

11/03/2019

Hi,

Days twenty-two through twenty-four; the new phase....

Day 22 (11/04/2019) – Today started a new phase of our trip; self driving! Esther and I walked about a half hour this morning from our hotel to the Avis office. After handling all of the paper work it was up the elevator to the fourth floor of the garage and there in space 1 was our white Toyota Camry. After inspecting the car for defects it was time to get started. I open the left front door and started to climb in; oops, no steering wheel. That was the start of getting use to driving on the wrong side of the road. Well, with map in hand, we finally made it back to our hotel for Joyce, breakfast and our luggage and, would you believe, I only got “watch out”, “move over”, etc. a half dozen times in that short ride.. Now the task...how do I get three giant suitcases in the car? The two largest, Esther’s and mine, did squeeze into the trunk along with most of the small bags. Joyce’s suitcase occupied one side of the rear seat. Breakfast done, were off to our first stop; the Gorge Wildlife Park.

We were convinced by the driver that took us from the bus station to the hotel upon our arrival from Kangaroo Island to go to the Gorge Wildlife Park; where we could actually hold Koala bears, so we did. We walked to park, waited for “hold the Koala bear time”, waited in line for our turn and had a photo minutes. See photos below. We all enjoyed the park, actually spent about three hours there, before heading on to our first stop in Robe. It was quite a long drive to Robe and I only turned the car windshield wipers on two dozen times; no it wasn’t raining, they are located where our directionals, turn signals, are in the USA. Once in Robe our first stop was to buy wine cheese and crackers. We snacked on them for a while and then went out for dinner. It was a sit down meal but you had to order it, pay for it at the bar and wait. We did, and none of use was happy with what we ate. Spoiled from our tour in New Zealand I guess!

I guess all that driving on the wrong side of the road made me tired. I had a great night’s sleep!

Day 23 (11/05/2019) – Well it was off bright and early, after we found a place for breakfast that is, not knowing what we were going to do other than drive to our next stop in Port Campbell. Fortunately, my passengers were cautiously getting more confident in the driving ability as their chauffer driving on the wrong side of the street. We drove through some really nice farm land, lots of cows and sheep, and finally came to a sign “Blue Lake”. Far be it from us to pass up an opportunity to find out what a Blue Lake looked like and why it was blue. So off the beaten track we went to the Blue Lake. It looked like a miniature Crater Lake in Oregon, and was a sunken volcano that appeared blue during the warmer months only. In the colder months something rose to the surface that made the lake appear gray. While in the area, we also went to the Valley Lake, not blue, and to the sink hole.

Our next stop along the way was Port Fairy. A beautiful touristy spot along the ocean where we first drove out to the coast and walked around. We then went back into the town center for; you guessed it, out daily ice cream. While there, it was suggested that we walk out to the light house. So, we drove back toward the ocean to the parking area and chose the shorter of the two paths to the light house; 20 minutes each way. Joyce thought it was twenty minute round trip, but found our otherwise. Once at the light house, I told them they would not make it back in 20 minutes; it would take much longer. Well, they actually proved me wrong and were able to do it in 17 minutes.

From Port Fairy it was on the Port Campbell for the evening. As we were getting near Port Campbell I saw a road "Scenic Coastal Highway", and decided to take it instead of lady Garmin's direction. Wise choice; there were scenic stopping points along the way. We stopped at the first two and they were beautiful views of the coast line. The third stopping point was the "the Grotto". We walked out to the over look high above the ocean. Along the way, everyone we passed said, "you have to go down the stairs for the view". Well, we were convinced! Dreading that fact that we would have to climb back up those stairs, we descended to the bottom. It was an outstanding view. 68 steps later we were back to the top with just a sloping walkway and 600 more meters to the car to go. All three stopping points were really worth it. It was now nearly 7:00 pm and we decided to bi-pass the rest of the scenic stooping points and get to our lodging for the night.

We checked into a nice tree bedroom apartment, went out for another, not very good and very long wait, dinner. From dinner it was back to our home for the night where we all collapsed.

Day 24 (11/06/2019) – Today we got off to a more leisurely start. Once out of our abode it was on to breakfast for a muffin and coffee; we gave up on the eggs and sausage for today. With coffee in hand we headed back to the scenic lookouts we bi-passed yesterday; the London Bridge and the Arch. The rust color cliffs and ocean ways made for a beautiful view. From there, we decided to drive the "12 Apostles Food Artisans Trail" to visit Apostle Whey Cheese, Gorge Chocolate, Timboon Fine Ice Cream and Dairylicious Fudge expecting to tour the facilities. First, although it was too early for ice cream, the store was closed. From there, after a few wrong turns, we were in for a surprise; no factory tours, just stores. We spent a lot of driving time to buy a little fudge, chocolate and cheese. The one consolation was the owner of the fudge store was very sociable and we enjoyed are visit there. Esther especially enjoyed the baby cows talking to her. I'm not sure why, it must have been her looks, personality, the very busy camera or all of the above! It turns out they were desperately looking for milk; having just been weaned off of their mother's milk.

The last thing to do before heading to our lodging location for the evening, Apollo Bay, was to visit the most photographed scenic view on the Scenic Ocean Road; the 12 Apostles. Well, we did! It was twelve rock structures in the ocean that represented the 12 apostles. Unfortunately, due to water erosion over the years one was gone and two were going. We just couldn't find 12. It was still a great view as were the other scenic lookouts. We also stopped at the scenic overlook called Gibson Steps. At this site you could walk down to the beach. We walked to the overlook, out but decided not to do the stairs.

Next we came across and stopped at another wildlife park. After Kangaroo Island and the Gorge Wildlife Park, this was a no comparison; we didn't stay long. The drive to Apollo Bay wasn't all that far, but a twisty, turny, up and down road. During this drive we were running low on fuel so I kept my eye on the kilometers remaining. Gas stations were only found in towns, not a one in the spaces in-between. We had about 35 kilometers left when we arrived in Apollo Bay. First stop check into our lodge for the evening, second stop get gas and third look for a good restaurant. After enjoying our wine and cheese we decided to walk to dinner; not far, but raining by the time we headed back.

Not outstanding, but an okay day. We are now in for the night and will be heading to Melbourne tomorrow.