

Fact Sheet



Australia

Passports

You must be in possession of a valid passport to travel internationally. Instructions on how to obtain a US passport and an application form can be found on the web at:

www.travel.state.gov/passport.

You may also contact your local post office and they will advise you of the nearest passport issuing office. Your passport must be valid for at least three months after your scheduled date of return home.

Visas - Australia

A tourist visa – now usually issued as an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) - is required for all US citizens traveling to Australia. Passengers from certain other countries can travel with an ETA, please check with your consultant.

Non-US citizens can also refer to www.austemb.org for information on obtaining a visa.

You may get your ETA from Destination Australia free of charge if you are booking an airline ticket or vacation itinerary with us. If you are not a client, we can process your ETA for US\$7.50 per passport.

Money

Currency is Australian dollar denominations:

Coins	Notes
5 cent	5 Dollar
10 cent	10 Dollar
20 Cent	20 Dollar
50 Cent	50 Dollar
1 Dollar	100 Dollar
2 Dollar	

Approximately \$200 Australian per day can be withdrawn from an ATM or bank if you have a major credit or debit card and know your PIN number. Please call the issuing bank to inquire about your own card. A service fee usually applies but this is by far a more convenient way to get ready cash than using traveler's checks. Major credit and debit cards are accepted at most stores including supermarkets and most restaurants.

A credit card is required as a security deposit to check in to a hotel or rent a car.

If you bring in or take out of Australia more than \$A 10,000 cash or the equivalent in foreign currency (travelers checks excluded), you must declare it to Customs. Failure to do so is an offense.

Weather

Australia's seasons are the opposite of the Northern Hemisphere. The northern third of the country is tropical, while southern regions are temperate. Australia is the same size as the continental US, so summer and winter climates vary from area to area. Note that the months of December, January and February are humid, hot and often rainy in the tropics. Additionally, during these months, Cairns mainland area beaches may be closed for swimming due to the presence of poisonous 'stingers' in the water.

For an annual temperature chart, please go to the following website: www.australia.com and type in weather in the search box. You may also get a 10 day forecast for any city at the following website: www.bom.gov.au and click on the state tab.

Language

There is no truth in the rumor that Australians don't speak English. They just speak an endearing form of English that may puzzle you at first. Here is a by-no-means comprehensive lexicon to get you started:

Aussie	American
petrol	gas (for a car)
bathers	swimsuit
togs	swimsuit
swimmers	swimsuit
beaut	short for beautiful
beauty	great
boot	trunk (of a car)
bonnet	hood (of a car)
entrée	appetizer
main	main course
loo	restroom
dunny	restroom
jumper	sweater
lollies	candy
footpath	sidewalk
give way	yield (road sign)
sunnies	sunglasses
serviettes	napkins
nappy	diaper
bum bag	fanny pack
rubber	eraser

Telecommunication

Most pay (public) phones require a phone card which can be purchased at kiosks everywhere. Shop around for international calling rate deals.

Another option is to purchase an un-locked cell phone prior to leaving the US or Canada. When you arrive at your destination, you can then purchase a pre-paid SIM card that you install into your cell phone and this will give you a local telephone number and you will be able to make domestic and international calls. Note SIM Cards are not generally interchangeable between different countries within the South Pacific. You can also rent a cell phone at any Vodafone store. Gateway airports have a Vodafone store on the premises.

You can use the phone jack in your hotel room to connect a laptop, and many hotels have high speed access for a flat fee. If you are not taking a laptop, you may want to set up a net-based (free) E-mail account such as Hotmail so you can receive E-mail from any computer. There are many internet cafes throughout the country and prices are very reasonable.

Public Transportation

Taxis are readily available and will accept credit cards for a 10% surcharge over the meter. As hotels change names, and many taxi drivers are new to the country, have the street address of your destination handy. Buses and trains are a safe, inexpensive way to get around, but local currency will almost certainly be the only payment method, unless you go to a transit center with staffed ticket offices.

Driving Distances

Due to the vast distances involved, few people do a self drive trip to Australia but here are some of the more popular driving routes:

Destinations: Miles:	Miles
Sydney - Canberra	188
Sydney - Melbourne	552
Sydney - Brisbane	641
Sydney - Cairns	1638
Alice Springs - Ayers Rock	277
Hobart - Launceston	123
Hobart - Port Arthur	58
Hobart - Freycinet	111
Launceston - Freycinet	147

Customs/Duty Free

There are strict laws prohibiting or restricting the entry of drugs, steroids, weapons, firearms, protected wildlife and associated products. If you are unsure about anything declare it to Customs.

Each traveler over 18 years of age can bring into Australia 1125ml of alcoholic liquor and 250 cigarettes or 250 grams of tobacco products duty/tax free. For other goods, including those intended as gifts, a duty/tax-free allowance of \$A 400 per person or

\$A 200 per person under 18 is available. These articles must accompany you through Customs and must not be intended for commercial purposes.

Tax Refund

Departing travelers may be able to claim a refund for GST and WET (Wine Equalization Tax) paid on goods purchased in Australia. The refund is applicable to goods, totaling \$A 300 (GST inclusive) or more that are being taken out of Australia. The goods must have been purchased no earlier than 30 days before leaving Australia. You can purchase several lower-priced items from one store, either at the same time or on several occasions within the 30 day period. These goods will be covered by the one tax invoice. Or you can buy goods from several stores, provided that each store's tax invoice totals at least \$A 300 (GST inclusive). Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS) facilities are located at international airports and cruise-liner terminals. To claim, travelers must show their passport, international boarding pass, retailer's tax invoice and the goods. Other Conditions may apply please refer to www.customs.gov.au

Departure Tax

A departure tax is included when you purchase your ticket in the US. No other collection will be made.