

A trip to remember

2011 - ENGLAND

31st March - 2 April

After months of meticulous planning - finally - we are on our way.

LEG 1
3 DAYS IN LONDON
THEN 16 DAYS TOURING
SOUTHERN ENGLAND

THE JOURNEY FINALLY BEGINS

"Come on Sig, it's 2.30, we have slept for over an one hour, I am refreshed and we are in London for heaven's sake - let's go and enjoy it!"

Siggy stirs but turns over. How could Heather be so fresh while he is so tired. But, spurred on by her enthusiasm, he gets up to get ready. Until, that is, he takes a peek at Heather's watch.

What time does it say? 2.30pm according to (Heather's) watch. Since the Nowak's had gone to bed at 1pm that indeed was 1.5 hours of sleep. Siggy opens the curtains but the outside is dark. It must be 2.30AM!! They has slept 13.5 hours!! No sense in going out to walk - they would only find London's homeless people at this hour. So it was back to bed for both of them. Fantastic - Siggy was dog tired.

"Come on Sig, it's 3 o'clock, we have slept for one hour, I am refreshed and we are in London for heaven's sake - let's go and enjoy it!" Here we go again!!

When Siggy opens the curtains Heather soon realises her mistake. She had worn her watch upside down - so when they got up the first time it was 8.30pm and dark. Now it was really 3am and still dark!! Again, far too early again to walk.



Trafalgar Square



Our Hotel - Citadines



Paddington Bear

Depart Brisbane March 31 @ 1pm
Arrive London April Fools day
@7.30am.

24hrs of air travel plus
5 hours waiting in airports.

Not counting the 2.5 hours to get
out of Heathrow airport!!





Paddington Station



Nelson's Column



So what time did the Nowak's finally get up and actually go for their first walk in London? Well, the truth is that Heather has to buy another watch - one that has "actual" numbers in large print. One that she can read the real time - or she has to double check with Siggy's watch to see what the real time is. Why? Because when the Nowak's woke the second time at almost 6am (according to Heather) on Saturday (they slept most of Friday) and it was only when they had finished getting dressed and showered ready to go that Heather realised that she had mistakenly read the time 1 hour too EARLY. It was really 5 #@\$%**&%\$ o'clock!! BUT instead of going back to sleep the Nowak's decided to check out their email and eat breakfast before they went out into the cold crisp air.

THE FLIGHT

Flying may sound exciting but the reality is quite different. 24 hours in the air and 5 hours on the ground, waiting at airports, is definitely not exciting. Neither is flying over lots of countries (and water) at night, especially if one sits in the middle isle with two young grizzling children screaming in front of you. Grrrr. But this time, unlike our last

trip with Lufthunza, our trip with Etihad was so much better. At least our legs had room to move and we had individual screens with over 83 movies to choose from. We each watched 7 movies - and good ones too.

SIGHSEEING

The trip on the express train from Heathrow to the city centre was uninspiring but the taxi trip from Paddington Station (an amazing place) was interesting. We remembered all those places from Monopoly.



Because airlines are strict with luggage weight we packed our luggage very very carefully.

Our bike bags with the heaviest clothing came to 20kgs each (maximum allowable).

The hand luggage came to 7kgs each (again maximum allowable).

But we knew that our handbags weighed 3kgs each - which luckily for us were not weighed.



A Match to Remember

West Ham versus Manchester United

The match was over by half time. We wish!! The score was 2-0 in favour of the home side. Everything was going to script, and the man sitting beside Siggie had made the trip from Dublin, a devote West Ham fan, like Siggie (on this particular day) was delighted. Heather and Siggie had choice seats in the Eastern Stand - where the West Ham faithful sat. This win would ensure that West Ham would not be demoted out of the Premier League. The best league in the world (biased). The leaders, Manchester United, would be 7 points ahead IF THEY WON!!! 32,000 spectators roared when the 2 penalties went in. West Ham were cruising to victory. If only they could hold out.



First Goal - West Ham

But, as fate would have it, the second half was all Manchester's. Once they scored their first goal the game was over for West Ham. Rooney scored a hat trick within 10 minutes and they won 4-2. Heather enjoyed the game but Siggie's Irish neighbour was gutted. The last time he went to a West Ham versus Manchester United game was in 1976 - he even had the original ticket as a souvenir. He had it with him to show his son. His son had come over from Holland just to meet his father and watch the game.



Name the Players - Manchester United

All Siggie can remember was the long long crowded walk back to the Upton Park train station with millions of disgruntled West Ham fans and a minority of drunk loutish ManU idiots, singing nasty "full of shit" ManU songs!!



A Dream Fulfilled

Heather had the last word. At half time Siggie told her it was quantity, not quality that counted. At full time she told Siggie that the better "quality" team had the "quantity" to match. The better team won and Siggie reluctantly agreed.

The West Ham theme song is "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles".

A very strange choice indeed.