

Australia swaps summer for Christmas snow

December 20 2010



Snow and ice covering buildings and cars on December 19, 2010 at Mount Hotham, Victoria, as snow fell in Australia. The usual hot and summery December weather was replaced in parts by icy gusts sweeping up from the Southern Ocean, giving the country a taste of a white Christmas. Snow has fallen in parts of east coast states New South Wales and Victoria.

Snow fell in Australia on Monday, as the usual hot and summery December weather was replaced in parts by icy gusts sweeping up from the Southern Ocean, giving the country a taste of a white Christmas.

Snow has fallen in parts of east coast states [New South Wales](#) and Victoria, leaving ski resorts -- some of which are usually snow-free at this time of year -- with dumps of up to 10 centimetres (four inches).

"It's white, everything is white," Michelle Lovius, the general manager of the Kosciuszko Chalet Hotel at Charlotte Pass told AFP.

"First thing this morning everything was just very still, very peaceful and every single thing was just blanketed in a thick cover of white."

Lovius said such an amount of [snow](#) was unusual for early December, normally the peak of the wildflower season in the New South Wales mountain region.

"We're hoping that it (the cold) stays in for five days and we get a white [Christmas](#)," she said.

Further south in Victoria state, Mt Hotham had 10 centimetres of snow on Sunday and Mt Buller up to five centimetres, Victorian Snow Report spokeswoman Maureen Gearon said.

"It is a blanket of white, which is beautiful at this time of year. People are out in their Santa hats taking photos in the snow," Gearon told Australian news agency AAP.



Snow and ice covering buildings and ski lifts at Mount Hotham, Victoria, December 19, 2010 as snow fell in Australia. The cold blasts carried through to Sydney, where the temperature fell to 13 degrees Celsius (55 degrees Fahrenheit) early Monday, and dipped to 9.8 Celsius in the city's west

The cold blasts carried through to Sydney, where the temperature fell to 13 degrees Celsius (55 degrees Fahrenheit) early Monday, and dipped to 9.8 Celsius in the city's west while winds of up to 100 kilometres (62 miles) an hour are forecast for much of the state's coastline.

It was a different story on Australia's west coast, where the worst flooding in 50 years isolated the town of Carnarvon, 900 kilometres north of Perth.

Weather experts said it was not unusual for [Australia](#) to experience chilly weather in eastern states in early December, as cold winds from deep in the Southern Oceans sweep upwards.

"It's not uncommon to get a dusting of snow along the higher peaks of New South Wales and Victoria every couple of years (at this time)," Bureau of Meteorology climatologist Grant Beard told AFP.

Gearon agreed, saying that in previous years, those on the Victorian snowfields had been "having cocktails in the sun one day and skiing the next".

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