Melbourne likes to boast that it is "the most livable city in the world." I don't know what the qualifications are, but I can see why people might think so.

Melbourne has been developing as a city for around 150 years. It grew up with great cities like London as its examples. It's young enough to have learned from poor planning in older cities, and has time to build all the modern amenities that a great city needs.

The streets are easy to navigate. They follow a pretty strict grid system even out into the suburbs. Since arriving in Melbourne, I've hardly looked at a map while out and about. If I locate my destination on a map, the way is straight forward enough. I like to get a little lost in a new city and explore what's off the beaten path, but not in Melbourne. Though, I've found many of the city's nooks and crannies, I always knew where I was and how to get back to the main streets.

Surprisingly, Melbourne is not stingy about free wifi. Almost all café's, bars, and shops offer free wifi. Most public monuments, museums, and parks have free wifi provided by the government. Melbournians hardly need data at all while out in the city.

There is also great food everywhere, and to fit any budget. Of course, Melbourne has its upscale and exotic cuisine to attract adventurous foodies. There is also lots of good cultural street food, for those who don't want to break the bank. For pretty much anyone, there is a chain called Lentil as Anything that stays afloat through donations to serve vegetarian and vegan food on a pay what you like bases. Though food seems cheaper in Australia, the portions are smaller, so leftovers are not common. Even so, it would be hard to go hungry here.

But the most unique food experience I had was while indulging a traveling tradition. MacDonald's has infested almost the entire world, but the experience is different based on where you are, so travelers often make a trip to MacDonald's to compare. Though I tend to avoid fast food, I had lunch at a MacDonald's in Melbourne out of respect for the tradition. The menu is pretty similar to that in the United States, but I was impressed to be able to order food digitally at a touch screen kiosk. It was like having a digital menu that does all the work of a cashier. Someone called out the number of the order, and that was all the interaction I had with the staff. While waiting for my food, I also noticed that drinks are served automatically. The cup drops into a conveyer belt and then stops under the soda fountain to be filled and a lid put on, all without anyone bothering to lift a finger. Pretty soon, fast food restaurants won't have workers at all.

As far as art and technology are concerned, there is inspiration everywhere. Melbourne has the most extensive collection of art museums and art that I have ever seen, and most exhibits are free to the public. There is an entire alley of a few blocks with beautiful graffiti projects. The buildings are intricate and modern. Melbourne is relatively young, but definitely keeping up with the times, if not leading the way.

Melbourne has one of few observation decks and observation wheels in the world. It has a great zoo, and lots of places for wildlife sightings of kangaroos, penguins and other native creatures. There are great beaches and views of the ocean, cliffs, and mountains. Though I have enjoyed seeing Melbourne as a tourist, it may be the only place in the world besides the Bay Area that I could see myself living. By my standards, Melbourne is, in fact, very livable.