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CIR's Corner

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Hello everyone! "CIR's Corner" is my monthly article about international exchange and cultures around the world. I will introduce a variety of interesting international topics.

This Month's Topic: Anthony's Trip to Australia

Do you remember Ebetsu ALT Anthony Tartan? He introduced himself in the [September 2022 issue of CIR's Corner](#). Last month, he visited his family in Australia, and he was kind enough to write about his trip for this month's issue. I hope you enjoy reading!

My Trip to Australia - By Anthony Tartan



In the middle of May, I returned to Australia with my family. It was my first time back in six years, and the first major trip with my son Touma, who is 20 months old, walking and talking.

From Narita we travelled 8.5 hours almost directly south to my hometown of Brisbane. Brisbane is a tropical city, which is very hot in summer, but winter only lasts two weeks with a low of about 7 degrees. We were there for autumn, and the temperatures were 15-25 degrees, being a little bit cold at night. My family home is in Everton Park on the Northside, and most of my childhood friends and a few relatives also live close by.



While visiting home, we stayed two nights in Burleigh Heads on the Gold Coast. Many parts of the Gold Coast are named after the beaches they are attached to. There is the famous 'James Street' close by, which has many fancy restaurants and cafes. It was on James Street that we ate fish and chips (including *barramundi*, a popular local Australian fish) and Mexican. Australia has restaurants from all over the world!



Probably the highlight of the trip was the Paddock Bakery. It was very fancy, and most bakery items could satisfy two people. The sausage roll was made with pork, apple and pistachio.



The weather was near perfect the whole time we were there. I do wish I could experience an Australian thunderstorm again. In summer, there is a thunderstorm twice a week, compared to only once a year in Ebetsu. It rained on our last day in Burleigh Heads, so we could not go to the beach again.

A big reason to come home was to support my parents and do a big clean. I threw away 25 kg (about eight tubs) of my belongings that I had in storage. I kept one tub, because there are CDs I don't want to throw away, and I don't know what to do with.

Every day (or night), we had different friends and family visit. My wife also has Japanese friends who migrated to Australia and started families. They visited and it was very interesting to hear their experiences and opinions of living in Australia and starting a family. It is very different to Japan, and that is often the appeal.



One of my favourite things to eat in Australia is the yoghurt. There is a huge variety of yoghurt styles and flavours. *Cocobella* is a brand of dairy-free coconut yoghurt. It's very similar to eating cream.



We ate lamb Hamburg steak, cold chicken curry (with apple and grapes) and a lot of bakery snacks. The coffee in Australia is next level. I would often go to bed thinking about having a coffee in the morning.

There was plenty of culture shock that I experienced in Australia after six years in Japan. Many people drive Teslas now, and most cars are SUVs. I did see two Nissan Cubes, which was interesting. Traffic is terrible and people have become much worse drivers. There is a very thin and revealing style of yoga pants that many women wear out in public. I was shocked to see many young people covered in tattoos. I saw an elementary school girl with a nose piercing. In addition, the amount of sugar people consume is about six times that of Japan in my opinion. As a result, it's easy to


notice the bad health in society, especially in elderly people.

It was great to see boys and girls kicking a football around, which is a big part of Australian outdoor culture. Every afternoon the street would fill with children riding bicycles, playing with dogs and playing sports with their parents.



When I'm back in Japan, I will miss my friends, the bakeries (apple and cream turnover and sausage rolls), the sound of birds in the morning and throughout the day, and overwhelmingly, the hot sun and different humidity that makes Australia unique. I talk to my parents quite often online, and they will visit in September.

Australia has many cultures, and that's what makes it unique to Japan, and even the rest of the world. It's not the only multicultural country in the world, but the multiculturalism is unique in Australia because of our laid-back lifestyle. Schools in Australia have many considerations for multiculturalism.

If you visit, I hope you can attend an event like 'Greek Festival' or a cultural hub like 'Chinatown' or 'Little Africa' and eat many wonderful foods. Go to Australia for the beach! 



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