



Travel Stories by Amaru & Suzanne



Driving the Great Ocean Road!

by Amaru & Suzanne, October 4th 2009

It's taken me almost 5 years since I first arrived in Australia, but I've finally seen the Twelve Apostles...

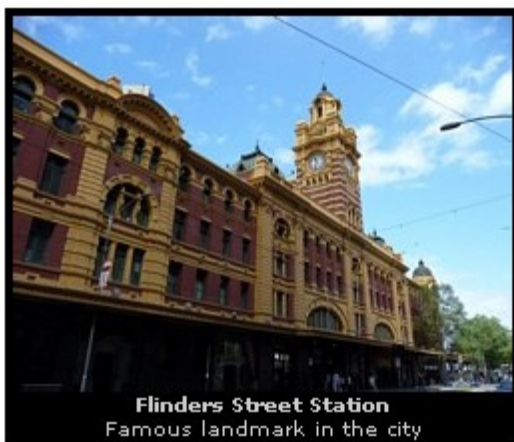
As a combination of both our birthdays we decided this year that we would travel to Melbourne over the long weekend and also incorporate a trip down the famous Great Ocean Road and the Twelve Apostles.

We left Sydney after work on Friday on a Tiger Airways plane. We weren't quite sure what to expect as we'd read a lot of bad reviews about the airline and also seen the TV show "**Airways**". But we had no problems, the plane left on time, it was comfortable, staff were friendly and at \$39 each one-way you just can't complain...

We were lucky enough to be picked up at the airport and then spent Friday evening catching up with Kate and Adam and also getting to know their daughter Keira, whom we met for the first time.



Love the small lanes
found everywhere in Melbourne



Flinders Street Station
Famous landmark in the city

Saturday was a nice relaxing day in the city, we woke up and made our way to the Queen Victoria Markets where we pretty much just strolled the food courts looking for tasty treats for breakfast.

While wandering we saw a doughnut van with a massive line-up... Of course this made us interested and we lined up to see what the whole deal was about. Well, apparently this van has been in business for over 50 years and the doughnuts were great, hand rolled, jam filled with sugar on top...Mmmm!! We paid for a bag of six but were given eight... Ah well ;)

We were half thinking about visiting the rest of the markets as well but since we've done that a few years ago and weren't really interested in buying anything (that we couldn't eat) we moved on.

We made our way on foot to Federation Square to see if there was anything going on.

We arrived and saw a street performer and sat down to watch his show. During his show he walked up to the audience and selected one girl to participate... while he was doing this Suz pretended to look for something in her bag as she didn't want to be selected. I laughed at her and 5min later I was selected.... figures!

So, my time in the spotlight had finally arrived! I was given a wig to wear and then had to pretend that I was in a club fighting over a girl with another guy while performing some 70's dance moves... There is some video evidence of this somewhere but it won't make this page anytime soon ;)



Lord of the Fries
Suz getting us some nice handcut fries



Federation Square
...still weird looking!

Once my career was over and done with, we jumped on a tram and made our way over to St. Kilda. We always visit St. Kilda when we're in Melbourne, it's just such a nice area, it's right on the bay has a bohemian atmosphere to it and contains a few nice food places.

The rest of the day we just spent wandering different parts of the city, finding small alleys to walk down and sit down for a coffee and just people watching...

The next morning we had breakfast at a South American inspired café. Suz had a "normal" breakfast while I had the "Venezuelan" one which consisted of "huevos pericos", black beans and arepas and felt like a kid again ;) On our way out I discovered that they were selling "Manjar" and had to buy a small can for the road...

After a very gratifying breakfast, we picked up our car and started our trip towards Torquay and the beginning of the Great Ocean Road...

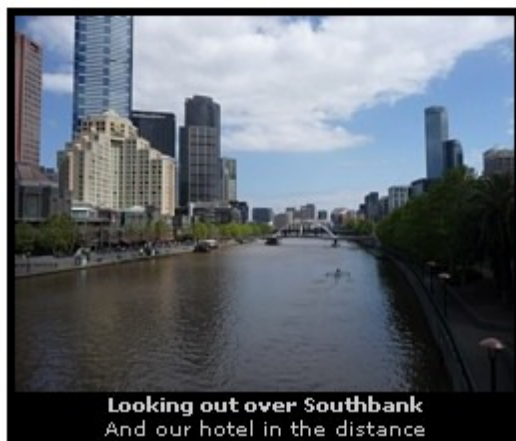
We drove and stopped at quite a few places along the way such as; Torquay, Bell's beach, Anglesea, Split Point, Big Hill, Lorne and Apollo Bay where we finally stopped for lunch.

At the beginning of our drive we had clear skies and sunshine but as we continued along the road we were covered by thick clouds and a few drops of rain started to fall. It was still a pretty road to drive down, it just meant that we didn't want to pull over too often due to the rain.

After lunch we made the inland journey towards the Twelve Apostles and along the way the skies started to clear up again, we were now hoping to experience a nice sunset.



Street Performer
I was part of the show...



Looking out over Southbank
And our hotel in the distance

The Twelve Apostles are amazing, not sure what it is, it's just a few limestone cliffs sticking up out of the ocean but they the experience is mesmerizing!

We stayed around for a while just taking it in before we started the drive towards our stop for the day, but before we reached Port Campbell we stopped at Loch Ard Gorge and had a quick view of this area as well. Here we could actually walk down to the beach and be surrounded by the cliffs.

Once in Port Campbell we checked into our hotel (after accidently going to the wrong one first), sat at the local pub for a refreshing cold drink for a while before making our way back to the Twelve Apostles (only 10min by car) for a sunset viewing.

Boy were we in for a treat! If we thought the view was beautiful before it was nothing compared to what we now witnessed.... It's actually difficult to find words to explain it so I'm just going to leave it at that and leave you to see for yourselves in our photos!

The next day we awoke to dark clouds and rain and before we drove back to Melbourne (shorter route this time via Colac and Geelong) we made a final visit to the site and even though it was cold and cloudy and rain was falling, the view was still great!

Another great weekend in Melbourne and its surroundings.... can't wait to go back!



We've stopped to watch some
Kite Surfing down at St. Kilda



Melbourne from a distance
Seen from St. Kilda pier



The Luna Park in Melbourne looks
scary compared to the Sydney one



Acland street in St. Kilda
The Main Street



"The Saints"
Made it to the final but lost...



Beer o'clock...
I never need an excuse ;)



Graffiti in Melbourne
There are many small lanes like this...



Some urban wedding photos
It's a cool concept!



Old buildings
New trams...



Suz looking out over Southbank
just from outside our hotel



The Crown Casino
at night...



Looking out over Southbank
from our hotel



On the road again...
Starting our small road trip



Looking out over Bells Beach
Just outside of Torquay



Suz
in front of Bells Beach



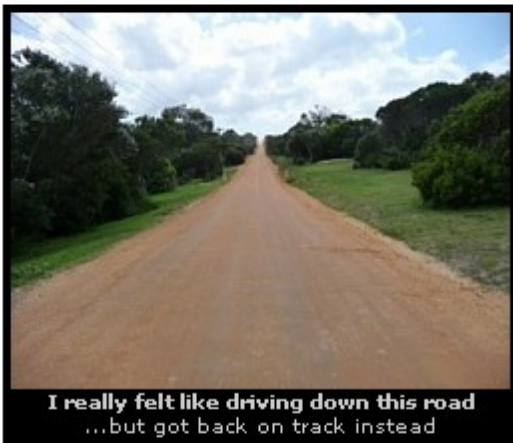
The sign says it all,
stay clear from the edge!



The Split Point
Lighthouse



The first of many
limestone cliffs



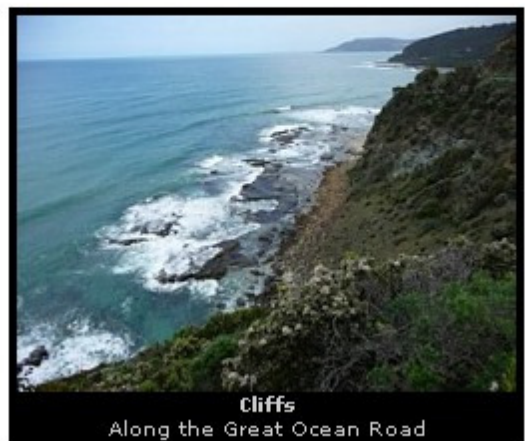
I really felt like driving down this road
...but got back on track instead



The Great Ocean Road
Memorial



The "huge" car we rented
...but it was a good car!



Cliffs
Along the Great Ocean Road



Big Hill with a map showing some of the spots along the way



"Drive on Left"
Just in case you haven't noticed it...



The Twelve Apostles
The highlight of the Great Ocean Road



Suz
at the viewing deck



Looking out over the cliffs
at the Twelve Apostles



...and looking out the other way
at the Twelve Apostles



Suz and I
at the Twelve Apostles



Looking out over
Loch Ard Gorge



Looks like a nice beach in there



At the Loch Ard Gorge
A beautiful inlet...



We're back at the Twelve Apostles
for a sunset viewing!



The Twelve Apostles during sunset
It's mesmerizing!!



Plenty of other photographers
think the same...



Yup, that's me
In front of the Apostles...



A beautiful sunset
A perfect end to a perfect day!



Relaxing with a local brew
Quirky name but good taste



Next day in Port Campbell
The town just outside the Twelve Apostles



A final view before we head back
Different light, just as beautiful!



We're in Geelong
Home of the AFL Premiers



The boardwalk contains
quite a few funny figures



We drove over 600km over two days
The tripmeter was set a bit late ;)



Flying back to Sydney with Tiger Airways
At \$39 a ticket, who could complain?

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