

My Australian Journey

January 26, 2009

Today I arrived in Sydney on a beautiful morning, the snowy white mountains standing majestically in the distance. Lucky for me, Australians speak English so I quickly found my way out of the airport and grabbed a taxi. The taxi took me to my old friend Vanessa's, she was going to take me on a tour of Australia! I hadn't noticed how far away from the city we were, because I had been asleep, Australian cities are very far apart. When I got to Vanessa's house, I was surprised because her house was underground! It was practical though, because in the bush it is very hot and sunny. You escape the heat and unforgiving rays of the sun, having your house underground. I hurried over to the trapdoor that was in the ground and kicked it twice. I backed away and a head popped out from under the ground.

"Hello," said the voice I assumed to be Vanessa's. I returned the greeting and she asked me to come down while she gathered her things. Inside the house it was a little damp, but neat and tidy. We soon got into her car and drove off. I soon found out that our first destination was Melbourne. After a few hours, we finally reached the outskirts of Melbourne.

Port Philip Bay was bigger than I thought it would be and it was really beautiful. We passed the State Library of Victoria, and the Parliament House. We're in the Australian state of Victoria. Vanessa suggested that we go and get a bite at the near by cafe, she said it was really good. I ordered a Vegemite Sandwich, which Vanessa said was very good. When I took the first bite I started choking, this was nasty. People started looking my way. I ended up spitting it out into my napkin and ordering a turkey sandwich. Then, when we finished eating, Vanessa mentioned to me that Vegemite was concentrated yeast extract. No wonder it was so nasty!!! I decided that I had experienced enough of Australian food. Vanessa said she wanted to show me the Yarra River, she said it flowed through Melbourne. The river was very fast flowing, I didn't understand how the ducks could stay in one spot and not be washed downstream. It was getting late and Vanessa and I wandered around endlessly trying to find somewhere to stay. We found someplace and flopped down on the beds and immediately fell asleep.

By Jillian



Melbourne

January 27, 2009

I woke up stiff, but energized and was ready to get back in the car. Our next destination was Adelaide. Vanessa told me that Adelaide is the capital, economic center, and chief port of the state of South Australia. All of the main roads were blocked off, so it was really hard to get around.

Based on all of the banners going across the roads, I assumed the Australian Grand Prix was going on. I like watching car races so I suggested to Vanessa that we go and watch. She parked the car and we walked over to the race. Sydney's car was in the lead so I started rooting for them. It was really loud, so we didn't stay for very long. On our way to the downtown district, we saw the River Torrens. It was a lot slower than the Yarra River, and a lot cleaner. When we got downtown, we noticed that we were a little hungry, so we stopped for a snack at a cute cafe that was just down the road. Vanessa ordered some Anzac biscuits and I ordered a shortbread cookie. Anzac biscuits turned out to be traditional rolled oat and syrup cookies, and they were actually quite good. As Vanessa and I munched away on our treats she suggested that we go to one of the few beautiful parks that surround the city.

At the park we went to, there were many winding paths to explore. The path we chose wound around the whole park taking us on many adventures. Like the time we found ourselves next to a creek with an Echidna playing on the bank, or when we came across a magical bridge. An Echidna is a spiky hedgehog that has the bill of a platypus. It was really fun and the best part was that you would never know you were right next to a big city.

The sun was going down so we clambered up onto a ledge and watched it set behind the Mount Lofty Ranges. Vanessa pointed out a really nice restaurant that had good food, and she was right, it was really good. I was bushed, we found a cute little Inn that was by the park. I could barely lift my suitcase as we hobbled up the large stone steps. Vanessa and I got a room on the eastern side of the building so we could see the Mount Lofty Ranges.



Perth



January 28, 2009

I was rudely awakened at 5:30 in the morning because Vanessa wanted to see the sunrise at the park. I ran after her, and the sunrise was beautiful, but I'm not sure if it was worth getting up at 5:30 in the morning!!!! I wanted to go back to bed, but Vanessa said we should get an early start because it was a long drive.

We've been driving for hours now and are going to stop in the town of Kalgoorlie to fuel up and get lunch, a late lunch. The sun is going down and we've finally arrived in Perth. Vanessa stops at the closest restaurant because we are starved. I order some juicy steak and Vanessa orders a Caesar salad. For dessert we order Pavlova. It turns out to be really good. Pavlova is a meringue shell topped with fresh fruit and whipped cream.

We pay the bill, Australian money is like ours because it's in dollars so it's easy to understand. We retire for the night at the Kangaroo Ranch.

The State of South Australia



January 29, 2009

For once I woke up refreshed and went to get coffee. That would help me stay awake. It was not too far and I got to walk along the Swan River. I liked the climate, it was warm and sunny, unlike Seattle which is cooler and rainy. I saw some people on the beach and thought that it might be fun to go swimming. On my walk back I saw the 1,000 acre section of "bush" that was in the main district.

Vanessa must have been really tired because she was still asleep when I got back. I decided to let her sleep and went to Perth's Culture Center. The museum, art gallery, and reference library were all very interesting. When I got back to the hotel Vanessa had gotten up and was eager to go get breakfast. I was hungry to, so we headed to the hotel's restaurant.

Vanessa wanted to get on the road early because we were going to be driving all the way across the continent, so we got in the car and drove off. By noon we were at Coolgardie and had to stop to fuel up and eat. When we got back into the car, we switched places and drove off.

Unlike Americans, Australians have the driver on the right side. I thought this was pretty weird, they also drove on the left side of the road! By sunset our stomachs were rumbling and we were on the outskirts of the state of South Australia. We found a small trucker's diner but nowhere to stay so we slept in the car.

Broken Hill & Toowoomba

January 30, 2009

When I woke up, I was stiff and cramped, I also saw a sign that said, "Great Victoria Desert." No wonder there was nobody around. Vanessa wanted to drive and I wanted to rest so we switched seats. Once we got into South Australia, we stopped for breakfast. It seemed like we were back on the road in the blink of an eye.

Vanessa and I snacked along the way because we didn't want to waste time eating lunch. By 9:30 we had crossed the border of New South Wales and had stopped in the town of Broken Hill. Vanessa went to get some Chinese takeout and I went to get the car some gas.

Along the way I saw a hotel and got us a room. This hotel had a pool and I planned on going swimming. Gas was cheaper than in Seattle and I met Vanessa back at the hotel. The Chinese food was really good, we had moo-shu pork. I went for a swim and then warmed up in the hot tub, then went to my bed and fell asleep.

January 31, 2009

My back really hurt when I woke up, sleeping in the car might not have helped. So I went downstairs and got a massage, it felt really good. When I got back, Vanessa was up and had already eaten breakfast and was jealous when I told her I had gotten a massage. We checked out of the luxurious hotel and got back on the road.

I had some of the left-over Chinese food for breakfast as Vanessa drove. We reached Toowoomba by dinner and had supper there. We had to drive through night to reach Mac Kay by 9:00.

Cairns

February 1, 2009

We stopped in Mac Kay for an early breakfast. We were racing the clock because at 1pm we were to go scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef. We raced to Cairns, the closest town to the reef. Vanessa and I drove past Cairns ship building firm, brewery, and naval base, and arrived just in time for the boat to go scuba diving. We jumped into our diving suits and flopped aboard the boat. When we dove backwards off the boat, and hit the water, we were amazed to see so many animals living there.

The water was so clear and there were many different types of coral. Vanessa had her under water camera and we had fun taking pictures of ourselves in our exquisite surroundings. Unfortunately, it was becoming dark and we had to go back to shore. We had dinner and found a cute Inn that was on the seashore.

February 2, 2009

What a great experience it was to go scuba diving yesterday! We had breakfast and got back on the road. We hoped to make it to Cloncurry. Sitting in the car was getting really boring so I popped in a book on tape. It was a long book and it took up a lot of time. We stopped to fuel up and had fish and chips.

Back on the road again and it started to rain, and got cooler. We stopped at a rest stop, went to the rest room, and changed into warmer clothes. We got to the outskirts of Cloncurry at about 8:30. Vanessa and I were too tired to find a hotel so we slept in the car again.



Sydney

February 3, 2009

I woke up and felt like my back was tied in a knot! I wish I could have a massage now! On to Bundaberg! I offered to drive this time. It was hard to get used to driving on the right side of the car, and driving on the left side of the road.

We had to drive overnight to reach Bundaberg, and then drive until noon to reach Brisbane. How fun! Every minute seemed like an hour and minute after minute leaked into the other until I lost track of time. It was getting dark. Vanessa volunteered to do the night shift so I could sleep.

February 4, 2009

When I opened up my eyes, I saw a little green sign that said, "Welcome to Bundaberg!" We stopped for breakfast and then made the short drive to Brisbane. The landscape was changing, it was getting warmer, and it had stopped raining. I enjoyed watching the scenery flash past, I even saw a kangaroo. It was almost flying, it seemed, as it hopped, or should I say leaped! We were entering Brisbane in the blink of an eye. We decided to get some lunch. For dessert, Vanessa and I ordered some Lambington, which is a square of sponge cake dipped in a thin chocolate icing, which is then rolled in coconut. It was really good!

After lunch, Vanessa and I walked along the Brisbane River and decided to see the fair grounds of the World's Fair that was held in 1988. It was very interesting, but not much was going on there. We walked back to the car. The Glasshouse Mountains standing snowy white behind it. We grabbed some dinner and retired for the night at a nearby hotel.

February 5, 2009

Vanessa and I woke up and had breakfast. We slowly hopped into the car and said our good byes to Brisbane as we drove off. Sydney was one of our final destinations before I got back on on a plane and flew home. I was becoming a little homesick and was ready to go home, but I couldn't, not just yet anyway.

By sundown we reached Sydney, and I saw a sign that said, "Welcome to Sydney, Australia's oldest, and largest city." Vanessa wanted to stop by Port Jackson to see all of the boats come back to port. There were many different sizes of boats rushing all over the place. It made sense to me that it was Australia's busiest sea port.

I was getting hungry so we stopped for some dinner. We got Mornay, a dish consisting of canned fish in white sauce, topped with bread crumbs browned in the oven. We waddled back to the car and found a place to stay.

I was delighted to find two minties on my pillow. I read the label and it told me that they were peppermint-flavored nougat candies. I unwrapped one and popped it into my mouth. MMMMMMMM!!!! Was it good! I stashed the other one in my suitcase. I lade down on the plush bed and fell into a deep sleep.



February 6, 2009

I woke up with a feeling of dread, it was my last day in Australia! I slowly plodded towards my suitcase and packed up. I woke Vanessa up and we checked out of the hotel and got into the car.

It was a silent drive to Canberra, neither of us wanted to say good bye. We found our way to the airport and Vanessa helped me check my bags and find my flight. Vanessa and I said our good byes and I headed down the solemn jet way to my plane. I had a wonderful trip to Australia, and I hope to return someday.

The Perfect Life

By

Jillian

John Jagamara has a perfect life, living by Dryborough Station in Australia. John never knew his white father, who made his skin light brown. He isn't like the other dark skinned Aborigines who live at the station, but that doesn't matter to him. He loves swimming in the swimming hole and doing all the things his cousins and friends do. John loves feeling his mother's touch and her skin when he curls up in her lap by the fire; he wants to stay there forever. In the book, *The Burnt Stick* by Anthony Hill, John, the main character, is not really like the others, his light brown skin will soon become a problem.

One day, Charlie Warragin, tells John's mother that "The Big Man from Welfare" is coming to take John away. All of the Aborigines that had white fathers are to go to the mission and learn to live like a white person. John doesn't want to leave his mother and everything he knows and go to the Pearl Bay Mission. John Jagamara's world is falling apart, one night his mother is holding him tight the next minute he is leaving.

John's mother isn't ready to just give her son up she has a plan. In the morning John and his mother get up when the sun comes up. She rubs a burnt stick from the fire all over him to make him have dark brown skin like all the other Aborigines. Will her cunning plan be able to outsmart the man from welfare?

The Burnt Stick is a wonderful book and I would recommend it for 10 years old and up, also for people who like to read books about outwitting others.



1920



1930



1940



1950

Vegemite \$1.33

Everyone on the block is eating Vegemite, it's quality is guaranteed and is still tasting just as good as it did in 1920. So if you want excellent taste and want to be hip, include Vegemite in your day, it will leave you with a smile!

1960



1980



1990



2000

