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Australia Seven Day Scuba Dive Course

Adventure Relaxation Culture

Trip Name: Australia Seven Day Scuba Dive Course **Trip Code:** OZDC **Duration:** From 7 days

Trip Highlights

- Diving the Great Barrier Reef – experience one of the natural wonders of the world as you explore this incredible underwater world.
- Gaining an internationally recognised PADI qualification in one of the best diving sites in the world.
- Unique opportunity to enjoy a night dive.

Overview

With this programme you have the chance to go Scuba diving in Australia, spending seven fantastic days gaining an internationally recognised PADI qualification in one of the best diving sites in the world. Scuba dive the Great Barrier Reef in Cairns, Northern Queensland.

Spend time relaxing in Cairns, enjoy a fun 5 day course including a 3 day/2 night live-a-board trip to the Outer Great Barrier Reef and scuba amongst stunning tropical marine life.

Destination Info

Cairns is located in Northern Queensland and is undoubtedly a tourist town. The Great Barrier Reef, a world heritage and natural inspiration, is the main attraction that most visitors flock to Cairns for and they don't go home disappointed.

Itinerary

Australia Seven Day Scuba Dive Course

Your first two nights on the programme will be spent in Cairns where you will have a chance to relax, explore the city or just catch up on some sleep! Over the following 5 days you will have a mixture of classroom theory and practical exercises including an amazing 3-day live-a-board trip to the Great Barrier Reef.

The team will find the best spots for you to learn to Scuba Dive and you will get full diving tuition from expert and accredited Diving Instructors. Our instructors will take you through all the basics and by the end of the week you will have gained your PADI certificate. The PADI 5-day course gives you your basic license to dive anywhere in the world to a maximum depth of 18 metres. Your course is broken down to two components: 2 days of pool and classroom training and a 3 day, 2 night live-a-board trip to the Outer Great Barrier Reef. You will have the opportunity to complete a total of nine dives, being 4 training dives and 5 recreational dives (including a guided night dive).

The exclusive dive sites are situated on some of the best Outer Great Barrier Reef locations. These sites are chosen for their spectacular coral formations, varied marine life and consistent visibility. On every trip you will visit a variety of these spectacular, un-crowded and unspoilt locations ensuring the most memorable experiences.

Weather permitting, you will never dive the same site more than twice, which gives you a great opportunity to see and experience a wide range of locations and reefs. The reefs you will be diving in are home to a huge variety of marine life so don’t be surprised to see turtles, reef sharks, barracudas, lobsters, hundreds of hard and soft coral and just as many species of tropical fish.

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Day 1 - Arrival in Cairns

- You will check-in at the hostel in Cairns, this can be done anytime after 11am, you will meet the rest of the group starting the course.
- Arrange dive medical (if necessary and time permits).
- Free time to explore Cairns, catch up on sleep or take a tour.

Day 2 - Academic and Pool training

- Time to get started! After your pick up from the hostel (8.25am) you will start with academic training in the classroom with the rest of group.
- Dive medical (if required) and then break for lunch
- In the afternoon - get stuck in with practical training in the pool before being transferred back to the hostel.

Day 3 - Academic and Pool training

- Pick up from hostel in Cairns (7:55am) followed by some pool training.
- Break for lunch and then return to the classroom for some more training and an exam.
- Drop off back at hostel.

Day 4 - Live aboard trip - Diving on the Great Barrier Reef!

- Transfer from hostel to dive centre (6:15am).
- A light breakfast is served on the boat to begin your fantastic 3-day/2-night live-a-board trip on the Great Barrier Reef. Late morning you will have your first training dive in the Ocean!
- After a lunch break you'll have a second open water-training dive before tucking into a well-earned, hearty dinner. The evening is your free time to relax and chill out with the others in the group.

Day 5 - More great diving!

- Your third training dive first thing in the morning will be the deepest dive of your certification! Followed by a hearty breakfast, you will then have your fourth and final training dive before a filling lunch to celebrate the fact you are now a certified diver!
- A chance for your first pleasure dive with your new PADI qualification.
- Have a healthy and plentiful dinner before doing a guided night dive – a great experience!

Day 6- More diving and return to Cairns

- An early morning dive followed by breakfast.
- After breakfast, the vessel makes its last site of the trip where you will do your second dive of the day. When you surface from your last dive of the day, you will return to the vessel where you can enjoy some freshly made sandwiches as the boat heads back to Cairns.

Join fellow passengers and crew at a l

Day 7- Programme end date

- You can choose to check out of the hostel (by 10am) or stay for some extra nights. It's not recommended that you fly within 48 hours of diving so most people will choose to relax by the pool or head into the City.

Accommodation

For the first three nights of the programme you will be staying at a hostel in central Cairns. There is a three day/two night live-a-board boat trip on the fourth day of the programme and your last night will be back in the hostel in Cairns.

Programme Services and Facilities

Internet

There is an Internet café at the YHA hostel in Cairns, in which you can connect to the web for a small fee. There won't be access to the Internet on board the boat.

Telephone

The international telephone access code for Australia is +61.

To place an outgoing, direct dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK, +49 for Germany, followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164 / +49 69 222226 475.

You will find public telephones throughout the city of Cairns, and all other towns and cities in Australia. You will need an international phone card, such as the one Real Gap offers. You will not have access to a public phone on the boat.

The easiest option may be to take your mobile and purchase a pay-as-you-go SIM in Australia, or get a Real Gap SIM before you depart, to allow you to text and call cheaply, and keep track of your spending. Before you depart, please ensure that your mobile is set up with international roaming and unlocked, so you may use a pay-as-you-go SIM while you are away.

Laundry

There are laundry facilities at the hostel. It may be worth bringing some travel wash for essentials like swimwear and underwear.

Meals

Meals are included throughout the three-day boat trip on days 4-6 and healthy filling food will be provided with vegetarians being catered for.

What's Included

- Four nights hostel accommodation in Cairns (dorm-style)
- Two nights cabin accommodation on dive vessel (twin-share)
- PADI Gold Open Water Certification
- PADI Open Water manual
- Dive Insurance
- 2 passport photos
- All dive equipment
- 9 dives (4 training and 5 recreational including a guided night dive)
- Accommodation transfers
- All meals whilst on live-a-board boat trip
- 24 hour support number

What's Not Included

- All Flights
- Visa
- Australian Dive Medical (can be arranged on arrival – AUD $55 payable direct to Doctor)
- Meals when not on the live-a-board boat
- Additional fees for environmental, port departure and administration costs approx. $60 AUD

Additional Information

Orientation

When you arrive the dive school staff will provide you with details about accommodation, meals, schedules, free time, safety issues and so on. You will also have the chance to ask as many questions as you like so that you feel comfortable in your new surroundings.

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

- Visa 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 (shampoo, soap, toothbrush etc)
- Alarm clock
- Torch and batteries (necessary for bush camp and caving)
- Sleeping bag
- Sun block
- Small padlock to secure luggage

Clothing

- Clothing suitable for weather conditions (remember long sleeved trousers and tops to protect you from the sun)
- Raincoat and/or waterproof clothing
- Wide brim hat
- Sunglasses
- Shorts
- T-shirts
- Swimming costumes (several)

Medical Kit

- Medication
- First Aid Kit
- Insect repellent

Medical

Our partners in Cairns have confirmed with PADI that a UK diving doctor can now perform a AS4005.1 diving medical for Australian dive courses. Therefore you are able to have a medical carried out before departing for Australia. You will need to take a copy of the SPUMS medical form (click here to print the form) to the doctor, who **must complete** the form.

Please click here to go to a website for the UK diving doctors.

It is important that you declare any medical condition that may affect you whilst scuba diving.

Alternatively you can still have the dive medical once you have arrived in Australia, this can be arranged in-country for you at a cost of AUD$55. The team in Cairns will allow you time to get the dive medical on Day 1.

Please note: Bags are limited to a small bag whilst on the 2-night boat trip as space is an issue on boats. Any excess luggage can be kept safely in storage for you at the retail shop.

Minimum Age

Minimum is 16 years (all under 18 year olds must have parental consent); maximum decided on potential participants health.

Flights

Your flight to Australia should arrive at Cairns 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. **Do I need to have any diving experience before hand?**
   No. You will be learning the first qualification for Scuba Diving called the Open Water Course.

2. **Do I need to do my diving medical before I leave the UK?**
   You can either do it before you go, or when you arrive.

3. **Can I fly straight after my course finishes to continue my travels?**
   You will need to wait 24 hours after your course before you fly anywhere. This is due to the affect diving has on your body.

4. **Do I need my own equipment?**
   You will not need your own equipment as it will be provided for you. However, you use any equipment that you already have.

5. **Do I need to take a sleeping bag?**
   No, you aren't able to take a sleeping bag on the boat as all bedding is provided for you.

6. **Do I need to take a mosquito net?**
   No, there are no problems with mosquitoes in the ocean.

7. **Will there be a safe/safety deposit box available?**
   There is a safety box on board the boat that the Skipper has control over, there are never have any problems with theft on board the boats. Each cabin can be locked from the inside and generally items are safe, please just make sure that you keep your valuables tucked away out of sight as a pre-caution.

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.

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

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