

NEARLY ONE IN TWO AUSSIES WOULD PREFER TO SPEND CHRISTMAS WITH THEIR MATES THAN THE RELO'S

You can choose your friends but not your family!

Sorry Mum! Given the guilt free option, 41% of Australians would rather spend Christmas Day with their mates than their family this year, according to new research by lastminute.com.au, Australia's leading travel and lifestyle website.

The trepidation of tradition!

Christmas traditions are slowly being tossed to the curb. The survey of over 13,000 Aussies found that a quarter of people have planned a holiday in the past to coincide with the festive season. Top spots on the escape Christmas list include Noosa, Gold Coast and Perth, and further afield were Bali, New York, Greece and Mexico.

"Those who haven't planned a trip to avoid Christmas with the relo's have probably thought about it!" said Courtney Maywald, lastminute.com.au spokesperson. "One cheeky respondent was so desperate to escape the in-laws, she sneakily stayed in a motel in the next street one Christmas without telling anyone!"

While 79% of people will put up a Christmas tree and 70% can't wait for the hot turkey, less than half of us will get into the Christmas spirit and host some festive drinks this year (44%). And it seems it's all about the pressies and the food - only one in four people will attend a Church service this Christmas.

One in two Aussies won't send Christmas cards in 2010 and only 29% will be belting out their best *Little Drummer Boy* rendition at a carols event.

Twas the night before Christmas and 8% of people are still shopping!

One in two people will leave shopping for their nearest and dearest to the last minute, with Gen Y the most likely culprits at 61%. Of this group, 63% are hitting the shops a week before Saint Nick arrives, 29% are getting desperate three days out, and a confident 8% leave it to Christmas Eve to find the perfect pressie (not including Santa himself).

The top reasons for not ticking shopping off the to-do list sooner include:

- Not knowing what to buy (57%)
- No time to shop (43%)
- Hating the crowds (34%)
- Being disorganised (28%)
- Hating Christmas shopping (23%)

Pitiful pressies to practice fake smiles for (though better than a lump of coal... just!)

The Aussie tendency to leave Christmas shopping to the last minute has resulted in some poor present picks! They say it's the thought that counts but the thought of these shockers has stood the test of time for some unlucky receivers:

- Easter eggs
- Wrinkle cream
- Thigh master
- Self-help book
- Potato peeler
- Pot-purri
- Weed sprayer
- Fire extinguisher
- Snuggie
- Toilet roll holder
- Deodorant
- Condoms (from mother-in-law)
- Weight Watchers voucher
- Bug zapper

Time is money, baby!

The traditional trek to the local shopping centre to purchase presents is on the decline, with two thirds of Aussies dreading hitting the shops in December.

Nearly three in four Aussies (71%) plan to do some of their Christmas shopping online this year, up from 55% who did so in 2009.

“Shopping online will stop you going crazy this Christmas! On lastminute.com.au, you can find everything from hotels to hampers, flights to facials, perfume to pole dancing classes and chocolate to circus lessons – I’d like to see your in-laws complain about receiving one of those goodies,” said Maywald.

“And if you’re a tardy shopper who just doesn’t know what to buy you can always purchase a lastminute.com.au experience voucher. Print it out on the spot on Christmas Eve and you’re good to go! It’s so easy to put yourself in the pressie good books, even at the last minute,” said Maywald.

Present ideas

Stuck for inspiration? These gifts from lastminute.com.au are sure to jingle their bells this Xmas!

- Carlton Brewery Tour - \$25
- Pole dancing class - \$30
- Women’s Health subscription \$80
- Tandem Beach Skydive - \$285
- V8 Race Buggy Hot Lap - \$50
- Luxury picnic bag - \$59
- Chocolate walking tour - \$109
- Hot air ballooning w/breakfast - \$345
- Photography tour - \$99
- Ladies pamper day - \$160
- Beers of the world pack \$79.95
- Mad Men DVD collection - \$59.95

Check out more ideas in the www.lastminute.com.au gift guide!

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NOTE: Specific state, gender and generation statistics are available on request.

For more info or an interview with Courtney Maywald, get in touch!

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

The findings of this survey are based on a sample of 13,825 completed responses collected by an online survey in November 2010. Invitations to participate in the survey were published online on lastminute.com.au, via social media and via email newsletter to lastminute.com.au users.