

Podcast 108 - On a Hot Day in Melbourne

by Rob McCormack - Tuesday, January 15, 2019

<https://slowenglish.info/?p=2828>

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

Podcast Number 108 – On a Hot Day in Melbourne

<http://traffic.libsyn.com/slowenglish/podcast108.mp3>

Hi,

I live in Melbourne which is on the south eastern coastline of Australia. Our weather here is really quite pleasant. Our winters are not too cold, with average daily maximums being around 14 degrees Celsius in June and July, and our average daily summer maximum being around 26 degrees Celsius in January and February. But on occasions during our summer, we have really hot days. Actually, as I write this podcast, I am experiencing a hot day in Melbourne. Our maximum temperature, as I write, is 38 deg C. So I guess you can understand that, today, this topic is top of mind for me. So in this podcast, I would like to talk about what people do in Melbourne when the weather is really hot.



A hot day in Melbourne - the temperature gauge on our front porch at our home.

What do I mean by really hot? Well, I consider anything above about 32 degrees Celsius maximum as a hot day. Mind you, I am getting older now and I think I feel the heat a little bit more than I used to, so perhaps a younger person might have a different view. Nonetheless, when the temperature gets above about 32 deg C then I want to stay indoors and enjoy the coolness of an air conditioned environment.

I guess I am spoilt, in that I have the option of staying indoors on a day like this. After all, I am retired. I don't have to go to work. Some people have jobs where they are required to work outside. Others must work in buildings without air conditioning. I don't envy them. In Australia, I think an air conditioner is an essential requirement in summer. We have a good quality reverse cycle air conditioner installed in our home. My wife and I decided a long time ago, when we first got married, that we would always buy a good quality air conditioner for our home. We have lived in Perth, Canberra, Sydney and lastly Melbourne. All of these cities have hot days in summer, when it really is essential to have an air conditioner that can make a house comfortably cool.

Most work places and many homes are indeed air conditioned in Australia. This has not always been the case of course. When I was growing up in Western Australia, the small home where I lived with my parents did not have an air conditioner. A circulating electric fan was the only cooling appliance that we

had. That was true of most homes in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. I can remember those long hot days in summer during the summer school holidays, when we would often sit under a tree in our back yard, drinking a cold drink. Sometimes, we would turn on the water sprinkler on the lawn and run through the streams of water, just to stay wet and cool. Alternatively, we would sit inside in front of the fan. Nowadays, on really hot days, I can still see children running under sprinklers in the suburbs of Melbourne.

In fact, keeping cool on very hot days in Australia is often about going to a place where you can relax in the water. This means either going to the beach, lake or river, or going to a water park. Water parks are very popular in Australia. We have several in and around Melbourne. I often ride past one on my motorcycle on the outskirts of the city. It has several swimming pools and lots of water slides, fun activities, kiosks, cafes, theme park rides and even a wave pool. On the weekends during summer, or during the school holidays, the car park is usually full so it is obviously very popular. Of course there is a cost for entry – in this case I think around \$30 per person.

<http://www.funfields.com.au/food/index.html>

Also popular are the local swimming pools which exist in each local government area. They often have shaded areas and some lawn, so that people can relax and also get cool by taking a swim in the pool. Some have fun water slides as well. The costs there are much cheaper but the water is still cool.

Many people will head off to the beach, or a lake or local river. These are free of course. In Melbourne there are good beaches on Port Phillip Bay where people can swim and relax on the sand. When I was a young boy, going to the beach was our normal way to get and stay cool. Of course it also meant being out in the hot sun, so we often got sunburnt which was very painful and bad for our skin. Nowadays, people understand the dangers of being out in the sun and nearly everybody will take their hats and put on lots of sunscreen to protect their skin.

For some people, staying cool may mean going to a local shopping centre or the local library where the building is fully air conditioned. Spending a couple of hours in a café or the food court is a relaxing way to avoid the heat. I love the way a shopping centre is always beautifully cool, no matter how hot and uncomfortable it is outside. They really must have very powerful air conditioners.

For me, when it is really hot in Melbourne, I will choose air conditioning any time rather than the beach. On days like these, I'll leave the beach and the water park to the young.

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

[WpProQuiz 110]

Vocabulary

air conditioned environment = a room or building where the air is made cool by a machine

air conditioner = a machine which makes the air in a room or building cool

alternatively = another way, a different way

appliance = a small machine, usually electric and used in the home

average = the middle number in a range of numbers. To calculate an average, add all the numbers and then divide the total by how many numbers you have.

avoid = not to do something

back yard = the area behind a home where the garden is

cafes = a small shop where you can buy tea, coffee and snacks (like cakes)

circulating electric fan = a type of machine for blowing air, in order to cool you down when it is hot

coastline = where the sea meets the land

comfortably = when something gives comfort

consider = (here) to believe, to think

degrees Celsius = a way of measuring temperature. Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius

different view = (here) when someone thinks differently to another person

envy = when you want something which someone else has

essential = necessary

experiencing = to see, hear or feel something; you are there

good quality = (here) when something is very good

head off = to leave to go somewhere

installed = put in place and working

kiosks = a very small shop where you can buy things, usually food and drinks

library = a place which has many books which you can read and borrow

local = near where you live

local government area = the area of a town or city managed by a local government

maximums = the highest (plural)

mind you = a phrase telling someone to take note; another way of saying "I am telling you..."

motorcycle = like a car, but with only 2 wheels (lots of fun to ride!!!)

nonetheless = despite this, even though

obviously = when something can be easily seen or understood

on occasions = sometimes

option = one of the choices between which you must choose

outskirts = on the edge

pleasant = when something is good, nice

popular = when something is liked by a lot of people

powerful = strong

quite = when something is neither very good nor very bad

rather than = instead of

relax = to rest

required = (here) requested, told, asked to do something

requirement = something you must do or have or be

retired = not working anymore, usually after you are 65 years old

reverse cycle air conditioner = a type of machine used to cool air in a room or building

shaded = when there are trees or roofs which block the sun

shopping centre = a very large building with lots of shops

spending = (here) to use up some time

spoilt = to be lucky, to be given things others don't have

streams = (here) water travelling in a thin line

suburbs = the area of a city where people live

sunburnt = when you get too much sun on your skin and it burns and goes red

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

temperature = a number telling you how hot or cold it is

theme park rides = a special machine which you ride for fun (like a ferris wheel, roller coaster)

top of mind = it is something you are thinking about right now

water slides = a long flat tunnel with water flowing, where you can slide (it's fun!)

water sprinkler = a small machine for spreading water onto the lawn

wave pool = a swimming pool which has waves made by a machine