

G'day

G'day and welcome to the second edition of Tourism Australia's World Youth Day (WYD) newsletter. The eyes of the world are turning to Sydney as it prepares to host the 10th international World Youth Day from 15-20 July 2008. In this edition, find the latest news and information leading up to the event including details of the Youth Festival and Vatican Art Exhibition. Follow the journey of the Cross and Icon across Australia; and learn more about the spirituality of Aboriginal Australia.

News and Events

Qantas expands flights for WYD08

Qantas has announced extra flights to bring international visitors to Australia for WYD08. Four additional services - three from Rome and one from Los Angeles - will bring pilgrims to Sydney for the event. Pilgrim flights operate from Rome on 5, 8 and 12 July, returning to Rome on 21, 25 and 28 July, and from Los Angeles on 9 July, returning on 23 July. Qantas will continue to monitor demand, adding further capacity if needed. For more information click [here](#).

Sydney gets the thumbs up for WYD08 planning

A five-person Vatican delegation travelled to Australia recently to inspect WYD08 venues. Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko led the delegation from the Pontifical Council for the Laity (PCL), the body that oversees World Youth Day preparations and promotes the initiative around the world. The PCL was joined by 200 delegates, representing pilgrims from 100 nations. The delegates received briefings on WYD08 planning and visited event venues including Randwick Racecourse - the venue for the Vigil and Final Mass, which will be celebrated by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI on 20 July 2008.

Did You Know?

Over the week of WYD08 events, approximately 3.5 million meals will be served to registered pilgrims.

Get down at the WYD08 Youth Festival

WYD08 attendees can expect to be wowed by some of the best Australian and international talent at the Youth Festival - one of the many events that will support the official WYD08 Program. The festival will feature music, performing arts, visual art exhibitions, debate, film, forums, conversations, community gatherings, street performers, workshops and a vocations expo. The three-day Youth Festival runs from 16 - 18 July in various

locations throughout Sydney including parks, playing fields, churches, halls, galleries, indoor and outdoor performance spaces. For more information click [here](#).

Treasures from the Vatican hit Sydney

Explore the story of Saint Peter and his basilica through the fine art, history and culture of the Treasures of the Vatican exhibition. Discover paintings, sculpture, models, maps, architectural drawings, letters and mosaics that highlight three exhibition themes: Saint Peter's life and martyrdom, Saint Peter's Basilica, and the tradition of Saint Peter and lives of the Popes. It will be one of the largest displays of Vatican objects ever brought to the southern hemisphere and is set to include significant pieces by Michelangelo, tiaras, art, sculpture, models, maps, letters and mosaics. The exhibition will be on display at the Australian Museum in Sydney to coincide with WYD08 and will continue until October 2008. For more information click [here](#).

Mother Mary MacKillop in Sydney

Explore the life and work of Australia's much-loved Mother Mary MacKillop with a tour that coincides with WYD08. For many years Mother Mary MacKillop worked in Sydney's Rocks area, gaining the love and respect of local residents and Sydneysiders. Amongst her many achievements, she founded the order of the Sisters of St Joseph who were influential in the development of the Catholic education system in Australia; and in 1995 Pope John Paul II announced her beatification, the initial step in making her Australia's first saint. Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority will host the two-hour tour which will follow the work of Mother Mary in The Rocks, and features original artefacts from her orphanages, refuges and personal life. For more information on the Battlers' Saint Tour click [here](#).

Australia Online



WYD pilgrims can now access information on visiting Australia on the official World Youth Day website. The *About Australia* section includes facts and figures about Australia; tourist information on visas, tips on getting around, weather information, as well as information on Australia's spectacular natural environment, people and lifestyle. For more information [click here](#).

Travel Tips

Update on WYD Visas

Visiting Australia for WYD08 has been made easier following simplified visa procedures. Visas for registered pilgrims will be free of Australian government charges, pilgrims will be issued a three month visa allowing multiple entries, and the number of visas granted overall or from a particular country will not be limited. On current indications, around 140,000 international visitors will be traveling to Australia for WYD08. Almost half of these visitors will be from the United States, Italy and Germany. For more information click [here](#).



Aussie Specialist Travel Agents

The first port of call for any pilgrim planning to travel to Australia for WYD08 should be their local Aussie Specialist Travel Agent. Aussie Specialists are experts on all things Australian, having

received rigorous in-depth training on the country. Most have also travelled to Australia, gaining first-hand experience of all the country has to offer. This intimate knowledge means there is no better assistance available for Australian travel or planning advice. To find your nearest Aussie Specialist Travel Agent visit www.australia.com and click on 'Find a travel agent'.

Visiting Australia – customs and quarantine

Australia has strict customs and quarantine laws to protect our beautiful island continent. When arriving in Australia everyone must complete an Incoming Passenger Card and declare any restricted or prohibited goods, including all medicinal products, heritage items, protected wildlife items firearms, weapons, and currency over AU\$10,000. Any food, plant or animal products must also be declared on the Incoming Passenger Card.

If in doubt, it is always better to declare any items you are unsure about. As part of their regular checks, Customs and Quarantine officers could check your baggage contents with an x-ray machine, a detector dog team or by manual inspection. If restricted or prohibited items have not been declared passengers could be given an on-the-spot fine, while more serious breaches risk prosecution. For more information visit www.customs.gov.au and for a complete list of what you can and cannot bring into Australia go to www.aqis.gov.au/icon.

Yellow fever vaccination is the only health requirement for entering Australia and is only required in some circumstances. For more information visit the Department of Health and Ageing website at www.health.gov.au.

Crossing Australia

The journey of the Cross continues

The national tour of the WYD Cross and Icon will travel through every diocese, in every state, in Australia, delivering a message of hope, peace and unity.

Since touching down in Sydney on 1 July 2007, the Cross and Icon have visited some of Australia's most beautiful and historic places. In Cairns, the Royal Australian Navy and the young people of Cairns took the Cross and Icon to the Great Barrier Reef where the Cross was dipped in water following a liturgy that called on everybody to protect our natural environment. In early October the Cross and Icon traveled from Darwin to Alice Springs on The Ghan, and visited Uluru in the heart of Australia.



Upcoming stops on the journey of the Cross and Icon include Wilcannia Forbes – the largest Catholic diocese in NSW, spanning the western half of NSW, extending from the Victorian border along the Murray River in the south, to the Queensland border in the north, and to the South Australian state border in the west. The Cross and Icon will also travel to Penola in South Australia, where Mother Mary MacKillop founded the Josephite Order of Nuns.

An Indigenous Message Stick is also accompanying the Cross and Icon throughout Australia, as an invitation to the indigenous youth of Australia to come to World Youth Day in July 2008. Follow the journey of the cross, icon and message stick [here](#).

Experience Australia: Aboriginal Australia

Aboriginal Australians are the custodians of the world's most ancient living culture, which is expressed through art, story-telling, dance, music and the land itself. Today, this culture is articulated through a fascinating mixture of traditional Aboriginal practices and contemporary interpretations, urban living and dreaming. With more than 700 dialects, Aboriginal Australia is one of the most linguistically diverse places on the planet.

Aboriginal Australians are spiritually connected to the land and use the Dreamtime to tell the story of creation. The Dreamtime is akin to a religious or spiritual belief system. In the Dreamtime, the hills are giant marsupials, frozen in time. The rivers are tracks of the rainbow serpent, and the Milky Way is the river of the sky where, after the rainbow serpent has swallowed the sun, people fish for stingrays and turtles with the stars as their campfires. According to Aboriginal beliefs, the spirit ancestors of the land and her people descended from the sky, emerged from the earth and sprang from the waterways.



The landscape today is a map of the spirits' journeys, and stories created thousands of years ago to describe these journeys are the same that you will hear today.

When you immerse yourself in the world's oldest culture, make sure you keep your eyes open when you travel our vast continent as our landscape offers an outdoor gallery of ancient art and storytelling dating back at least 50,000 years.

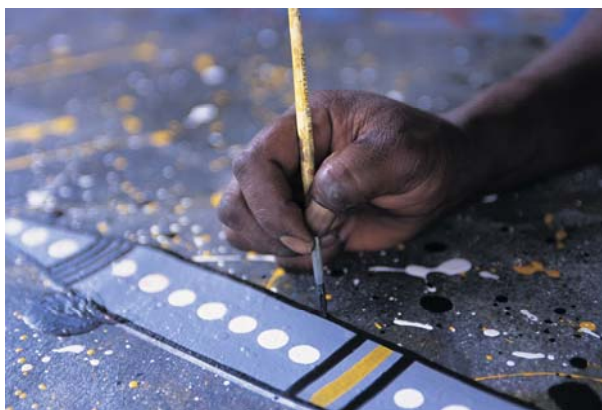
Aboriginal Australia Facts

- The world's most ancient living culture, Australia's indigenous people, have a continuous history spanning at least 50,000 years.
- Aboriginal Australians are spiritually connected to the land and explain their existence by telling stories about the land and animals; this is known as the 'Dreamtime'. It is a complex network of knowledge, faith and practices that derive from stories of creation, and which dominates spiritual aspects of Aboriginal life.
- The boomerang and the didgeridoo are two objects most closely associated with Australia's indigenous peoples. Used for hunting and commonly thought to always return, not all boomerangs are designed to come back. The didgeridoo, a deep-toned woodwind instrument at the heart of much Aboriginal music, is ideally made using suitable eucalypt branches hollowed out by termites. The tube is then decorated with ritual designs and fitted with a mouthpiece made from native honeybee wax.
- Traditional Aboriginal food – now known as bush tucker – sustained Australia's original inhabitants for millennia. Bush tucker - such as bush tomatoes, Illawarra plums, quandongs, lilli pillies, muntari berries, wattle seeds, Kakadu plums and bunya bunya nuts – has gone mainstream as Australian chefs are experimenting more and more with its unusual and delicate flavours.
- The Olary region of South Australia is home to what is believed to be the world's oldest known art – rock engravings – created around BC43,000.
- The mysterious "Bradshaw" paintings in Western Australia's remote Kimberley region continue to amaze scholars. The first settler to see these ancient paintings was explorer Joseph Bradshaw in 1891, the paintings have been likened to those in Egyptian temples.

Unique Aboriginal Experiences

Today, the possibilities of experiencing Aboriginal culture are many and varied – from bushwalking to snorkelling, from sharing traditional bush tucker to story-telling through interpretive exhibitions and dance. For more information on all of these experiences and more, visit www.australia.com.

- Experience the most modern interpretations of ancient stories told by groups such as the **Bangarra Dance Theatre**, which has performed in some of the world's leading venues.
- Take a cruise on Sydney Harbour with **Tribal Warrior**, which offers interpretation of the Sydney landscape through indigenous eyes. The tour includes a visit to a Sydney Harbour island and a traditional welcome ceremony.
- In the heart of the New South Wales Outback, you'll find **Harry Nanya Outback Tours**, based in the town of Wentworth. This tour offers interpretative tours of Mungo National Park and the Willandra Lakes World Heritage area. Visitors can experience a remarkable corner of the State and unravel some of the powerful mysteries of the Barkindji people.
- Gain insight into Indigenous Australia in **The Aboriginal Memorial** at The National Gallery of Australia and at **The First Australians Gallery** in the National Museum both in Canberra.
- See the **Tjapukai** Dancers of the Rainforest provide Dreamtime insights in tropical north Queensland. Presenting a theatrical interpretation of Aboriginal culture from the beginning into the future, Tjapukai's version of world history conveys the vast timeframes of Aboriginal experience. Hi-tech visual effects, including lasers, are used alongside electrifying dance routines to recreate the Dreamtime story.
- Hear about the Dreamtime on the Liru Walk run by **Anangu Tours**. The famous Liru Walk, retraces the path of the Liru Ancestors through the bushland near Uluru. Hear the tragic fate of Lungkata (Blue Tongue Lizard Man), who is still lying at the base of Uluru. See demonstrations of ancient bush skills such as making kiti (bush glue), making fire without matches and carving wooden tools with only a sharpened stone. Learn to hold and throw a spear.
- Visit **Iga Warta**, a cultural tourism centre owned and run by the Coulthard family, members of the Adnyathanha people in the Flinders Ranges of South Australia. Experience Aboriginal culture while living, sharing and learning in an Aboriginal community setting, while staying in safari tents or cabins.
- Learn about Tasmania from the perspective of the original inhabitants on a **Jahadi Indigenous Experience** in the Meander Valley west of Launceston run by the Palawa Aboriginals.
- Stay in an Aboriginal camp such as the remote **Kooljaman at Cape Leveque**, a multi award-winning Aboriginal owned wilderness camp near Broome, WA. The camp is owned by the Aboriginal communities of Djarindjin and One Arm Point. Spend a day with an Aboriginal family swimming, snorkelling, reef walking and exploring old mission ruins, then stay in safari-style tented cabins.
- Take the Aboriginal Heritage walk in the **Royal Botanical Gardens**, Melbourne. Then, visit the **Bunjilaka Aboriginal Centre** at the Melbourne Museum, and the **Koorie Heritage Trust**, a cultural centre. If you're feeling hungry try the tapas tucker at **Tjanabi @ Fed** an upmarket bush food restaurant which recently reopened in Federation Square. It features native game meats and native Australian produce.



- Set in the bushland on Sydney's western fringes at Penrith, there's **Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural Centre**. This cultural museum and gallery presents the story of the Darug people, the traditional owners of the area. Visitors can take a nature walk and learn about the native plants traditionally used by Aboriginal people for medicine and food.

Useful Websites

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