

THE Sunday Telegraph


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Flush
with
friends

**Kenny takes
a world tour P6**

Kenny's guide to the

Toilet technician

Kenny Smyth recalls great moments from his first overseas trip.

HEY folks, how's tricks? It's Kenny here. The good lads and ladies at the paper have asked me to scribble down some of my thoughts and memories from my trip around the globe.

When they asked me to write down the highlights of the tour, I asked if they had a spare 100 pages in their newspaper. They just laughed, which I took to mean no.

So here goes it: I'll have a crack at jotting down me thoughts without taking up ya year.

We kick-started the tour in Asia, visiting Singapore, Japan, China, Taiwan, Thailand and India. One thing I found that was a constant in all those countries was friendliness: they all had it by the barrow load.

Mumbai, in India, left me totally speechless: it felt like I'd been dropped smack bang in the middle of a human pinball machine. There were people, cars, cabs and cattle everywhere.

When I say cabs, I'm doing my best to describe what looked like half a scooter married to an Arnott's biscuit tin.

It was so busy, and yet everyone makes room for one another; I found it thrilling.

A little travel tip: when they tell you the meal is a little bit hot, it's like saying a flood is a little bit more water than you may need in a day. The old body dunny clock was reset for early the next morning, let me tell ya.

But, by jingoes, it was some of the best food I've ever laid lips on, and I've eaten a lot in my time, as I'm sure you can imagine.

Xi'an, in China, was also a bit of a standout as far as amazing experiences go. You know, they tell me it's one of the oldest places of recorded civilisation — just unbelievable.

We travelled hours off the beaten track to a little village and met people who power their lights and stoves from methane supplied by themselves and their pigs.

I kid you not. It's called biogas and it works a treat.

But more impressive than their bum-powered households was the greeting we received when we



Here's to ya: Kenny enjoying himself at the Oktoberfest in Munich

arrived: it was sensational. I felt completely overcome.

It was such a poor village, but they made us feel we were welcome to live there with 'em forever.

Next stop Germany, for the Oktoberfest in Munich. It was a bit like Disneyland with yeast and pretzels.

I've worked at a lotta festivals in my time, but I can honestly say that if you don't mind a beer and you like having a chat with total strangers, Oktoberfest is as good as it gets.

Everyone there makes the most of singing, laughing, thigh-

slapping and, of course, eating cheese, chooks and salted bread. They were all going for it like it was their last feed.

I even had a go at wearing a litre housing, or however you spell it. They're those funny-looking leather overalls-come-pants that stop at your knees, and apparently were going to help me blend in with the crowd.

Blending in wasn't the hard part — but after a few hours of drinking, I needed more than a litre of housing for my bladder, I gotta tell ya.

With Germany behind us and a

phone book full of new friends, we were off to Russia.

When we landed in Moscow, I dubbed the place The Land of Worried Looks, but I realised pretty quick it was my own nerves at work.

I guess my generation grew up with the fear of the Cold War, but the only thing at war here was my teeth chattering in the cold.

But growing up, my fascination with Russia was less about war and more about space travel: these people had cracked it for the first bloke in space, and good on 'em.

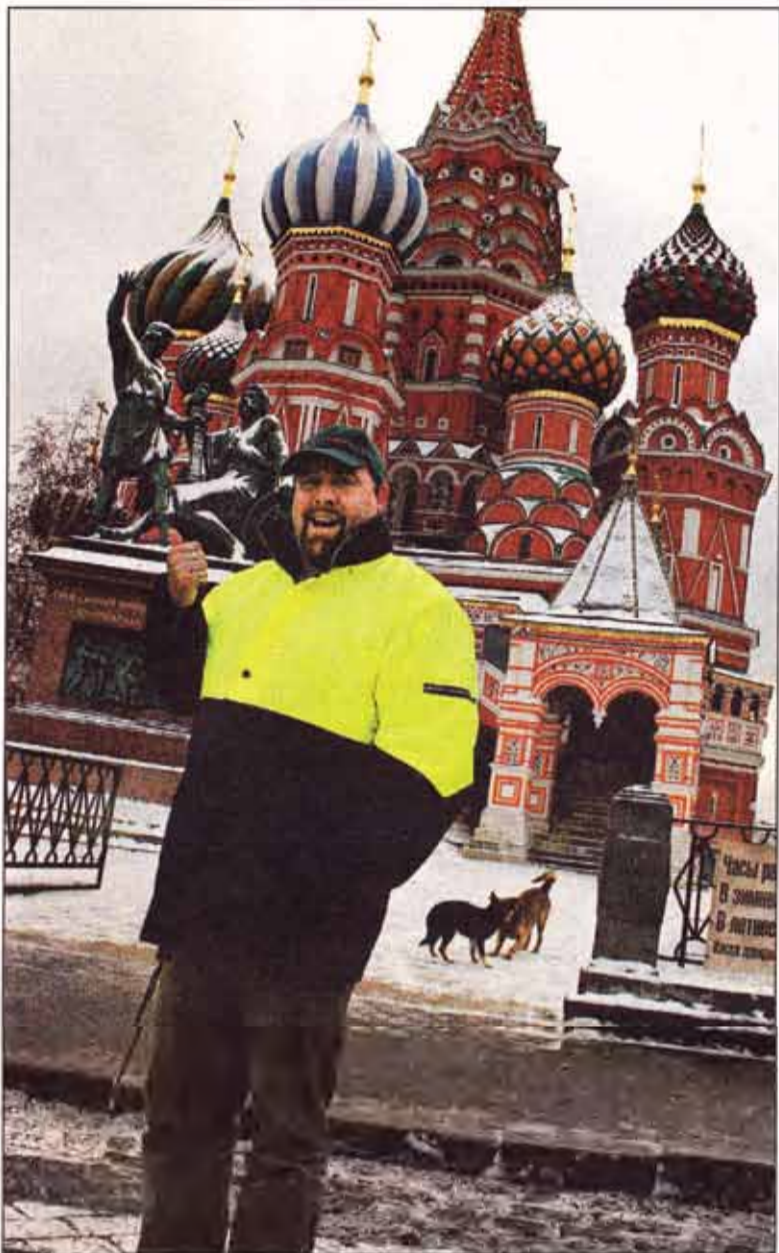
I arrived at the cosmonaut training centre early in the morning and, although it's a military base, the good people there made me feel completely at home.

I was shown all manner of amazing gadgets, gimbals and God knows what that help keep people floating around the Earth.

But my mission there was to learn about "going" in space, not floating in space, if ya know what I mean. To cut a long story short, I'll never look at a vacuum cleaner the same way again.

We then travelled to Egypt. Boy, do they know how to make

other lucky countries



stuff that lasts. The pyramids are something I've wanted to see all my life, and God knows how many people's lives were spent building 'em.

I also got a chance to ride a camel (old grumpy lumps) across the desert. I never thought I'd say a desert looked stunning, but here I go: "That bloody desert was stunning."

When you cop an eyeful of pyramids at the end of a long camel ride, I tell ya that stunning desert becomes a whole lot more stunning!

I also must confess that if ya

can handle a bit of bad breath, a camel makes a great mode of transport from A to B.

With the way fuel costs are going up, I reckon we should all grab a bucket of water and fuel up our one-humped Malvern Star. But keep a tube of Colgate in ya back pocket for old grumpy lumps.

Sweden was one of our last stops; we headed to the top of the country to a place called Kiruna.

My girl, Jackie, surprised me at the airport with a dog sled ride to our hotel. I felt a little sorry for the dogs at first, until the dog trainer told me they live for the



Bloody marvellous: Kenny outside St Basil's Cathedral, in Moscow's Red Square; piloting a camel in Egypt; sampling the local delicacies in Xi'an

thrill of running together. Can't say I understand that thrill myself; I've trained my body to avoid running altogether.

The sight of a sun-up and a sundown over ice-covered bush is just as pretty as it gets. Second only to Jackie, of course.

Looking back, I'm not sure if I could pick one country as better than any other; every one had a flavour to add to my travel soup.

A smile is a great thing to pack if ya going overseas: it did me a bunch of favours, I gotta tell ya.

We have an amazing backyard here in Australia, but I must say our neighbours' yards are every bit as fascinating.

So, if ya get a chance to travel round the neighbourhood better known as Earth, I say go for it.

It's fantastic, and you'll find that we're not the only nice people kicking around on the moon's big brother.

■ Kenny's World premieres on Network Ten on September 10 at 8pm.

