

My Australian Diaries.

Travelling for educational purpose.

July 3, 2011

From Moscow to Sydney.

My flight took a long time to be in Australia. Well, I wish I could stand it. Actually it wasn't that bad as I thought it might be... In the airport I felt like I am going to die because I used to take my laptop and a heavy bag with me. But, you know, misfortunes never come alone. You see, I bought shampoos and I decided to take them with me in hand luggage, because there was no place in my beautiful suitcase. But the customs inspector said that I could not take them with me...FOR NO REASON!! I was about to cry because it was unfair (shampoos were pretty expensive) and I wouldn't be bothered to go and buy shampoos in Australia. So Duty Free saved my life.

Thank you, Duty Free!

During my flight I fell on a sleeping old lady and sat over my sit because the plane was shaking. I wanted to laugh at it but everyone around was sleeping as well. Everyone was tired so was I. You can't imagine how my arms hurt. On board I was watching the film "I Am Number Four". I was under the impression of this catching movie so my pain has just gone.

Wollongong.

Wollongong is a seaside city located in the Illawarra region of New South Wales, Australia. It lies on the narrow coastal strip between the Illawarra Escarpment and the Pacific Ocean, 82 kilometres south of Sydney.

The name Wollongong is believed to mean "sound of the sea" in the local Aboriginal language, although other explanations have been offered, such as "great feast of fish", "hard ground near water", "song of the sea", "sound of the waves", "many snakes" and "five islands"

Right now I'm in my aunt's house. Each member of her family is very warm and welcome to me. But in her house it isn't warm at all because it's winter. I'm afraid to catch cold. Now I'm about to sleep. Hope no one will fall on me while I am sleeping. Kidding;).

University of Wollongong.

Wollongong has one university, the University of Wollongong, which was formerly part of the University of New South Wales, and the Illawarra Institute of Technology, part of the State's system of TAFE colleges. The university was awarded the "Australian University of the Year" in two consecutive years (1999–2000, 2000–2001) by the Good Universities Guide.

Finally, I've entered the University of Wollongong. Well, not actually Uni, but college which is located in the territory of the University. My first day at Uni was quite weird... I could hardly orientate to which building I should go. Uni's campus is huge! At first I felt like I'm Alice in Wonderland, because in which corner I had not looked in, I was surprised. University was like a little town. There were shops, library, cafes and even a hairdressing salon. There also was a park

with a pond full of ducks. Could you imagine that? At the very next day I became much braver, and I even have been to the Uni's shop. I bought a bar of chocolate. It always drives me in good mood, so with a smile I moved into the next day with impatience and wonder what next day would be in this green beautiful University like.



This is how it looks – the Uni.

Each of my English lessons goes great! Teachers teach students with all respect and wishing to help students. There is no misunderstanding between students and teachers, that's just amazing! I really wish I could study in this cool University as an actual student. I look forward to be there. Imagine yourself in a huge green fresh place kind of land full of Australian handsome/pretty people walking around, talking with each other, going to Uni Café or whatever...I do not think you need any evidence or reason to study right here. I'm not trying to assure you that this Australian University is an excellent place to make your future better as it could be, it's just so obvious. Each time I'll be there surrounded by such polite and smiley students, I'll feel like I'm one of them. Honestly, my pride goes through my mind while I'm in University.



My very last day at the University.

Sounds sad, but I`m not sad at all! Well, those few weeks were full of benefits for sure. I have studied in an advanced group of course. I was the only Russian in the whole building where I`ve studied and I was the youngest one. Those advanced courses were not hard at all. English rules, new words just needed to be understood and learned. I didn`t learn it only by myself. There were Japanese people studying with me and I`m glad I had an opportunity not only to have a chance to study with them but also to make lovely friends.

This last day was random. We watched a film "A cave with the yellow dog" in English, took few photos together and then teachers gave us a certificate where our achievements were showed. My speaking was "nice", writing was "great" reading and listening were "good". I am not sure these were the marks I deserved, but anyway I would always be thankful to my great teachers whom I would miss so much. I am planning to come back next year to study there.

At the end of this page I can tell you, that my English courses were good! I realized that if you studied hard, with all pleasure and energy you could hope to have your best achievements!

The next few days I`ll be packing my beautiful suitcase to be ready to go to Queensland with accumulated knowledge from the English courses at the University of Wollongong!

And here I am in Queensland. Queensland is a state of Australia, located in the north-east of the country. It is bordered by the Northern Territory, South Australia and New South Wales to the west, south-west and south respectively. To the east, Queensland is bordered by the Coral Sea and Pacific Ocean. The state is Australia's second largest by area, following Western Australia, and the country's third most populous after New South Wales and Victoria. The capital and largest city in the state is Brisbane. Because of its size, there is significant variation in climate across the state. Low rainfall and hot summers are typical for the inland west, a monsoonal 'wet'

season in the far north, and warm temperate conditions along the coastal strip. Inland and in southern ranges low minimum temperatures are experienced. The climate of the coastal strip is influenced by warm ocean waters, keeping the region free from extremes of temperature and providing moisture for rainfall.

Me and my home stay family (except for my aunt's husband) arrived here by plane yesterday. First of all we landed in Brisbane and then after a few hours we boarded another plane which landed in the airport where we went to the hotel from. On our way by minibus I looked through the window and wondered how desert slowly was changing into a green palmed area. Also it was very sunny, so everyone had to put on the sunnies. And the weather was absolutely different comparing with the weather which was in the state of New South Wales.

Great Barrier Reef.

Today we were sailing around the small islands on a white yacht.

The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest coral reef system composed of over 2,900 individual reefs and 900 islands stretching for over 2,600 kilometres (1,600 mi) over an area of approximately 344,400 square kilometres (133,000 sq mi). The reef is located in the Coral Sea, off the coast of Queensland in north-east Australia.

A large part of the reef is protected by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, which helps to limit the impact of human use, such as fishing and tourism. Other environmental pressures on the reef and its ecosystem include runoff, climate change accompanied by mass coral bleaching, and cyclic population outbreaks of the crown-of-thorns starfish.

The Great Barrier Reef has long been known to and used by the Aboriginal Australian and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Aboriginal Australians have been living in the area for at least 40,000 years, and Torres Strait Islanders since about 10,000 years ago. For these 70 or so clan groups, the reef is also an important cultural feature



My emotions were the highest as never before when I saw the beautiful turquoise Coral Sea waves. I couldn't but smile when I felt the warmth, bright sun and beautiful sea underneath (I was snorkling while the yacht was staying still).



When we arrived to the hotel after this fun trip, my cousin and I decided to go to the town, hang around in Airlie beach and enjoy Queensland night life style.

This town wasn't big and may not be that bright as the cities, but it was so cozy. The town was full of shops, where you could buy sun cream, swimsuits, postcards with the views of the Coral See, there were also McDonald's which overjoyed me and a tattoo salon, bars and other great stuff like this. No wonder, everyone who was on our way did surfing as a professional. It was even more fun because we had a chance to talk to them, to ask about the sea sports and so on.

When we finally arrived to our hotel my cousin and I went to the swimming pool, though it was late. We made new friends. And I do still communicate with them very well! Really, it's very important to know language most people speak! It's amazing when you can understand what other people tell you and you can talk with them with no language limits. Also it's necessary to know English even just for being well educated and well-thought-of.

This was the best day of my life.

30th of July

Today was a lovely day! It was sunny, warm (which was quite unusual for Australian winter), bright outside. Today I saw a stunning panorama: nature was breathing deeply giving fresh air coming from the top of mountains, wide green fields, seagulls flying up in azure sky, pretty houses with red tiled roofs like in old fairytales, ocean was sparkling because of the sun rays. In other way of saying that: I've been to Kiama. This small town was so cozy and the way you feel when you are here is absolutely magnificent! Now a little bit of official information...The name "Kiama" is derived from the Aboriginal word "kiarama", which means "Place where the sea makes a noise". Kiama is also known as the place where the mountains touch the sea. During the colonization of Australia, the "Place where the sea makes a noise" area was settled by wheat

farmers as the soil was volcanic and rain-swept unlike most of Australia. Over time tourism and housing growth turned Kiama into a dormitory suburb (where people travelled away to work) and summer tourist spot. Kiama in 2009 is a tourism heaven in summer, during which its population triples.

Anyway, if I had enough of my money, I would buy a little house here for myself. Just to relax, enjoy the calm nature. Unfortunately right now there are only 15 Australian dollars in my jeans' pocket...



Kiama and the surrounding.

Do you believe in love at the first sight? I do, because the thing I fell in love with is the biggest city in Australia. Today is a special day. It was my first time in Sydney. Sydney is the most populous city in Australia and the state capital of New South Wales. The city is built on hills surrounding Port Jackson which is commonly known as Sydney Harbour, where the iconic Sydney Opera House and the Harbour Bridge feature prominently. The hinterland of the metropolitan area is surrounded by national parks, and the coastal regions feature many bays, rivers, inlets and beaches including the famous Bondi Beach. Within the city are many notable parks, including Hyde Park and the Royal Botanic Gardens.

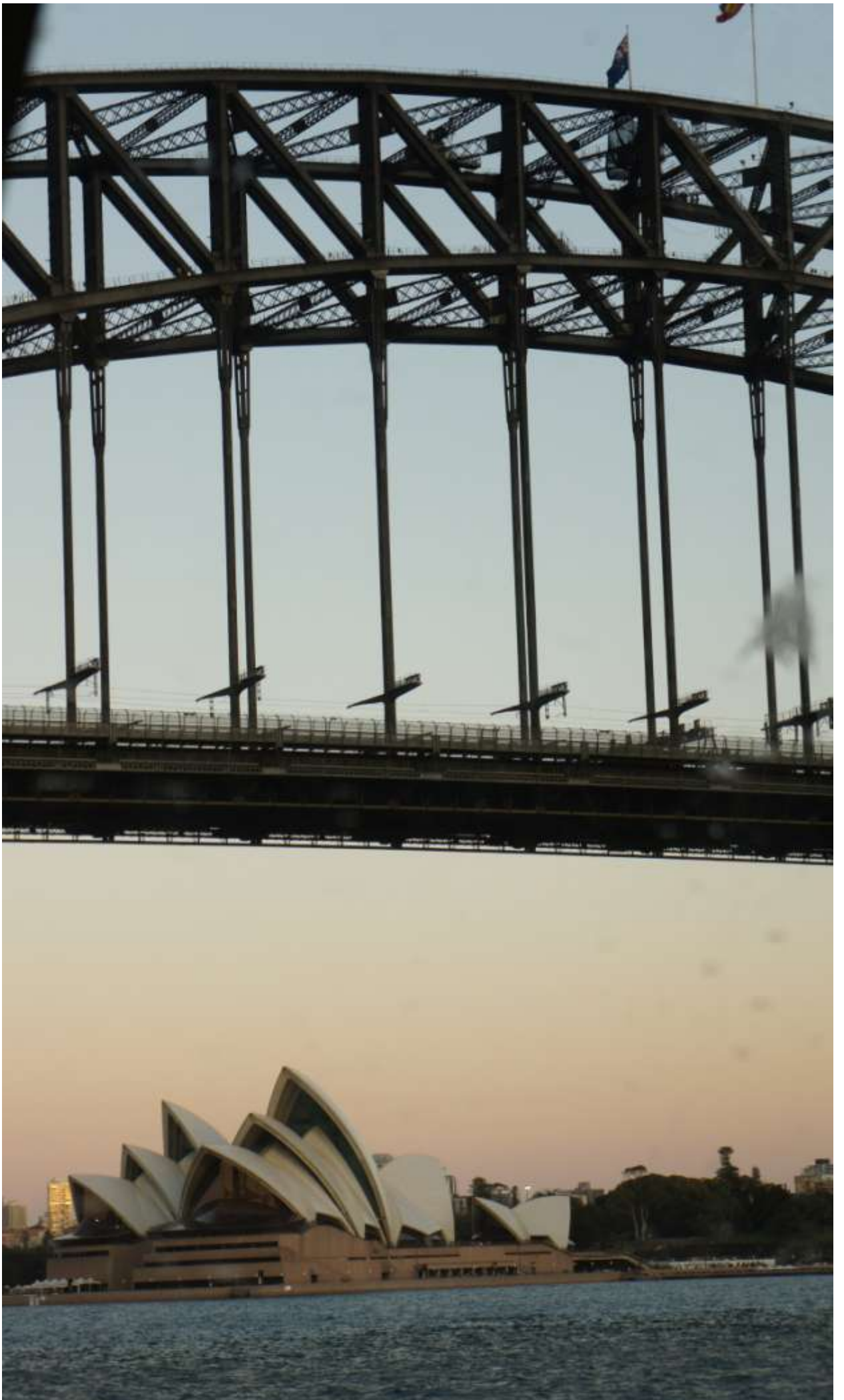
Sydney is well-endowed with open spaces and access to waterways, and has many natural areas, even in the city centre. Within the CBD are the Chinese Garden of Friendship, Hyde Park, The Domain and the Royal Botanic Gardens. The metropolitan area contains several national parks, including the Royal National Park, the second oldest national park in the world, and several parks in Sydney's far west which are part of the World Heritage listed Greater Blue Mountains Area.

The Domain was established by Governor Arthur Phillip, just six months after the arrival of the first fleet. Originally established as being exclusive to Governors, it was opened to the public in the 1830s. Hyde Park was dedicated on 13 October 1810 by Governor Macquarie for the "recreation and amusement of the inhabitants of the town and a field of exercises for the troops". To celebrate the first 100 years of European settlement, Centennial Park was dedicated by Sir Henry Parkes in January 1888. Similarly, Bicentennial Park was opened on 1 January 1988 to commemorate 200 years since European settlement. 1988's Bicentennial celebrations also saw the opening of the Chinese Garden of Friendship, designed by the City of Sydney's Chinese sister city Guangzhou.

How stunning this city is! It's so modern and fabulous. Everywhere there are skyscrapers...and they are not usual glass buildings.



The architecture is much more complicated. It is so charming and glamorous that you hardly would be able to imagine, I can assure you! The harbor which is positioned at the heart of Sydney`s city is so gorgeous. There are cafes, small shops, fountains and a huge Cinema next to the harbor. Sydney is as busy as London. People are walking in great rush everywhere. But there are no traffic jams and it is unbelievable! There are also massive private yachts, ships and boats inside this harbor. I took a cruise around Sydney on a white big ship. There is no description for my emotions when I saw The Opera House (the symbol of Sydney).





The Sydney Harbour Bridge .

The Sydney Harbour Bridge is a steel through arch bridge across Sydney Harbour that carries rail, vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic between the Sydney central business district (CBD) and the North Shore. The dramatic view of the bridge, the harbour, and the nearby Sydney Opera House is an iconic image of both Sydney and Australia. The bridge is nicknamed "The Coathanger" because of its arch-based design.

Sydney harbour bridge with the sunset at the background. I wondered why there were Australian people sitting next to me with their mouths open and big smiles on their faces. They were like strangers. I thought that they had seen this thousand times! Sure they had, but I have just realized that it doesn't matter how many times you see beautiful things, Australians are proud and excited of the place they live in, discovering the beauty each time they catch eye on it. The matter with us is that sometimes we can't see the beauty of the place we live in as clearly as Australian ocean water is!

My home stay family and me have just come back from Blue Mountains back home to Wollongong. Now I'm writing you about our trip.



The Blue Mountains is a mountainous region in New South Wales. It borders on Sydney's metropolitan area. The area begins on the west side of the Nepean River and extends westward as far as Coffs River. Geologically, it is situated in the central parts of the Sydney basin. The highest point of the range is Mount Werong at 1,215 metres (3,986 ft) above sea level. A large part of the Blue Mountains is incorporated into the Greater Blue Mountains Area World Heritage Site, consisting of seven national park areas and a conservation reserve.

Unfortunately the weather was disgusting. It was cold, very windy, but anyway... We rented a tiny house and stayed there for two days.



During those days we went to the caves. It was nice to be in a place that I have never been to and never dreamed about even going there.



In the caves there were massive white snow icicles and on the top of them were million little glassy crystals so it looked like it were snowflakes. It was not very cold in the caves, strangely enough. The temperature was bearable, about eighteen degrees above zero. The temperature was well maintained because of the sensitive crystals.



Crystals are alive, just imagine that! They grow but very slowly. It takes hundreds years to grow for one centimeter!!

In addition I can say that nature surrounding those caves is untouched by humans so there is much more chance to see the nature how it really is than in other places.



Today is a fun day! I have been to a special social event and enjoyed being a VIP guest. I was a spectator of the Australian football game. There were two teams Dragons & Roosters. They were playing on the huge green field alighted by lanterns and spotlights. It is so cool to be a VIP spectator because my seat was pretty high so I could see everything. Other people were sitting

below me and some people were sitting on grass. Of course this was an open-air stadium and I felt sorry for people who would sit on field grass during the rain...but some spectator`s spots were roofed.



In fact I absolutely hate football, but today`s game changed my mind. It is true that to watch a football game on TV is much more boring and unhealthy for one`s eyes. When you watch it at the stadium with your own eyes it is much more interesting. I cheered on the Roosters team and they won! It was very breathtaking to watch them playing! The game was watched by about 25 thousand people. It was not only me, who liked to cheer on wonderful players!

Anyway, soon I`ll be in Queensland-one of the states of Australia. I was excited so much.

My stay in the state of Queensland is over.

After my stay in Queensland I went to Brisban. I haven`t been there for long. So there was really no time to explore this city properly, but some of the parts have been seen. The best way to see Brisban in beautiful colours is to see it before the night falls. The beauty of this city will show you graceful colors of the night life.

Yesterday we were at the exhibition of surrealistic art. I am not fond of abstract art though it was pretty nice to watch how this world seems unreal from the point of view of some modern artists.

Conclusion.

During my holiday every day I was discovering something interesting and, of course, I did my best for better understanding of this unusual country and its wonderful hospitable people. My

admiration of this country will not leave me for a long time, for sure! Now I'm starting to pack my beautiful suitcase with a hope to be back again soon.

Information source: 1. <http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/>

2. <http://www.sydney.com/>

3. Personal observations and impressions

4. Advertising booklets

5. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page