



Australia

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HISTORY



Fifty million years ago the Australian continent broke away from the great southern landmass of Gondwanaland, which comprised South America, Africa, India, Australia, and Antarctica. Apart from a period during the last Ice Age when the sea level was 100-meters lower than it is today, Australia existed in isolation. This resulted in the evolution of vegetation and wildlife which is substantially unique.

In the Beginning

It was thought that the Aboriginal population may have lived in Australia for 50,000-years. However, recent evidence from the Kimberley region of Western Australia suggests much older human habitation. When European explorers arrived, the Aboriginal peoples lived by hunting and gathering and using stone tools. Estimates of the historical size of the population range up to 750,000 people. Aboriginal society, though technologically undeveloped, had complex cultural and religious forms, and some 500 languages, in 31 basic groups. There was a rich oral tradition of songs and stories and many different styles of rock art.

The first known Europeans to land were Dutch. In 1606, William Jansz landed on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula, and thereafter various landings were made. The Dutch named this land New Holland but showed no interest in further exploration

Daniel Deniehy

A republican patriot and member of parliament, he led his life according to his principles. He worked hard to: 1) achieve a genuine people's democracy, 2) make land available to the ordinary citizen, 3) promote Australianism against imperialism, and 4) keep Australia free from Asianisation.

Australia Becomes A Nation

The settler population in early years lived mostly in coastal areas, deploying large tracts of land for sheep and cattle. The annexation of land was often accompanied by the brutal treatment of the Aboriginal population, who were forced into the interior. Gold was first discovered in Victoria in the 1850s and prompted Australia's gold rush with a consequent opening up of the interior and more displacement of the Aboriginals. Wheat farming developed, and the country rapidly became a leading exporter. With the invention of refrigeration, export trade in mutton and dairy products began. An extensive railway system was built. Between 1860 and 1890, immigrants, and capital, mostly from Britain, contributed to a long economic boom. In 1891, the country had a population of 3-million and was exporting wool, mutton, dairy products, and wheat.

The colonies, all of which had Westminster-style representative institutions by 1890, became one nation on 1 January, 1901. The Commonwealth of Australia, with a federal structure, was established.



MONEY

MONEY



Australia's national currency is Australian dollars (AUD), which comes in denominations of \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 notes. Coins come in 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents and one and two dollar denominations.

Credit Cards

Credit cards such as American Express, Bankcard, Diners Club, MasterCard, Visa, UnionPay, and JCB are accepted in Australia. VISA or MasterCard can be used everywhere credit cards are accepted. American Express and Diners Club are accepted at major supermarket and department store chains and many tourist destinations.

Debit Cards

Major cards are accepted widely in Australia. That said, it's usually a comfort to carry some cash in case you are unable to pay by card.

ATMs

ATMs are easy to find in Australia – in banks, shopping areas and even inside pubs and restaurants. They're convenient and reliable so you can take out cash as you need it rather than carrying around large sums. Check out your home bank fees on foreign withdrawals before traveling – many banks are part of a global network that offers fee-free withdrawals from ATMs in Australia.



Visitors From The USA

Change your U.S. dollars to Australian dollars before you leave America at any airport or money exchange location. All international airports will have a currency exchange booth located near the ticket counters or departure gates. Major cities in the U.S. also have currency exchange offices and desks separate from the airport. They can often be found in malls or business districts. Companies such as Travelex, AAA, American Express and other exchange services will allow you to pre-order the amount of Australian currency you'll need and have it ready for you to pick up.

HELPFUL INFO

Climate

Australia, a huge country of more than 7.5-million-square-kilometers (3-million-square-miles), crossed by the Tropic of Capricorn, has largely an arid climate, classified as desert or semi-desert, except in the extreme north, where it is tropical (with a rainy and a dry season), and on the southern coasts, where it is more temperate, oceanic or Mediterranean. However, even non-desert areas are subject to sudden increases in temperature, caused by hot and dry winds coming from the desert, sometimes accompanied by sand. Being in the Southern Hemisphere, Australia has, of course, reversed seasons in comparison with Europe or North America.

Electricity

In Australia the power plugs and sockets are of type I. The standard voltage is 230-V and the standard frequency is 50-Hz.



Technology & Communication

It's easy today to find free wifi, especially in towns, in McDonalds, Starbucks, and shopping centers. Australia has no less than 1,734 public hotspots of free wifi, and that's without counting cafes, restaurants, parks. However, be careful when connecting to one of these networks because hackers can easily access your personal information. The three mobile networks in Australia are owned and operated by Telstra, Optus, and Vodafone. The numerous other service providers are all powered by this trio of network networks. These smaller telcos are called mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs). MVNOs typically tend to offer basic services at a cheaper rate.

Australian networks use the GSM standard. This is the same as most other countries, although some places like the US and Japan also rely on CDMA. If you have a CDMA-only phone you will not be able to access 3G networks in Australia, which means no talk and text. You may be able to access 4G networks, but 4G networks are data-only.

Infrastructure & Transport

Australia's transport and communications infrastructure have developed rapidly in close conjunction with the expansion of the country's main industries. The development of transport infrastructure in Australia has been almost entirely related to moving commodities for sale in cities or to gaining access to seaports.

In 1996, Australia had 913,000-kilometers (567,338-miles) of roads, of which 353,331-kilometers (219,559-miles) were paved. Freeways constitute 13,630-kilometers (8,469-miles) of total roads in Australia. Road infrastructure in Australia is generally very good. Both urban and inter-city roads are well developed across the country. However, congestion, especially that caused by competition between freight and passenger road users, is becoming a problem in the large cities. The main cities affected are Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane; Sydney has the worst congestion problems, followed by Melbourne, then Brisbane. Intra-urban movement constitutes about half the total tonnage of road freight in Australia.



In Case Of An Emergency

In an emergency phone triple zero '000'. In Australia, you can also dial 112 from mobile phones if you are out of phone network range

Language

Australia's official language is English. However, Australia is a multicultural nation with a significant migrant population, so it's common to hear a diverse range of languages in Australia's cities and towns.



LGBT Travel

Sydney is one of the most gay-friendly cities in the world, and across most of Australia, the gay community has a high profile and lots of support services. There are plenty of gay and lesbian bars, and most Saturday nights see a privately operated gay dance party taking place in an inner-city warehouse somewhere. In rural areas of Australia, you may still encounter a little conservative resistance to gays and lesbians, but Australians everywhere are generally open-minded. Noosa, on Queensland's Sunshine Coast, is a favored destination for revelers after Mardi Gras, and a couple of resorts in north Queensland cater to gay and lesbian travelers.

Religion

Although there is no established church or religion, the vast majority of the population, 61%, identifies with one of the branches of Christianity. “Other religions” are practiced by 10.1% of the population. These belief systems include Taoism, Rastafarianism, Scientology, and Unitarian Universalism (to name a few). This is followed by Buddhism (2.5%), Islam (2.2%), Hinduism (1.3%), and Judaism (.5%).



Getting There

Most major international airlines fly to/from Australia's larger cities. The national carrier is Qantas, which has an outstanding safety record and codeshares with British Airways.

Sydney and Melbourne are the busiest gateway cities, but Perth, Adelaide, and Brisbane are all increasingly popular places to start your Australia adventure.

Driving

All measurements in Australia are metric. Distances are in meters and kilometers, and speed in kilometers-per-hour. Australians drive on the left side of the road and the majority of vehicles have the steering wheel on their right side. Around 70% of Australian cars are an automatic transmission. When hiring a car, manual transmission (stick-shift) is generally only offered as an option for the cheapest small cars. The gear stick in a manual transmission is operated by the left hand. The arrangement of the pedals is standard worldwide. In most cars, the indicator (turn-signal) stalk will be on the right side of the steering wheel and the windscreen wiper stalk on the left side of the steering wheel.

Driving conditions vary. Most Australians live on or near the eastern and south-east coasts. Roads within and between the cities and towns in these areas are sealed (paved) and well maintained, as are the main highways that join the state and territory capital cities. There are usually plenty of well-marked rest areas on major highways, though these are usually very basic and do not always have toilet facilities.

In more remote areas (known as the "Outback") motorists may travel for hundreds of kilometers between towns or road houses without opportunities to refuel, get water, refreshments, or use toilets. In these areas, even on major highways, you will have to plan your trip, including fuel and food stops. Off the major inter-city highways, road conditions can be difficult in remote areas. Many roads are unsealed (gravel or sandy) and often poorly maintained. Some may only be suitable for four-wheel drives and some (including major sealed highways) may not be passable at all in certain seasons or weather conditions.

THE EXPERIENCE

Culture

The culture of Australia is a Western culture derived primarily from Britain but also influenced by the unique geography of the Australian continent, the diverse input of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and other Oceanian people. The oldest surviving cultural traditions in Australia (which are actually some of the oldest surviving traditions on earth) – are those of Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Their ancestors inhabited Australia for between 40,000 and 60,000 years and they lived a hunter-gatherer lifestyle. The boomerang and didgeridoo, which were invented by Aborigines, are to this day iconic symbols of the country. Australians are generally laid back, open and direct. They say what they mean and are generally more individual and outgoing than other cultures. More than three-quarters of Australians live in cities and urban centers, mainly along the coast.

Bucket List

Ride The Rock Wave

Take A Quokka Selfie

Have A Whale Of A Time In Exmouth

Shark Cage Diving At Port Lincoln

Drive The Great Ocean Road

Take To The Skies In Canberra

Family Travel Highlights

Swim With Sea Lions

See The Phillip Island Penguin Parade

Chase Waterfalls In Litchfield National Park

Have A Picnic On Cockatoo Island

Get Wet On The Gold Coast's Beach Suburbs

Hop Over To Kangaroo Island

Visit The Theme Parks In The Gold Coast

Tourism Authority

Tourism Australia is the Australian Government statutory authority responsible for international and domestic tourism marketing as well as the delivery of research and forecasts for the sector. Tourism Australia officially commenced on 1 July, 2004. The new organization brings together four separate organizations: the Australian Tourist Commission; See Australia; the Bureau of Tourism Research and Tourism Forecasting Council.



Foods To Try

Vegemite

Fairy Bread

Tim Tams

Meat Pies

Chicken Parmigiana

Fish and Chips

Pavlova

Beetroot

Witchetty Grub

Kangaroo

Emu

Barramundi

Drinks To Try

Ginger Beer

Jagerbombs

Archie Rose

Bundaberg Brewed Beverages

666 Vodka

Bundaberg Rum

Tooheys

Goon

Hippocampus

Tamborine Mountain



Photography Hot Spots

Hutt Lagoon (the pink lake), Western Australia

Cape Byron headland and Lighthouse, New South Wales

The Pinnacles, West Australia

Surfer's Paradise Beach, Queensland

Shipwrecks, Queensland

Sydney Opera House, New South Wales

Uluru, Northern Territory

Twelve Apostles, Victoria

Souvenirs To Buy

Camphor Cutting Board

Opals

Ugg Boots

Dinosaur Designs

Akubra Hat

Ken Done

Penfolds Grange Wine

