Melbourne

Consulate general strengthens partnerships in Australia's Victorian gem

Story and photos by Isaac D. Pacheco

The images that people often associate with Australia are those from tourism guides depicting the Sydney Opera House's distinctive white shells reflecting off the surface of that city's beautiful harbor, the towering red sandstone monolith of Uluru (Ayers Rock) set against the rugged landscape of the Outback, Queensland's beautiful Gold Coast beaches teeming with sun-soaked vacationers and the Great Barrier Reef's vibrant underwater ecosystem. These iconic sites are undoubtedly captivating places to visit, but they represent only a fraction of the country's unique cultural and environmental offerings.

"Australia is very big and very diverse," said Bill Furnish, public affairs officer at the U.S. Consulate General in Melbourne. "Our consular district spans a third of the continent, from tropical Darwin up north to Tasmania at the southern tip."

While Canberra serves as Australia's political capital and Sydney is its most populous city, the distinction of cultural and sports capital belongs to Melbourne, located in the southeastern state of Victoria. Melbourne's temperate coastal climate, cosmopolitan setting and world class cuisine, along with numerous entertainment venues and a flourishing arts scene,

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