

# CAPITAL TALK

**REBECCA Hossack** is a very cultured Aussie. She told **JENENA HOSJA** what she thought of life in the Capital.

**Name:** Rebecca Hossack

**Occupation:** Director of Cultural Affairs at Australia House

**Age:** 39

**Home town:** Melbourne

**Marital status:** Married

**What do you miss about home?**

Everything. This might sound silly but I worship the Australian physical environment and often dream about it. I especially miss the insects, the natural world and the buzzing of nature. I haven't seen any butterflies since I have been here. I also miss the green grass outside my house, the space, the fresh air and the eucalypts. The world is older and wearier over here and the natural world is dying. People in Melbourne are so friendly and they are always smiling at complete strangers.

**What do you like about England?**

I love its tolerance. I respect the fact that despite England's huge population, people are still given a go. I also like the way that you can do your own thing in England without too many people knowing what you're up to. People tend to gossip in smaller communities and I don't miss that at all.

**What don't you like about England?**

I don't like the crowds or the pollution. I also hate the traffic over here, I miss the wide, empty roads of Australia and the slow, relaxed and civilised pace of Melbourne. I don't like the way Australians living over here have lost their sense of humour.



**What's your advice to Antipodean newcomers?**

You need to give London a go. Also, try and get a job in the British community instead of the Australian ghetto. You really need to try to understand the British. If you are interested in art, go to the free weekend lectures at the Tate Gallery, the National Gallery and the Royal Albert. They provide excellent information on English culture.

**Have you seen any change since you've been in London?**

I have been here since 1980 and I believe that England has become more urbanised, it has become a cultural theme park. Everything is boxed and packaged and marketed for the tourists. A lot of English heritage has lost its romance and nearly every stately home has a giftshop.