

This adventure began in Skibbereen on Wednesday 26th April. We boarded the bus at 11.15a.m for Cork. In Kent Station at 13h we discovered there was a bus directly (well sort of directly) to Dublin Airport at 14h. We had Pucchinio's sandwiches and coffee and worked out which stand the bus was departing from as it was not the one indicated on the board. A bus for Clonmel was departing from there. We wondered how many visitors who wished to go to the airport actually made an unexpected visit to Clonmel.

The seat beside the driver was occupied by a woman who seemed to have been vaccinated with a gramophone needle. She alighted in Cashel to everyone's relief only to be replaced in Cahir by a lady of the travelling community. This passenger wanted to share all her recent and not so recent family tragedies with us all. These included tit bits like "sure I can't stay there didn't I smash all them windows the last time I was there" Since we assumed she could not read she demanded from anyone with whom she made eye contact "where's this in the country?". She remained with us to the bus station in Dublin. The remainder 30mins trip was uneventful. Into our hotel for the night. Our flight to London was comfortable and efficient. We had 1hr to transit to our Tokyo flight. All went smoothly. We boarded having booked aisle seats.

We were all aboard ahead of schedule but alas the walkway to the plane would not release us to the skies. The ground staff huffed and they puffed and they couldn't pull it away. We were stuck fast... After about 40mins we were suddenly free and off into the beautiful morning sky we flew.

I was seated beside a lovely Japanese/English girl. The flight took 11hrs and was as boring as all other long haul flights we have ever been on. We arrived in Haneda airport at around 7 am. It took about an hour of queuing to have our visitors rail pass stamped. Once stamped we were free to start our Japanese adventure. We had booked an airbnb. The owner had sent us detailed instructions of how to get there. And with only one minor error (going two stations in the wrong direction) we walked to the apartment door. We negotiated the many locks and codes and flopped into our bed, thankfully not a futon, for three hours.

Flushing the toilet appeared to require a degree in electronics until we discovered a 'normal' handle on the side. All the other paraphernalia was just decoration. But there is one great design feature. The flush handle also turns on a tap over the tiny basin at the back of the loo, to rinse your hands. The water from there refills the cistern, simple.

We now have to brave the streets again and find somewhere to eat dinner. This should not be difficult as we are in an area called Gotande quite close to the city center.