

## SYDNEY

The journey into Darling Harbour, where we dock, is an interesting one. We pass many buildings on either side of the water, including some new areas built on former dockland sites. We are among many other vessels in the water as our Port Pilot guides us through.



After about half an hour, we round a bend in the water and see both the Sydney Opera House, and Sydney Harbour Bridge approaching. There are berthings for large ships before the Harbour Bridge, as many of these ships are too big to go under the bridge - ships such as The Queen Elizabeth 2 and Queen Mary 2.

Our little tub passes easily under the bridge as we sail on further to our berth at Darling Harbour - where we berthed at last year. We were allowed ashore around 2pm, and were leaving late during the following evening - yes, a day and a half in beautiful Sydney!

We headed straight for the nearest monorail station to buy a day ticket, a short walk from the ship. I was carrying a bag which contained one of my suits which needed dry-cleaning - a service not available on the ship.



On our way to the monorail, we passed a small supermarket with an ATM sign outside. We needed Aussie dollars so in we went to use the machine. Once inside we saw a notice advertising the fact that they were an agent for a dry-cleaning firm too! Suit was left there, be ready tomorrow after 3pm, cost AU£15 (around £7), and was told the shop was open 24 hours a day! To cap it all, we found they sold sugar free sweets and chocolates!

The monorail does a circular route around the city centre. The carriages have no drivers, the system is totally automatic. The carriages travel in one direction only, so if you want to go to the previous stop, you go round again! We decided to do the complete circle first, in order to decide which station we wanted to get off first, and chose the City Centre station. True to its name, we were

dropped off right in the heart of the city centre shops. We bought some souvenirs, and also some more computer equipment to resell to passengers - mainly memory sticks and camera card readers. Whilst here we found a Food Court, with many different outlets around the outside, with many chairs and tables on the inside. A bit US style, but good fast food time! Mum had Chicken Wrap, Dad had Chicken Biryani.

We rejoined the monorail to get to Chinatown. Here we browsed many Chinese shops, and finally settled at a table at an open air bar. It was here we rang you - Naomi! No shortage of eating places here, that is if you like chinky food! After our meal it was time to head back to the ship, pausing only at a bar for some beer. The folks on the next table were eating ribs - each rib being around a foot long, and the rack contained around 20 ribs - I decided there and then what my meal would be on the following night!

Next day we were off on a ferry to Manley, where we were told there were good beaches. We arrived at the ferry terminal at Circular Quay and had to wait 40 minutes for the next one, so ordered some coffee and food from an Italian place close by. I ate Banana Bread, whilst Mum enjoyed a do'nut filled with soft cheese.



Manley is beautiful, clean, slightly upmarket, and very pleasant. We strolled around the seafront - many brave folks riding the gigantic surf waves. Mum bought 2 pairs of colourful shorts, and we were going to have a drink in the sun, but were unable to do so. All outside establishments had notices saying that in order to drink outside you had to buy a substantial meal. Needless to say we enjoyed our outside drink when we got off the ferry back to Sydney!

We decided to walk back to the ship, passing the Harbour Bridge, and through an area called The Rocks. On the way we had to call at a pub, if only to use their toilets. It was in a backstreet area, had old wood seats and tables, green tiled walls, and the barman and locals were all friendly! We dropped off our bags of purchases in our cabin, changed into evening wear, and headed out back to.....well you all know where.....and what I ate.....and they were delicious!!!!



The ship left Sydney on time, and we were at sea for one day before rocking our way into Devonport, Tasmania....see next report. During this day at sea, our ship was passed by the brand new P&O ship The Queen Victoria, bound for Sydney!

