



Carey Grammar School – Melbourne, Australia
Aiyana Kaplan '16

My exchange to Melbourne was an experience like no other. I had the opportunity to explore a new city, culture and environment. Melbourne is a lot like Montreal, as they are both modernized and developed. One big adjustment was the climate. I literally came from -40°C right into 40°C! This was a huge shock as I find 20°C to be shorts weather.

Fitting in and making friends wasn't troubling. Everyone was very friendly and welcoming and helped me find my classes. There was not one moment where I wasn't surrounded by a group of friends asking me about Canada and educating me about Australia. School in Melbourne was different because the hallways and lockers were outdoors. This was an enjoyable change because I got more fresh air and had more time to spend in the warm weather. Carey Grammar School was very enjoyable and just like LCC all of the classrooms had projector screens and the students had laptops. They also had tons of interesting electives to choose from.

Australia is known for it's lovely land, wildlife and beaches. Being a true beach lover, I was excited to be going to the beach in the middle of February. At the beach I tanned, went boogie boarding and even saw some tiny starfish! Something that amazed me about Melbourne was the exotic wildlife. I personally think koalas are the cutest creatures in the world and couldn't wait to see one in person. I soon learned that they were endangered and that there were none in the city but I still saw some at the zoo and got to listen to the beautiful rainforest like sounds and melodies the birds sang.

I had a jam-packed trip; from the zoo, to the aquarium and even the outback. We even went to Sydney one weekend, where I got to see the Opera House and Harbour Bridge and spent some more time at the beach.

This exchange was a once in a lifetime experience that I will never forget. Travelling, being exposed to new things and spending a long period of time away from home was all part of this life changing experience. I had the chance to expand my horizons and meet some wonderful people. I made so many wonderful friends, got to experience so many new things and try different foods, like vegemite, a gross salty taste that will never leave my mouth. I have become more independent and had the opportunity to learn so much about Australian culture and the country in general.

Being away for so long I missed my friends and family, the snow and even the cold. But I also miss Australia and hope to return one day.

I would recommend the Melbourne exchange to students wanting to enter a more comfortable environment but who are also open to experiencing new things. Carey is a school with exceptional spirit that anyone would be happy to go to and Melbourne is a truly beautiful city that feels very similar to Montreal.