Australia: Rainforest, Reef and Cultural Ecology

Country Overview & Packing Guidelines

Spring 2027

Country Overview

GENERAL INFORMATION

In size, Australia is slightly smaller than the 48 contiguous United States. Its population is estimated at over 27 million, with 86% of the population living in urban centers along the coast. Most of the interior of the country is desert or semi-arid.

Australia is a “Commonwealth Realm,” referring to its status as a former British colony while still retaining the King of England as figurehead. It is a parliamentary democracy with a Prime Minister serving as Head of Government. The capital of Australia is Canberra, located in the Australian Capital Territory and surrounded by the state of New South Wales.

Australia is rich in natural resources. Agricultural products, particularly grains and wool, and minerals, including various metals, coal, and natural gas, constitute 65% of its total exports. The economy, however, is dominated by its services sector (68% of GDP), and only 8% of GDP is attributed to its agricultural and mining sectors.

CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY



The program is based in Cairns, a coastal city in Queensland with a population of more than 160,000. In many ways, it is a city that should be seen from the sea. Looking towards this coastal town, mountains rise just beyond the city and are covered in thick rainforests. Just offshore, and stretching for over 1,500 miles, is the world's largest coral reef system, the Great Barrier Reef (GBR). Cairns is ideally suited as a program base because of its great location and proximity to our educational excursions.

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Cairns and its environs are considered part of the Wet Tropics bioregion. Average temperatures for Cairns are in the 80's, however, daytime highs can sometimes be significantly warmer (95º+), especially from November to March.

[Cairns]: AVERAGE HIGH/LOW TEMPERATURES (°F)

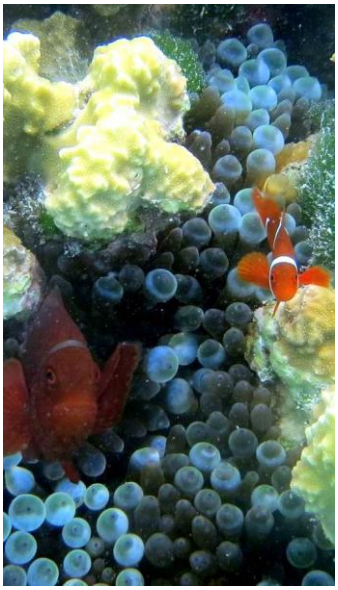
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
98/78	95/75	95/75	95/75	65/45

SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
70/58	75/61	77/63	85/75

The seasons for Cairns and its environs are generally divided into three seasons: the mostly dry and windy season (April -September), where Southeasterly trade winds dominate weather systems; storm season (October to January) where warming temperatures lead to increased humidity and thunderstorms) and the wet season (January-April) where the monsoonal rainfall pattern can dominate.

The dry season is delightful, generally sunny and dry, with cool evenings that make a light sweater or cardigan essential. The storm season and wet season are hot and humid, with high probability of heavy rainfall from February through May. Some homes have air-conditioning, though most have ceiling fans. The sun is always hot, and careful consideration should be made to protect yourself from exposure, heat stroke, etc. Locals describe the highlands (tablelands) behind Cairns as "naturally air-conditioned," with generally cooler temperatures than the coast year-round. Frosts are possible on the Tablelands between June and September.

The wet season is vibrant, with February traditionally the start of the wet season, though some years it can start as early as December. It will be hot and humid most days and warm most nights for the first two-thirds of the program (think the hot days of July-August in most parts of the U.S.) but will be cooler when the program visits the uplands during orientation, and the rainforest trip. From December to April, rainfall can be monsoonal (i.e., "bucketing down"), and students need to be prepared for wet weather. Weather rarely cancels outdoor program activities unless it becomes a safety issue.



LOCAL CUSTOMS

Local customs in Australia are similar to the US in many ways but different in some respects. Generally, it is acceptable for both men and women to shake hands upon meeting. Once well acquainted, two men may hug each other, two women may hug and/ or exchange a kiss on the cheek and a man and a women exchange a kiss on the cheek. Once people get to know you, it is not uncommon for them to tease you as part of a greeting, and so it is important not to take offence, and to try and develop a sense of humor towards friendly "banter" as this is a sign people feel comfortable around you.

Australia dress codes are generally very casual, with shorts and flip flops (locally known as thongs) acceptable in most situations. In the cities, for business meetings, and at nights in good restaurants, hotels or clubs a smarter standard of dress is often expected, including for men: a

shirt with a collar, long pants and close-toed shoes; and for women: a dress and shoes or sandals. Shirts are required to be worn in taxis and all forms of public transport.

Australians are generally quite punctual people for being so laid back and casual in many regards. If a set time is agreed upon, it is expected that the time will be honored unless the person says “around….o’clock”. There is also a strong tradition of egalitarianism in Australia and a widespread distaste for classism and pretentiousness. You are expected to be modest about your achievements and to treat a cleaner or waiter with the same respect you would show the Prime Minister. You can address anyone, except Aboriginal elders, simply by their first names. For Aboriginal elders you preface their name with “Uncle” or “Auntie”.



Some customs you may have to get used to are:

- No eating or drinking (except for possibly water) in classrooms, public transport, taxis and many shops.
- No littering
- No tipping
- Sitting in the front seat with the taxi driver and engaging in conversation
- Strong restrictions on smoking in public

LOCAL DIET

Participating in the local food culture is a central aspect of daily life in country. Special or restricted diets may not always be fully understood by your host family, although they may have previously hosted a student with similar dietary restrictions. By trying to replicate your diet at home you may miss out on an important part of your host culture.

SIT Study Abroad provides experiential learning opportunities where students become embedded in their host community. As such, we strive to accommodate serious food allergies where possible but simply cannot ensure that all dietary restrictions or non-medically mandated diets can be accommodated.

Australia is a very multi-cultural country with nearly 30% of its residents born overseas. Over 50% of people have at least one parent born overseas. The national diet is therefore very diverse. While on excursion, students will contribute to the food preparations. In between excursions, students can use the cooking facilities at their accommodation or eat out in the variety of restaurants in Cairns. Vegetarians and vegans without special requirements can be accommodated when camping or when the group is cooking, but special diets cannot always be accommodated so some flexibility with dietary choices is expected.

Note: if you have special dietary needs, including allergies, please inform the office of Student Health, Safety & Wellbeing prior to the start of your program (studenthealth@sit.edu). We will advise you on realistic expectations about avoiding or incorporating certain foods within the program context.

MEAL PLANNING

Students are responsible for the majority of their meals when we are not on our main excursions and should plan accordingly. Meal planning becomes an exciting way to explore local markets, try new ingredients and skills, and even cook with fellow students.

The estimated cost for meals not provided during the program is based on the cost of modestly eating out or buying groceries to prepare your own meals. Cooking facilities are available at all accommodations. If you plan on eating out regularly or visiting bars and clubs, you should budget more money. Exploring local food is one of the highlights of living abroad, so give yourself room to savor the experience.

Please remember to budget at least **$2,500.00** for your meals not provided during the semester. Your actual cost is likely to be less, but this depends upon how often you eat out, your tastes and whether you purchase drinks to accompany meals eaten out. For a breakdown of your program's estimated out-of-pocket expenses, please see the table in the **Money** section of this document.

SAFETY, SECURITY, AND HEALTH

Maintaining good health is essential to having a successful study abroad experience.



SIT recommends you do research prior to departure about the health, safety, and security specifics of the country(ies) you plan to visit. Consult the U.S. Department of State website and search their Countries and Areas Archive for international travel information and current travel advisories for each country. Search the Center for Disease Control Traveler's Health page to see travel health notices and vaccine requirements and recommendations for any country(ies) you plan to visit.

SIT recommends doing research ahead of time to stay up to date on It will be critical that you educate yourself about the potential health and safety hazards that may exist in your areas of travel and make informed decisions about what preventative measures to take prior to departure. You should also reference the Health, Access, and Identity information on your program's webpage.

Consider your normal routines for maintaining your physical and mental health and wellbeing. How might your program impact your ability to continue these routines? With this in mind, SIT strongly recommends bringing a full semester's supply of prescription medication(s). Getting a prescription filled outside of one's home country can be difficult, if not impossible. Equally challenging is receiving medication from home by mail. Therefore, students should bring an entire semester's worth of medication with them. Students are also advised to bring several extra inhalers and/or Epi-pens if prescribed. If you have any questions, please reach out to the Student Health, Safety, & Wellbeing Team.

Students are thoroughly briefed on safety considerations during in-country orientation and are updated throughout the semester if and when circumstances change. For information regarding safety and security, emergency communications, SIT policies, health and personal property insurance, and general program tips, please read the Safety, Security, and Health document and Student Handbook.

HOUSING

Students should expect to share a room with one or more students during orientation/launch and while on excursions.

Students should expect to move around a lot during this program. So, you should aim to pack light; don't bring clothes or items unless you are sure you will likely use them. Your base will be at the Global Backpackers on the Esplanade, Cairns; while on excursion, you will stay in shared rooms at hostels and field stations with some "bunkroom" camping (five to six days) on the Aboriginal trip. On the Aboriginal trip you will be staying in basic accomadation, with shower and toilet facilities a short walk away. Though we often spend long days outdoors, we return to a base camp or field station and so there is no "backpacking" camping on the program. Due to the popularity of the locations we stay at and visit on this program, single rooms for students are simply not viable due to space availability.

During the ISP period, you have your choice in housing; past students have stayed at hostels, Airbnb's, serviced campgrounds (called caravan parks in Australia), at field stations or boarding houses organized by ISP advisors. Your decision will largely depend on the constraints of your ISP topic, the lodging options available at your research location, and your preferences. Your Centre Director will provide guidance and recommendations as much as possible, but you are responsible for making your own arrangements. It is also important to reiterate that the travel costs to and from your ISP location are NOT part of your ISP accommodation stipend.

TRANSPORTATION

We will be using a chartered bus for orientation and the rainforest excursions. While on the camping trip we use 4WD vehicles. To arrive at Lizard Island Research Station, we will have a one-hour flight using two small planes to transport the group and luggage. We will also be riding small boats daily. Individuals who are susceptible to motion sickness should be prepared for driving on winding roads, and the days on the water and the short flight. Generally, we spend no more than 3 hours driving on any day during the program.

COMMUNICATION

While you may want to be in regular communication with friends and family from home during the term abroad, please bear in mind that different time zones, unreliable phone lines, and changing program activities can complicate communication.



It's important to be clear with family and friends about your availability during the term. Many students recommend making an appointment to call home or to receive a call. You should also consider the impact of constant communication with friends and family at home on your cultural immersion.

Visit our Contact & Communication page for practices on program communication, emergency communication, and home institution communication.

PHONES AND INTERNET

Cell Phone Policy

As part of SIT's commitment to student safety and security, all students are required to have a working cell phone capable of making and receiving both local and international calls, including a data plan so that your phone is operational when you are away from wi-fi. If needed, during orientation SIT staff can assist students in purchasing a local SIM card and acquiring minutes for calls and texting. Failure to maintain a working phone capable of making and receiving calls/texts will be considered a conduct violation and a breach of our student code.

Wireless internet is nearly ubiquitous in Cairns these days, and you can use Global's free of charge and there is good internet at, our classroom. You can email people at home on your safe arrival in country but What's App is the program's choice of communication between students and staff for urgent and important communication. Phone plans in Australia are always changing and it is recommended that students wait to arrive in country and explore option if they plan on

buying a local phone plan. Telstra is generally considered to have the best “coverage” on our excursions, and a monthly plan including data is about USD 25.

You should inform your family and friends that the group will not always be in locations where there is easy access to telephones, thus you should not make prior commitments to call people at set times until you arrive in Australia. Cairns is 15 hours ahead of EST, 14 hours ahead during Daylight Savings Time (April - October). Our time zone in Cairns is AEST (Australian Eastern Standard Time)

MAILINGS

Unlike receiving a package here in the US, receiving a package at your program site is usually **expensive** and **problematic**. Customs agents must inspect all packages and you, as the recipient, are responsible for duty and storage fees. In addition, there are cases of items being lost in the mail or taking so long to reach the recipient that the recipient is nearly back in the US by the time the items are received. For these reasons, sending packages should be done only for emergency situations. Additionally, sending valuables is highly discouraged. Mailing prescription medication abroad is illegal.

For this program, **DHL, FedEx, UPS are all services are available in country**. Despite cheaper prices, reliance on the US Postal Service is not advised due to delays and unreliability. When given the option, it’s always a good idea to send packages certified and with a tracking number that allows the sender to track the package.

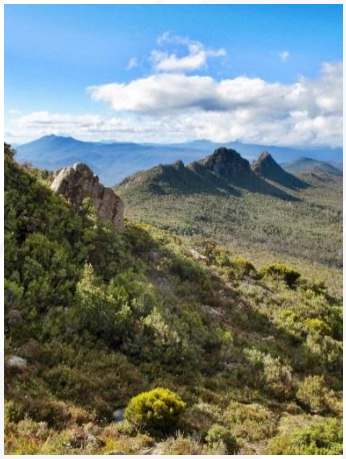
If it is necessary for someone to send you mail then posted letters and packages should be sent to the following address:

Student Name
[c/o Bridie Allan
321 Toogood Road
Bayview Heights 4868
Cairns
Australia

The delivery services listed above sometimes require a phone number to mail a package internationally. Please use the students cell phone in country number.

MONEY

The amount of personal funds required varies widely between groups and students, and where you choose to conduct your ISP. You should bring a Visa or MasterCard credit card for emergencies, such as paying for medical bills. Other credit cards are not widely accepted in Australia. ATMs are also available for Cirrus and Plus systems and are widely available. Withdrawing funds directly from ATMs is the best, safest and cheapest way to access and exchange money, as changing cash and travelers' checks in banks within Australia often incurs up to a $15.00 fee, and the exchange rate given at ATMs is almost always better than you'll get for cash in the bank or money changers. Most students open bank accounts after arrival in order to receive their ISP funds electronically.



Check current exchange rates:

http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/

If using a debit and/or credit card, you should contact your bank and/or credit card companies regarding your travel plans. If you don't inform these companies that you will be away, they will often assume the card has been lost or stolen and will put an immediate hold on the card. You should also check on costs of withdrawal, as these costs vary and can sometimes be very expensive. Renewing and receiving reissued credit and debit cards while on the program will be an expensive and highly inconvenient process. Before you leave for your program, please check the expiration dates on your cards to ensure that they will not expire while you are abroad. It is also very important that you make photocopies of all your debit/credit card information and leave them with someone you trust in case your card(s) is/are lost or stolen.

We suggest that you budget between **USD 4,000 to 4500** for out-of-pocket costs not covered by the Tuition and Housing Fees. To determine where you might fall in this range, please examine your spending habits during a typical semester at your home school and consider any exceptional expenditures you may have on the program. Please carefully consider your personal spending habits when creating your out-of-pocket expense budget. Some items to consider are meals not provided by the program, textbooks, Independent Study Project or Internship-related expenses not covered by the program, interpretation services, medical expenses, personal spending, and gifts. Use the average estimates below as a guide to help you plan for out-of-pocket expenses.

Please budget approximately:

Personal spending (Estimated averages):	$1,000 USD
Meals Not Provided	$2,500.00 USD
Books, printing, supplies:	x 50 USD
Up-front medical costs:	x 50-70 USD per visit
Potential ISP travel expenses:	X 500 USD
Visa:	x 175 USD
Estimated total:	x 4275 USD

Please note that up-front medical costs can vary widely. Though you are completely covered by SIT's travel insurance BlueCross BlueShield, which you can read more about on our Participant Insurance page, you still may need to pay up-front for medical care and then file for reimbursement.

VISITORS AND FREE TIME

SIT strongly discourages and will not provide support for any visitors to students during the term, due to the rigorous nature of the program and the disruption that such visits cause in program flow and group dynamics. Students should be sure that relatives and friends are aware of this policy and that visits are scheduled for dates after the formal conclusion of the program. Students will not be excused from program components to attend to visitors. See the Attendance and Participation Policy.

If a visitor does come while a program is in progress, they must plan their own independent accommodations; SIT Study Abroad homestay families can accommodate only their assigned student and, due to cultural and contractual understandings with SIT, should not be asked to host students' guests.

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

Please read our full Independent Travel policy for our definition, guidelines and how to access our independent travel notification form. Please note that independent travel is only allowed during program free time and students will not be excused from program activities to travel. SIT is not responsible for any costs of student independent travel including logistics, preparations, cancelation fees, change fees, and any other costs associated with independent travel. We highly recommend you wait to book any independent travel until AFTER arriving on program and

receiving the final academic schedule from your program as schedules sometimes do change at late notice.

During the program, students follow an intense schedule of classes and field-based learning assignments, even during the ISP. Free time for pursuing an independent interest or hobby during the program will be limited. Your admissions counselor can advise you about particular interests you may have. For example, if you must keep in shape for your next athletic season, or if you play a musical instrument and want to know whether to bring it, we can help you to understand your schedule and any concerns or limitations that may exist.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND POLICIES

SIT maintains a Code of Conduct and clear institutional policies regarding student behavior through a commitment to mutual learning and respect for others. Visit the policy page for detailed policies around academic integrity, alcohol and drug use, anti-harassment and non-discrimination, attendance and participation, credit hours, equal education opportunities, grading, housing, independent travel, prohibited activities, religious holiday observance, sexual harassment and misconduct, and withdrawal among others.

Packing Guidelines

LUGGAGE

Please pack lightly and include only necessary items. You will be spending time in Cairns, so bring clothes that you are comfortable wearing in the city as well as on excursions. There is a general tendency to overpack; those students that have brought too much in the past have regretted it, as it makes their daily lives more complicated as they have more stuff to manage (and move and store when required; there is no program bag storage other than Global). You should be able to carry all your luggage significant distances on your own. Try to minimize both the number of bags and weight of your bag(s) since you will likely be acquiring more belongings while abroad. You need to bring three bags in total. First, you should carry your belongings in a large backpack or a medium-sized suitcase (30”x20”x15” is an ideal size for a suitcase and is the maximum size allowed by many airlines). Second, inside your luggage, you also need to bring an empty, small



fold-up carry bag that zips close (cheap bags that zip close can also be purchased locally in Cairns). You will need this “extra bag” to store any excess belongings while on excursions and on ISP. If you don’t bring this, we won’t be able to store stuff for you. Third, you must bring a small day pack. You can use this as your carry-on luggage. If you bring more than one large bag you may need to leave it at whenever we go on excursion, as it may not fit in the bus trailer. If your suitcase is larger than the recommended size it may cause disruption to the group and we may not be able to accommodate it in the luggage trailer, resulting in you having to re pack or leave it behind.

If carrying prescription medications, you should carry a letter from your doctor to prevent any concerns at customs or in transit. (Please see the “General Health Tips” section in the Safety, Security, and Health pre-departure document.)

Please check the current requirements of the Transportation Security Administration (http://www.tsa.gov) as well as those of the airline on which you are flying for domestic and international baggage restrictions.

CLOTHING GUIDELINES

Plan to dress lightly and casually. A long-sleeved shirt will come in handy for protection from insects and stinging plants during fieldwork. Generally, Australians dress as casually as Americans – jeans, tee shirts, swimsuits, and flip-flops (known by Aussies as “thongs”).

You should bring at least one set of nice clothes for special occasions. Although you do spend extensive time in the outdoors (about 30 field days; possibly many more depending on your ISP), you will also be spending at least one-third of the semester in Cairns (some people will spend much more time in towns, depending upon their ISP.) Close-toed shoes (lightweight hikers or sneakers should do) are required for entrance into most nightclubs (especially for men), and 'smart casual' is the general standard for other venues if you ‘go out.’ You may consider a pair of lightweight pants instead of jeans. Jeans are heavy to carry and don’t dry well in the wet tropics. That said, some students this past semester said they wished they had brought a pair of blue jeans along with them; frankly, you need to decide on the best clothes for you both in town and the field because you have to carry them, wash them, and dry them. You just want to bring clothes that you will wear often and can mix and match if you are worried about wearing the same clothes numerous times during the semester.

During the program, you do not do overnight hikes or camping away from vehicles, so top-quality expedition gear, backpacks, hiking shoes, and clothes are not necessary if you don't already own them. You should expect to be doing fieldwork in rain and mud and have little to no access to amenities like washers and dryers for up to a week at a time. You should consider bringing at least one set of clothes for fieldwork that you won't mind discarding at the end of the semester.

You should bring rain gear and warm layers (generally it shouldn't ever get colder than 42 degrees Fahrenheit). Light, breathable rain gear is best, otherwise it will get moldy. Fancy or expensive rain gear is not necessary. If you sweat easily, then you will sweat in anything heavy-duty, so your best bet is a lightweight anorak or shell. You may also want to purchase an umbrella upon arrival, as raingear can become quite stifling in the tropical heat. Many students choose to wear rain gear as a way to keep warm if the weather is a bit chilly; many choose to simply wear shorts and get wet when the weather is warm and rainy.



Warm clothing and layers will be used when the group visits the Tablelands and the uplands "back-o-Cairns" during orientation, and the rainforest trip. A set of polypropylene long underwear and a thermal top or sweater are handy items to use in layering your clothes for those few times during the semester when the group might encounter temperatures below 40º F (remember, your ISP may be somewhere cooler than north Queensland). Layers and warm clothes are as much about comfort as they are about safety; don't overlook their importance. If you are thinking about stopping in New Zealand or southern Australia on your way home from the program, you will want to have some warmer clothes with you. Weather rarely cancels outdoor program activities unless it becomes a safety issue. It is also a good idea to have something warm to put on for the flight and other air-conditioned buildings.

EQUIPMENT

You must arrive with a mess kit (plate/bowl, knife, fork, spoon, and cup; some past students have used plastic containers with lids (ie "Tupperware"), which can be multipurpose and hold your cutlery and sandwiches and any leftovers when you cook at Global). You will be using these from day one mostly at lunches where the sandwich is our main menu item. If you like to cook, bring your favorite recipe in case it may be added to the menu.

Your first aid kit must include two Ace Bandages or other pressure bandage and some Sudafed or other antihistamine. It is mandatory that you carry these with you at all times in the field. Bring a small amount of whatever brand of antibiotic cream you prefer, a few band-aids and any pain relievers you use for headaches. The program has an extensive first aid kit that we take on all excursions, but you should have a few of the basics so you can look after yourself for minor bumps, scrapes, or the occasional aches and pains.

Binoculars are an essential tool of observing nature and it is a course requirement that you have a pair to use throughout the semester on field trips and assignments. Being able to use binoculars to identify and observe biota in the field is a skill all field scientists must have and so we endeavour to teach you this important skill. We recommend bringing a pair with at least 7x, 8x, or 10x magnification. If you don't know what that means, have a look at this website: http://brandwein.org/preserve/activities/binoculars.



You are required to have binoculars for one of the first course assignments of the program. If you don't have binoculars for this assignment, you will not be able to complete it, and this will be reflected in your grade. If you don't bring binoculars, you will need to purchase them in country.

A sleeping bag is necessary for the camping trip. A light, 3 season sleeping bag is best, but students should be prepared to sleep in layers for any cold nights in the uplands. In a pinch, cheap sleeping bags and pads can be purchased in country. Tents and other camping gear are provided when necessary.

Notebooks and other supplies are readily available in Australia. If you have a specific preference, bring these with you.

Please make sure that you have a waterproof watch (with a stopwatch function) for your fieldwork. These are generally cheaper to purchase in the U.S.

COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONICS

You must bring a laptop computer. This computer will be your personal property and responsibility. Before leaving home, remember to back up your computer to the cloud or on a hard drive that you leave at home to safeguard all your data in case your computer is lost or stolen. It is recommended that you insure your computer, smartphone, or other valuables for full coverage in the event of loss or theft (SIT insurance does not cover personal property).

Because the program travels so much, it does not provide computers for student use. Wireless internet is available free at our accommodations. $100 should be adequate to cover your phone and data costs for the semester. On the camping trip there is no cellular coverage and so you should not expect to have internet access every day of the program.

Assignments are usually typed and submitted via email. Because you will not always have access to the internet it is important that you have word processing software on your computer. You cannot always rely on cloud-based software such as Google Docs.

Electric converters are generally not required for Australia, as most appliances like laptops and digital cameras should have 110-240v capabilities (and is marked as such on the power pack). An adapter plug to change the prong type for the outlet is necessary, and can be purchased in Australia for about $10.

Please see the following website for information about electricity, voltage and electrical adapters. http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/.

WHAT YOU CAN AND CANNOT OBTAIN IN COUNTRY

Aside from some prescription medications, and perhaps some specific brands, everything you need can be obtained in Australia at a reasonable cost nearby Global Backpackers. There are coin-operated washing machines at most places you will stay but Australians usually dry their clothes outside, so there may not always be driers.

ALUMNI CONTACTS

If you have further questions, please contact your admissions counselor and/or ask an alumni contact: https://studyabroad.sit.edu/admissions-aid/application-process/contact-a-former-student/.

Don’t miss the Packing List on the next page!

Packing List

These minimum packing guidelines are based on suggestions from past students and your center director. Again, you will need to pack efficiently but come prepared for various locations (from cities to campsites) and temperatures (from hot to coolish, windy, and possibly wet). Think capsule wardrobe and pack minimally.

GENERAL

- 1 warm sweatshirt or fleece (bring both if you particularly feel the cold)
- Underwear and socks (10-day supply)
- 7-9 shirts (of various thickness with at least two long sleeve)
- 2 pairs of shorts
- 1 pair of jeans or casual pants
- 1 pair of lightweight long pants for field
- PJ's or clothes you sleep in
- 1 good quality waterproof raincoat (essential for safety in cold weather)
- 1 or 2 swimming suits
- 1 pair of sandals (Tevas or Chacos are good)
- 1 pair comfortable sneakers
- 1 hat to protect you from the sun
- 1 pair of shoes/boots for hiking (we do many short hikes and some of the trails we use are pretty rough and often wet and muddy. So, decide on what sort of footwear you feel comfortable with. Some students like to have a proper hiking boot, while others think that it is not worth carrying heavy and bulky hiking boots and opt for more sport or trail running type shoes).
- Optional – workout clothes

WOMEN

- 2 sets of nice clothes for going out at night
- 1 pair of shoes for going out

MEN

- 2 nice shirts with a collar for going out at night
- 1 pair of shoes for going out at night.
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TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

- Passport

- 2 photocopies of your passport stored separately from your actual passport
- Photocopy or printout/photo of visa
- 2 passport photos
- Any relevant vaccine records/documents

HEALTH/TOILETRIES - MOST EXTRAS CAN BE BOUGHT HERE

- Adequate supply of any medications you use regularly
- Small first aid kit (most supplies can be bought here)
- Extra eyeglasses and/or contact lenses
- Sunscreen (at least SPF 30)
- Sunglasses
- Wide-brimmed hat or baseball cap (for sun protection)

OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS

- Small luggage lock
- Quick dry towel
- Flashlight
- Students are encouraged to bring a **battery-operated carbon monoxide detector**