

Tassie Travels

Thursday 17th February - Spirit of Tasmania to Devonport

Managed to amuse ourselves on board. It's a long trip (9 hours) but as long as you're prepared it's not too bad.

Checked into Comfort Inn at East Devonport and then walked into town for dinner. Col had been recommended a great seafood restaurant, however when we got there it was just a fish & chip shop - I was a bit disappointed and suggested we go elsewhere. Tried another restaurant - I wasn't happy with this one either, so just ordered garlic bread but it never arrived! Left and headed to the 2 pubs in town - unfortunately they finished serving dinner at 8.30!!! Getting some dinner wasn't looking good. Finally settled on Bella's - it was the best pizza we have had in a long, long time - *bellissimo!!*

Friday 18th February - East Devonport to Strahan

Brekkie, checked out about 9.30 and headed to our first stop *Sheffield - The Town of Murals*. First sight was a man dressed in German/Swiss costume walking his pet Alpaca - *what the!!* People were getting photos with the alpaca - I took a photo and the man demanded money for taking a photo!



There was a park with 9 murals which the public vote on - they were fantastic. There was also many more murals throughout town.

Visited a Marble gift shop - fascinating - had to drag Col away from the kiddies marble tower (like kerplunk!)

Next it was on to Cradle Mountain - fantastic views along the way. Arrived at Café/Shop where the courtesy bus takes you to each of the bus points for various walks. First stop Dove Lake - we did 2 short walks from the Lake - left around to the old miners hut, and then right to Glacier Rock - the steep climb up was well worth it - some of the most spectacular views.



Caught bus to next stop for a long walk up to Waldheim Chalet, well worth it again as we then went on a short walk through a rainforest area - beautiful!

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Bus back to rangers station for our final walk - **Enchanted Walk** - waterfall and flowing creeks - beautiful and met with a little wallaby along the way.

Left about 4.30 for a 2 hr drive to Strahan. Along the way we happened across the most beautiful oasis of an area - **Tullah** with great views of Lake Roseberry.

Checked into the Motel Strahan and headed into town for dinner at the Fish Café - seafood platter - very good value and very very fresh - mmmmmm!

Saturday 19th February -Strahan to Hobart

Set off early for our 5 hour drive to Hobart. It had rained most of the night and we woke to a grey, drizzly day. Drove to **Queenstown** - what a lovely old mining town - fantastic views of the mountains - apparently the quartz rock face shows a myriad of colour at sunset. The historic Railway and museum was fascinating. As we drove out of Queenstown the views were even more spectacular - unfortunately our photos don't reflect how much we were blown away. We stopped on the side of the road and all we could say was - WOW, WOW!



Stopped at **Lake St Clair** but the weather wasn't too good to do a proper walk (maybe next time). Derwent Bridge's claim to fame is a great old pub and the exhibition '**Wall in the Wilderness**'. Huge wall carvings - impossible to describe how life like they were - have to be seen to be believed. Not complete as yet - 5 more years to go. Unable to take photos.

Next was the long drive to Hobart through the National Park - winding roads and on/off rain. Finally arrived at the Mercure Hobart. Walked to the Town centre - along Victoria Dock - sussed out all the seafood restaurants. There was actually a professional walking race in progress with part of the streets blocked off - saw the end of the race won by Australian champion - Claire Tallent.

No seafood tonight, we wanted steak. Ball and Chain in Salamanca was recommended. It was a long wait in the bar for dinner but well worth it - eye fillet cooked perfectly and just melted in the mouth.

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Sunday 20th February - Hobart

Unfortunately Cascades Brewery tour was booked out - next time. Drove down south through the Huon Valley. Not as good as expected, so didn't travel all the way down to Dover - only went as far as Geeveston. What a lovely clean town with wooden / carved statues of prominent residents. Our favourite was William Trevaskis, the swearing chemist - aka **Wally Waskis**.



Visited the Apple Museum which was fascinating - lots of old artefacts depicting each room of the home and demonstration of their famous apple corer. Bought some lovely cherries from a street stall and they lasted all the way home.

Arrived back about 2.30 so headed to Salamanca in Hobart to visit the Tassal Salmon shop - I had been looking forward to visiting here for days - unfortunately they had just finished a demonstration and about to close - damn! Took a couple of wrong turns and ended up in **Battery Point** - a fantastic little village with great bakeries / cafes. Finally got a bus down to **Wrest Point Casino** via Sandy Bay - the scenic route - but so worth it, so many beautiful homes.

Loved the Casino - has some of the best water views - so relaxing, great bars, restaurants and décor. Also had a win! Dinner was at the Loft restaurant and then cocktails in the Cage bar - great atmosphere and entertainment. Taxi home about 1.30.

Monday 21st February - Bruny Island

Early start for 45 minute drive to Kettering for 8.45 bus pickup at Oyster Cove Marina. It was raining and didn't feel like it was going to stop. Before we headed off down to the Café for boarding the Mirrambeena ferry across to Bruny about 8 people decided to pull out of the trip. But the rain cleared and a beautiful rainbow appeared.



Arrived at Roberts Point on Bruny Island, then a 40 minute drive to Adventure Bay for our 3 hour cruise aboard the yellow boats. It was fairly intense out through the heads but the views of the cliff face, blow holes and caves was pretty spectacular.

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Arrived at Peppers Resort Seaport - lovely spot and great room. Got a taxi out to the Country Club (casino) for the Launceston Cup Calcutta - didn't draw a horse. Met 4 great old guys from Adelaide who were on our table (one was John O'Neill an ex-racecaller). Col met Sharkey (a tipster he follows) and saw Mick McGuane (ex-Collingwood player) in casino after.

The buffet was spectacular - freshest oysters (even better than Bruny Island ones), salmon platters, carvery, salads. Great array of desserts / cakes / pastries and a great cheese / fruit platter. It was a great night - more than we expected for our \$45 ticket! Have to say though that their casino is no comparison to Wrest Point.

Wednesday 23rd February - Launceston Cup

Courtesy bus out to Mowbray Racecourse for the Launceston Cup. Great course - quite small but great views. We managed to snag a table overlooking the winning post and also managed to back a few winners. They have a huge marquee area set up - keeps the crowds down and separate from public - great idea. They only stopped alcohol being brought into the course 2 years ago. Courtesy bus back to town and then dinner at Salsas for Tapas - seafood paella and softshell crab. Big day but very enjoyable.



Thursday 24th February - Launceston

Drove along the Tamar wine route. Not much along the way so headed further up to **Beaconsfield** to the Mine and Heritage centre - ended up spending over 2 hours here - fascinating site of the ruins. Relived the miners rescue with an interactive tour.



Drove to **Beauty Point** for fish & chips (fish, prawn & scallop patties and chicken/bacon dim sims - **divine!!!**). Drove down and across to George Town - lovely views and very quiet and serene and then headed back to the hotel.

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Went for a walk from our hotel along the path to **Cataract Gorge** - spectacular, words can't describe the feeling. Col said it would be heaven to walk along here each day after work. Arrived at Cataract Reserve where we went on



the Basin Chairlift - so relaxing and awesome. There was also a lovely café and restaurant with beautiful peacocks strutting around. On our walk back came across a fitness park with proper gym equipment - **brilliant!!**

Happy hour drinks at Silt restaurant and received complimentary **garlic prawn cones** - they were to die for!!!! They weren't on the menu - otherwise we would have ordered more! We then had Moreton Bay Bug Oysters and Scallops with ham, plum sauce and gruyere cheese. Then off to Mud restaurant for a final relaxing drink before packing for home.

Friday 25th February - Spirit of Tasmania to Home

Up at 6.00 to drive to Devonport for slow loading onto the Spirit. Arrived in Melbourne at 7.00. Saw some dolphins playing in the ocean. Passed the Queen Elizabeth and Crystal Serenity cruise ships.



The car was a good faithful friend to us on our trip. We didn't see much wildlife - unfortunately heaps of road kill though.