

General Information

Last Updated Monday, 08 September 2008

About Australia

Australia's landscape is a picture of amazing diversity, contrasts and natural wonder. From the ancient rock Uluru (Ayers Rock) to the Great Barrier Reef, Australia's Red Centre reaches out to a magnificent azure coastline. Scattered across this beautiful environment, our thriving cities bubble with sophistication and energy. Brisbane, Queensland's vibrant sub tropical capital, Sydney and its magnificent harbour, and Melbourne with its heritage of arts, fashion and fine food, are just three of Australia's outstanding city destinations. Australia, the world's smallest continent and largest island, is like nowhere else on earth. It is as big as mainland United States but has only 20 million people. It is adventurous, stylish and friendly, has unique flora and fauna and a fantastic climate. Aussies (as the locals are called) enjoy sport, beaches, music, performing arts, outdoor cafes, pubs, multicultural restaurants and good friends. A rich cultural blend of fashion, languages and cuisine colours the streets of Australia's major cities. Australia's diverse mix of environments and cultures offers an encounter like no other. Explore lively, sophisticated cities, experience the awe-inspiring beauty of Australia's natural wonders, discover the ancient mysteries of Aboriginal culture, and see and feel the rigours of life in the rugged Outback. Regardless of which path you take, Australia guarantees the experience of a lifetime!

Australian Map

Australia Facts Airport Information

Train - 10% Discount for all Delegates

Brisbane's Airtrain isn't affected by gridlock on our roads. No matter how bad the traffic is you'll always get to where you're going faster on the Airtrain. With up to four express trains each hour direct to the Gold Coast, Airtrain is the most reliable and frequent option to reach the Gold Coast from Brisbane Airport.

If you are travelling from the Airport to the Gold Coast and know the station to get off at, you can book a single or return journey online now. If you are travelling up to the Airport, you can purchase your ticket on the train platform at the Gold Coast.

Conference delegates will be personally met in the arrivals hall and assisted with their luggage to the station when pre-booked at <http://www.airtrain.com.au/conference> (and receive a 10% discount on your fare). Currency and ATMs

The Australia currency is the Australian dollar (A\$). Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) are widely available and local currency can be withdrawn using Cirrus or Maestro based cards that facilitate electronic funds, point of sale (EFPOS). Credit Cards

Visa, MasterCard and Eurocard are widely accepted. American Express and Diners Club are accepted at many hotels and some restaurants. Customs & Quarantine

Quarantine and wildlife regulations and other restrictions may also apply to certain goods. A customs entry for customs clearance may be required if the goods carried are valued over A\$250. All travellers must declare amounts of A\$10,000 or more in foreign or Australian currency (notes and coins) you take into or out of Australia.

We recommend you check the Australian Customs Service web page. Electricity in Australia is 240 volts, 50 hz. GST & Goods and Services Tax

All goods and services transacted in Australia attract a Goods and Services Tax of 10%. By law this tax is included in all displayed prices & so the price you see is the price you pay.

Visitors to Australia can claim back the GST paid on any purchase of at least A\$300 from the one store. This is done at the airport at the time of departure. You need proof of purchase (normal receipt) that shows the suppliers ABN (Australian Business Number), that GST was paid on the goods, and how much the GST was. Media

- Australian Broadcasting Corporation
- The Courier Mail
- The Australian
- Australian Financial Review Time Zone

Queensland is 10 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT + 10). During September, Queensland will be on spring time. Because Australia is on the other side of the International Date Line, you lose 1 day when traveling west from the U.S. You will gain one day upon return (across the Pacific) Tipping

Tipping is not as widespread in Australia as it is in other parts of the world. Tipping is your prerogative, a reward for service. It is customary to tip hotel porters, and a gratuity of about 10% is usual in restaurants if good service is received. NO service charge is added to hotel or restaurant bills. Visa

All visitors, apart from New Zealand citizens, must obtain a Visa before travelling to Australia.

Australia's Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) is an electronically-stored authority for travel to Australia for a short-term tourist or business entry. ETAs are issued within seconds of being requested through computer links between the Australian Immigration Department, travel agents, airlines and specialist service providers around the world. Over 30 countries have access to the ETA system. A recent innovative enhancement allows a traveller to apply for an ETA over the Internet. Conference delegates from non- ETA countries will need to obtain a business (short-stay) visa, even if some tourism activities are planned for part of the stay in Australia. It is called a 456 visa if it is issued as a label into a passport.

We strongly recommend you check the latest information on Department of Immigration .Weather

August is winter in Australia. The climate at the Gold Coast can be quite cool. Average maximum for August is 19C (66F) and the average minimum is 14C (57F). 1 September is the first day of SPRING. Bring a jacket and sweater for the cold evenings.