

Surviving Sydney – Student’s Guide to Staying Alive in the City

Expensive! Is probably one of the words that come into mind when asked to describe about the biggest and most populous city in Australia. Chances are, the word will even top “Beautiful”, “Pubs” and the like. Rank number 11 worldwide as the best city to live in (Mercer 2019 Quality of Living Survey), I suppose the city somehow find a way to live up to the hype. And with quite a stable currency, it is simply picture perfect. For the Aussies, at least.

Now what happens if you are an international student, and you were not born with a silver spoon in your mouth? What if your parents don’t happen to own the mill? Well, you better sort it out, soon. If you happen to have casual or part time job alongside your study, and you don’t spend your income lavishly, you will probably do just fine. You can even afford to have the newest smartphone at your disposal to cruise the day. But other than that, you might want to be careful with your expense.

So the billion dollar question is, can an average bloke from an average family background survive the tempting, bright light big city? The answer is yes, with the right strategy.

Here are some ideas:

Accommodation

Instead of settling for an apartment in the city area, you might want to check out accommodation in some suburban areas, where the rent is cheaper.

Foods

Seek and you shall find. Even in the city area, if you know where to look, you can find a reasonable meal with a decent price. For example, at the Dixon food court in the Chinatown area, you can still find a meal which cost less than AU\$ 10. Or you can buy a take away lunch box for about the same price at a food outlet inside the Town Hall Square (even cheaper if you buy two). The best choice is of course home cooking. So if you are capable of basic cooking and food preparation, buy your own ingredients and cook your own food. It’s considerably cheaper.

Entertainment

Instead of going to the movies, you can opt for online streaming. Or, if you are an outdoor person, you can go to various beaches and parks within or not far from the city area for free.