



Kierra

from
Tillsonburg
to
Australia

“G’day Mate”

I cannot believe that I've already been in Australia for almost seven months. I still remember getting off the plane in Adelaide and feeling so energized despite being awake for almost 48 hours. Everything was just so new to me, but yet I knew that this would be my home. Now, I can now truly say I'm an Aussie and heart. Exchange life isn't easy it has many ups and downs, but it is rewarding nonetheless. I can now look back at myself before exchange and compare myself to now and see the changes in myself.

Many things have happened since November that I don't even know where to begin. School finished up Mid-December for the year and school holidays began. The first week of holiday I went camping in a gorgeous town called Beachport with my host family. The caravan park was located just a five-minute walk away from the ocean. My host mum, Di and my host brother's wife Jane and I spent our days walking along the many beaches taken in all of the breathtaking views. My favourite part of the trip was getting to go swimming in the ocean for the first time! Soon Christmas came and I ditched the white stereotypical white Canadian Christmas in for my first 40-degree day.



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The homesickness went away quite quickly and I got to go on a trip of a lifetime. The trip is known as "Mini Safari" which takes place over the course of 7 days with all the exchange students from my district. We started off in the city of Mount Gambier, where we go the chance to explore the city and to have a go at paintballing. Then we travelled to the state of Victoria where we went to Portland for the day. There we spent the morning on a seal watching tour and finishing it off with a surfing lesson. Surfing I will have to admit has become my favourite sport despite not being able to stand up on the board. By late afternoon we managed to sneak in a tour of the city centre and have some free time looking through all the different shops. The last stop on "Mini Safari" was Warrnambool where we took a day trip to the beach. The best part of the trip was on the last day when we took a trip along the Great Ocean Road and then finished off the day with a trip to the market.



Many people think that exchange is all about traveling when in reality school can be the best part of your exchange. School gave me the opportunity to meet some amazing people and to learn so many things that I wouldn't get the chance to learn in Canada. A new year at school means new classes, this year I'm taking Commercial Cookery, English, Art, Drama and Society and Culture. Even though it's only the third week of school I've learned heaps about Aboriginal Australians, Alfred Hitchcock, and different art techniques. I've made many new friendships in my new classes and became closer to the friends I've already made.

My host families have been nothing but amazing to me and I cannot even begin to thank them enough. My first host family I see quite often and it's always good to catch up on what's going on in one another's lives. I also got the chance to meet their oldest sons David, who lives in a town six hours away and Bryce who recently moved back home to Naracoorte. My second and current host parents are both teachers at school. At school, they can be quite strict, but at home, they are some of the kindest people I've met. They love to show me how to cook different Australian recipes like Pavlova and salads. I move into my last family's house ten days from now and I'm really excited to see what that brings!

To finish off I would like to give a Rotary both in Canada in Australia for all the time and money spent to make sure that the exchange program runs smoothly. If you are thinking about doing exchange do it! Exchange will bring you a broader perspective of the world.

Cheers,

Kiera