

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Come and join the party!

A UNIQUELY AUSTRALIAN INVITATION

Australians know how to throw a party - as we proved to the world during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Throughout the country, there are festivals, events and exhibitions that celebrate the diversity of modern, multicultural Australia.

We are a country of festival-goers, always keen to celebrate the nation's comedy and arts, food and wine, music and culture, sport and heritage. Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide and Canberra each boast major arts festivals which spotlight the best in dance, jazz, theatre, opera and more.

Adelaide is known as the Festival city because of the large number of festivals it hosts. Thousands of art lovers from across the globe converge on the city for the biennial Adelaide Festival and Festival Fringe, Tasting Australia Food and Wine Festival and the Clipsal 500 Adelaide super car race series.

Melbourne lays claim to being Australia's events capital, enthusiastically embracing a wide diversity of festivals, exhibitions and sporting spectacles. There isn't a dull month in Melbourne with a busy annual cycle of major events including the Australian Open Tennis Championships, the Formula 1 Grand Prix to the Melbourne International Comedy Festival and the horse race which stops a nation each November, the Melbourne Cup.

Sydney is known worldwide as the best place to be on New Years Eve with the annual New Year's Eve firework celebrations on Sydney Harbour. Australians are among the most enthusiastic of participants and spectators in sport. Whether it's a casual game of beach volleyball, the emotion of an Aussie Rules football match or the excitement of the racecourse on Melbourne Cup Day, there is always an opportunity to join in the fun.

Key Festival and Event Facts

- Sydney's Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras attracts up to 500,000 local and international visitors to the glitzy loud and colourful Oxford Street parade and is one of the world's biggest gay and lesbian events. With more than 100 events in theatre, performance, music, comedy, dance, sport and visual arts, Sydney's Mardi Gras Festival is a colourful and energetic way to celebrate the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer culture.
- Sydney's Chinese New Year celebrations are one of the largest outside of Asia. In 2006 more than 530,000 people attended the City's celebrations.¹
- Watch the race that stops the nation, the 145-year old tradition that brings Australia to a standstill. On the first Tuesday in November,

Australians everywhere stop and unite for one of the world's most famous horse races - the Melbourne Cup².

- The Sun-Herald City2Surf is Australia's largest annual fun run and takes place on the second Sunday of August. A record field of 63,000 people entered the 14km journey through the city's eastern suburbs down to the finish line at Bondi in 2006³.
- 2007 is the Year of the Surf Lifesaver (YSL) marking the 100th anniversary of Surf Life Saving in Australia, an organisation which has saved over 500, 000 lives on Australian beaches.
- Floriade is Australia's premier spring festival and a world-class floral spectacular. Over one million blooms create a stunning backdrop to a month long festival filled with music, cultural celebrations, artistic displays, entertainment and recreational activities.

Uniquely Australia

No matter where you are in Australia the following events are on and are celebrated with equal enthusiasm.

- Join in **Australia Day** celebrations on 26 January where we celebrate the establishment of our nation. Whether it be a family BBQ, a day at the beach, or enjoying the displays and events throughout the cities and towns, everyone manages to find a way to celebrate being Australian.
- Join the locals for a beer and watch the **Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race** which captures the nation's attention on Boxing Day each year.
- The country comes to the city to celebrate our proud rural heritage at **The Sydney Royal Easter Show**.
- Every year in Spring the coastal walk from Bondi to Tamarama is transformed into a seaside art gallery for **Sculpture By The Sea**. The exhibition provides sculptors with a unique opportunity to site their work in a dramatic natural setting.
- Pull on your boots and kick up your heels as Australia's country music capital, Tamworth comes alive for the annual **Tamworth Country Music Festival**. Over 50,000 people descend on the city each January to join in the festivities and celebrations.
- All sorts of weird and wonderful competitors turn up to race in bottomless boats, bathtubs and yachts in deep sand at **The Henley on Todd Regatta**, a waterless regatta held in the centre of Alice Springs.
- Watch the world's most talented pilots compete in a race based on speed, precision and skill as they fly a daring, compact course in Perth's sky for the annual **Red Bull Air Race**. A major festival inspired by the Race features the history and heritage of aircraft, aerial and static displays and much more.





- During the annual **Canberra Balloon Fiesta** a sea of hot air balloons lift into the dawn skies each day from the forecourt of Old Parliament House and float over the iconic national attractions. Whether you watch from the ground or take to the sky, you will be impressed by the riot of colour that is the Canberra Balloon Fiesta.
- As Australia's largest cultural event, the **Sydney Festival** is the place to be during January. It is the celebration of summer and is synonymous with the energy, style, spectacle, sophistication and world-class talent which so quintessentially defines the city.
- Be captivated by artists from around the globe performing on various stages at **WOMADelaide**. The 'World of Music, Arts and Dance' brings together a diverse range of international talents for this festival.
- Melbourne is the funniest place on earth when the **Melbourne International Comedy Festival** hits town.
- **Melbourne and Sydney International Film Festivals** premiere the hottest films from Australia and around the globe while **Tropfest**, an independent film festival, is a showcase for young Australian filmmakers.
- The **Perth International Arts Festival**, Australia's oldest international arts festival, offers some of the best international and contemporary drama, theatre, music, film, visual arts, street arts, literature, comedy and free community events to entertain locals and visitors alike.
- Indulge in the flavours and aromas of Victoria at the **Melbourne Food & Wine Festival**. Famous chefs, restaurateurs, winemakers, growers and producers showcase the region's best culinary fare. The Festival is now in its 15th year and is celebrating its status as one of the world's largest and most acclaimed culinary festivals.
- Join in singing, dancing and non-stop entertainment at the **National Folk Festival** in Canberra. Take part in a cultural celebration of traditional and contemporary music, dance, poetry and storytelling, staged in the nation's capital during the Easter Break.
- **Rosemount Australian Fashion Week** has been the launch pad for many of Australia's hottest designers. Set against a backdrop of Sydney's spectacular harbour, the best of Australia's design talent will showcase their collections to the world.
- Australia's largest consumer fashion show presents collections showcasing talented and innovative local designers from around Australia at the **L'oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival**.
- Staged in spring-time September, **Brisbane's Riverfestival** will entice you outdoors with its celebration of the Brisbane River and local waterways. Watch the sky explode with fireworks, dine outdoors in style on the city bridges, or catch festival events including river cruises and concerts.
- Nature opens its doors for the best seats in the house. Held amidst the Savannah Woodlands in the Undara Amphitheatre, nature resonates with the stirring performances of operatic greats, classical hits and Broadway memories of **Opera in the Outback**.
- The national capital, bursts into colour with **Floriade**, the largest spring festival in the Southern Hemisphere. Floriade 2007 will present a uniquely Australian theme focusing on "Aussie icons, myths and legends", in an incredible display of floral beauty and creativity.
- The **Australian Open** brings the world's hottest tennis players to Melbourne for two weeks of head-turning thrills. Over 550,000 spectators descend on Melbourne in January each year, making it the highest attended annual sporting event in Australia.
- Full-blooded V8 action hits the city streets, as Adelaide hosts the **Clipsal 500**, Australia's largest motor sport festival. Rev up for four nights of concerts, spectacular air displays and non-stop on-track action.
- Melbourne comes alive to the roar of engines each March for the **2007 FORMULA 1™ Australian Grand Prix**. Four days of action on and off the track featuring superstar Formula One drivers, red hot racing action and F1 glamour and entertainment.
- For a fair dinkum Aussie experience go to an **Australian Football League (AFL)** game. One of Australia's favourite sports, AFL attracts huge crowds of vocal and loyal supporters with games played from March to September. See why Aussie Rules is regarded as one of the toughest games in the world.
- As dawn breaks, thousands of eager participants lace up for Australia's premier marathon - the **Gold Coast Marathon**. Elite athletes and sports enthusiasts of all ages and fitness levels pound along the course that hugs the spectacular coastline.
- Cycling superstars compete in the **Tour Down Under** – Adelaide's premier international cycling event. A thrilling six-day race travelling the city streets of Adelaide and picturesque South Australia. Join more than 400,000 roadside spectators and celebrate each finish with a party like no other.
- Cattle class by day, first class by night. Mount up and join 150 horses and their riders in a romantic journey of epic proportions. You'll drive 500 head of cattle along the famous Oodnadatta Track through South Australia's vast Outback in the **Great Australian Outback Cattle Drive**.
- Alice Springs welcomes visitors who love to laugh to the quirky, annual **Camel Cup**. There are nine races throughout the day with lots of action in between including belly dancers, rickshaw races, the Miss Camel Cup competition, polo on camels, food stalls and bars and more.
- The **Australian Safari** is an epic adventure for lovers of cars, motor bikes and quads. The nine-day safari crosses about 5500 kilometres of spectacular Western Australian outback, taking you through gruelling terrain from the tropics to the outback and on to the sea.

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