

# Me and my travels



Claire's enjoying life on the farm this month . . .

**G**'DAY! After a stressful search for a job, I'm currently enjoying farm life in the Queensland outback. Conveniently arriving just before harvest time, I was set straight to work.

My job is to make lunches and cook dinners for the labourers and deliver them by Range Rover to wherever they're working on the land. I herd cows and calves every morning on a quad bike and clean the house during the day. I also feed the chickens and dogs and take them for walks.



It reminds me of home, as I was brought up on a farm, and being here brings back lots of fond memories of me and my brother Rory feeding my dad's calves. The country life is so refreshing after months of partying, but my job can

get quite lonely because everyone else is outside all day. However, I am never completely alone. The house has lots of creepy crawlies, which took a coward like me a while to get used to! We have to wear shoes at all times because of 10-inch centipedes with long pincers that give a painful nip. The bathroom always has long-legged spiders gathered on the walls and at night the insects are attracted to the house lights so it's common for a few to fly into your dinner and get stuck. But my favourite 'house pet' is the frog which lives in the toilet. We can hear an echoed 'ribbit' and then up pops a vibrant green frog, which only disappears when flushed and poked with a brush. Even when we scooped it up and took it outside it managed to find its way back!



Australian farm life is full of little quirks — we drink and wash ourselves in rain water which is gathered in a big cylinder tank outside on the farm. It tastes metallic unless it's put through a filter. The tank fills up during storms, which are common during summer. I have seen a couple so far from the safety of the house. The lightning flashes for hours and as it's so remote, with flat land and open space, it looks like it is striking much closer than it is. The location also has stunning sunsets and sunrises.

The sights are fantastic but nothing will beat what I saw when I was driving down the farm lane at dusk — 9 or 10 kangaroos were hopping through the field of wheat beside me. It really hit home that I was in Australia! It was amazing.

Now harvest is over we will wake up when the sun rises, and start work at 5.30 am, stopping for a few hours at lunchtime, starting again from 4 pm till the sun goes down. It's far too hot to work in the middle of the day, with temperatures reaching mid-30s, and the flies drive you insane! Nothing seems to stop them crawling into our mouths, up our noses and in our eyes.

My next destination is Brisbane, and although I'm excited about city life, I will miss the farm! It's been a great experience . . .