

AROUND THE WORLD WITH ROTARACT



By Will Bassett

Rotaract Club of South West Brisbane, Qld

WHAT do Germany, Canada, India, the Netherlands, Ukraine, Mexico, Peru, Hungary, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Croatia, Zimbabwe, Sweden, USA and Sri Lanka have in common? For me, in no particular order, these are the countries I now have a place to stay with friends I met on Rotaract Roundtrips.

Having been a member of Rotaract since 2010, I sometimes find myself surprised at how little I know about the programs and opportunities open to us. This is why, upon my return from my third and final Roundtrip in the Canada Corridor this year (after trips to Vancouver in 2015 and Germany in 2016), I wanted to share my experiences.

When I got on the plane to go on my first trip, I had a moment of, "Oh God, what have I done?" With a background in marketing and

events, I plan everything! I was about to trust a bunch of strangers for 10 days with all details of the trip. But then I realised – they're Rotaractors! We're an amazing bunch of people; I needed to just sit back and relax.

A few days later, though we had just met, the group I was travelling with were treating each other like we'd been great friends for years. On my travels I've climbed Canadian mountains, been down a salt mine and hung out in a massive, Disney-style castle in Germany, watched a baseball home game and got totally drenched by Niagara Falls. Roundtrips not only give participants the chance to see the sights and have an amazing time all over the world, but also to help out with local projects – like donning an apron to make burritos and handing them out to the homeless in Montreal.

An added bonus was being able to share ideas and gain new insights on Rotary matters; from funding issues, to membership, to the gap between Rotaract and Rotary.

Most Roundtrips are advertised through Facebook. For around \$AU500, plus flights and travel insurance, you'll get five to 10 jam-packed days of incredible experiences and memories to treasure for a lifetime. I can't encourage you to apply enough.

NOTE: *The trips can be between four days to 14 days, and typically have a minimal cost, which covers food, accommodation, transport and all events and activities – \$US100-\$400 is usual. They are district and multidistrict sponsored trips, and not sponsored by Rotary International. •*



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PEOPLE'S POTATO



There are many ways to see a country, but Rotaract Roundtrips are second to none. Travelling on a Rotaract Roundtrip means being shown around by the locals and sharing experiences with people with whom you already have a common bond through the membership of Rotaract.

*Melissa Pilkington
Formerly of the Rotaract Clubs of Mount Lawley
and Subiaco, WA*