

No matter how hard you try to get your ducks in a row before a long trip, it's always a bit of a last minute scramble. I have learnt to expect the unexpected before big trips. On previous trips we've had last minute trips to the dentist and the vet, along with other minor hiccups. This trip the unexpected was a little more major, although not quite so last minute! Anna had an accident a few days ago. Thanks to a close encounter with a very hard object, she knocked her two top front teeth right out and fractured the bones around them. Anna and her friends were quick thinkers and very persistent. After trying to find help in five different places (Ubering and running between them), her teeth were back in her mouth and splinted to her good teeth. The dentist was amazing (shout out to "Dentist for Chickens" in Peach Parade :-)) and thinks there is a good chance they will be saved as they were stored in milk and back in her mouth within an hour.

She was a bit of a mess but it's amazing what a difference a few days makes. After some further patching up and a couple of root canals on the morning we left, she was all good to go. Our flight wasn't until 11pm so it gave plenty of time to get organised. You know it's been a busy day though when you have 9,500 steps on your fitness watch and you haven't actually left the house that day!

It's always nice to finally get on that plane and just zone out. There was plenty of time to do that with a scheduled flight time of 12 hours. We were a bit late leaving but arrived early - the wind must have been going the right way at 37,000 feet! Air NZ were great and we were lucky enough to be on one of the planes offering free WIFI. We had expected the WIFI speed to be hopeless, but were pleasantly surprised that it was fine. Most of my friends were asleep but the kids found plenty of nocturnal teenagers to chat with.

LAX airport has definitely improved in recent times, and we were on our shuttle about 1 hour after we landed. That included time to track down the shuttle company by pay phone as my mobile decided it could handle data but not calls. I have learnt never to travel to the USA without a good supply of Quarter dollar coins, and they sure came in handy for the pay phone. We shared the shuttle with an older couple from Washington State who were serious Disneyland fans, so used the time to grab some tips. I love Disneyland, but not on the same level as people like this!

We were fortunate to get to Anaheim before the worst of the rush hour set in, which was just as well as we were all starving. We love the Cheesecake Factory and there was one within walking distance. Google maps showed us the shortest way was through the Toy Story parking lot next to our hotel. It has a lovely wide sidewalk right where we wanted to go, but when we were nearly through to the other side we were stopped by a large No Pedestrians sign. This place is totally set up for cars, people just don't walk. I can't think of

any other country that has sidewalks that wide but doesn't let you use them! So we backtracked and walked along the main road to our destination.



Inside Cheesecake Factory

It was worth the extra steps and we had a delicious meal. I must have a short memory, but I am always blown away by the portion sizes here. Anna and I could easily have shared her meal. Matt's steak wasn't much smaller, but he was starving so almost finished it.

•



Anna' huge meal

•



The meal Matt almost finished. It doesn't look that big, but the plate was huge!

•





Everything is big - check out the size of that soda cup!

•



Another favourite but not tonight

-



Classic dessert back at our hotel

We're looking forward to sleeping horizontally tonight and hope to get a good rest before we hit Disneyland tomorrow.