

## An Expat Life



### When did you go to Toronto and why?

I moved from Sydney in December 2014. There were new and exciting things happening in Toronto on the topics that were important to me. I wanted to take on some challenges in terms of education and building big telescopes.

### What's the key to adapting to a new city?

Understanding what the locals do for fun – getting into their hobbies, their weekend getaways, their sports, their politics, their food and their music.

### What do you miss about Australia?

We don't take ourselves seriously. It seems that in every other country there's this sense of formality, a sense of propriety, and in Australia that doesn't exist. People call a spade a spade.

### You're a rugby league fan. What's your team?

I'm a Manly Sea Eagles season ticket holder. I miss my footy a great deal; I watch it over the internet. It's pretty clear that when I'm not in the country they don't play as well. I miss my cricket, too.

## Bryan Gaensler

He's a self-described rugby league tragic and political junkie. So how's the director of the Dunlap Institute for Astronomy & Astrophysics at the University of Toronto dealing with life in Canada?

INTERVIEW BY DI WEBSTER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON GORDON

### How has life changed since moving?

In any career, when you've been doing the same thing for 10 years or so, you get stuck in a bit of a rut. In Toronto I've been forced to rethink all of the things I thought I knew how to do, professionally and personally.

### What do you like most about living there?

Australia is a very sensible, caring, functional society but sometimes people think that everything is too hard and it's easier to sit back and enjoy life. The US is a place where things get done but it's a very cutthroat, fierce, intense environment. Canada is the best of both worlds.

### What aspects of Toronto would you like to bring back to Australia?

In Australia, we talk about multiculturalism and diversity but Canada is a lot closer to living it. In Canada, no-one cares where you come from or what language you speak; they celebrate the fact that everyone is different in a way that's a little bit more mature than we do in Australia.

### What aspect of Australian life do you wish you had in Toronto?

The one drawback about Canada – no surprises – is the weather. The winter is very tough.

### When you think of home, where is that?

Sydney. Every time I see the Harbour Bridge or the Opera House on TV – I'm not a very sentimental person but even now I get a funny, peculiar feeling in my stomach.

### Where would we find you outside of work?

Learning to ice-skate.

### How's that going for you?

Not so well. Some good advice I got was to wear multiple tracksuit pants because you're going to get a wet bum.

### Do you have a favourite Toronto restaurant?

My son and I went to The Peartree in Cabbagetown (507 Parliament Street). It's a family-run neighbourhood restaurant that you feel helps build the community. And the food is delicious.

### What about a bar?

There's a pub down the road from the office called Prenup Pub (191 College Street) with a good menu and a range of beers and ciders on tap.

### What's the first thing you're going to do when you're back in Australia?

Probably have a can of Solo and some chicken and chips.

### From where does the universe look its finest?

The universe looks its finest from Uluru. I thought I'd been to a lot of places with dark skies but I really hadn't seen the night sky properly until I saw it on a dark, clear night next to the rock. ●