

Christmas Down Under

Christmas in Australia is very different to Xmas in Europe. The main difference is that it is in summer in Australia and usually very, very hot! Starting on Christmas Eve, lots of people go to Mass at Church at midnight, and then on Christmas morning everyone gets up and has a small breakfast, usually lots of fresh fruit and a glass of sparkling wine (or champagne), then opens their presents which are usually handed out by someone nominated to be 'Santa'.



Christmas Lunch in Australia is the main meal of the day and was traditionally like Christmas Lunch in England. That is, roast lamb or pork, roasted veggies, gravy, and a hot Christmas pudding with custard. These days however, people have realised that it is just way too hot to eat all that hot food! Most people now have a roast lamb or pork as it's traditional, but there is generally a cold leg of ham, lots of seafood like oysters and prawns, lots of different types of salads, lots of fruit like berries, mangoes, apricots and peaches, and one or two traditional English fruit cakes (also cold). The barbecue is also being put to good use for most of the day! In the afternoon, people who are lucky enough to be near the beach will often go to one for a snooze (a short sleep) and a swim.

Images of Santa Claus on Christmas cards can also be quite different in Australia. There are still the traditional images of Santa coming down the chimney, or with his reindeer, but there are also cards with Santa surfing and wearing his boardies (swimming shorts)!



The day after Christmas is called Boxing Day. Lots of people (usually the men) sit down in front of the TV to watch a yacht race called the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, or the Boxing Day cricket test match between Australia and New Zealand. Apart from that, it is a day for relaxing and trying to keep cool, so often people will go to the beach or somewhere with water.



Boxing Day, Darwin, 2007