

NIPPON NEWS

10 Day Tour of Japan | March 2023 | Heather and Blayze

First Impressions

Today, after leaving Taiwan Taoyuan international airport, and arriving to a cloudy Tokyo city, we went to the hotel which we sat down for a few minutes, and left to a Japanese Konbini (Convenience store) where we bought a small bento boxful of Japanese finger food for Four Australian dollars! The food isn't bad either. However I do hope that tomorrow I can see more of this beautiful island nation. (Blayze)

Funny Story

The toilet here in our hotel is very complicated. It's multipurpose you see. Even has a seat warmer. Plus you can regulate the bidet spray!! Can't afford to get it wrong or you might get an unpleasant surprise.

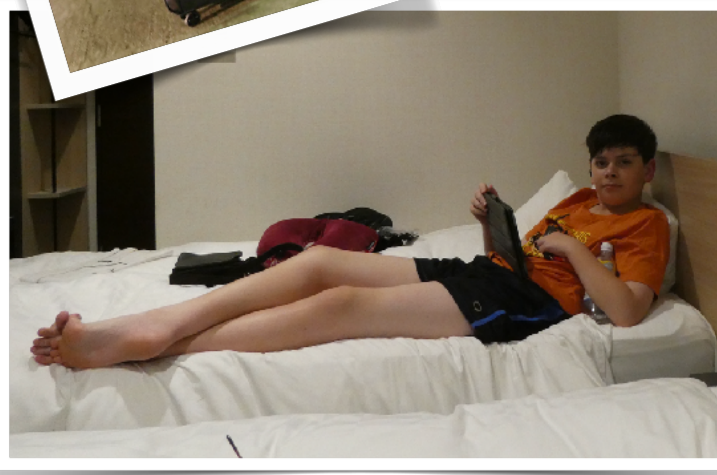
Both Blayze and I took some time to work out how to even flush the thing. It was only when Blayze googled that we worked it out.

Buttons galore. Almost gave us the shits!!



The Journey Begins

This whole trip came into fruition as a consequence of a promise (about Xmas 2019 or 2020) to take Blayze on a trip to Japan. He was, at the time, studying Japanese and had a real interest in the culture. We all know what intervened and thus the earliest opportunity to fulfil the promise was this year. The air fares were sky high, so after searching for a most cost-effective option it became a TripaDeal for two (Blayze and me). Siggy gets to stay behind this time. After all he took Deakin to New Zealand for an explore when Deakin was only 8 years old.





The trip is a 9 day escorted adventure to see some of the sights of Japan.

Today our habit of getting to the airport at least 1.5 hours before we had to, paid off. As we were trying to check in our luggage, we were told that Blayze might be refused entry because he only had 2 COVID shots. The rules I understood, was that a “child” under the age of 18 and accompanied by a “Parent/Guardian” who had the required shots, would be admitted. However, the staff at Brisbane said that the word “Guardian” did not appear in the set of rules that mattered.

To cut a long, stressful story short, after waiting for about 35 minutes for the China Airlines staff to contact Japan, we were informed that we could board, but we may still be refused entrance in Japan — “it is a grey issue”. So, on we went. I managed to put the possible consequences out of my mind and the first leg to Taipei went quite well. We both managed to sleep after being interrupted by the unexplainable midnight dinner. We only had 3 hours to wait at the connecting airport and amazingly met Caroline a fellow resident of Cleveland (just around the corner from us) who is also going on the trip.

At Tokyo, the process of passing through the terminal was very complicated. It included me getting fingerprinted (twice) but I was only concerned with the two minute process where they considered our COVID status and didn’t blink an eyelid. But this time I was programmed to say that not only was I Blayze’s grandmother, but also his guardian.

Our tour guide meet us in the baggage claim area. He was jovial and helpful. We eventually proceeded to the bus with about 30 others also headed for the tour. “Zoo” is his name (don’t know how it is spelt). He talked to us nearly the whole hour to our hotel. He was very interesting and quite insightful.

Too tired to seek a restaurant, we, with a few others, took Zoo’s advice and went to a local convenience store down the road and acquired some prepared food. Very tasty. I soaked in the bath — wonderful. I am very tired. Blayze says he is too.

Tomorrow is a free day in Tokyo. I have organised a personal tour with a local guide.