in the safety deposit box at reception.

Meals

Meals are not included but there are a plenty of food shops in the city centre including a large supermarket, where you can purchase food to take back to the hostel and cook in the self-catering kitchen. Alternatively, sample some of Brisbane’s many restaurants with your fellow travellers. For lunch you can either bring your own food with you to

the sanctuary, or there is a café on site where you can buy lunch.

What's Included

- Train transfer from the airport on arrival
- An orientation day
- Accommodation
- A certificate of participation
- Information pack
- Two uniform shirts for you to keep

What's Not Included

- All flights
- Travel Insurance
- Transport to and from the sanctuary
- Visas
- Meals

Additional Information

Orientation

On your first day at the sanctuary (a Monday) you will need to arrive by 11am for your comprehensive orientation with the sanctuary's volunteer coordinator Karen. This will cover things such as health and safety - for you and the animals, more information on the duties you will be performing and a bit of background on the animals and the sanctuary itself. For the rest of the day you will have the chance to explore the sanctuary from a visitor's point of view and familiarise yourself with your new surroundings before you actually start working with the animals.

What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and therefore, you may not need all of the listed items on your travels nor is it exhaustive.

Personal Admin

- Documents

- Passport.
- Driving Licence
- NHS card or a National Insurance card or proof of entitlement to your National Health Service, or the German Krankenversicherungskarte
- Insurance Policy document or card
- Credit Card, for emergencies and booking internal flights

General

- Journal or diary
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Alarm Clock
- Torch/ batteries
- Sleeping bag
- Sun block
- Small padlock to secure luggage

Clothing

- Clothing suitable for all weather conditions (remember long sleeved trousers and tops to protect you from the sun)
- Raincoat and/or waterproof clothing
- Work clothing* - trousers, jeans or shorts (no skirts) are fine as long as you bring items you don't mind getting dirty!
- Enclosed shoes (essential!)
- Sun hat
- Sunglasses
- Causal clothes
- Shorts
- T-shirts
- Swimming costume

Medical Kit

- Medication
- First Aid Kit
- Insect repellent

*You are given 2 volunteer shirts once you arrive which are yours to keep but are to be worn on the days you are volunteering so that you are easily identified as being someone who is allowed to be in enclosures with the animals.

Minimum Age

Minimum 18 years, maximum decided on potential participants health, as the work at the sanctuary can be very physical.

Flights

Your flight to Australia should arrive at Brisbane Airport on your programme start date, and your return flight should be arranged for your programme end date.

To book your flights, please contact your travel advisor who will do their best to get you the best deal on the day. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

Please note: If you are flying to Australia via the USA you will need to obtain Travel Authorisation by registering online through the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) no later than 72 hours before departure. This is compulsory and will cost USD$14 to register. To register, please visit: www.esta.cbp.dhs.gov

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your Online account, or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

FAQs

1. **What visa do I need?**
   If you are just visiting Australia as a tourist you will need to apply for the 3 month e-visitor OR ETA visa (depending on your nationality). If you are planning to work whilst you are out there after your programme you will need to apply for the 12 month Working Holiday Visa.

2. **How much do I need to budget for food?**
   It depends on whether you choose to eat out or not each day. You can save a lot of money by buying your food and cooking in the hostel. If you do this you can budget for around £15 per day easily. If you choose to eat out all the time then it is going to cost you a lot more!

3. **Will there be a safe/safety deposit box available?**
   Yes, there will be lockers for you to use while you are at the project. Please bring locks so you can lock away your valuables.

Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

You will be assigned a personal travel advisor who will co-ordinate your program with you. Feel free to contact them at any time before you go, or when you are on your travels. They will provide you with competent assistance and help with any questions or advice you may need during your stay.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

Money Matters

The unit of currency is the Australian Dollar. Changing foreign currency or travellers cheques is usually no problem at banks throughout Australia or at licensed moneychangers.

Australia is affordable by Western European and American standards, but if you are travelling on from Southeast Asia you'll notice a big increase in costs!

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant 13.37 $

Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) 5.04 $
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) 2.40 $
Water (0.33 litre bottle) 2.14 $

(Prices quoted in US Dollar)

Passports and Visas

You should ensure that you have a full passport that is valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information provided below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

All visitors to Australia need a visa – only New Zealand nationals are exempt, however you will receive a 'special category' visa on arrival.

For entry into Australia you will require an eVisitor visa. UK passport holders can apply for a 90-day tourist visa online at www.immi.gov.au All other nationalities should consult the relevant embassy.

If you intend to work after your week in Sydney you will be required to apply for a working holiday visa.

Working Holiday Visa
To take part in this programme you will require a working holiday visa. The working holiday visa is available to anyone age 18-30. The emphasis is on casual employment: you are meant to work for no more than six months at any one job. If you want to stay in Australia for up to 24 months, this is now possible for some nationalities. Speak to one of our sales advisors for more information.

To be eligible for a Working Holiday Visa, you must:

- Be aged between 18 and 30 years at the time of application
- Have a valid passport for one of the countries listed at Australian Immigration, www.immi.gov.au
- Have no dependant children
- Have not previously entered Australia on a working holiday visa
- Meet health and character requirements
- Be outside Australia at the time of visa grant

To be granted a working holiday visa you must also agree that:

- Your main reason for coming to Australia is to holiday
- You must not undertake studies or training for more than 4 months
- You will leave Australia at the end of your authorized stay
- You must have sufficient funds to support yourself for the initial part of your stay. AUD$5000 minimum is regarded as sufficient. You may have to provide evidence of this in the form of a bank statement.

For the most up to date information on visa requirements, please visit http://www.immi.gov.au/

Cultural Considerations

Australia is a melting pot of different cultures. It has a population of over 21 million people with most of the population living on the east coast between Adelaide and Cairns. High waves of immigration from England, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Malta and Eastern Europe have occurred during Australia's brief history, particularly after World War II, and the later waves from the Middle-East, East, and South-East Asia, as well as the Indian subcontinent, have created a truly diverse population.

Although Australia has no official language, English is spoken by 80% of the population. Chinese, Italian and Greek are respectively the next most common languages, reflecting Australia's cultural diversity and concentration of nationalities. Australians have very strong attitudes and belief systems which are reflected in their culture. Australians traditionally have a very ironic sense of humour.

Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or

anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

Safety

As in most countries there are people who try to take advantage of tourists. The following advice is intended to help you keep safe:

- Always keep your personal items such as passport, money and camera with you and in a safe place. You can buy mini padlocks to prevent people from going into your bag without your permission.
- Don't carry excess amounts of cash
- Wherever possible, walk around in groups, especially after dark, and avoid taking short cuts
- Do not pick up hitchhikers if you are driving and do not hitch hike yourself
- When you are out do not leave your drinks unattended, as there have been reports of drinks being spiked

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK and American customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: www.fco.gov.uk
USA: www.travel.state.gov

ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

If your card is confiscated or you are concerned that your card has been tampered with, please report immediately to the bank or cancel your card.

Language Guide

Here are some Australian terms and phrases that you might find useful:

Bottle Shop - *Off-licence/Liquor store*
Bonzer - *Good*
Bush - *Unsettled country area*
Dag - *Nerd*
Esky - *Portable insulated box to keep food/drink cold*
Fair Dinkum - *Honestly, truly*
Pokies - *Gambling machines*
Pom - *Person of English descent*
Singlet - *Sleeveless cotton vest*
Smoko - *Tea break*

Thongs - *Flip flops/Sandals*
Ute - *Utility vehicle/pick-up truck*

Food & Drink

You will find food in Australia to suit all taste buds, with the larger cities in particular offering a great range of places to eat. Due to the large amount of British settlers, Australian food is reasonably similar to that in Western Europe, but if you are feeling particularly adventurous get involved in some bush tucker (kangaroo, emus) or the infamous vegemite. For less scary Aussie food, look out for fresh seafood and of course, a typical Aussie barbecue!

Please let Real Gap know before you depart if you are a vegetarian or have any other dietary requirements.

Public Holidays

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country.

To view a list of the public holidays for Australia, please see the link below:

www.timeanddate.com/holidays/australia/

Weather

Australia is located in the southern hemisphere, where seasons are the opposite of those in the northern hemisphere.

The summer months in Australia (November to March) can get very hot. Up north, in Queensland for example, the summer period brings the rainy season and the weather can be very hot and humid with lots of rainfall. The winter months (June to August) in Queensland bring much dryer weather but still heat. The further south you go the colder and wetter winter becomes and in some mountainous areas of New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania skiing is possible.

Time

Australia is such a big country that it has three time zones:

Eastern Standard Time (Queensland) – 10 hours ahead of GMT depending on Daylight Savings
Central Time – 9.5 hours ahead of GMT
Western Time - 8 hours ahead of GMT

Electricity

Electricity in Australia is 240 Volts, alternating at 50 cycles per second.

Sockets in Australia are V-shaped flat prongs.

Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of reommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

Phone: 1-800-985-4852
Email: info@realgap.com
Post: Real Gap Experience, 8 Essex Center Drive, Peabody, MA 01960
Web: www.realgap.com