

# Australia



**Instructions.** Read the following text. Then, in the chart below, write one relevant aspect of this country for each category: religion, theater, and daily life.

## Religion

In the early 21st century more than one-half of Australians identified themselves as Christian; about one-fourth were Roman Catholic and one-fifth Anglican. Almost one-fourth of Australians professed no religion. In contrast to the European settlers, traditional Aboriginal communities are intensely spiritual. Their religion gives meaning to life, and the coordinating theme is the sustaining connection between land and people.

## Theater

For indigenous Australians, the "corroboree" comes closest to a modern concept of theatre, but this participatory public performance of songs and dances represents much more than entertainment; it is a celebration of Aboriginal mythology and spirituality. Groups such as Bangarra Dance Theatre bring a modern sensibility to bear on the storytelling and ritual essential to Aboriginal culture. European-based contemporary Australian theatre is characterized by its emphasis on smaller, regional theatre groups. Australia's larger cities offer unconventional theatre as well as mainstream and alternative performances. Most of these troupes are committed to presenting the work of Australian playwrights, including Alexander Buzo, Jack Davis, Tim Robertson, and David Williamson.

## Daily Life

Drinking and gambling have long been important aspects of Australian popular culture, despite persistent government attempts to regulate and limit them. Beer has traditionally been the drink of choice, but the explosion of Australian wine production has somewhat altered patterns. Barbecues ("the barbie") are a essential Australian pastime, and meat is abundant. Traditional Aboriginal Outback cuisine consists of such unique foods as kangaroo, wombat, turtle, eel, emu, snake, and witchetty grubs (larvae of the ghost moth).

RELIGION	THEATER	DAILY LIFE