Log 1 – Arrival to SYD

1. You made it! What’s your first reaction?

On the plane during the descent my reaction was wow, it’s beautiful. The seaside cliffs and beaches and just a sprawling yet still somewhat quant city. Then our cab driver is very talkative but also very friendly (which an American expat to Australia had told us many people here were, possibly even friendly to a fault). The apartment is quite lovely as well, in a beautiful neighborhood full of British-style townhouses.

1. What did you do today?

Immediately found the closest coffee shop to the apartment while waiting for the property manager to let us in. I just left Kristin on the corner of the house with all our luggage while I went to go get coffee. Priorities.

1. Anything particularly different about SYD than from NYC?

The drive from the airport to the apartment was much shorter than I was expecting. It was probably 20 minutes, so not like the long haul you have to make to get out to JFK from Manhattan. The Paddington neighborhood feels a bit like Brooklyn, though it was extra quiet when we arrived. I think the quietness was due to us arriving the morning of a weekday so I guess most people in Paddington had left for work already. Also, we’d been warned that the city might be quiet (except at bars) that day because it was the day of the Melbourne cup horse race. At the coffee shop at the end of our street, I felt quite at home. Even though there’s not really drip coffee here, you can get pretty close with their version of a strong Americano, the “long black”.

1. Did you handle the jet lag well?

Decently. Didn’t have any falling asleep in the middle of the day episodes, but definitely went to bed early the first couple of nights.

1. Additional Comments

Log x – 11/11/2014 (bike ride around the lake)

1. Where are you in AU?

Canberra, the capitol.

1. What did you do today?

Went to work, borrowed a little single-speed bike from the hotel to both get to and from work on as well as do a 16km ride around the western part of the lake in Canberra.

1. Describe an interesting creature or human you saw.

These weird birds that looked like they had pink sweaters around their necks covering the lower par of their mouths. I guess sorta hipster birds or something.

1. Any divine food or beverage experiences today?

Mandarin soufflé and chocolate sorbet paired with a Spanish port at the hotel was fantastic. Also, the coffee so far is good everywhere in Australia.

1. Any thoughts about the Aussie lifestyle you’d like to share?

Coffee! It’s a big part of the culture here and I love it. Also, at least in Canberra, I’ve noticed that people wait at the lights a lot more than in NYC (both pedestrians and cyclists).

1. Additional Comments

Log x – 12/11/2014 (national portrait gallery)

1. What did you do today?

Borrowed the bike again, this time

1. Describe an interesting creature or human you saw.

Saw lots of creepily realistic looking art at the gallery. I guess it was silicon molded to look like humans, but the details were so precise as to the veins in the arms, creases in arms or fingers, and of course the real human hair everywhere it should be.

1. Any divine food or beverage experiences today?

Not necessarily divine, but for my second coffee of the day, I went to a stand with some coworkers called 2 past 10. The stand also sold little sandwiches, but as is appropriate for Australia, about 75% of the coffee stand was dedicated to housing the grinder and machine (just the general coffee operation), leaving the remainder as the kitchen for making said sandwiches. The coffee was great (I had a long black).

1. What slang or Australian vocabulary did you hear today?

Bread pudding is apparently called bread & butter pudding here. Also, not really slang, but I had a trout hash brown at breakfast (called breaky here), and I wasn’t sure what to expect, but it was what it sounds like. It was a hash brown with bits of trout inside it, and quite tasty.

1. Additional Comments