

Australians value the meaning of Christmas



The meaning of Christmas is not the same for everyone. Traditionally a Christian celebration, the name 'Christmas' comes from 'the Mass of Christ'. Christmas is now celebrated around the world, by multiple cultures and religions, but the reasons may differ.

For some it's about Santa, reindeer and presents, for others it's about spending quality time with family and friends and still others its about celebrating the birth of Jesus. For most, it's some combination of all the above. So let's take a look at what Australians value about the Christmas season.

Is Christmas losing its meaning?

More than half of Australians (52%) believe Christmas has lost its Christian meaning.

However, close to 6 in 10 (58%) would be happy for Christmas not to lose any of its Christian meaning. If combined with those who are neutral about it, 93% of Australians are happy or don't mind Christmas not losing any of its Christian meaning.

Australians are also more than 4 times more likely to be neutral or unhappy about Christmas losing some of its meaning, than happy about it.

Australians look forward to family and friends; the food and mood

Part of the appeal of Christmas is the mood and cheer that comes with the season with a third of Australians (32%) saying they look forward to 'the mood and Christmas cheer' the most. More than 1 in 5 (22%) are most excited about the Carols and Christmas message.

What they most look forward to though is spending time with family and friends, almost two thirds (65%) of Australians are in agreement. The food and celebration are what 46% of us look forward to most. Around a quarter (23%) can't wait for some time off work or study.

Though watching the traditional cheesy Christmas movies this time of year comes with the territory, it's not everyone's favourite activity, collecting only 7% of the vote!

Australians want Christmas' religious traditions and symbols to have a public presence

Even in the current social and political climate, almost 9 in 10 (88%) believe the religious traditions and symbols of Christmas should be allowed to have a public presence in Christmas celebrations. Half of those in favour (44%) think that they should be strongly encouraged as they believe it's what Christmas is all about. While the other half (44%) think they should be somewhat encouraged, as it's a key part of Christmas and can be shared by other cultures and religions. Only 12% think the religious traditions and symbols should be discouraged.

Finally, the traditional Christmas greeting is also preferred. Merry Christmas! Two thirds of Australians (66%) prefer to see and hear the phrase 'Merry Christmas' to any other form of greeting at Christmas time.

Methodology

These insights were gathered from a nationally representative survey of 1,008 Australians conducted by McCrindle in November 2019, which asked Aussies about their opinions

around Christmas.

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