

Then there was Brisbane. It had a lot of unknowns for us. We'd only driven through it once and didn't know the city at all. We kept being told in forums that Brisbane has no beaches. We had, however, have a work contact there.

For weeks, we agonised over whether to follow our hearts to Perth and move there with no jobs, or to take a risk by moving to a city we didn't know because there was a chance of a temporary job that may lead to something more permanent.

I'm a massive believer that you make opportunities wherever you go, so I'm sure we'd have been okay whichever path we'd taken.

### MAKING OUR CHOICE

Online research played a huge part in our decision making. We considered house prices, schools, cost of living, weather and job opportunities in both cities.

My husband, Matt, applied for lots of jobs in Perth while we did our research. If one had worked out we'd have moved there, but three months before our move - with no sign of a job - we made the call: we were following our hearts to Australia so we decided we needed to follow our heads and move to Brisbane.

We had many reasons for choosing Brisbane. The main reason was obviously work opportunities. Matt works in aviation and we knew Western Australia only has one major airport.

Although we hoped his Brisbane work contact would be able to help with finding







We knew we wanted a bigger house - it was part of our Australian dream. Perth houses are more expensive than Brisbane. Our research showed us that Brisbane offered us a more affordable family lifestyle.

We love to travel and although Western Australia has some of our all-time favourite places (Exmouth, Monkey Mia and Coral Bay), the east coast has so many places to visit with kids for holidays and short breaks.

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work, we also figured that if it didn't work out we could still move up or down the coast in Queensland or New South Wales for the right job.

It turns out that the aviation industry in Australia is competitive (it's a lot about who you know and most jobs aren't advertised), so going where our contacts were proved the right call for us. Matt was taken on as a casual member of staff for the airline where his friend worked. He is now a permanent member of staff there.

I'm not sure how easy it would have been for him to find a job in his industry in Perth, but without that personal contact it would have been much harder.

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Since we arrived almost three years ago we've visited Moreton Island, Fraser Island, Rainbow Beach, Tamborine Mountain, Byron Bay and so many more destinations – all of them just a short drive

The Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast are easy day trips from Brisbane. There are many big family wildlife attractions within an hour and a half of our house like Australia Zoo, Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary and Underwater World, as well as the big theme parks, Movie World, Seaworld, Aussie World and many more.

Both Perth and Brisbane offer pretty special weather but we liked the idea of the more tropical temperature in the Sunshine State.

### **DECIDING WHERE TO MOVE**

Once we'd decided Brisbane was going to be our new home, we started to research where we wanted to live. There is nothing more daunting than looking at a map of suburbs and having no idea which ones are good and which ones aren't.

Luckily our friends who had moved over a few years before helped us narrow things down. We knew that Matt was likely to be based at the airport for work, so that answered the main question: which side of the river to live on. We didn't want him to waste time and tolls crossing the river four times a day. The airport is on the north side, so that's where we focused our search.

We were quickly able to rule out the myth that Brisbane doesn't have beaches. If you travel to the northern or southern suburbs you'll find beaches. They may not be epic sweeping beaches like you get further up and down the coast, but they are still pretty bays and strips of golden sand that offer the beach lifestyle.

As we wanted to be close to a beach, that meant either moving somewhere on the Redcliffe Peninsula, which is about 45 minutes from the city (the peninsula is made up of suburbs Redcliffe, Margate, Woody Point, Scarborough, Clontarf and

family accommodation, access to parks, shops, cafes and schools), or moving further north to Bribie Island.

Bribie is joined to the mainland by a bridge and it has a sleepy feel to it. It is mostly made up of retired people and young families, and it is where you'll find Brisbane's closest surf beach (the beaches around Redcliffe are calm, sheltered waters more suited to paddle boarding). It has a nice community vibe, but it felt too

later, we expanded our search to take in the inland suburbs nearby as we found we could get a lot more house for our money by moving a few minutes from the beach.

#### **SETTLING IN**

We settled into our chosen area quickly. I started chatting to other mums at school, at playgrounds and in suburb Facebook groups. This introduced us to local families. We attended expat meet-ups, as

Sunday. It was another great way to meet new friends, and through this I became close with other school mums who I may never have met otherwise.

Three years on... I won't promise settling into your new home is easy - it does take effort – but almost three years in and we have a strong network here. I know I have a range of people to call on in an emergency, and likewise we're here for our friends too, many of whom don't have family close by either.

Was Brisbane the right choice? Absolutely! We love it here. All of the online research really helped, but we did overthink things a bit too much. In hindsight, I don't think it mattered which city we'd chosen - our minds were set on creating a new life for our family and I'm sure we'd have been as successful with that in Perth as we were in Brisbane.

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far to commute for us (probably one hour and 15 minutes to the city). We were also a bit worried about living somewhere with only one access road as we knew Brisbane sometimes has extreme weather.

All of the research didn't prepare us for how we'd feel about areas. While online they all sounded great, in reality we felt more drawn to some suburbs than others. You definitely can't make a decision based on what you see on the internet!

We quickly knew that Scarborough appealed to us the most and we were lucky to find a house for rent during our first two weeks here. When the time

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it was great to know other people who were going through what we were going through. We also signed our boys up to the surf club Nippers programme which



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