

## Fremantle, Western Australia Program

**Australia:** In land area, Australia is the sixth largest nation after Russia, Canada, China, the United States of America and Brazil. It has, however, a relatively small population. Australia is an independent Western democracy with a population of more than 20 million. Australia's lifestyle reflects its mainly Western origins, but Australia is also a multicultural society which has been enriched by over six million settlers from almost 200 nations. Two thirds of the indigenous people, Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, live in towns and cities. It is generally thought that Aboriginal people began living on the continent 50,000 to 60,000 years ago, and some authorities believe their occupation may date back 100,000 years. Overseas tourists are drawn by Australia's sunshine, sandy beaches, the vast outback, rainforests, the Great Barrier Reef, unique flora and fauna, the Gold Coast of Queensland, and the attractions of the cities, Australia's friendly, multicultural society, and the safe and welcoming environment.

A beautiful wildlife is prevalent with a wide range of animal and plant life. Isolation of the Australian island-continent for 55 million years created a sanctuary for the flora and fauna. Marsupials were saved from competition with more highly developed mammals. Birds unique to Australia also survived, and distinctive trees and plants developed. Australia's best-known animals are the kangaroo, koala, platypus and spiny anteater. Of more than 700 bird species listed in Australia, 400 - including the large, flightless emu - are found nowhere else. Australia has 20,000 species of plants, including living fossils such as the cycad palm and the grass tree, and brilliant wildflowers such as the waratah, Sturt's desert pea, the flowering cones of banksia trees, and the red and green kangaroo paw. There are rainforests and vast plains in the north, snowfields in the south east, desert in the centre and fertile croplands in the east, south and south west. About one third of the country lies in the tropics.

For more facts: <http://www.about-australia.com/facts/australia-in-brief/>

**Fremantle:** Fremantle is a port city in Western Australia, located 12 miles southwest of Perth, the state capital, at the mouth of the Swan River on Australia's western coast. It was the first settlement of the Swan River Colonists in 1829. The city contains well preserved buildings and other heritage sites.

To read more about Fremantle:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fremantle,\\_Western\\_Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fremantle,_Western_Australia)

To visit Fremantle: <http://www.fremantle.wa.gov.au/main/html/>

For students: <http://www.freofocus.com/main/html/students.cfm>

To explore Western Australia:

[http://www.westernaustralia.com/en/Pages/Welcome\\_to\\_Western\\_Australia.aspx](http://www.westernaustralia.com/en/Pages/Welcome_to_Western_Australia.aspx)