

## Blog 25 - LONDON

In April, my whole family and I went on a trip to London! The flight was 12 hours long, but it was bearable because the British airline (Virgin Atlantic) was quite enjoyable! Their food tasted good and they even served ice cream sandwiches, cute pastries and pudding as snacks! My mom even savored a glass of white wine for *free*.



In London, we visited some of the famous tourist sites such as the London Eye, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, London Bridge and London Tower. In addition, we experienced what it was like being a local London resident: living in a service apartment with a fully equipped kitchen, going grocery shopping, visiting the local flea-market & artifact markets and riding public transportations enriched our one week memory of London.

Amongst all the sites we saw in London, Buckingham Palace impressed me a lot. The day we went, we came just in time for the guard changing ceremony. On that day, the British flag was billowing in the wind on the roof of the palace. My mom said it means that the queen is in the house, otherwise, it means she is elsewhere. I thought that the guard changing was just going to be two soldiers coming up to each other and switching places in a formal way. But I saw more than 100 guards coming up to us wearing maraschino cherry red uniforms, two feet tall hairy black hats carrying swords and guns and flags and music equipment! I silently watched their expressions while 2 of them did a little strut back and forth. They played 2 songs in front of the palace, although I only recognized one of them called: Sky fall by Adele. In the end, I felt sort of Confused. They said that the soldiers were changing guard, but I didn't even realize that there were different persons standing there. They all look the same with their big, tall and hairy black hats covering half of their face!





One day, my dad and I even took a one day tour of Warner Bros. Studio: The Making of the Harry Potter movies! At the studio, they had a lot of props and locations in which they shot the scenes in the movies. All of the major actors and actresses had lived there for 10 years! They ate, slept, learnt and grew up there. Near the end of the tour, they recorded a video clip of me riding a flying broomstick as my Harry Potter studio souvenir! If you are a Harry Potter fan, you must remember a famous scene of Harry running through the column of platform 9  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Although it wasn't located at the studio, I was lucky enough to take a look at it when I was boarding a train to Cambridge at the King's cross station. Since it's so famous, a long line of people were waiting to run through that wall! These Harry Potter movie scenes were definitely the highlight of my own London memory!





If you go to London, there's no way you won't try some local fish & chips! It's a classic! :) One day, when it was time to have lunch, none of my family members hesitated: "Let's try some good old fashioned fish & Chips!" We entered a busy local pub and settled down at a corner table. When the nice waitress came over to take our order, we made it clear that we wanted fish and chips. :) The waitress asked: "Which one, sir? We have 32 different kinds of fresh fish!" As we had no time to go through the list, we ordered the local popular kind. When the waitress presented us with the dish, my grandma was startled with the huge plate! When she was halfway finished, she murmured: "Where's my chips?" I pointed to the untouched French fries in her plate and said: "These are the chips." She doubtfully stated: "These are French fries! They're just bigger and mushier!" We all laughed hysterically! Shouldn't the dish be called "Fish & Fries?" :)



During the first a couple of days in London, our whole family had the camera out all the time. We were overwhelmed by the detail in the buildings and the scenery that made us feel like we were stepping into a fairytale. But as the days sped by, we realized that leaving memories in our camera wasn't the only important thing. By the end, we all had our own memories treasured in our hearts.