



Australian Embassy
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Season's Greetings from Australia

Christmas in the southern hemisphere

The heat of early summer in Australia has an impact on the way that Australians celebrate Christmas and on which northern hemisphere Christmas traditions are followed.

In the weeks leading up to Christmas houses are decorated; greetings cards sent out; carols sung; Christmas trees installed in homes, schools and public places; and children delight in anticipating a visit from Santa Claus. On Christmas Day family and friends gather to exchange gifts and enjoy special Christmas food.

Many Australians spend Christmas out of doors, going to the beach for the day, or heading to camping grounds for a longer break over the Christmas holiday period. It has become traditional for international visitors who are in Sydney at Christmas time to go to Bondi Beach where up to 40,000 people visit on Christmas Day.

SEASON'S GREETINGS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR



From the staff at the Australian Embassy in Zagreb



Photograph: Bondi Beach, Sydney, New South Wales
Courtesy of: Tourism Australia

Carols and Music

The tradition of an Australian Christmas Eve carol service lit by candles was started in 1937 by radio announcer Norman Banks. This outdoor service has now been held in [Melbourne](#) every year since then.

Carols by Candlelight events today range from huge gatherings, which are televised live throughout the country, to smaller local community and church events.

Sydney's [Carols in the Domain](#) has become a popular platform for the stars of stage and music.

Many light-hearted Australian Christmas songs have become an essential part of the Australian Christmas experience. These include *Six White Boomers*, Colin Buchanan's *Aussie Jingle Bells* and the Australian *Twelve Days of Christmas*.

Food

Christmas in Australia comes at the beginning of summer and many people no longer serve a traditional hot roast dinner. Cold [turkey](#) and ham, seafood and salads are often served instead. It has even become acceptable to serve the traditional [Christmas plum pudding](#) with cold custard, ice cream or cream. [Pavlova](#), a meringue base topped with whipped cream and fresh fruit, and various versions of the [festive ice-cream pudding](#) have also become popular Christmas desserts.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and the Coles company are engaged in a project to cultivate native foods. They are working with Mandawuy Yunupingu (of the band Yothu Yindi) and Aboriginal communities to grow sufficient quantities for sale in supermarkets across Australia. The aim is to offer all Australians a [Bush Tucker Christmas](#).

FOR OTHER CELEBRATIONS AND SEASONAL

TRADITIONS IN AUSTRALIA [click here](#)

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