

Two days, two doughnuts

Episode description

Join Andrew for an exciting update on his travels and adventures in this bonus episode! He'll share some stories of his latest adventures, from exploring Vancouver and Victoria, to creating unforgettable memories.

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Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Welcome to bonus episode number 39 of the Culips English Podcast. My name is Andrew and it's great to be here with you today. Thanks for clicking play and joining me for this English study session. Now there's a totally free interactive transcript that accompanies this episode that you can get just by clicking the link in the description, or by visiting our website Culips.com. Our website is also the place where you can listen to the hundreds of audio lessons that we have, including our most recent Simplified Speech episode that we just released last week. In that episode, Kassy and I talked about her recent trip to South Korea. And it's kind of funny, because today in this episode, I'm going to talk about my current trip to Canada that I'm doing right now. So, I guess traveling is the theme of this week here at Culips. But anyway, if you haven't checked out our website before, make sure to do that. And also make sure to study along with the interactive transcript while you study with this episode.

I have to apologize for the less-than-stellar audio quality that you're listening to right now. As I just mentioned, I'm currently in Canada, and I'm away from my little podcast studio, back home in Seoul. So, I'm making this episode just on my smartphone right now. And because of that, I'm going to try and keep this episode on the short side. But I just wanted to check in, give you a few updates about what I've been up to over the last week. And the good news is that I'll be back in the studio next week, I'll be reunited with my good microphone again. So just bear with me for this week, and we'll be back to normal next time.

I just used a couple of interesting expressions there. Did you happen to hear them? I wonder if you noticed. The first one that I said was less-than-stellar. Less-than-stellar. I called the audio quality for this episode less-than-stellar. Stellar means excellent. So, if something is less-than-stellar, well, then it means that it isn't very great.

And because the audio quality isn't very great, it's less-than-stellar. I asked you to bear with me. The spelling of bear is just like the animal B-E-A-R. But in this case, it is a verb. And in its verb form, the word bear means to accept something. So, in other words, bear with me just means be patient with me. So although the audio quality is not great right now, guys, please just bear with me, be patient with me, and next week, we'll have a regular bonus episode again for ya.

So, the last week has been really, really busy. It's been one of those weeks that's technically only been seven days, just like every week, but it's felt like a month. The week started off with my wife and I flying from my hometown, which is called Kelowna, and we went to Vancouver. We had been staying with my parents in Kelowna, but my wife had to return to our home in Seoul, because she had to go back to work. So Kelowna is a small place, and there are no direct flights from Kelowna to Seoul, of course, so we had to go to the nearest big city, which is Vancouver. The flight between the two cities is only around 40 minutes. So, pretty much as soon as you take off, it's time to land. It's a really quick flight. Now, you could drive and the drive between Kelowna and Vancouver is absolutely beautiful, and it's great to do in the summer. But in the winter, it's a little sketchy. The drive involves going over a couple of big mountains, and in the winter when the weather is unpredictable, it's much safer just to fly.

So, we flew to Vancouver and we had a couple of days there. On the first day we went to visit my aunt, and my aunt is my dad's older sister and we're really close. So, I definitely wanted to make a trip out to see her while I'm here in Canada. Getting to her house was a bit of a journey. From downtown Vancouver, we had to ride the SkyTrain, that's what Vancouver's equivalent to the subway is called the SkyTrain, so we rode the SkyTrain all the way to the end of the line, and then we had to take an Uber for another 30 minutes or so before we arrived at my aunt's place. This was my first time taking an Uber and it was a pretty positive experience overall. It worked as advertised for the most part.

My aunt is in her 80s now, but she's still doing really well and it was so nice to see her. We originally intended to take my aunt out for lunch, but she just wanted to stay in instead. So, she made us some grilled cheese sandwiches and tomato soup, which is just classic Canadian lunch food. And then for dessert, we shared an apple fritter doughnut. And I don't know if I've shared this with you guys on Culips before, but I absolutely love doughnuts. So, I was happy to eat that for dessert. An apple fritter is a kind of doughnut made with apples, and if they're done right they're really delicious. I've actually had quite a few doughnuts on this trip. So, as a doughnut lover, it's been amazing. But I think I'm going to have to do a lot of running when I get back to Korea to compensate for all this snacking.

But anyway, we had a great visit with my aunt and then my cousin and his wife came over to my aunt's house, and they picked us up to take us back downtown for a sightseeing tour. Now my cousin is older than I am, by probably 15 to 20 years, somewhere in there. And because of that, growing up I was actually closer to his children than I was with him. Because his kids are much closer in age to me, they're just a few years younger than I am. But now that I'm older, it's great to spend time with my cousin and his wife. They took us to several great spots in Vancouver to see the beautiful ocean, and city, and sunset views. And then they also treated us to a delicious dinner at a beautiful restaurant overlooking Kitts Beach and the ocean. We saw the sunset, it was just amazing, and overall it was just a nice day spent with family.

The next day was my wife's final full day in Vancouver and we decided to check out the Mount Pleasant and Mid-Main areas of the city. I think it's called Mid-Main. If you're from Vancouver, and you know better than I do, then please let me know. But those are the two areas we checked out: Mount Pleasant and Mid-Main. Mount Pleasant is very pleasant, just like the name. It's home to a lot of young people and hip people mostly in their 20s and 30s. So, it's got a little bit of a younger vibe. And because of that, there are lots of cafes, restaurants, pubs, vintage stores, and my favorite record stores. So, my wife and I had an awesome time walking through these neighborhoods. We especially enjoyed doing some digging at a few of the stellar record stores that we came across. Longtime Culips

listeners will know that my wife and I are big music fans, and we love listening to records as a way to relax and hang out and spend some time together. Now the record prices in Canada are generally much cheaper than they are back in Seoul. Of course vinyl records aren't the easiest thing to fit into a suitcase though, so we didn't buy very many. But looking is fun and we enjoyed browsing through Vancouver's record stores.

Now, after all our walking around, we were pretty beat. Pretty beat means pretty tired, and we were pretty tired. So we decided to refuel at a Vietnamese restaurant. Now, I'm not an expert about Vietnamese food by any means, but I've been to Vietnam a couple of times and have had the real deal. And I have to say that I think Vietnamese food in Vancouver is pretty legit. It tastes almost exactly like the Vietnamese food I've had in Vietnam. So, we enjoyed some delicious pho, which is a kind of Vietnamese noodle soup. And then we visited a nearby cafe for a coffee and another doughnut. Two doughnuts in two days as a doughnut lover, I was in heaven. And the doughnut that I had was sourdough doughnut. It was incredible. I've never had a sourdough doughnut before, but it was very delicious.

One thing that was a little bit annoying about this trip to Canada though is how to pay for things. Like for example, the Vietnamese restaurant that we visited was cash only. And at the time, I didn't have any cash on me. So, I had to run across the street to a bank to withdraw some money. In Korea, you can withdraw money from any bank, even if it's not the bank that you use, and you don't have to pay a fee. It's wonderful. Canada in this regard is so, so bad though because the bank was not my home bank. And because of that, it meant that I had to pay a fee. I had to pay a \$3 fee just to withdraw money from the ATM, and that was shocking. Culture shock in my own country. And then when we went to the cafe after lunch, they only accepted card payments, no cash. And that was a little bit confusing and annoying for me as well. Anyway, after the long day of sightseeing and shopping and eating, we were ready to crash for the night.

My wife's flight was set to take off the following day at 1pm. So, we woke up early and we got her all packed up and ready for the trip home. We arrived at the airport and got her

checked in for her flight, and after she passed through security, I left the airport and made my way to Victoria, the biggest city on Vancouver Island and the capital of my home province, British Columbia. Victoria is a place where I lived for several years while I was a university student. And I still have several good friends there, and I really wanted to see them. So, I made the trip to the island.

Now, getting from Vancouver to Victoria is always a pain in the neck. As I mentioned, it's on an island. So you need to take a ferry to get there. So, from the airport, I had to take the SkyTrain to the bus station, and take a bus to the ferry terminal, ride the ferry across the ocean to Vancouver Island, and then take another bus from the ferry terminal to downtown Victoria. I left the airport at around 12:30 in the afternoon, but I didn't arrive in Victoria until around 6pm. So it was quite the journey, especially when you consider that the actual physical distance from Vancouver to Victoria is only something like 25 kilometers. So, it's a long trip for just covering a short physical distance.

But Victoria was great, I had an awesome time there. I was able to hang out with three of my buddies who I used to play in bands with and it was just so nice to catch up with them. We ate some Chinese food together, and then we had a drink. And the next morning, we also met up again to go for a walk through the James Bay and Cook Street Village neighborhoods, which are just lovely. And then we had sushi together near Chinatown for lunch. And maybe you guys are thinking, why is Andrew eating so much Asian food, Vietnamese, Japanese, Chinese while I'm in Canada, right? But actually, you know Canada doesn't have a strong food culture. So, I think global cuisine is really Canadian cuisine. And I think that some of the best food I've had while being here is actually either Eastern European food or Asian food. Anyways, like I said, it was awesome to catch up with my friends and share some laughs together. And I think if you can connect with your old friends, after a long time of not seeing them and just immediately jump back into joking around. And there's no awkward lulls in conversation or anything like that then you know you've got some real friends.

In the afternoon, I had to head back to Kelowna, because it was my brother's birthday on Thursday, so I wanted to get back to celebrate with him. Unfortunately, there were no flights that day from Victoria to Kelowna. So, I had to make another long trip back to Vancouver, and then catch a flight from Vancouver to Kelowna. And on Thursday, we had a nice family celebration for my brother's birthday. This was the first birthday celebration in a long time, as long as I can remember, where my whole family was together in one place at the same time. So, that was really nice. And I'm actually staying at my brother's place here in Kelowna right now. I'm recording in my brother's place right now.

And we're planning to take a road trip tomorrow to go to a hot spring that's a few hours north of here, near a place called Sicamous. And apparently the hot spring is next to a cold-plunge pool. So, you can relax in the hot spring until you're too hot, and then jump in the cold plunge to cool down. And then you rinse and repeat and do that again and again until you've had enough. Sounds awesome to me. So, I can't wait to check out the hot springs tomorrow.

And then the next day, I need to go back to Vancouver to fly back to Seoul. To be honest with you it's been a great trip but I'm excited and ready to go home to my wife, and my dog, and my regular routine. I love traveling but after about a week or so of living out of a suitcase, I'm usually ready to return back to a regular routine and a regular schedule.

One last thing before I wrap up here, is that many Culips listeners have asked me to post some pictures of my trip. So, I know that I'm pretty horrible about taking and posting pictures, but I've posted some recently on to our Instagram account. So if you go onto Instagram and you search for Culips_English, then you'll be able to find our account and you'll be able to see a bunch of the pictures that I took there and check those out.

Anyways, everyone that is it for this episode. Again, I'm not going to do a vocabulary lesson for this week, but we'll return with that feature next time when I'm back in my podcast studio. So until then, take care and I'll talk to you next time. Bye!

Episode credits

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