

Podcast 58 – Perth, Western Australia – A Life in the Sun

Learn English while learning about daily life in Australia, with Rob McCormack

Podcast Number 58 – Perth, Western Australia – A Life in the Sun

<http://traffic.libsyn.com/slowenglish/podcast58.mp3>

Hi,

I love Melbourne and the state of Victoria. It's where I have lived since 1994 and I appreciate it every day. However I have also lived in 3 other great Australian cities in three different states – Sydney in New South Wales, Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory and Perth in Western Australia. In this podcast I would like to tell you a little bit about Perth, which is where I went to University and spent some of the first years of my working life. In fact, Western Australia is also where I was born and lived my early years, so it will always be a special part of Australia for me.

<http://www.australia.com/en/places/perth.html>

Perth is the capital of the state of Western Australia and has a population of around 2 million people. When I was 17 years old I left my family in the south western coastal town of Bunbury and moved to Perth to live in a university college at the University of Western Australia. That was a big thing for me at the young age of just 17. Back then, I thought that Perth was the centre of the universe. Well, not literally, but at that time I had never been to another big city. There is a reason for that. Perth is the second most isolated big city in the world. The nearest big city to Perth is Adelaide in South Australia, which is 2,014 kms away. That's a long

way. In fact, only Honolulu in Hawaii is more isolated than Perth. Because Perth is so isolated, its people know how to have fun in their own city. You can do just about anything in Perth, but it's most famous for its water activities – firstly in the ocean and at the wonderful beaches which Perth has, and secondly in the river which runs right through the city – the Swan River.

What more can one say about the beautiful beaches in Perth? The sand is white and feels wonderful between your toes. The sand and the water is clean and there are waves which roll onto the shore. In addition, the main beaches are most often patrolled by surf lifesavers. The most famous beach in Perth is Cottesloe.



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In a recent visit to Perth with my family, we went to Cottesloe and had a fantastic lunch at the Indiana restaurant. This restaurant is in a wonderful old building built right on the beach's edge, with great views along the beach and out to sea. We really enjoyed our visit and it reminded me of my university years when Cottesloe was just a short motorcycle ride down the road from the university college where I lived.

<http://indiana.com.au/>

Other famous beaches in Perth include Scarborough Beach, Leighton Beach, City Beach and South Beach which is in Fremantle, close to Perth. I have been to Scarborough Beach a few times and it too has great restaurants, cafes and of course the beach itself is excellent. But I think Cottesloe is my favourite.

After the beaches, the two things that I love most about Perth are the Swan River and Kings Park. Kings Park is a 4 square kilometre park and is found right in the centre of Perth.



It has a mix of natural bushland, beautiful grassed parkland and botanical gardens with a fantastic range of Australian native plants. The thing about Kings Park is that it sits on the top of a hill. This means you have a wonderful view of the city of Perth and the Swan River below. I never get tired of this view. It reminds me again of my years at University when I was lucky enough to have this view just a couple of kilometres from my university accommodation. There are many viewing platforms in Kings Park where you can just take in the view. It's no wonder that around 5 million people visit Kings Park every year. It's the most popular tourist destination in Perth.



The University of Western Australia is located very close to the Swan River which runs right through the centre of Perth. While it is not a large river, it spreads out a lot as it reaches the centre of Perth and becomes two large waterways called Perth Waters and Melville Waters. At its widest point, Melville Waters is around 4 kilometres across. Melville Waters in particular is a great place for water activities including one of Perth's most popular pastimes, sailing. I know that stretch of water well. When my wife and I were first married, we owned a small yacht which we sailed on Melville Waters. There are several yacht clubs along the shores of that part of the Swan River and sailing of all types and sizes of yachts is very popular. Our yacht club was called The Perth Flying Squadron Yacht Club, which is a strange name because you think it might be for people who fly airplanes, but it's a sailing club for everyone. We would often go sailing in the evening on a Wednesday during the summer. It was called twilight sailing and it was great fun. We would start the race at around 5 pm. As it got darker, the city lights across the water were a real sight to see. After sailing around the course in around 2 hours, we would return in time to have a barbeque outside the club rooms. The weather was almost always perfect in summer time for a barbeque. We have great memories of our time in Perth.

When talking about Perth, you must also mention the weather. It's a great climate for an outdoor lifestyle. In February in the middle of summer for example, the average maximum temperature is around 31 degrees C with lots of sun. Even in the middle of winter in July, the average maximum is still around 18 degrees C, which is not that cold. Perth's weather is perfect for playing sport, getting outdoors and enjoying yourself, although you need to make sure you have a hat and sunscreen for your skin. Even though I love Melbourne, I will always have a soft spot for Perth.

If you have a question or a comment to make, please leave it in the comments box at the bottom of this page. Or, you can send me an email at rob@slowenglish.info. I would love to hear from you. Tell me where you live, a little bit about yourself and what you think of my Slow English podcast. I will write back to you, in English of course. If you would like to take a short quiz to see if you have understood this podcast, you will also find it on my website. Goodbye until next time.

Rob

Podcast 58 Quiz - Did you understand the podcast?

You can take the quiz as many times as you like.

[Start quiz](#)

Vocabulary

accommodation = a place where you can stay the night. For example, a hotel, an apartment

activities = things to do

airplanes = a machine which can fly through the air
appreciate = to enjoy something
Australian native plants = plants which grow in the Australian bush
barbeque = to cook your food outdoors on a grill
beaches = a sandy area where the ocean meets the land
botanical = about plants
cafes = a place where you can buy coffee, tea and snacks
capital = the main city, where the government is
climate = the weather
clubs = when people join together in a group because they like doing the same thing
coastal = next to the ocean
destination = the place you are travelling to
excellent = very, very good
favourite = the one you like the most
grassed = land where grass has been planted
in particular = when talking about one thing or one group of things
isolated = far away from other places or things
literally = means exactly what it says
located = the place where something is found
maximum = the highest or largest or biggest
memories = what you can remember from the past
mention = to speak about
mix = when two or more things are put together
motorcycle = like a car, but with only 2 wheels
natural bushland = trees and plants that you would find in a forest
outdoors = outside, not inside a building
owned = when something belongs to you
patrolled = to walk up and down a beach in order to keep everyone safe
popular pastimes = hobbies or activities which lots of people like to do
recent = just a short time ago
reminded = when something helps you to remember

sailing = going in a boat which moves with the wind

shores = where the water meets the land

sight = what you can see

a soft spot = when you like something more than other things

spreads = becomes wide

square kilometre = an area 1 kilometre long and 1 kilometre wide

strange = when something is different or not what you expect

stretch of water = an area of water

sunscreen = you put this on your skin to stop being burnt by the sun

surf lifesavers = people who help you if you have a problem at the beach

toes = on your feet, you have 5 on each foot

twilight = the time when sun goes down and just after that

universe = everything – the earth, the sun, the stars, everything

University = a place where you go to study and get a degree after you finish school

university college = like a hotel, but is at a university where students can stay

viewing platforms = a place where you can see out over the land

waterways = a wide area of water where boats can go

waves = when water rises up as it reaches the beach

widest = when the distance from one side to the other side is largest

yacht = a sailing boat

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