Ever wanted to know why an emu is on the Australian Coat of Arms? Look no further with these things you might not know about Australia Go World Travel is reader-supported and may earn a commission from purchases made through links in this piece. My country of Australia is both unique and diverse. Born and bred in Melbourne, Australia to migrant parents (Mum is from Malta and Dad is from Ireland), I am lucky and proud to call Australia my home. 1. Australia is an island, a country and a continent. It is the largest island in the world, the sixth-largest country but the smallest continent. Australia is as wide as the distance between London and Moscow. 2. Most of Australia’s exotic fauna cannot be found anywhere else in the world. Examples include koalas, quokkas, platypuses, wombats, emus and kangaroos. 3. The Australian mammals, platypuses and echidnas, are the only two mammals in the world that lay eggs to give birth. 4. Australia is home to 1,500 types of spiders and to 4,000 types of ants. 5. Australia has over 750 different reptile species, more than any other country in the world. The saltwater crocodile is an example. It is the largest reptile in the world and one of the oldest creatures to walk the planet. It is also the closest living thing that I have ever seen to a dinosaur. If you are ever in Darwin in the Northern Territory, take a cruise on the Adelaide River and see the crocodiles jump. The power of their jumping and their jaws is eye-popping! 6. There are many deadly creatures in Australia such as 21 of the world’s 25 most venomous snakes, the blue-ringed octopus and the stonefish. Another is the Australian box jellyfish which is considered the most venomous marine animal. I spend a few weeks each year in beautiful Palm Cove, Far North Queensland. If I am there between about October and May, I swim in the protection of the marine stinger net installed each year by the local council. 7. Australians have a vernacular or slang sometimes called “Strine” or “Strayan.” Look out for “bloke” (man) and “sheila” (woman). These terms are sometimes on public toilets (what Australians call restrooms) so it is handy to know which is which! Also, an entrée is an appetiser; not a main course. (This gets me into trouble every time I travel to the US!!!) Diapers are nappies, pacifiers are dummies, flip flops are thongs. The list is endless! Oh, and we Australians love to shorten words. Examples include: “arvo” for afternoon, “vego” for vegetarian, “Maccas” for McDonalds and “Aussies” for Australians! 8. In Australia, we drive on the Left side of the road. Also, not all hire cars are Automatic transmission so specify Automatic if that is the type of car that you want.