

Post



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So long, Australia. It's been swell! - April 28, 2025

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SUMMARY

Sadly, the end of our trip is in sight. We sweated through the heat and humidity on a long walk along the Esplanade in Cairns, had a nice al fresco lunch, then headed out to catch for our flight to Sydney. Quick dinner at our airport hotel then early to bed. Final thoughts - Australia and its people are awesome. It's beautiful. You should go! - Karen

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DETAIL

And so we come to the last blog post of the trip. We're not home yet (for the sake of our story) but getting there is all that's left on our dance card. We're still in Cairns and our flight back to LAX is out of Sidney early in the morning. As such, we're doing a late day flight from Cairns to Sydney and spending the night at a hotel near the airport.

At the Cairns airport we learn that Virgin Australia check-in doesn't open for another hour. We sit and forty five minutes later the desk is open and there's 100 people in line. Argh. Remembering the we paid just a bit more for the exit row we're able to skip the line.

The Sydney airport hotel's fine. The next morning we're back at the airport, going through security. No issues. On our way to the Qantas lounge we pass a bunch of big, glittering, well-lit stores in a row: Louis Vuitton, Tiffany and Company, Hermès, Bvlgari, Cartier, Gucci, Rolex, ... we're seeing a pattern here. Apparently a lot of well-heeled people fly in and out of Sydney.

The lounge is great, with lots of room, comfortable chairs, two breakfast buffets, wine and an open bar. At 8:00 o'clock in the morning? We have breakfast and a bit of wine (hey, it is 5:00 pm in Austin). The flight to Los Angeles is under 13 hours, which is great. We have a 130 mph tail wind.

Flying let us ponder our trip to Australia. We definitely enjoyed it even more than we thought we would. Everyone was nice. Every city had lots of green, outdoor spaces with lots of walking space for pedestrians. The public transportation was very good and (in the city) there weren't that many cars. The weather's good and the food is great.

I think the good food, in part, comes from the country, years ago, realizing they needed to encourage immigration. That brought in people from all over, many of whom are good chefs and restaurateurs. The immigration (to this day) means they have enough labor. Maybe not enough housing for all those immigrants, but they're working on that.

And they're picky about who they let come in and work. You're limited to how long you can stay, and if you want to 're-up' you have to prove you've done three months of some job that's hard to fill and/or some job in a place where it's hard to get workers to come. The end result that we saw was impressive.

It was funny waking up, knowing that the day is totally over in Europe and mostly over in the US. The US stock market is closed. Whatever was going to happen has happened, and "tomorrow" hasn't started anywhere. You're always living the past, and you're kind of at recess while the world sleeps.

There's lots of natural beauty down there and the people are very active and thus healthy and trim. Would we go back? We were hoping that we could say "Don't need to" but, gosh, it's really nice. We'd come back to Sydney, Brisbane, and Tasmania, for sure. Maybe some trip where we're in Japan and our bodies are already used to the far away time zone. Only time will tell.

Thanks for coming with us on our little trip and we hope to see you on some future adventure. Bye for now.

Photos



All the airports we walked through in Australia (and many of the city malls) had LEGO stores. And each had one or more big, impressive LEGO-made creation. There weren't any duplicates that we saw.



At the airport Qantas lounge for one last meal.



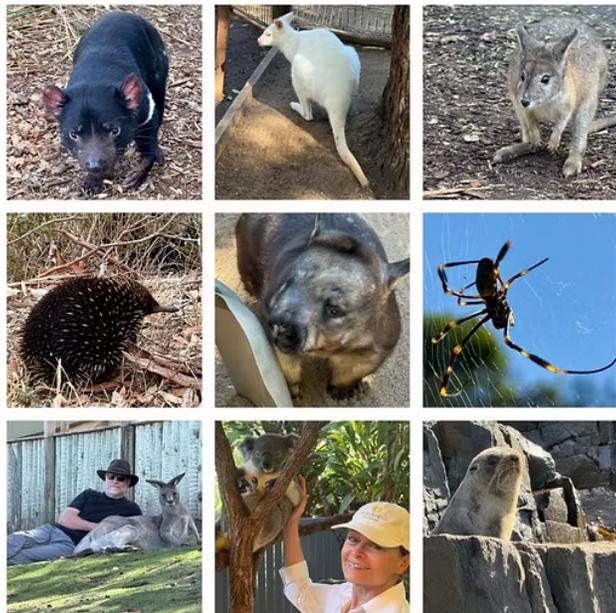
A good healthy brekky. As always, a beautiful flat white. And wine (a dozen "serve yourself" bottles within arms reach). Anyone know any good breakfast wines??



The pilot gave us one last view of Sydney and it's harbor, Harbor Bridge, and more. It was a lot of fun.



On the plane we had time to sort through our pictures. I had more pictures of pretty (and pretty crazy) birds.



The animals, though, were the really crazy thing here. Clockwise from upper-left: Tasmanian devil, albino wallaby, normal wallaby, golden-orb spider, smelly seal, koala (with Tricia), Kangaroo (hanging with Don), echidna, and in the middle a male wombat.



Lots of fun signs down here.



Back in Austin trying to overcome our jet



And we ate with friends at Chuy's (tex mex).



The timing of this comic showing up in my inbox seemed timely. Will we come back to Australia? Only time will tell, but neither of us would be surprised. Bye for now.

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