

## Australia and New Zealand

### Geography

- Australia is the only country that is also a continent.
- It has 7 682 300 km<sup>2</sup>.
- Australia lies between the South Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean.
- Its surface is mostly flat except for the Great Dividing Range.
- The major rivers are The Murray and the Darling, but most of the rivers are creeks which dry up during summer.
- The highest mountain is Mount Kosciuszko (2 228m)
- There are deserts and semideserts in the central part of the country (Great Sandy Desert, Great Victoria Desert, Gibson Desert, Simpson Desert).

### Climate

- In the central part of the country there are deserts (the Great Sandy Desert, Victoria Desert...)
- In the north there is a tropical climate with heavy summer rainfalls and in the southwest and Adelaide there are hot and dry summers and mild winters.

### People

- There are more than 21 000 000 people living in Australia.
- The major ethnic groups are European descendants (mostly from Britain and Ireland), Asian people, people from the Middle East, Indonesians and also native Australians called the Aborigines.

### Political system

- The official head of the state was the British Queen represented by the Governor General. The British Queen died on 8th September 2022 and her son Charles became the King Charles III. The states of Commonwealth recognized him as their official head.
- Official name of Australia is the Commonwealth of Australia
- The capital city is Canberra and the official language is English.
- The currency of Australia is an Australian dollar.

### Political division

- There are 6 states and two territories. **These six states are:** Western Australia, Southern Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania. **The two territories are:** Northern Territory, Capital Territory

### Australian Flag

- Australia's flag is the Union Jack flag with five stars that represent the constellation of the Southern Cross and a large 7-pointed star for 6 states and 1 territory

### Cities and places of interest

- The largest cities are Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide. The capital is Canberra but it is not the largest one.
- **Sydney** (New South Wales) – it is Australia's largest city. There are nearly 60 km of beaches. In Sydney there is the famous **Opera House** which looks like waves breaking on the shore. Next to the Sydney Opera House there is **Sydney Harbour Bridge** which is more than 80 years old and there people can have a beautiful view of the city. There is also a very old and interesting part of the city called **„The Rocks“** which is full of cafés, restaurants,

clubs... People can also visit the famous **Bondi beach** in Sydney and have a rest there or do some sports such as surfing, swimming, beach volleyball...Summer Olympic Games were held here in 2000

- **Canberra** (Australian Capital Territory) – it is the capital city of Australia. It was designed mostly by American landscape architect Walter Burley Griffin on both sides of the artificial Lake Burley Griffin. In Canberra tourists can visit **Telstra Tower** to have a beautiful view of the city and the new and the old buildings of the **Parliament**. There is also the **Australia war memorial** and the **museum of Science**. If tourists prefer nature, they can visit **National Botanic Gardens** or admire the **Black Mountain**
- **Melbourne** (Victoria) – Australia's second largest city and a financial and commercial centre. It is the centre of Australian football, cricket, horse racing, tennis and golf. There are also many parks and gardens. In 1956 summer Olympic Games were held here. Since 1988 the famous Australian Open(tennis) has been played here
- **Brisbane** (Queensland)– it is the third largest city in Australia. It is Australia's important financial, industrial and transportation centre, there is a naval port and international airport. Tourists can visit theatres, museums, botanical and zoological gardens and there are also schools and universities
- **Perth** (Western Australia) – it is the world's most isolated large city (Jakarta is closer to Perth than Sydney). It is the seat of the **Perth Mint** and tourists can admire the **Round House** which is the oldest remaining building in Western Australia.
- **Adelaide** (South Australia) – the fifth largest city in Australia. Adelaide is known for many festivals and sporting events, its food, wine and culture, its long beaches
- **Alice Springs** is a town in the geographical centre of Australia, it is a desert town. Here we can find museum of flying doctors service and people go to this town and region to admire wild nature and desert countryside.
- **The Great Barrier Reef** (Queensland) – it is the world's largest coral reef (2 600km). The reef is located in the Coral Sea, near the coast of Queensland in north-east Australia. The Great Barrier Reef can be seen from outer space and is the world's biggest single structure made by living organisms. A large part of the reef is protected by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park which helps to keep the reef healthy.
- **Kakadu National Park** (Northern Territory) – In the East of Darwin where tourists can see Aboriginal rock paintings, crocodiles and the kakadu bird
- **Ayers Rock** (Northern Territory) – in Uluru National Park. There is a huge sandstone which rises 348 metres above the desert floor and is the biggest rock monolith in the world. It is also known for changing its colour especially at dawn and sunset. It is on the UNESCO list of World Cultural Heritage.
- **Tasmania** – it is an island state off the southern coast. More than one fifth of Tasmania is covered by national parks. There also lives the famous Tasmanian devil which got its name from the sounds it makes. These sounds terrified the early settlers so they called it „the devil“
- Australia is the greatest producer of **wool** in the world. There are a lot of **sheep stations**.

#### Fauna and flora

- Australia's best-known animals are the kangaroo, koala, platypus, wombat, spiny anteater, dingo, emu, opossum. There are around 55 species of parrots in Australia
- Australia has a lot of species of plants for example **cycad palm** and the **grass tree, wildflowers**. In Australia there is also **eucalypt** tree, which is very popular with koalas who eat its leaves.

#### History

- Aborigines were the original people of Australia, they spoke different languages and had different cultures.
- Australia was discovered by Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch navigators
- In 1770 the British navigator James Cook made a voyage to the South Pacific and mapped Australia's eastern coast. He was the first to claim Australia for Britain. The British used it as a penal colony and sent thousands of prisoners to Australia until 1868 when the transport stopped.

- The Dutch navigator Abel Tasman discovered Tasmania in 1642. An early name for Australia was New Holland
- The discovery of gold in the 19th century brought many immigrants to Australia. Six separate colonies were founded
- In 1901 a new British Dominion known as the Commonwealth of Australia was founded and the six colonies (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania) federated as states.

#### Interesting people from Australia

- Writers: Patrick White (the first Australian to win the Nobel Prize for literature), Peter Carey (novelist)
- Painters: Sidney Nolan, Brett Whiteley
- Singers: Kylie Minogue
- Actors: Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe, Mel Gibson
- Sportspeople: Cathy Freeman (sprinter), Ian Thorpe (swimmer)

#### New Zealand

- It's an island country in the south-west part of the Pacific Ocean.
- It consists of two main parts – the Northern and the Southern Island. There are also more than 700 little islands.
- It's the 6th biggest island country in the world
- The capital city is Wellington
- The population is about 5 million people
- The head of the state is the British King Charles III
- Official language is English, Maori language and their sign language
- The official symbol of New Zealand is kiwi bird
- The official name of New Zealand is Realm of New Zealand
- It is a constitutional monarchy in which the British monarch is the formal head of the state
- The country is divided into 16 regions
- The biggest cities are Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Hamilton
- The currency is New Zealand dollar
- The countryside is formed by fjords, glacial lakes, green valleys, volcanoes, geysers, hot springs, mountains – the Southern Alps with their highest peak Mount Cook (3764 meters)
- There also frequent earthquakes
- There are 14 national parks
- New Zealand flag: it consists of a small copy of the British Union Jack and 4 red stars, which form the Southern Cross.
- There are two national anthems: The British one (God save the King) and their own God Defend New Zealand

Fauna and flora: in New Zealand we can find many endemic species. It is said that there are no dangerous animals living in New Zealand, there are even no snakes. New Zealand is the home of many bird species, many frogs,

bats, geckos, reptiles. There are many rainforests in New Zealand

Climate: quickly changes, it is very windy. The summers are hot and the winters are mild.

The rivers and lakes in New Zealand: Arrow, Waikato, Kawarau, Rangitata. Lakes: Pukaki, Emerald lakes, Wakatipu, Hawea, Taupo

The highest mountain is Mount Cook (more than 3700 metres tall)

The cuisine: fish and chips, Maori hangi (mixture of meat and vegetables baked in a hole in the soil covered with hot stones), seafood

Favourite sport: rugby (the national team performs a special dance called haka before every match). Sports: rugby, cricket, netball, basketball, tennis, sailing

Interesting places:

- **Queenstown** – centre of extreme sports and travel industry
- **Wellington**: the capital city, international port, seat of government
- **Auckland**: the city of yachts, there are two ports, it lies on 55 extinct volcanoes
- **Kaikoura**: a place where you can watch the whales
- **Waterfalls Huka Falls**: they are on Waikato river heading from Taupo lake

History

- The first settlers came from Eastern Polynesia and the Central Pacific around 800 AD. They were the ancestors of the Maori population.
- The first European to come here was a Dutch navigator Abel Tasman in 1642
- James Cook explored the country and tradesmen soon started to follow him.
- Great Britain took control of the South Island by the right of discovery and the North Island became a British colony in 1840 when they signed a treaty with the Maori chiefs. The Maori were promised protection. There were several wars against the British control.
- The effort to be independent rose after the WWII when in 1947 New Zealand became independent. But still it is a member of the Commonwealth.

Interesting people from New Zealand

- Actors: Russell Crowe, Sam Neil, Lucy Lawless
- Directors: Peter Jackson (made the Lord of the Rings trilogy), Jane Campion (directed the Film Piano)
- Others: Edmund Hillary (mountaineer who was the first to climb Mount Everest).