

AUSTRALIA

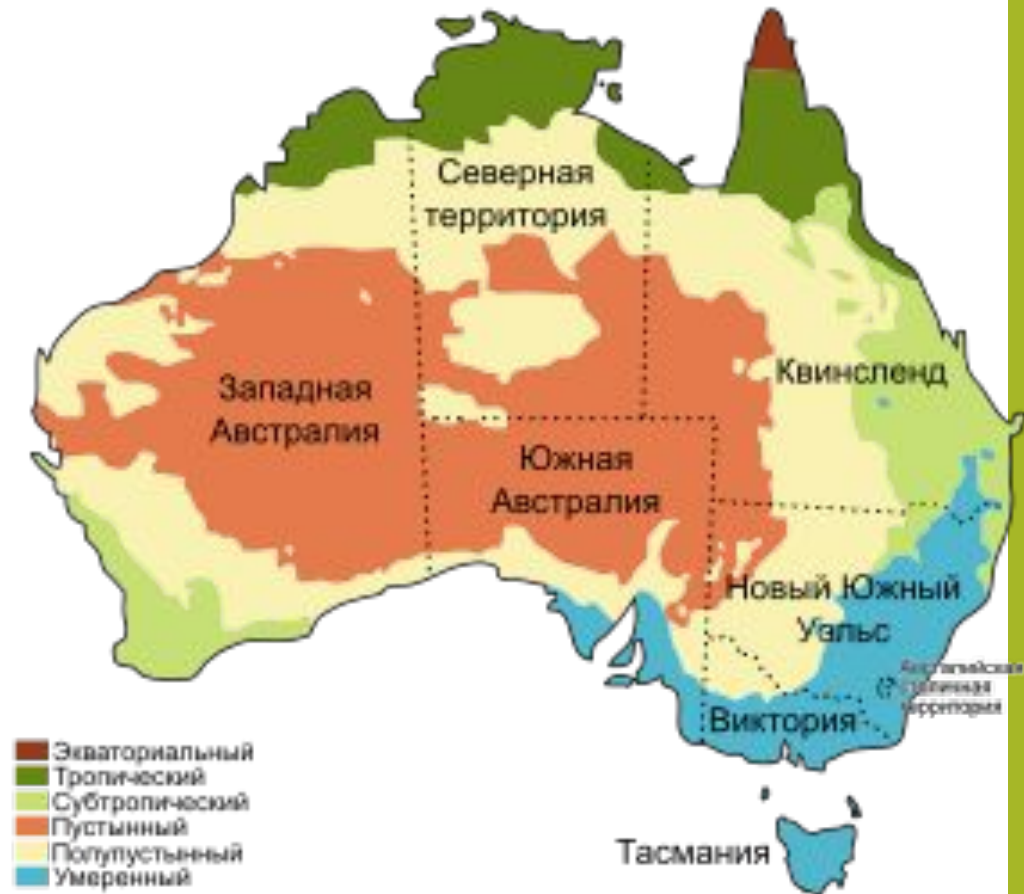
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Australia – what is it?

Australia is the only country in the world that is also a continent. It is the 6th largest country and the smallest continent. It lies between the South Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean. The name of country comes from Latin word «australis» which mean «southern». The countrys official name is Commonwealth of Australia.

The Commonwealth of Australia is a federation of states. Australia has 6 states – New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia. Each state has its government.

About 23 million of people live in Australia nowadays. The natives of the country are called Aborigines. Now they occupy a very small part of the countrys population due to former extrusion of the native people in the past.



THE CAPITAL OF AUSTRALIA

The capital of Australia is Canberra. All the government buildings are situated there. The capital is also the home for many cultural institution, such as Australian National University, National Gallery, National Museum, Royal Military College, Australian Institute of sport and any others.



Sydney

The largest and the most visited city is Sydney. With the population of more than 4,6 million of people. There are a great number of attractions in Sydney. The most popular ones are Sydney Opera House, Sydney Harbour Bridge and others.

The country has some unique species of animals, which can not be found anywhere else. Among them koalas, kangaroos, wallabies, flightless emus, wombats and many others. So, Australian Zoos can be another place of interest for tourists.



Australian flag

The blue color on the flag means: loyalty, honesty, kindness, impeccability, immutability, chastity and simple heart. In the upper left quarter is the British flag, as the United Kingdom represented the Union of Australia. Six white stars on the flag: five stars in the form of the Southern Cross constellation in the right part of the cloth and one big star under the British flag, the six rays of which represent 6 Australian states, and the seventh ray represents the outer territories.

The flag was created in 1901 as a result of the competition, about 30,000 proposals were submitted to the competition. After the approval of the flag, the shape, size and location of the stars were slightly changed.



Attractions in Australia

Australia has a lot to offer to tourists.

The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest coral reef system composed of over 2,900 individual reefs and 900 islands.

The most famous building in the country is the Sydney Opera House. Its roof looks like sails. It is a masterpiece of architecture. More than 5,000 people can visit concerts, operas, theatre performances and other events.

Kakadu National Park is in Australia's Northern Territory and covers about 20,000 square kilometres. It is a wetland with over 200 kinds of birds and 1,700 plant species. It is also the home of Australian crocodiles.



Nature of Australia

Australia is the driest continent on the Earth. The unique climate and the isolation of Australia from other continents explain the existence of unusual plants and animals.

The commonest tree of Australia is the eucalyptus. In the drier areas there is the Australian acacia or mimosa. In those areas one can also find strange bottle trees. They preserve water in their trunks.

Australian animals are also very unusual. Among them there are kangaroos, duck-bills, koala bears, and others.

