

## **Day 21 – Sydney, Australia [Friday 11-Feb-2011]**

We woke up at 5AM, tore down our tent, showered and did final packing before heading to the airport in Christchurch. We were a bit late when we arrived. I was able to drop the car off just an hour before the flight was scheduled to depart. In all the great hurry I forgot to grab the suction-cup GPS mount from the windshield. Nevertheless, I was quite proud of myself for not having an accident while driving on the left side of the road.

During the flight over, I chatted with an American who was going home via Detroit. He had to go from New Zealand to Australia before being able to take a direct flight to Los Angeles.



**A view of snow capped Mt Cook, New Zealand's tallest mountain**

The Sydney airport was quite busy. We declared all the things that might get caught including the tent, the boots, antibiotics and the dried camping food we had. We ended up having to throw away the camping food because it contained a small amount of chicken. Once outside of the arrival area I got some cash from an ATM machine. They are just as conspicuous here as in NZ. It is like they are trying to hide them so that you'll go to the Exchange “boutique” instead.

We took a bus into town. It cost us \$15 AUD/each. But the shared taxi-van took us all the way to the front door of the place we were going to stay at. The room was not quite ready when I got there, so I left our bags with them while we looked for a place to eat. We had not really had a breakfast this morning. We found a Vietnamese place not far from the Hostel. It tasted really good.



We ate Vietnamese lunch in Sydney while we waited for our room to get ready



**The building where we are staying is to the left: Wake Up! Sydney**

We have a private room. It does not have its own bathroom. It is just a room with a bed. But it should work. The place is filled with young backpacking travelers. We must be the oldest people there.



**Pitt St: One of many pleasant walking streets in Sydney**



**Lilli gets to pose in front of the famous opera house in Sydney**

We decided to get down to the port by Circle Quay. We took the free “green” bus, nr 555, from the central station. That was easy. But the driver got mad when another passenger wanted to get off without pushing the button requesting the driver to stop.



**Those who dare can climb the span of the Sydney Harbor Bridge**

There were a few clouds up down there, but the weather was generally nice. We talked around a bit by the Quay and then decided we wanted to take a ferry, to get a better view of the city. There are all sorts of tour boats, but most of them charge like \$40+/person for a trip. We found that we could ride a ferry over to the zoo (back and forth) for just \$21.50. That was a really nice ride. The view was great. The city looked like a much larger version of Auckland.



By the piers an Australian aborigine plays the Didjeridu. Quite amusing.



**The contrasts in Sydney are stunning**



A view of Sydney and its opera house, to the right, seen from a ferry



We decided to go out for a brew and a bite at the C bar on Pitt Street



**Free fresh oysters on Fridays! Those went down with a slurp**



It is Chinese New Year and two dragons visit a local store while load music played



The two dragons eventually move outside of the store and continue their dance



Lilli is shopping for food in Sydney. Everyone at the store was younger than us!



They have a great mixture of old and young buildings in Sydney

No sooner had I taken the picture of Lilli, above, than a scruffy looking guy came up to me and asked if I had used the camera. He flashed a small badge and I surmised he was part of the store's surveillance team.



### **Evening at Wake Up! Sydney. Sitting in the common room with young backpackers**

You can tell that this hostel is full of young backpackers. The place really lit up when we got ready to go to bed!