Australia and New Zealand

The Great Barrier Reef is the world’s longest coral reef. It is very popular with tourists, who come to visit the islands and beaches, swim in the warm water, and see the fish.

The outback makes up more than two-thirds of Australia, but its population is very sparse. Children in the outback use ‘Schools of the Air’, and communicate with their teachers over the internet.

One of the most beautiful things you can see in Australia is Uluru, an enormous rock alone in the middle of the desert. Uluru is 600 million years old, and thousands of tourists come each year to walk round it.

Perth is a long way from the other cities, in Western Australia by the Indian Ocean. The land in the west has plenty of gold, oil, and valuable minerals, so Perth is a rich city.

Sydney, in New South Wales, is the oldest and biggest city in Australia. Many people know of Sydney Opera House. The roof of this beautiful building looks like sails.

Adelaide, in South Australia, is called the City of Churches, and it is also famous for its WOMADelaide festival of world music and dance.

Canberra is the newest of the Australian cities, and its name is an Aboriginal word meaning ‘meeting place’. It is the home of many important national buildings, like Parliament House.

Auckland, the most northern of New Zealand’s major cities, has a modern business area with many tall buildings. Visitors like to go to the top of the Sky Tower.

The strangest place in New Zealand is surely Rotorua. Here the air smells like eggs and hot water explodes out of the ground.

Although Wellington is not the largest city, it is the capital. It is built on high hills and parts of The Lord of the Rings were filmed in and around Wellington.

New Zealand is a great place for farms. This means there are a lot of animals. For every person living in New Zealand there are ten sheep and two cows.

Christchurch is a flat, green place. One third of the city is parks and gardens, and it is called the ‘Garden City’.

In the south-west of the South Island is Fiordland, where land and sea meet in deep valleys. At Milford Sound you can take a boat trip and see the mountains and forests from the water.

The most southern city is Dunedin, which is the old name for Edinburgh in Scotland. In the nineteenth century it was the hub of New Zealand’s business and its largest city.

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