

Useful Information for Your Stay in Sydney

Airport

Aviation Security Measures for Carry-on Baggage at International Airports

From 31 March 2007, the Australian Government has introduced enhanced security measures to limit the amount of liquids, aerosols, and gels that can be taken through the screening point for people who are flying to and from Australia.

All containers with drinks, creams, perfumes, sprays, gels, toothpaste and similar substances will have to be carried in a re-sealable transparent plastic bag, no larger than one litre, and be inspected separately at the airport screening point.

Each container should not have a capacity greater than 100 millilitres and all containers should fit comfortably in the re-sealable plastic bag. Exceptions will be made for passengers with medical conditions and quantities of baby food required for the flight. However, these items may be subject to additional security checks. Passengers can still take on board items purchased after the screening point, including duty free.

Banking/Currency

Decimal currency is used in Australia with the dollar as the basic unit (100 cents = \$1). Notes come in A\$100, A\$50, A\$20, A\$10, and A\$5. Coins come in 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, \$1 and \$2 denominations.

Currency exchange facilities are available in most banks, hotels and airports and operate normal business hours. Credit cards are accepted at most restaurants and shops, the most widely used being MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Diners Club.

Business Hours

Banks generally open from 09:30 – 16:00 hours Monday - Friday. General office hours are 09:00 – 17:00 Monday - Friday. Post Offices also operate at these hours; however stamps are often available from hotels.

Eating Out

Bistros, restaurants, cafes and coffee shops offer varied menus, prices and decor. Local specialties such as seafood and Australian wines are worth trying. At some restaurants you can keep the liquor bill down by taking your own wine or beer. These are called "BYO" restaurants, an abbreviation for "bring your own."

Electricity

Electrical current is 240/250V, AC 50Hz. The Australian three-pin power outlet is different from that in many countries, so you will need an adaptor. If your appliances are 110V, check if there is a 110/240V switch. If not, you will need a voltage converter. Universal outlets for 240V or 110V shavers are usually found in leading hotels.

Goods & Services Tax (GST) / Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS)

Since 1 July 2000, Australia has adopted a new taxation system incorporating the Goods & Services Tax (GST). All prices quoted in this brochure are inclusive of GST, unless otherwise specified.

As part of this new taxation system, the Australian Government introduced the Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS). The scheme is administered by the Australian Customs Department and took effect on 1 July 2000. The TRS enables travellers departing Australia to claim a refund of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and Wine Equalisation Tax (WET) paid on goods bought in Australia. The refund applies to goods over the value of A\$300 when items are purchased in the same shop within 30 days of your departure from Australia. Should an item be too large to take onto the aircraft as hand luggage you will need to visit the TRS clearing office at the international airport with the item and receipt. The receipt will be stamped "TRS sited" and at that point you can check the large item in with your luggage. Once you have cleared customs you can collect your refund from the TRS desk by showing your receipt or items purchased. It does not apply to services or goods consumed or partly consumed in Australia. However, the goods can be used before departing Australia.

Quarantine

Australia is free from many plant and animal diseases prevalent in other countries. Very strict quarantine

rules apply to the import of animals and plants, which cannot be brought into the country without prior application. Animal and plant products are also restricted.

For more information see the 'Information for International Travellers' on the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) website, which you can access by visiting www.affa.gov.au.

Shopping

Shops open from 09:00 to 17:30 hours during the week with late night shopping on Thursday. On Saturday, most shops open from 09:00 to 16:00. On Sunday, Darling Harbour shops are open from 10:00 to 18:00 and major department stores in the centre of the city are open from 10:00 to 16:00.

Time

Sydney is 11 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (summer time).

Tipping

Tipping is not as widespread or regulated in Australia as it is in other parts of the world. Tipping is your prerogative, a reward for service. It is customary to tip hotel porters and a gratuity of about 10 per cent is usual in restaurants if good service is received. Tips for taxis are regarded as optional.

Vaccinations

A current valid international certificate of inoculation against yellow fever is required if passengers come from, or travel through, infected areas. Check this carefully with your airline or travel agent.