

Day 7 - Saturday 20th March 2021

Today is 'Hump Day' the 7th day of this gig, so each day from here begins the 7 day countdown to my release. The first week has, in all honesty, gone rather quick and without too much drama. I haven't lost my shit yet, nor have I gone too crazy with silly activities to amuse my boredom - probably because anytime I do do something out of the normal I get people asking me if I'm ok, so it isn't worth the annoyance...

Considering it's a Saturday and I was still laying in bed at 11am (I did get up and have coffee at 8am so I'm not totally lazy), and then I rode 15km during one Qtr of the Melb vs Freo game before showering, I thought I would share some of the '*survival tips*' from my 2 Quarantine stays, mainly concerning the room and day to day stuff - very riveting.

Food



A hotel room is clearly not designed to be 'lived' in, as per what is happening during these forced quarantine times. There are no sinks, preparation or real storage areas etc. so you need to improvise. As soon as you can, get a supermarket delivery, or a family member to drop off some 'essentials' - and this is really some basic items you may need plus junk or fruit etc. I re-arranged the area above the bar fridge as a 'pantry' to store my little treats, tea etc. and simply had some basic food / snack items and some drinks - remembering these fridges are crap, not a lot of room, and usually not very cold. There is ample food that comes to your room (probably too much), but its the varied quality or the unknown type of food that requires a bit of a top up, plus, when you are totally bored, you either want to eat or drink, so its best to munch on some fruit or a carrot vs. all these chips that keep talking to me!



Washing Up

There is a basic and minimal amount of actual living items in the room - in this case- 2 plates, 2 sets of knives/ forks/ tea spoons, 2 coffee mugs and 2 glasses. Thats all. Meals get served in varying styles - cardboard boxes, foil trays, plastic containers etc. and in this hotel's case, meals come with nothing - no plastic cutlery nor serviettes or salt/ pepper etc...so you use what's in the room, plus if you tip (or arrange) the food onto a plate you do feel a bit more 'normal' vs eating airline food on your lap. Obviously all these need to be kept clean, and this is one of the semi gross things about Quarantine (although maybe more in your mind than actually) - you have to wash up in the bathroom sink! I set up one of the 2 hand towels my room has (I can get new ones at any time) and use this as a bit of a barrier between the bench, then after thoroughly cleaning the sink - especially the first time I got here, you wash in very hot water in the sink then air dry stuff...it is a bit off, but once all has been cleaned,



Im sure any potential contamination is only me giving myself my own cooties! Oh yeah, and as you can see I have a coffee plunger - an absolute essential before you come - I brought this one with me last time, with some coffee beans from CPT (just remember to tick the customs box for food!) and clearly brought it again this time - it's a life saver to make a couple of coffees in the morning. (I stole this from my apartment when I left).

Washing - Clothes

I reckon I have mastered this one, or I may be considered the biggest bogan/ hobo on earth - you can judge me if you wish, I don't give a rat's...

The one perk for paying half the price of a small car for a business class air ticket home is you get free airline pyjamas (on Qatar anyway - its on 1st Class in Emirate you get them). So i arrived with 2 sets (CPT-DOH, plus DOH-PER). I live, and I mean literally live in the PJ pants or one of 2 pairs of shorts I have on rotation (between wearing and washing/drying), same goes for jocks - I reckon I've got 3 pairs on rotation - wearing and washing and drying...Why do I do this? Firstly who cares, no one will see me. Secondly its comfy, pants, no shirt, even some days no pants as well (theres a visual no one wants - so apologies for that), and finally who wants to leave Quarantine with a pile of washing?

I simply took a few things out of my 2 cases, then left all my other possessions all packed up so I also don't have to worry about a big re-pack at the end of this thing.

The part people may not like is the actual washing - I wash my jocks and shorts and stuff in the shower when I have one, and hang it to dry over night- have soap delivered when you get here, and soap it up, rub it up, jump on it, do whatever you want - there is a good chance all the jocks and PJ's will be left in the bin when I check out, so it really makes no difference what you do and why ruin multiple items of clothing - I guess you could in theory wear the same clothes the entire time and never shower if that's your thing... maybe an experiment for #3 Quarantine!



I have a couple of shirts that I have washed and these can be hung in the wardrobe on hangers and they dry pretty well too! I am an ideas man!

Food - extras



As I have indicated throughout my Week 1 dribble, the food comes with some interesting extra items - most meals have a drink - either a juice box or a soft drink or sparkling water, and there are also a couple of other snack items such as yoghurt, muesli bars, chips etc. A lot of these seem targeted at kids, and whilst you can throw them out, thats a waste. people are always posting pics on the FB group of mass collections of these items, so clearly very few people are using them, so I don't know why they keep giving, but in my case, most of them I am not eating, but collecting to take out, and will give to either Josh or my nephews who may be able to use for school or home snacks. You cannot send these items to another room

or guest (due to contamination), and you cannot ask not to have food sent as they will keep sending. If you leave it at the door, all will be discarded as it is in the hotels 'Red Zone'. As for the bag of drinks I have, I think its some revenge from my hatred of Coke that they only serve me Coke, which I refuse to drink, hence the Pepsi in my fridge earlier as a back up.

These are a couple of the day to day quarantine 'life skills' from my little world anyway - others may have a different approach, the works so I'll stick with it.....right back to the footy...



Day 7 Lunch and Dinner



Sun setting on the half way mark!

CHAPTER 4

QUARANTINE 2.0 - WEEK



"Wake me up when Quarantine is over" - No-one in Quarantine (2020-21)

Day 8 - Sunday 21st March 2021

Hump day is over, and the homeward stretch is on its way. Today is looking like being another AFL marathon like yesterday with 3 games on today, including the Roos making their first appearance for 2021 - not a lot of confidence but we shall see what happens. A quick few K's on the bike to start the day then shower and ready for the game to start.

My thoughts were proven correct with North Melbourne, they started off ok, but then had a period of being totally outplayed and scored, before putting up some good play for the balance of the game with some positive signs, but they still got flogged by 50+ points. It could have been a lot worse...may be a long season.

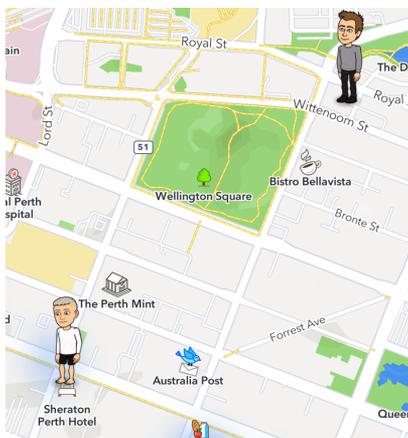


The photo above pretty much summed up my day today. It was seriously a case of lay around on the bed either playing on the computer, pretending to work on the computer or watching TV, then get up, maybe have look out the window, have a drink - either water or Green tea, sit or lay around a bit more, do a little bit of riding, then repeat. I did forget that weekends although are good as you are not technically working, are actually a lot longer because you are not working and don't have a lot of other choices on what to do.

I did watch the entire 3rd season of Drive to Survive, which only came onto Netflix yesterday - thats a bit sad in itself. I watched some of it last night, whilst riding or

whilst laying around, then finished it off today - highly recommended...and an easy binge watch. I have also developed a slight problem with buying some random things too - so I should be greeted by a few deliveries when I get out - I have bought a bracket for my bike (real bike) for my phone, a storage case thing also for my bike, i bought some frying pan/ saucepan things I found online too (which it totally sad), and have some other items being sent to my from Luki - the Asian Warrior from Vic...so it may be like Xmas when I get out.I just need to think what else I need. Maybe need to research a new camera and HDD and power pack considering these were all stolen from my cases on the way here.

Stacey flew back from Brisbane today so I guess it is looking like she may be around when i get out next Saturday night. It's actually a bit frustrating just how close I am to where we will be living (as you can see on the pic below of where I am vs. where Josh is (or was when I took this))



Tonight's dinner looked like a packaged up pile of dog shit, but actually tasted pretty good. They do at least make the meals sound impressive, but the actual reality doesn't always live up to the description. And I have found, it actually looks a bit better if you toss it into only a plate.



Lunch Menu

Main

Healthy salad of penne pasta, smoked chicken, cherry tomato, sweet corn, Lebanese cucumber, bell peppers and baby spinach.
(NF, SF, DF)

Gluten Free, Dairy Free, Vegetarian, Pescatarian and Vegan Dietary Alternative

Pasta salad with cherry tomato, corn, cucumber, bell peppers and spinach.

DINNER MENU

SALAD
Chef's Colelaw salad with ginger dressing

MAIN

Moroccan Lamb Tagine
Succulent Moroccan spiced slow cooked lamb, served with pearl couscous, apricots and seasonal vegetables.
(NF, SF, GF, DF)

GLUTEN FREE DIETARY ALTERNATIVE
Moroccan Lamb tagine with rice

VEGETARIAN, VEGAN & PISCATARIAN DIETARY ALTERNATIVE
Chickpea and vegetable tagine with couscous

DESSERT

Tree Lovers' Cake
Three layer sponge cake
(NF, SF, VEG, PF)

GLUTEN FREE, DAIRY FREE, VEGAN DESSERT
Seasonal Fruit Salad

WINE PAIRING - \$40

Ferngrove 'Independence' Tempranillo
Rich, juicy berries with a touch of spice and great depth of flavour. The perfect example of a modern Australian wine from our Great Southern regions.

Day 8 - Lunch & Dinner

Day 9 - Monday 22nd March 2021



Happy Human Rights Day - a Sth African Public Holiday, so all that means technically not a work day, which means today may drag a bit, so late last night I set up a few meetings with the guys in Nigeria so they can amuse me later on in the day. I also ordered some online groceries to get me through until Saturday, with some more prawns to nibble on later today - Yum...

The morning was spent being highly unproductive, simply bumming around, I gave dad a call, chatted to

Madi who was travelling back to Sydney from the Gold Coast, and not a lot else, Oh I did wash a couple of T-Shirts I have had on limited rotation, which really meant ones I have worn for a small amount of time mainly if I have a zoom call, otherwise I'm topless. Oh, and I just smashed a glass in the bathroom too - one of only 2 I have as I was doing my washing up, big day...

Meals were pretty average today, it seems they are on the repeat cycle from last week as the menu is looking very familiar, which probably makes sense that there is a repeating menu, but you would think the repeat cycle could be over a longer period than 7 days with a constant cycle of incoming people each 14 days. The Stroganoff which was described as a creamy beef Stroganoff, is a very big stretch to fit this description - not sure where the liquid, or even moisture is in this dish, its as dry aslucky my prawns arrived!



Although today was a bit of a lazy one (I guess to some degree they all are), being a Monday it was a lot less work related than usual, mainly due to the fact that have very few meetings set up with the SA holiday, so it was only a couple of phone calls and emails and stuff, so it felt like I didn't do much. This should have been a good reason to do a bit of riding on my little hotel room exercise toy, but I was also a bit slack in this front as well and only rode around 20 odd kms...it was my 'rest day'.

Overall a fairly low key and un-writable day in general.

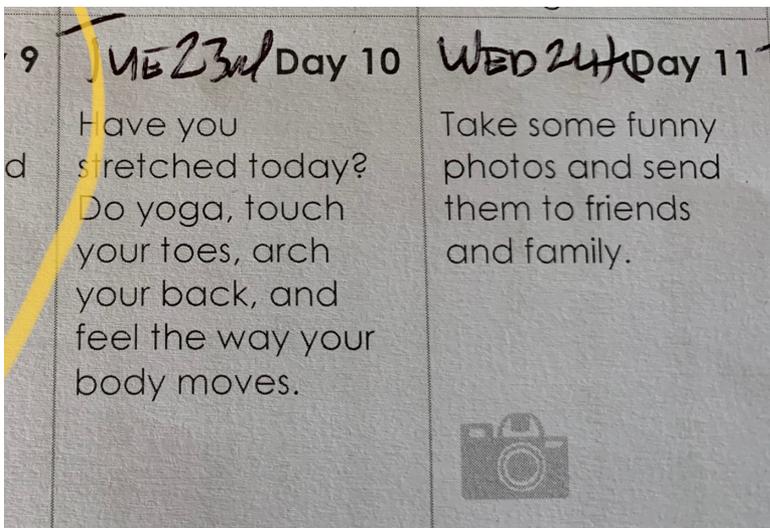
Bring on tomorrow...



Monday Lunch and Dinner

Day 10 - Tuesday 23rd March 2021

The timing is in that frustrating zone where you well are past the half way point and getting close to the end, but you're still stuck in what feels a long way to go. Regardless of that, it has still been a much less traumatic process than last time, I guess given the fact that I knew what to expect has made it a lot easier to cope with. But with that still in consideration, there are only 4 more sleeps to use the Santa Claus context, until I get to head out and see the gang again, so the band shall soon be back together!



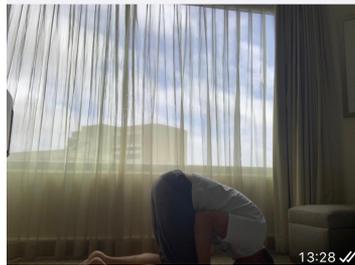
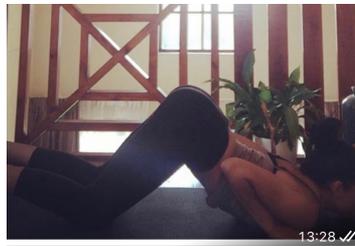
It's a bit exciting as today is 'Yoga Day' according to the very useful and highly creative 'Quarantine Calendar' they give you when you check into your room - something that is exactly the same as last time too. I think it was created as a Grade 1 school project

for the activities listed on it based on how useful and distracting they are (not).

HOTEL QUARANTINE CALENDAR						
DAY	DAY	DAY	DAY	DAY	DAY	DAY
<p>.....</p> <p>This calendar has been created to help you keep track of your time in quarantine, some suggestions have been included for your stay.</p>	<p>Check-in</p> <p>Welcome to Perth!</p> 	<p>Day 1</p> <p>Familiarise yourself with your hotel room and read the Information for Travelers in Self-Isolation Pack.</p>	<p>Day 2</p> <p>Have you spoken to the onsite medical team yet? If not give them a call via reception.</p>	<p>Day 3</p> <p>Do you know the symptoms of COVID-19? Expect a call from the Health and Wellbeing Team today.</p> 	<p>Day 4</p> <p>Did you know that mindfulness is a great way to relax and keep anxiety at bay? Consider setting a goal for the rest of your quarantine period such as finishing one book.</p>	<p>Day 5</p> <p>Give the exercises in the FAQ a go.</p>
<p>Day 6</p> <p>Quarantining with someone else? Communication is key to keeping the peace over the next 8 days.</p>	<p>Day 7</p> <p>Celebrate your first week done in quarantine.</p>	<p>Day 8</p> <p>Why not call someone you haven't spoken to in a while?</p> 	<p>Day 9</p> <p>Put on your favorite music and sing and dance like no one is watching.</p>	<p>Day 10</p> <p>Have you stretched today? Do yoga, touch your toes, arch your back, and feel the way your body moves.</p>	<p>Day 11</p> <p>Take some funny photos and send them to friends and family.</p> 	<p>Day 12</p> <p>COVID-19 swab today, have your passport ready. Book onward travel if necessary.</p> 
<p>Day 13</p> <p>Today is most likely your last full day in quarantine – take some time to reflect on the last 2 weeks. Check and pack your belongings.</p>	<p>Day 14</p> <p>Health screening today. Passed your health screen? Congratulations, your quarantine period is up!</p>	<p>Here are some other ideas:</p> <p>Dreaming of the outdoors? Visit some of the world's most famous national parks on Google Earth (even Perth's beautiful Kings Park can be explored).</p> <p>Many streaming services offer one-month free subscription. What better time to binge watch TV than when in Quarantine!</p> <p>Why not learn something new; some language apps like DuoLingo or Fluent Forever are offering free lessons during the Coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>Check out the Perth zoo giraffe enclosure: https://perthzoo.wa.gov.au/whats-on/live-cam</p>				

The amazingly 'unhelpful' Quarantine calendar

With the reflection on my amazing yoga poses from my last Quarantine which were inspired by my CPT friend Leanda, I had to reach out to her to give me some more challenges for today - so I contacted her yesterday but to date she has failed me, so I may need to simply pull out last years and have another go at working on these again. Looking at the pictures from last time, I clearly have a natural talent for Yoga, so whatever I decide to do later on today, I will certainly nail it I am sure!



I nailed Yoga Day last year!

I think I shall have to work myself into today's poses as they do require a lot of work - not only to do them, but to work out how to do, then how to take the photo myself as well and not look like a knob (which quite honestly is the hardest part!).

I rebelled today, and have ordered my two morning coffees from room service, with the strict instructions of 'extra hot' and 30 mins apart, so it shall be interesting to see how this plays out.....it didn't start well as 40 mins later i was going to ring to see where it was, as they are usually pretty quick, so i peeped through the door peep hole and there as a coffee cup sitting at my door - they didn't even knock, maybe I am supposed to be psychic?

My next coffee arrived on time and even announced itself at the door (or the knock did), much better to have a barista coffee vs my plunger one, even though the plunger is surely better than instant...first world problems hey! I decided to start hitting the pedals as I may go for a bigger push today throughout the duration of day/ night as I have another global call on tonight and tomorrow - a Yum Finance College, which starts at 8pm Perth time, until midnight or 1am, so this will be a good event to pedal in front of the laptop later on.

I chilled afternoon took place, hanging on the bed, and emailing and working, whilst multitasking watch

tele, chatting and stuffing around on Facebook, including to an old school friend Tania, who is going through some tough times in Vic but fighting on with an awesome attitude, and also giving my Ops guys a bit of a hard time here and there, but that's a daily (or hourly) activity, so nothing new there.

With it being Yoga day, I had to punch out a few moves - Leanda never came through for me, which is probably good as they would be too easy to do, I needed a challenge - I got some suggestions from Gary in Melbourne and The Lovely Mrs Barnes in Canada (thanks guys). You can judge for yourself how well I did, but pretty pleased!





Overall a very successful Yoga Day I'm sure you will agree...I also received an email from the Aussie High Commission in Sth Africa advising on a repatriation flight by the Aussie Government next month - could have saved myself a bit cash, and maybe had a Quarantine venue which allowed you to go outside from what I have heard - as the location was the Howard Springs detention centre in Darwin. Oh well...I will be out in 4 days so screw it...

The Pizza Hut Finance College started at 8pm Perth time, and I continued my biking, and managed to push out just over 100km...I stopped when it hit 3 figures, as that was enough, then it was a quick shower, gobble down a packet of Cheezels and a can of Pepsi and

finish watching the College...I think i may have burnt the calories to eat them! I chilled with some Netflix for an hour or so after the College and hit the sack around 1.30am.



Day 10 Lunch & Dinner