

CHAPTER 3

QUARANTINE 2.0 - WEEK 1



“Day 1 - This will be awesome, a hotel holiday for 2 weeks, no interruptions, stay in bed all day. Day 8 - Started talking to the lamp” - Anon Quarantine

Day 0 - Saturday 13th March 2021

QR900 landed some 25 minutes early into Perth at 18:05 after a non eventful flight with ample rest.

As we were preparing to get up to exit, we had been advised that there would be a 15-30 minute wait to de-plane due to Australian Immigration protocols, no issue, everyone was chilled and simply sat down. This 15 mins, turned into 30, then 45, then an hour, then closer to an hour and a half, before they told us the delay was due to an earlier flight arrival and the arrivals area all needing to be sanitised. You would think with a handful of arrivals it could be co-ordinated a bit, but whatever...

We eventually got off and headed towards our ‘processing’ area. It is a very strange arrival process to

your own country and you are made to feel like a bit of a prisoner through the process. The Perth airport was obviously shut down, nothing open along the walk to immigration, just barricades and taped up areas before coming to the customs hall.



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No usual process of self serve kiosks, its into the crowd control barriers - with several yells of, *"Stay 1 and a arrf metres away from everyone hey mate!"* being yelled out to every one who walks in. Here you line up, get told to take you mask off and put on a new surgical one , sanitiser before and after doing so.

You then take a couple of steps for a temp check..

Another couple of steps where you are asked if you have had Covid test, when, was it negative, are you

sick, do you have temperature etc...all somewhat inane questions, as I doubt anything is going to give a negative answer to anything at this point

Then it's to customs, who I must say, have become a somewhat embarrassment and are now one of the most unfriendly visa entry processors of flight arrivals I have seen with limited to no engagement, no small talk, no smile - nothing...They even asked for Yellow Fever Card, which has never happened coming into Australia and I tried to tell the officer this and ask about it, but this was met with, "*we always ask for it*" and a virtual '*GFYS*' response...anyway, I move one and by this deal all the bags are rolling around.

The baggage area is amass of Police, Border Patrol, Army, Navy (didn't see Airforce - maybe they were in the ceiling?) all around the place with barricades and directional arrows to move us like sheep...and that was how it felt...compared to last visit, which was disorganised but very friendly, this time it was very organised and structured to the extent of a robotic manner and with zero human engagement with arrivals. We were not Australians coming home, we are pieces of crap being processed and shuffled from point A to B to C etc...

Once all was was done which included G2G check, Police chat which was a no eye contact rolling off of go to hotel and you can't do this, this or this or you will be fined and imprisoned, hotel confirmation - off to the Pan Pacific, then sit in baggage area in a socially distanced space waiting for all to be processed before

we move to the hotel. This took some time at one stage i counted 25 Border Force people in front of us loitering and generally 'stuffing around' as we sat there knowing nothing as to what was happening. One in particular was having a ball...she clearly had something on her phone that was an absolute 'pissa' as she showed everyone one by one and was almost falling over with laughter every time...It was good to see they can enjoy themselves at work, yet treat all arrivals like a piece of crap! When everyone was finally done and processed, we were marched off row by row to our buses, again, just like prisoners, and without anyone speaking to us...Welcome to Australia.



Waiting for the buses

Four buses eventually loaded up, and off we went under police escort with 2-3 lights flashing police cards led and followed us from the airport to town - just to add to the feeling of criminality for coming home, but I'm sure its for 'our safety' or traffic management or some rubbish, anyway fortunately I was in the first bus, so we unloaded to more screams of great joys and hospitality as we got our bags and walked off the bus with the '*Stay away from each other, or Wait, not yet*' as thought we are stupid idiots.

Into the hotel, an efficient start took place, simply give name, get handed some information, a key, an arrivals pack to directed to the lift and placed in and up to the floor...I was a bit curious as a whole lot of exercise bikes were in the lobby which, when I asked was told you can rent, and info is in the room...



About to enter the new 14 day home

Up I go to level 13, room 1310...a large container or water and another bag sits outside the door and in I go...with the door closing behind me, only to re-open to get my 3 meals each day....my new home has been reached!

I check things out, first thing - no opening windows...has a bath, decent size, bed ok, etc...then start snooping - a blanket in the cupboard covered in hair - yuck - poke my head out and tell security, they tell me to call reception and they will replace - not really the point, but will sort that out, cupboard dusty and stuff on top (maybe just a tall person thing), and then a few spiders ran loud the plates and the bathroom. Apart from that all set.



The last guest turned into a spider

I then start unpacking and open my case and my camera bag which was in my case is open, and the camera is gone - WTF?? Someone has stolen it...clearly in SA I reckon, but FFS...seriously...This pissed me off totally and don't think there is much I can do there, had no insurance....very annoying...Will need to check the rest of the bags and remember what was in there...



One missing camera

I read all the hotel info and eat some of the little treats from the snack bag and generally stuff around, chat to Stacey etc.

Hotel seems to be ok in regards to guest reputation - they have a Facebook group to join for guest with info and comms, and have a lot of great things said about them by guests, they run competitions and have deals etc, so looks like they re trying to be proactive at least. My night involved partially un-packing, then watching shit on tv until around 3am before then not being able to sleep and watching another movie at 4am, and eventually going to sleep at 6am...I have plenty of time to screw around with my body clock...



Hotel welcome pack

Day 1 - Sunday 14th March 2021

Staying up all night may not have been the smartest thing, to do on the first night, but it is still Sunday, so who cares. It wasn't until around 10am that I rallied around, to a few missed messages and calls, the main one being Stacey asking for a supermarket order for later in the day....apart from junk, there was not a lot that I probably need....but I'm sure I will grab some stuff later.



This is my home

I checked out how to order my bike for the room, which came from Perth Gym Hire at a cost of \$240 for the entire hotel stay, so this was ordered and arrived within about 15 mins which was fairly impressive, I

even took it for a spin! I have been offered to join in a Spin Class with an old school friend (and spin guru mind you) - Karen Gorman, to which I told her I was a bit scared, and I copped a ribbing for that too...May need to do some practice, so possibly a week 2 thing...



The bike!

Sunday involved a lot of laying around, a bit of tv and playing on the bike, my new toy. Unlike last quarantine, I became obsessed with steps per day and had a walking track around my room virtually....this bike may save the need to do this this time.

Stacey ended up dropping off a few bits and pieces and I gave her a wave from the window across the road - nothing special asked for just some basics like t-bags,

toiletries, Salada biscuits, marg etc...I didn't ask for any bad things, but got chips, chocolate and snakes, as well as Pepsi so that was all a bonus. I may or may not have eaten one bag of my 2 chips already!



If i twist my neck, here is the Swan River view

My first real assessment of the meals arrived today with the menu description on FB tasting about bangers and mash, and that was pretty much what it was... plenty in volume, taste fine, but nothing to get overly excited about. There was a chicken Pasta salad for lunch too which was just that, a pasta salad...!



Day 1 menus



Dinner

Day 2 - Monday 15th March 2021

A much better sleep last night and already into Day 2 of this gig - nailing it so far. Breakfast was the ingredients to make an egg and bacon roll, but I think the roll may have been designed for a midget or a height challenged person - shit, don't want my book banned for being height insensitive!



Massive roll to make a sanga!

I pumped out a little ride on the bike before making my midget roll and not eating the rest, but opting for a coffee instead. Today is supposed to be Covid test day, so that's a bit exciting, its also a work day, so just

need to hang around and amuse myself until SA wakes up in a few hours. The best way to kill time, was to get this little project up to speed and up to date, as I previously had only a list of notes from the last week in Cape Town and the trip there thus far, but now all is current and just needs some photos added. I think I even may have found all my usual random missed words or weird typo errors that appear strangely in everything I write...So if you have made it this far already, there was nothing here in this little pile of garbage until today...fun fact #1

I pumped out a quick 10km on the bike (pretended I was riding to work). This exercise bike is pretty good, and I generally don't like them, but I realise the reason I don't like them is there is no air, so you simply get hot riding due to no air on you vs riding outside, add to this inside a shitty hotel room and it aint fun, so its going to be several smaller bursts, unless I can find a solution.

I'm back to work today, so have been doing some arranging and sorting out of things for this week. My first call isn't until 10am SA time, so there is still some time to kill. Lunch was Arabic meatballs with Hummus and salad, again fine, and as at lunchtime, still no Covid test!

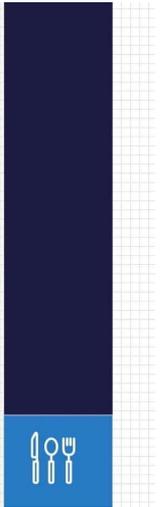
I set up and moved around the desk to maximise my work situation (so I can secretly watch tv during online meetings), and grabbed a cuppa and the day began... even if it was 3pm WA time..

Off to a raging start for work....Zoom loaded up, meeting waiting for a 1-1 mentoring session to start, then nothing....still nothing.....then the door knocks... they bloody nose probers are here for my Day 2 Covid test....so I leave the Zoom going and duck off, get done (totally painless vs the one that nearly popped my head last week in Cape Town), and back to Zoom...still not there...arsehole....could have stayed in bed another hour....oh well great start to the day, and I guess I shall have to annoy some other people in Sth Africa instead.

The next week or so is all sorted with face to face meetings all converted to Zoom and updated links and appointments sorted, only a couple of actual calls today which was great to allow me some time to sort out a lot of other things as well as to catch up on the last couple of days. A couple of distractions and pedals here and then on the bike and then it was time for dinner, which sounded quite good - a beef Stroganoff, but in actual reality was terrible...dried our meat sitting on some pasta without any sauce or anything - I ate the meat and tossed the rest out.

A bit more work, a bath, some tv and laying in bed with the laptop on my stomach and the tv going whilst drinking Green tea saw the tip tea all over my mouth, and chest (of course I wasn't wearing a shirt) so I burnt the shit out of myself and my mouth and chin is stinging like crazy...no lesson to learn here though - drinking hot tea, laying down without a shirt is all good...

Today passed reasonably quickly, and I am sure tomorrow will go a lot quicker as I have quite a bit to get through and some calls, so all is going ok at the moment.

<h1>LUNCH MENU</h1> <p>Arabic Mezze Arabic spiced meatballs, hummus, tomato and cucumber salad and pita bread (NF, SF, DF)</p> <p>GF, Vegetarian, Pescatarian and Vegan Dietary Alternative: Fried cauliflower and chickpea, hummus, tomato and cucumber salad</p>		<h2>Dinner Menu</h2> <p>SALAD Mixed grains, with variety of dry fruits, honey lemon dressing</p> <p>MAIN Creamy beef stroganoff with pasta (NF, SF)</p> <p>GLUTEN FREE, DAIRY FREE, VEGAN, VEGETARIAN, PESCETARIAN DIETARY ALTERNATIVE vegan lentil bolognese with all pasta</p> <p>DESSERT English Trifle (NF, SF, VEGAN, PFV)</p> <p>GLUTEN FREE, DAIRY FREE, VEGAN DIETARY ALTERNATIVE Orange and Almond Cake</p> <p>WINE PAIRING - \$40 Blanc de Blanc A savoury style Rose blended from Grenache and Syrah grapes. Tart strawberries, rose petal and a dash of creaminess. Very mooray!</p>
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Day 2 - Lunch and Dinners