

# On the Australia' Road with The Mama

Thinking about my new article, I had doubts at first. And yes, we are in a delicate period where travel is not so much in demand anymore and borders are closed. So, I had the choice between an article as planned on one of my road trips or to talk to you about a more general subject. I decided to talk about travel! Because in this period, trying to escape is still better.

So, I had the chance just after Christmas to see my mother arrive in Melbourne for two weeks! And yes "what" two weeks, some might say. But believe me it was just great. We were both planning to do a road trip in a van from Melbourne to Sydney. But for the last few months our pretty planet has been sending us signals and Australia has been the victim of violent fires just in this area. So, I was anxious "are we going to be stuck in Melbourne ??? nooo"! But I've got more than one trick up my sleeve! If we can't go east, let's go west!!!! and that's how we did it: Melbourne - Adelaide - Melbourne.

She arrived on December 26th I was overexcited! I left my hostel (yes the same from the article before!) for an apartment in the center of Melbourne (the CBD for the initiated). I looked at a lot of places, but I found a kind of apartment/hotel quite correct for the price compared to a hotel and really good comfort level. You can find information on the Quest website. I found it through booking.com or another comparator. After saying "see you in two weeks" to my friends I took the bus to the airport! And...I found it!

My little mum, in Melbourne, Australia, after more than 8 months without seeing each other (longer period), thousands of kilometers away from France! It must be said, when you tell your friends and family that you are leaving, whether it is just a few hundred kilometers away, in a neighbouring country or on the other side of the world, one of the main reactions is "too great! I'm definitely going to come and see you" but the reality is different because life is a whirlwind of projects. And seeing my little mummy here was like a breath of fresh air, something just magical...weird...but magical.

So we stayed a few days in Melbourne, for her to visit a bit, to recover from the trip and for me to finish my working days before leaving for our loop adventure!

When we decided to make a road trip we took the CamperVan option! It's quite practical to land anywhere and we didn't intend to go driving on the beaches (well I tried but mum didn't really agree haha) As every time I compared, asked for quotes, etc... and I finally made my decision and I don't regret it in any way to have passed by Travellers AutoBarn. you can go and have a look here ! (I'll probably write an article about all my vehicle choices during this year in Australia). So we got the car back and let's go !

We didn't really have a plan just a few spots we wanted and/or needed to see. At the end of our trip our route looked like the first picture of this article. To caption this picture:

In Red, places where we slept (which you can find on wikicamps)

In black, places where we stopped and saw

In green, National Parks

In Blue, our route (more or less random haha)

The goal of this trip was to find a mix between tourism and adventure. I wanted my mother to discover a little bit of the life on the road like a backpacker. She knows about camping and special trips because she's done some things but the Australian free camp side is still something!

The "Great Ocean Road" was going to keep us busy at first. But you'll tell me, what is it? Well it's a road between Melbourne and Adelaide that runs along the ocean (as its name suggests) it's located between Geelong and Port Campbell. It's a beautiful place but for me it's hell on earth for tourists. My advice is to go there early in the morning and avoid school holidays. But if this is not possible, there are places along the way that are still accessible and less crowded, just as beautiful as the 12 Apostles! You can take a quick look to see the 12 Apostles and then spend more time at the other viewpoints.

We left Melbourne on December 31st and so we were going to spend New Year's Eve on the road and it was going to be a nice first night. We found a place by the ocean on the Great Ocean Road. And thanks to the WikiCamps application (and also advice from friends) we managed to find places to sleep all along our adventure!

We were able to continue our discoveries across the border between Victoria and South Australia. We were lucky enough to have a free camp tip in Brown Bay where if you are in a 4X4 you can settle on the beach! For the others it will be necessary to stay on the parking lot but believe me it's not so bad!

The Adelaide region is an area where you can find many vineyards. And with my dearest little mum we found a nice activity to do. For the little story at the beginning when we decided to go west, I had only one goal, to go to Kangaroo Island...but I had to get used to the idea that it wasn't going to be possible, why? because this beautiful island was also ravaged by fires, just as we were on the road.

So after a short tour of Adelaide, we headed to the Barossa Valley north of the city to see the vineyards and visit a winery, the Penfolds winery. Well as always we're not doing things the right way and the winery was actually in a different place, in the historic part. Further south and the timing didn't allow us to get there. You say problem? Not at all we were able to enjoy a wine tasting and buy a few bottles. Mom couldn't leave with them but she wrote down some names to find them in France. And yes, I can be very proud of my country, but you have to admit that Australians sometimes know how to make very good wines. Well they also have the Goon... I'll let you find out what that is. But we'll say that the Goon is to wine what the very bad crémant is to champagne, with the same damage the next morning. You know what I mean?

Finally Grampians is a place that reminds me a little bit of my favorite places such as Kalabari, Karijini or Kakadu! You can find Waterfalls (Mackenzie falls was one of my favorites of this road trip!), small hikes and some summits to climb, with incredible landscapes as a bonus!

Well it's true that with the fires we had some "smoky landscapes" but we won't complain.

We had been told about Mount Abrupt, a short 6km round trip with a breathtaking view. Mom was reluctant but finally she did it! And it was worth it!

Grampians is really cool and you can find awesome places to sleep! It's best to get there when it's still daylight to avoid hitting the Kangaroos while driving at dusk (another one of the joys of Australia) and to find a place that suits you (free camps are quickly taken by storm)! We had found a free camp, it's Wannon Crossing (that you can find on WikiCamps), in the middle of the park, it was really nice!

As I told you Grampians is not that far from Melbourne and we still had some time! So we decided to stop in Torquay...where it's a paradise for anyone who loves surfing! This small town is located south-west of Melbourne at about 1h30. You will find waves to surf, beaches to walk or sunbathe, a beautiful Sunset, and many surf shops.

All the so-called "surfing brands" are there. It must be said that Ripcurl was born there and is still the headquarters for the company. Quiksilver has a big shop (where I find that the Roxy part is still a bit small), with a bar/restaurant in Rooftop! And once again we really liked it!

The only snag is that it's harder to find free campsites when the cities dominate and the campsites are a bit more expensive and often full (we were in the middle of Christmas holidays and here it's summer holidays!).

After some shopping (of course haha), and one (or two) beer and a good meal we watched the sunset before going to sleep in these last moments of our road trip.

The next morning, we drove to Melbourne and washed the Van before returning it. Mum stayed until the next day, so we could have a bit of a break before she left.

It was the last cool moments, I was going back to my hostel so I took the opportunity to show her the place where I lived and she even met some of my friends! it was a "lovely" moment.

I won't go into the details of the departure, the emotion, the rain, the separation, the tears, the return alone on the bus, then the rain again. Because in the end I will only remember the fact that my mother came to Australia! She did it! She who travelled a lot but who hadn't done so for some time came to see me at the other end of the world! I think this part between Melbourne and Adelaide will remain one of my favourites in this great country!

I hope that this little (finally very long) moment of travel will have allowed you to escape a little in this period of confinement! And I hope that you stayed until the end!

See you soon for new adventures.

Kiss Kiss Bang Bang