

G'day

Welcome to the first edition of Tourism Australia's World Youth Day (WYD) newsletter. Sydney will host the 10th international WYD from 15-20 July 2008. In this inaugural edition all the latest news on the lead up to WYD08; Follow the Journey of the Cross and Icon across Australia and a feature on the unique experiences to be had in the Australian Outback.

News and Events



The Journey Begins

The countdown to the largest youth event in the world began with the arrival of the World Youth Day Cross and Icon in Australia. Arriving in Sydney on 1 July, the 3.8 metre Cross was officially welcomed by Prime Minister John Howard, NSW premier Morris Iemma, Catholic Church leaders and hundreds of Australian youth.

The Cross and Icon will tour Australia for the next 12 months delivering a message of hope, peace and unity in the lead-up to World Youth Day which will be held in Sydney from 15 - 20 July 2008.

Individual Registration Now Open

Individuals from around the world can now register to attend WYD08. Individual registrations opened exactly one year before Pope Benedict XVI will celebrate the Final Mass for an expected 500,000 people at Randwick Racecourse on Sunday 20 July, 2008. WYD08 organisers have already received indications of attendance from overseas groups representing 137,000 people. Individual registrations can be made online at www.wyd2008.org

WYD Visas

All international WYD participants except Australian and New Zealand passport holders will need a visa to enter Australia for the event. The Australian Government has agreed that visas for WYD pilgrims will be free of government charges, and will allow a standard stay of 3 months with multiple entry to Australia. For more information on visas visit www.immi.gov.au

Did You Know?

An Indigenous Message Stick inviting the Indigenous Youth of Australia to WYD08 will accompany the journey of the Cross.

WYD08 Anthem Launched

The WYD08 anthem was officially launched at the celebrations of the arrival of the WYD Cross and Icon. The song 'Receive the Power' was written by Guy Sebastian the 2003 winner of Australian Idol. Guy has woven the lyrics around the theme for the 23rd WYD chosen by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI: "You will receive the power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses." (Acts 1:8).



Guy Sebastian and Paulini

The English version of the anthem is performed by Guy and Australian singer Paulini. The international version is performed with the chorus in English and verses in Italian, Spanish and French. Artists that appear in the international version include Robert Galea (Italian), German Silva (Spanish) and Amelia Farrugia (French). 'Receive the Power' can be downloaded for free from: www.wyd2008.org.

Sydneysiders to welcome pilgrims into their homes for WYD08

Sydneysiders are being asked to help host the thousands of young people expected to attend WYD. Registrations for HomeStay, a program in which Sydney homeowners host two or more visiting pilgrims from overseas or outside Sydney have officially opened. The event is expected to attract 125,000 overseas visitors and up to 175,000 from other parts of Australia. Most will be accommodated in schools and parish halls, but it is anticipated up to 50,000 will be hosted in homes across Sydney. Locals are being encouraged to showcase our world-renowned Aussie hospitality, providing international visitors with an unforgettable experience.



World Youth Day 2008

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Crossing Australia

Journey of the WYD Cross and Icon

The national tour of the WYD Cross and Icon began in Sydney on 1 July 2007. Over the next 12 months the international symbols of WYD will visit every Australian State and Territory delivering a message of hope, peace and unity, before arriving at the WYD opening Mass on 15 July 2008 in Sydney.

The WYD Cross and Icon are the international symbols of the world's largest youth event. Originally the idea of Pope John Paul II, the 3.8 metre high wooden Cross was built and placed as a symbol of the Catholic faith, near the main altar in St Peter's Basilica during the Holy Year of 1983.

Since 1984 the WYD Cross has made its way around the world, being present at each international celebration of World Youth Day along the way. In 1994 the Cross began in earnest what has since become a tradition: its year long journey around the dioceses of the host nation of each international World Youth Day, as a means of prayerful preparation for the big event. In 2003, the Icon of our Lady was given by Pope John Paul II as a second symbol of faith to accompany the Cross. Together, they have travelled hundreds of thousands of kilometres to places in need of peace and hope.

WYD Cross and Icon Australian Itinerary

The WYD Cross and Icon will travel to some of the most beautiful, historic and significant places in Australia including Penola, South Australia, where Mother Mary MacKillop founded the Josephite Order of Nuns; The Great Barrier Reef; Parliament House, Canberra; the Northern Territory, it will travel from Darwin to Alice Springs on The Ghan. The itinerary of the WYD Cross and Icon is as follows:

Date	Diocese/ Location
1 Jul 2007	Sydney
9 Jul 2007	Broken Bay
16 Jul 2007	Parramatta
23 Jul 2007	Maitland – Newcastle
31 Jul 2007	Lismore
8 Aug 2007	Toowoomba
17 Aug 2007	Brisbane
30 Aug 2007	Rockhampton
8 Sept 2007	Townsville
17 Sept 2007	Cairns
26 Sept 2007	Darwin
5 Oct 2007	The Ghan (Darwin-Alice Springs)
11 Oct 2007	Port Pirie

20 Oct 2007	Ballarat
29 Oct 2007	Wilcannia Forbes
7 Nov 2007	Adelaide
18-30 Dec 2007	National Schoolies Mission
Dec 2007 - Jan 2008	Greater Sydney Cathedrals, National Conferences
26 Jan 2008	Armidale
7 Feb 2008	Bathurst
16 Feb 2008	Canberra & Goulburn
27 Feb 2008	Wagga Wagga
7 Mar 2008	Sandhurst
16 Mar 2008	Parramatta
18 Mar 2008	Broken Bay
19 March	Sydney
25 Mar 2008	Wollongong
18 Apr 2008	Sale
26 Apr 2008	Melbourne
11 May 2008	Hobart
21 May 2008	Perth
27 May 2008	Bunbury
10 Jun 2008	Geraldton
19 Jun 2008	Broome
1 -15 Jul 2008	Sydney

Follow the Cross

Follow the path of the WYD Cross and Icon on its tour of Australia on the official blog site. To access the blog [click here](#).

Did you know?

- The Great Barrier Reef is the largest reef structure in the world and stretches over 2,000 kilometres and is the only living organism that can be seen from space.
- Originally the Afghan Express, the name *The Ghan* was inspired by the pioneering Afghan cameleers who blazed a permanent trail into the Red Centre of Australia over 150 years ago.
- Sydney's iconic Opera House was recently added to the UNESCO World Heritage List, placing the world renowned performing arts venue alongside other listed landmarks including the Statue of Liberty, the Taj Mahal and the Great Wall of China.

Experience Australia: The Outback

From red deserts to lush green waterholes, open spaces and sky that goes on forever; Australia's outback is a place where a new adventure awaits at every turn. It's vast. It's red. It's welcoming. Brimming with 'true-blue' characters, quaint country towns, quirky mining communities, cattle and sheep stations, Aboriginal culture and a 'roo or two, a journey into the outback is a journey into our heart and soul. You don't have to venture far before discovering our outback.



Outback Facts

- Australia is the oldest, flattest, most stable continent in the world.
- Coober Pedy in South Australia is known as the opal capital of the world. Its population is made up of more than 40 nationalities and, with year-round extremes in temperature, more than 50% of the population live in below-ground 'dugouts.'
- Australia produces 95 per cent of the world's precious opals and 99 per cent of its black opals.
- The world's longest continuous fence, known as the 'dingo fence', is 1.8 metres high and runs through central Queensland for 5,531 kilometres.
- Anna Creek Station in South Australia is the largest cattle station in the world, covering an area of 24,000 sq kms (6 million acres) – making it about the same size as Belgium.
- The Combo Waterhole outside Winton in central Queensland is a peaceful billabong lined by paperbark gums. It is also the birthplace of Australia's national folk anthem, Waltzing Matilda, which was first performed here in a local pub.

Unique Outback Experiences

- Become a 'bushy' in your own right and visit a working cattle and sheep station where you can join in rounding up the cattle, horse riding, fixing fences, shearing sheep, and becoming an expert at cracking a bullwhip.
- Get a taste of the real outback on the Outback Mail Run tour, from Coober Pedy to Oodnadatta and William Creek. Travelling over 600km a day, you'll accompany the mailman as he delivers post to some of the desert's tiniest towns and largest cattle stations.
- Explore Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, home to two of the most breathtaking unique wonders in Australia. Uluru, the famous sandstone monolith stands 348 metres high and, like an iceberg, has most of its bulk below the surface. Forty kilometres to the west of Uluru/Ayers Rock is Kata Tjuta, also known as The Olgas. This massive pile of rock domes dates back 500 million years.
- Take a wildlife cruise in Kakadu National Park. Fresh and saltwater crocs live in its rivers, creeks and billabongs and it's home to more than one-third of Australia's bird species.
- Marvel at ancient dinosaur footprints at Lark Quarry National Park in Queensland, the world's only preserved tracks of a dinosaur stampede.
- Take a scenic flight to view the imposing sight of the Bungle Bungle Ranges in Purnululu National Park, one of the most fascinating geological landmarks in Western Australia.

Useful Websites

Australia:	www.australia.com
ACT:	www.visitcanberra.com
NT:	www.travelnt.com
NSW:	www.visitnsw.com.au
SA:	www.southaustralia.com
TAS:	www.discovertasmania.com
VIC:	www.visitvictoria.com
WA:	www.westernaustralia.com