

Travel Journal: Australia

Senior Trip 2017



Day 1: Arrival

Jessica Pentlarge & Julee Keenan-Rivers *Seniors*

After a long 15 hour flight, we finally landed in Melbourne at 7am. We were exhausted but beyond excited for the trip to come. We grabbed our bags and headed off to a cafe called *Naughty Boy Cafe* for some very artistic milkshakes and lunch. We then toured the city in our vans and made our way to *Brighton Beach*. The beach was lined with colorful, small bathing houses. One of the host parents owned a bathing box, so we hung out around it and had sausage "on the barbie" (on a BBQ). We took our first dip in the Australian water and made sure to capture it on camera. We also found plenty of starfish surrounding the tide pools. After the beach, we went to a grocery store called *Coles* for some authentic Australian snacks and then drove to the pool for an easier workout due to our jet lag. The facility was amazing, with two 50 meter pools, a wave pool, a water slide, and more. We met a few swimmers on the national team, and after practice, we met our host families for the first time. We enjoyed a good first meal with our host families! Overall, it was a very fun but tiring first day in Melbourne!



Day 2: Adjusting

Bella Bram
Sophomore

Today was a really eventful day. It started with practice at 5 in the morning. I got up at 4:30, which was a nice, extra 30 minutes more than usual when going to morning practice in America. I got to the pool, and we did active warm up in the morning, which was tiring! I don't know how the Australians do it! We got in the water and didn't do many hard sets because we are still adjusting to the

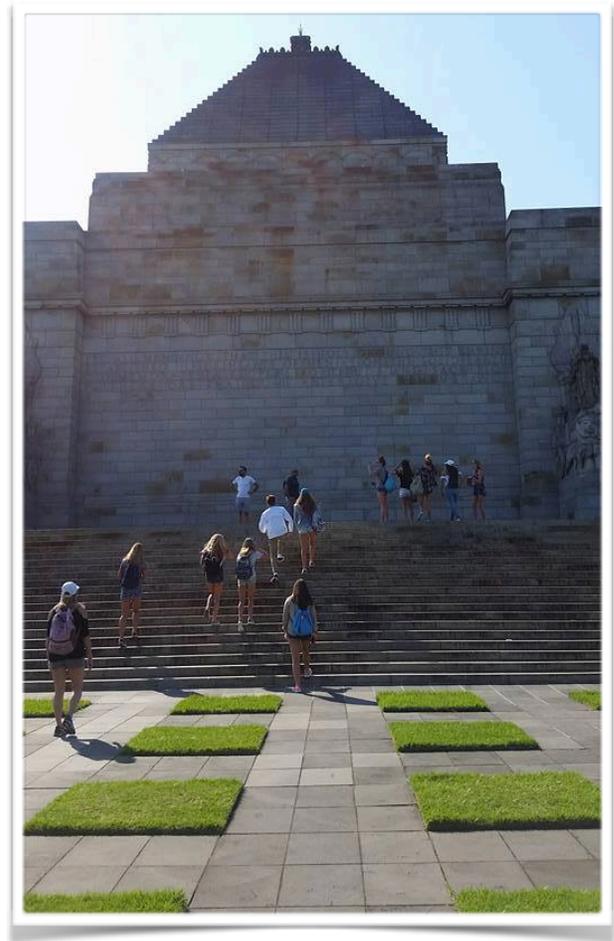


time change. After practice, we headed to *Blairgowrie* and hiked down to a beautiful beach that included a rock pool. Above it were rocks about 15 feet high, which I jumped off of 3 times. The water was a gorgeous blue and green color - we had caught Melbourne in good weather! Then we headed back to another beach in *Sorrento* that had shallow, clear waters and warm sand. There were even small stingrays swimming around. We ate fish and chips on the beach, which I could eat everyday. I want to take some back to America! I then bought chocolate ice cream after because Australian ice cream is to die for! We then took a ride on a ferry to *Queenscliff*. When we arrived, we stopped at a "servo" (service station), what Australians call a gas station. After getting back to my host family's house, we ate dinner. I really enjoy spending time with them because of how sweet and caring they are. There are 2 girls: one named Maya, 15, and another who is named Lani, 10. Last night I went to their swim banquet and met some of their friends who were just lovely. Doing all of these activities and experiencing all of this makes all of our hard work pay off!

Day 3: 360 Views

Halan Pham
Sophomore

Today was amazing! It was a total blast, and everything we saw was absolutely breath-taking! First, we went to the cathedral/shrine that I believe honored the fallen soldiers. The walk there was long but fun, though many people kept lagging behind a bit. The view from the top of the shrine was beautiful. You could see a whole 360-view of the skyscrapers and tall buildings that surrounded the shrine. There was a small fire next to a rather large vertical, rectangular stone where at the top sat statues holding a dead soldier and a list of many areas under a single group name. After that, we went to see the graffiti around restaurants and buildings. Many of them were extremely detailed and had bright and vibrant colors. My personal favorite was the painting of the astronaut. The eyes had so many details, and it looked like a lot of work went into it. It made me see the commitment some artists put into their paintings. After walking around the city a bit more, we stopped by a big mall where we got lunch and looked around a bit. The stores weren't that different





from what we're used to back in California and a lot of the workers were so nice, but the items were a bit over priced. After we shopped around for a bit, many of us came back to MSAC and practiced then went back home with our families and had dinner. Overall, the day was tiring, but it turned out to be so worth the trip and ended with a lot of cool stories.



Day 4: Koalas

Midori Hupfeld
Sophomore

On April 8, it was our family day, and my host family, Keely, Halan, and I went on an adventure to see the best exhibits of *Melbourne* in 12 hours. We chose to go to the beach, then to a zoo, to get cakes, and then to watch the penguins come to nest. We started off the day, after practice, by taking their two labradors to the beach to play. In my family, there are two kids: Gabi, who was our 14-year-old swimmer, and Josh, her 15 year-old-brother. Gabi, Josh, Keely, Halan, and I toughed out the cold water and threw the tennis ball around for the dogs. Afterwards, we all put on dry clothes and took a drive down to *Heilsville* so we could visit the sanctuary. We walked around the sanctuary and saw all the "wonderfully weird" animals of Australia, including platypi, wombats, kangaroos, and more. A bit later, we were able to have a close look and spend time with a koala named Benny. I learned that male koalas have a spot on their chest that leaves a scent to mark their territory. For lunch, we had meat pies and hot chips at the sanctuary's cafe. On the way home, we walked through shops and bought pastries and gelato. By that time, the sun was going down, so we walked to the beach and watched the beautiful sunset with our gelato. When it became darker, we went to the pier and waited for the penguins. They were coming to nest for the night by swimming in and climbing on the rocks. It was very dark, so it was hard to see them, but many little penguins had hopped on the rocks and began making honking noises. Gabi and I decided the noises made them seem like squeaking toys. All in all, today was a day that was extremely fun and gave me a way to become closer with my amazing host family.



Day 5: Colds & Footy

Mia Thomas
Junior

Unfortunately, a group of us have been battling a tough cold. I was hit yesterday with off-and on-fevers and other typical cold symptoms. Luckily, my host family, Jayde (15) and Mandy (her mom), are incredibly accommodating and very loving. Despite our separation across the world, they treat me as though I'm part of their family. I missed going to the *Victoria Market* and a *footy* game today, but Mandy and Jayde really stepped up to try and zap this virus out of me. Yesterday may have been my favorite part of this trip so far. I was taken to *Phillip Island* where there was a wildlife park filled with tons of animals. I got the chance to pet and feed some kangaroo. Although the kangaroos were a pleasure to interact with, other animals such as the "Emu" (a large bird) were quite unfriendly. After visiting the wildlife park, my family took me to a chocolate factory where I learnt all about Australian chocolate. There are many



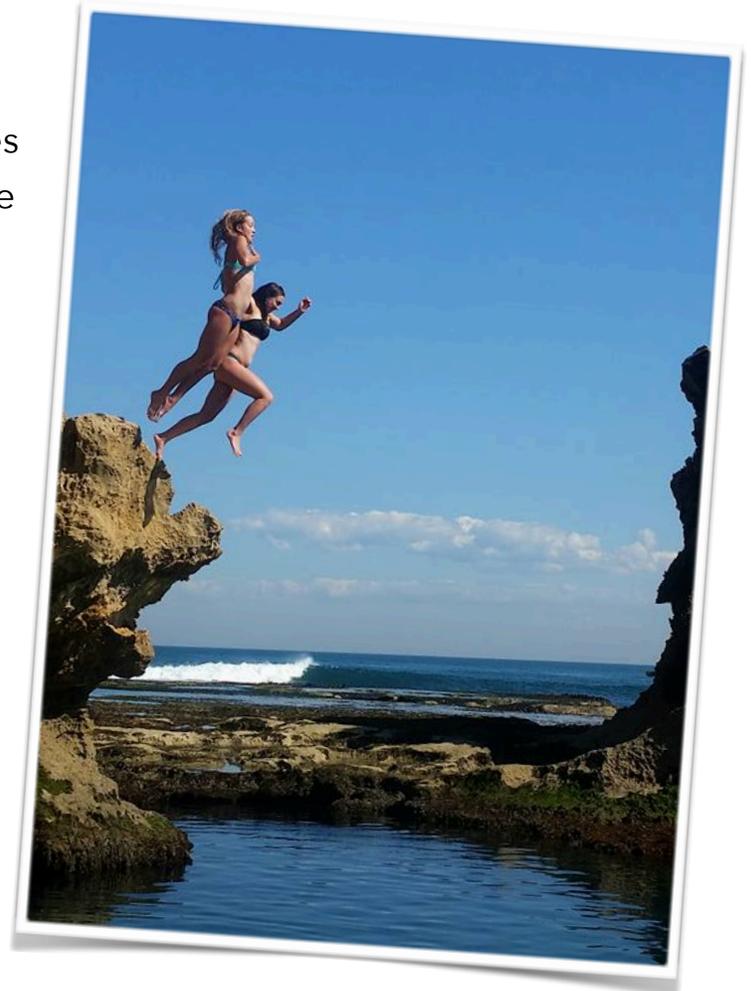
different chocolates here; though many are the same as chocolate in America, they have a very different flavor. I think all of us have greatly enjoyed the Australian famous *Tim-Tams*. Training is getting increasingly harder each day with a wide range of sets from race-pace to tight interval. No matter where we are in the world, we are still being challenged everyday. We have been so fortunate to swim at such an incredible facility. Not only are there two, full-sized Olympic pools, but also there is an incredible way to replace the tarps that we use to cover our pools in San Diego. Instead of pulling a tarp over the top of the pools, the floor raises to the surface to provide coverage over the water. It is quite fascinating and unlike anything I have ever seen in the states. I cannot thank NCA enough for providing us this opportunity to immerse ourselves into a whole new culture. We have had to learn to adapt the the unique phrases, foods, and accents as this is all new to the majority of us.



Day 6: Vegemite

Lindsay Turner
Sophomore

Today we said goodbye to our original host family. We were almost late to the airport due to traffic but, we made it on time. We flew from *Melbourne* to *Brisbane* then we drove from *Brisbane* to *Noosa*. The drive after the airport was so beautiful with the pretty trees and the beach was so beautiful. We were able to go to the beach at *Noosa*, and the water was warm with big waves. Tomorrow we are going to the *Australia Zoo* after we have practice in the morning. After the beach we met up with our second host family and had a nice dinner. One of the biggest differences is the fact that Australians drive on the other side of the road, but other than that everything is about the same. Some new foods that aren't in America include *vegemite* (black paste spread) and *Tim-Tams* (crunchy biscuit cookie). The best part of the trip so far has been experiencing the different culture and lifestyle while traveling across the world with my best friends. Special thanks to everyone that helped make this trip possible!!



Day 7: RAIN!

Ian Molloy
Junior



Today was a fun packed day despite unexpected conditions. Waking up it was pouring rain, but it was on and off quite a bit. We started the day by meeting at the aquatics complex and then we went to the *Victorian Market*. It was massive! Rows upon rows of vendor-filled goods and quirky gifts. We heard on our way there that the market had the best donuts, so we were all pretty excited because who doesn't like donuts? I got there and expected to see a massive donut shoppe, but it was a mini van like vehicle!

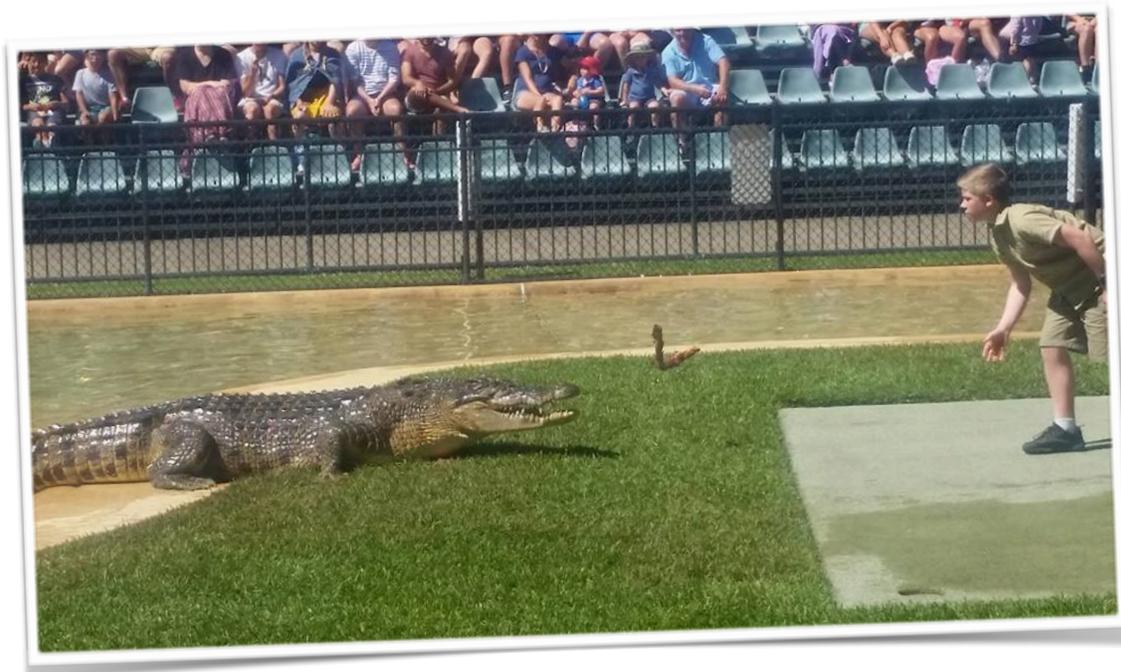
The smell was divine: fresh dough and strawberry jam filled our noses, and we knew that was the first place we had to go. Despite the rain we stood and held our ground, even while being drenched, because we just had to have those donuts. They were even better than the smell. We then walked around the vendor stands and got fresh fruit and checked out the various souvenirs and saw some

bizarre things. We saw live animals for sale, \$5 shirts, and \$30 fur mats, which were a little suspicious but nonetheless it was definitely a culture change than the farmers markets we have in San Diego! After hours of walking around, we gathered to go to the football game, which was definitely a highlight! It was pouring rain, but as we walked into the stadium, the atmosphere was just like a football game in San Diego! The teams were *Essendon* and *Carlton* and the team spirit was thriving, people decked out in their favorite teams colors and the stands being filled with the team colors. The game was terrific - there were almost 30 players on the field, which was so different from back home. There were water boys running on and off the field while the game was going on, which was weird at first! Understanding the game was surprisingly much easier than I thought, and it was so fun to watch. Although my chosen team lost, the energy of the stadium was electric, and despite the poor conditions, it was worth every second. I will never forget my time at the *Victorian Market* and the cultural differences I saw there, and I will definitely not forget witnessing my very first *AFL* (Australian Football League, I think?) game. It was one of the best sporting experiences I have seen as a spectator. This trip has been something I will tell my children about for ages and all my future friends/people I meet. I cannot thank the membership enough for allowing myself and teammates the opportunity to travel across the world to experience something so unique and spectacular. This trip may come to an end soon, but the memories I have made so far will never fade, and this would not have been possible without the help of all of you!

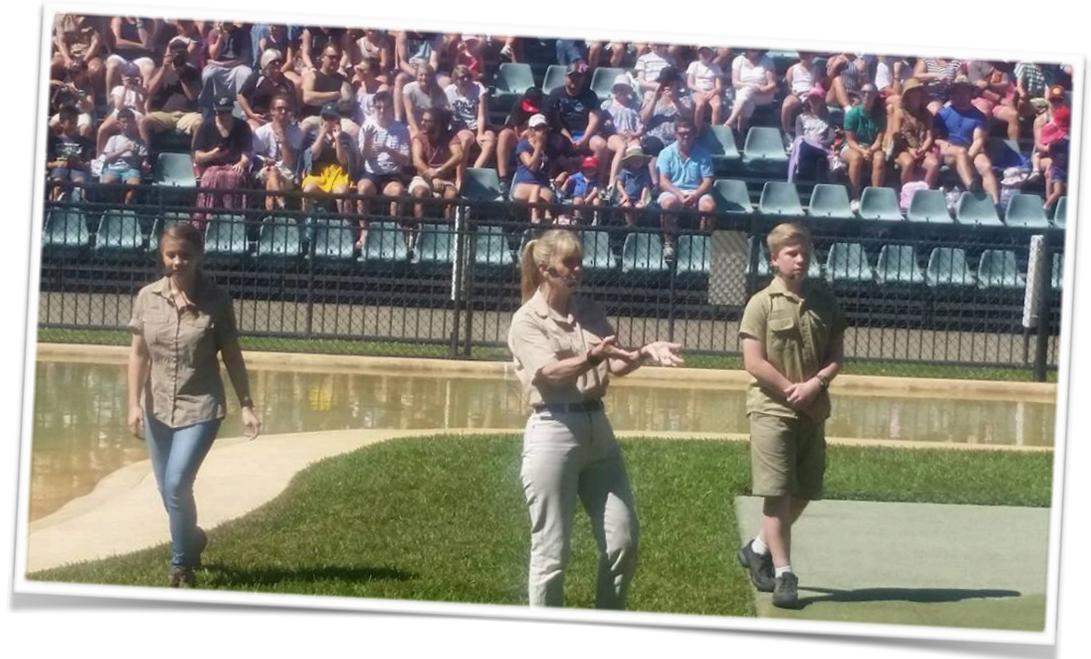
Day 8: Zoo Fun

Karina Hankee
Senior

Today we woke up around 6 am, ate breakfast, and got ready for another great practice. We swam for 2 hours then had a bigger breakfast with the whole team. After we all ate, we piled into both the vans and took an hour car ride to the *Australian Zoo*. Upon arrival, we all took pictures in front of the main welcome sign. Then we walked towards the back of the zoo to the photo center which is where the koalas and snakes were. We decided to all take pictures with the koalas. They were so cute and furry, but their nails were super sharp and scratched our arms. Each person got their own 8 x 10 picture with a koala to bring home with them. Then we walked right over to the alligator show. At first, 5 girls put on a show for the little children by singing, dancing, and handing out prizes. Oddly enough, one of those girls was Steve Erwin's daughter. During the



show, they explained all about Steve Erwin, and his wife and kids were there apart of the show also. There were so many cool birds that were trained,

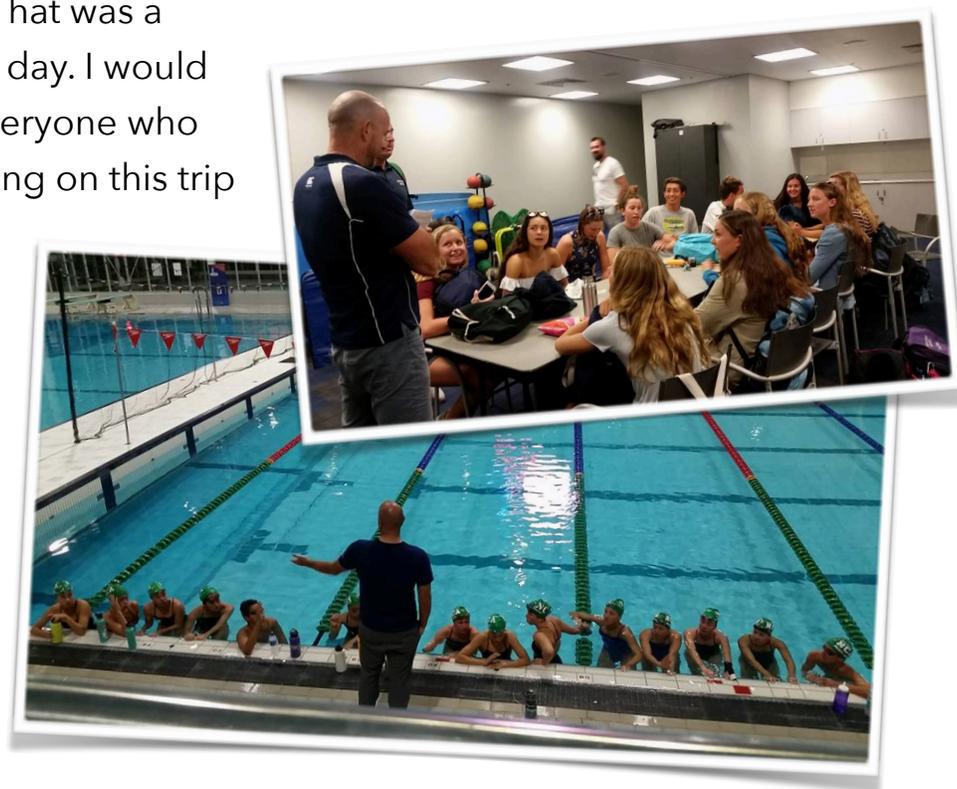


including one of the biggest birds in Australia, which was in the park. Then they brought out the scary alligators! The trainers did super-amazing tricks with them and they tried attacking the trainers if they went in their territory (the water). The show was the highlight of the day, but besides that, we saw many different animals. I would say my favorite would have to be the kangaroos. I loved petting them because they were so nice and friendly. We bought a couple bags of food, and you just hold your hand out and they eat it. We probably spent the most time with the kangaroos. The zoo was a super fun experience and is very different from the San Diego Zoo! In my opinion, everyone should come to the *Australian Zoo* over any other ones. After we left, we drove to the super market for our weekly grocery run. We picked up all the items we needed then drove back to the pool to meet our amazing host family. Overall, today is a day that I will never forget!

Day 9: Training

Lorenzo Deleon
Senior

We went to these beautiful rock pools, and everybody was jumping off into the deeper pool. I was looking for shells or rocks to take home and/or skip on the water. The girls took a lot of pictures there but no picture could do this place justice. After that we went to a beach town called *Sorrento*, and there we explored the dock and bay while the adults went and got us some food. The fish and chips we got were so amazing, even Mr.Preston said that the potato cakes we got that day were the best he'd ever had in 40 years. Most of the team picked up some ice cream after that, and then we hung out there for a while because we were waiting for the fairy to come around. We got on with our vans, and we saw some dolphins. That was a good way to end the day. I would really like to thank everyone who contributed to us going on this trip and the boosters that really gave us the opportunity of a lifetime. This trip will hold a special place in my heart forever.



Day 10: Sandbars

Catie Pentlarge
Freshman

Today was filled with adventure and relaxation. After practice, we headed out to the *Eumundi Market*. We shopped around for about an hour and bought ourselves lunch and other small items. I went to a small booth to buy a present for my mom because it was her birthday. After the market, we had about an hour drive to where we rented two boats and drove them around the river. We docked at the river mouth and went exploring. The tide was out at the time, so we explored along the sandbar. The sand was super soft, and every time we took a step it would squeak. So we all went running around making the sand squeak! We floated down the river and took a lot of pictures. Some people also went fishing and were very successful in catching fish! On our way back to the

dock, many of us got to drive the boats!

Overall, it was a fantastic day and many great memories were made that I will never forget. Thank you from the bottoms of our hearts to all of you who made this trip possible for us!



Day 11: Noosa

Keely Ryan
Freshman

Today was full of exercise and good food. It started out with a great sprint set that left everyone feeling confident for practices ahead. After we finished practice, we had our daily breakfast of toast, yogurt, and fruit and headed out for a big hike. First, we walked through the *Noosa National Park* to an overlook at the top. We could see exactly where we went boating a few days before. We then headed down another trail, stopping to look at the beauty of multiple beaches. We walked along this trail all the way until *Hell's Gate*, and we were pretty proud of ourselves for making it all that way. After we had headed back, we had three hours to do whatever we wanted around *Hasting Street* and *Main Beach*. We got lunch at *Betty's Burgers* and then got gelato from *Gelatissimo*. All the food we've had here is so delicious. After we ate, we cooled off in the ocean and relaxed on the beach. I am so grateful to have the opportunity to come to Australia. It has been a time to bond with my teammates and explore the world. I am so thankful that *Good Shepherd Swim Club* hosted us and thankful to the host families that have been so kind. This has been a once in a lifetime trip, and I'm so happy I've gotten to experience it!



Day 12: Aqua Fun

Ann Brooker
Sophomore

Today was a day we spent with our host families, and my family chose to join two other families to go to a water park called *Aqua Fun Zone*! Throughout the day, I had a blast with my roommate Mia and the two little girls I was staying with: Teagan and Baylee. Today was by far my favorite because I got to know my host family better, and the park was amazing! It was in a lake surrounded by forests, and on the beach, there was a resort visitors could stay in with a great view. Full of obstacles, slides, and rock climbing, *Aqua Fun Zone* was a great way to enjoy our last day in *Noosa*. Other families chose to either go shopping, surfing, or take a day to relax, and overall everyone had a great time with their hosts. I will remember the great memories made with them for a long time.



Day 13: Last Day

Greta Fanta
Freshman



Today was our last day in Noosa and in Australia, and today was also 'Host Family Day', where we spend the entire day with our host families. After practice, we went back to the house and had a big breakfast that consisted of eggs, bacon,

hash browns, and toast, which was very delicious. Then, we went to the *Noosa National Park Lookout*, which had a beautiful view of the *Noosa River* and the beach. We then started to head inland to go to a festival which had markets, food, and wine & cheese tasting. We got iced chocolates, which is chocolate milk with ice cream, whipped cream, and ice cubes, and then headed onto the *Botanical Gardens* for a picnic. The view was beautiful, and we saw turtles and ducks. After eating a delicious meal, we went to *Noosa National Beach*. The water was super clear and much warmer than San Diego. We also went shopping on *Hastings Street*, which is right by the beach, and got the best gelato I have ever had. We later went to *Little Cove Beach* and went in for a quick dip. It was less crowded there, and the water was even clearer than the other beaches in Noosa. We watched the sunset (not over the ocean!?!) and headed home, which was a great way to end the trip of a lifetime.