

***VALENTJNA, DJARRA e
DEBORA PRESENT:***

AUSTRALJA

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Australia is a country in the Southern hemisphere between the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean. The continent of Australia, including the island of Tasmania, was separated from the other continents of the world many millions of years ago. Because of this, many animals and plants live in Australia. These include animals like the kangaroo, the koala, the emu, the kookaburra, and the platypus. The two major mainland territories are the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

The Australian Aboriginal people arrived in Australia more than 50,000 years ago. Until the arrival of British settlers in 1788, the Aboriginal people lived by hunting and gathering food from the land.

In 1600, Dutch merchants traded with the islands of Batavia, to the north of Australia. The Dutch governor, van Diemen, sent Abel Tasman on a voyage of discovery and he found Tasmania, which he named Van Diemen's Land. When the settlers looked west from Sydney, they saw a range of mountains which they called the Blue Mountains.

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In 1914, the First World War started in Europe. Australia joined in on the side of Britain against Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. They fought bravely, but were beaten by the Turks. Today Australia remembers this battle every year on ANZAC Day.

Australia had a really hard time in the Great Depression of the 1930s and joined Britain in a war against Nazi Germany when Hitler invaded Poland in 1939. But in 1941 lots of Australian soldiers were captured in the Fall of Singapore by Japan. Then Japan started attacking Australia and people worried about invasion. But the United States Navy helped them and the Japanese were stopped. After the war, Australia became a close friend of the United States.

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