Country & Culture Briefing

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# The name of the Country

 The country selected for the purpose of this assignment is Australia. According to area, it is the sixth largest country of the world. It comprises of mainland of Australia along with other smaller islands.

# The Capital City and Other Important Cities

Canberra is the capital city of Australia, located on the south-eastern side. Apart from the capital city, other important cities include Adelaide, Gold Coast, Sydney, Perth, Newcastle, Brisbane, and Melbourne.

# A **Brief Summary of the Country’s History**

Australian Aboriginal people lived in the country for a very long time. Colonial Europeans arrived by boat. In half a century and with small numbers they decimated the Aboriginal way of life and established their own, mostly through farming. In 1788, the first British penal colony was made when Captain Arthur Phillip settled in Sydney. Other colonies were established quickly to support it at Norfolk Island, and Parramatta to the west, and in Tasmania. The continent slowly filled up with penal and free colonies being established, going on until gold was discovered near Bathurst in NSW in 1851, then in Victoria (“Australia: History | The Commonwealth,” n.d.). With the ensuing Gold Rushes, the population growth accelerated dramatically to the turn of the century, when in 1901, Australia achieved nationhood, establishing its own national parliament and constitution, going on to become one of the oldest continuous democracies in the world.

# Government of Australia and Key People

The Government of Australia is the government of the Commonwealth of Australia, a federal parliamentary constitutional kingdom, also referred to as Her Majesty's Government. The current head of state is Queen Elizabeth II. The National Party of Australia, the Australian Labor Party, and the Liberal Party of Australia are three main parties in Australia that represent the House of Representatives. The current Prime minister of Australia is Scott Morrison and David Hurley is the Governor-General. The democratically-elected representatives from all over Australia, make up the Parliament of Australia.

# The Name of the Country’s Currency

Australia’s national currency is the Australian dollar (AUD) and as of December 2nd, 2019, the Australian dollar is equal to 0.68 United States dollars. MasterCard and Visa are both normally accepted in this country. The country also enjoys good economic growth and is deemed as one of the most beautiful countries (“All About Australia,” n.d.).

# The Major Religions in the Country, And Its Significance to Country’s History and Culture

Australia’s population has almost 50% followers of Christianity with various sects that comprise of the group, there are Buddhists, Hindu, Muslims, some traditional Aboriginal animists, other spiritual groups, and of course almost a third of the population being the dreaded non-religious. Australia is a very secular country and all other religions are recognized, though Judeo Christianity is still the predominant religion in Australia. As of the 2016 census, 22.6% identified as Catholic, 16.3% as ‘other Christian’, 13.3% as Anglican, 2.6% as Muslim, 2.4% as Buddhist, 1.9% as Hindu, 1.7% as ‘other religions’ and 30.1% as ‘No Religion’. What’s more, most of the people who identify as Christian are ‘nominally Christian’ and do not practice the religion in any meaningful way. Religion is considered a very personal subject in Australia and isn’t really spoken about in public. People who proselytize or preach on the streets are considered to be nutters, and, for the most part, politicians and public figures who go on and on about their faith are not taken seriously.

# The most important holidays the people celebrate their dates, and how they are celebrated.

The National Public Holidays in Australia are New Year's Day, Easter Monday, Good Friday, Christmas Day, Anzac Day, Australia Day, and Boxing Day. Apart from these, other public holidays, for example, Queen's Birthday and Labor Day are separately declared by the governments of state and territory. The dates of these holidays change according to the year, except a few. Every Australian festival has its own nature, some are art-oriented festivals, whereas some are culturally-based. Many tourists are unaware of the most exciting festival.

To start the celebrations, Australians set up the Christmas tree with as many decorations and tinsels that they can possibly fit on. The week before the 25th, people drive around town or the suburbs, exclaiming at the Christmas lights that people set up. Christmas lunch is the big meal of the day. The Boxing Day Test at the MCG is legendary, even non-cricket lovers know about it.

# Business Greetings

Australians are not very formal people, hence the business greetings are also casual. Generally, a handshake and smile are suitable (“Business Culture and Etiquette in Australia,” n.d.). Besides, the greetings of men and women are not very different. Such as thanking someone can be said as, “I owe ya”, “Put it there”, “Take care legend”, “Love ya work”, etc.

#  Traditional Foods and Drinks

The list of a few traditional foods is as follows, that is mostly consumed using a knife and fork.

* Vegemite: One has to adapt and apply a very thin layer on toast or crackers. Once they get accustomed to the flavor, they can be generous. Lamington: it's incredible how such a humble cake is so amazingly tasty.
* Pavlova: a little slice of heaven.
* Meat pies: the ones made in small-town bakeries, are the best. Ketchup is optional.
* Barbie: in my opinion, it is more an excuse for drinking and eating, nonetheless it is recommended that the beef sausages and any piece of pork, one should roast.
* Fish and chips: after a day at the beach, they taste like glory.
* Game: kangaroo is fine, and camel too.

When it comes to drinks, common are Bundaberg Brewed Beverages, Ginger Beer, Bundaberg Rum, Jagerbombs, Archie Rose, etc.

# Miscellaneous

Australian humor makes the Australians sincere and friendly. Also, Australians’ humor tends to be hilarious, which can easily bring the house down. It makes every party and gathering more fun. Australia is a very diverse country that adds to its beauty (Jones, 1997).

# References

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