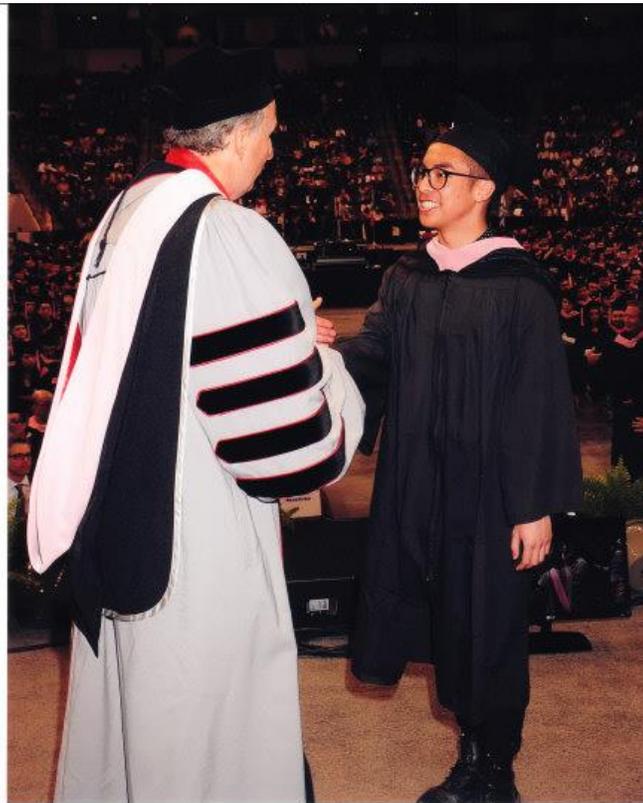


Journal

Boston Getaway with Auntie Inday (at Ryan's graduation at Berklee)

San Clemente, CA/ Boston, Massachusetts

May 7-11, 2015



Wednesday, 5/6 - Auntie Inday's Jetblue flight from Oakland 2:35 pm arrival at Long Beach airport. I was a bit late with traffic on the 405, Auntie was waiting at the curb. Long Beach Airport is about 45 miles from San Clemente, so drive home was about 45 minutes.

- short rest & freshen up, about 5:30pm we headed to the pier, 2 miles from the house, to Fisherman's happy hour special - chicken BBQ with potato salad and steamed vegies - \$4 per plate! sat there and dined by the water.

- of course, non-stop kwento, Auntie looked tired, slept early.

Thursday, 5/7 - lazy morning, light breakfast - coffee and homemade sweet bread.

- drove to Prince of Peace Abbey, Benedictine monastery in Oceanside, a half-hour from San Clemente

towards San Diego. Heard 11am mass with the monks, accompanied by organ music and Gregorian chant.

- lunch at Asian (Pinoy) buffet in Oceanside - kare-kare, ginatan langka, pinakbet, deep-fried salmon bellies - sarap!
- scenic tour of Dana Point Harbor , and up the hill overlooking the marina.
- bilis ng oras! Left past 7pm back to Long Beach airport for our 9:30pm red-eye flight to Boston. Grabbed a sandwich and drinks before boarding. Nice seats on Jetblue with lots of legroom. I managed few hours sleep on that 6-hour flight. Not so sure about Auntie.

Friday, May 8 - arrived Boston Logan Airport around 6am, took airport shuttle to rental car center. Picked up a really cute, almost new Fiat 500 - perfect for driving in Boston traffic!

- for breakfast, found an I-Hop in Cambridge, few minutes drive from airport.
- headed to Burlington Mall (huge mall with 200 shops!), while waiting for check-in at Crown Royale Hotel. Jewelry shopping at Macy's. Thai cuisine at the food court before checking in at hotel.
- nice roomy hotel, about 13 miles from Berklee, Ryan's school in Back Bay area of Boston. Auntie was knocked out! - didn't look like she got much sleep on the plane. When they told me at front desk I should leave soon for the 7:30pm Berklee concert at Boston U, I decided not to wake her up & let her rest. That was about 3:30 pm. I left at 4pm & it DID take me 3 hours(!) in Boston traffic with my very unreliable GPS, courtesy of my I-phone 5c(!)
- met up with the 2 boys (Ryan & Romy) at Agganis Arena, thank goodness I found nice place to park. Great concert put up by Berklee students, altho acoustics was not the best.
- the boys wanted to get dinner so we parked at the Prudential on Boylston & dined at Cheesecake Factory, had a good talk about Ryan's plans post-graduation.
- Auntie was still sleeping when I got back to the hotel, she didn't even order room service for dinner. I brought sandwiches & she wasn't hungry. We were both glad she stayed & got her much-needed rest.

Saturday, May 9 - Commencement ceremony to start 10am. this time we're not taking any chances, so we left hotel at 7am & made it to Agganis Arena in 20 minutes! Had breakfast at Panera's across the street. At 9am, the line was already forming at the entrance. Romy sat with us in section 112, 5 rows from the floor level, very good seating.

- Exactly 10am, graduates in their caps & gowns started marching in. It was quite an emotional scene for me. Ryan saw us in the crowd. There were only about 700 graduates. Beautiful ceremony, guest speaker was Deede Bridgewater, and one of the recipients of Honorary Doctorate Degree was Julio Iglesias. Followed by reception next door for parents & guests. Met some of Ryan's friends & his teacher Dr. Boulanger, who was so impressed with Ryan.
- For lunch, everybody was craving for Japanese food. Checked the internet, saw one in Financial District. Decided to park in the area, long walk to the restaurant, only to find it was closed! Just kept following the boys, probably ended up walking 2 miles - poor Auntie Inday in her hi-heeled shoes!

Ended up at Smith & Wollensky's upscale steak house - one of few places open, sorry for Romy, his treat! Food was great, and lively conversation, all in good fun. Just so glad Auntie was there!

- I can't even remember what we did for dinner. I think we skipped it & slept thru it!

Sunday, May 10 - we started out looking for Dunkin' Donuts, and after long search found it inside the big grocery store. Bought 1/2 dozen & made coffee in our hotel room.

- drove to Science Museum in Cambridge to catch 11:30am "duck tour" - on those amphibious buses that gives you a "land tour" of the main attractions in Boston & then takes you on the Charles River for the "water" portion of the tour. Great experience.
- I decided we could go to Faneuil Hall/Quincy Market for lunch. The duck tour conductor suggested we leave the car at the Museum of Science & take the subway - "it's not that far - only 2 exits". What he didn't say is we walk to the corner, up the stairs to the train stop. And then after getting off, walk 3 blocks to Quincy Market! Anyway, we made it there, finally decided on the famous Boston clam chowder. Then Auntie bought some Harvard T-shirts. Going back to get the car was another challenge - too much for Auntie, so we hailed a taxicab that took us back to Museum of Science parking.
- Ryan and his band were recording at Berklee studios that afternoon, we could watch the recording and he could give us a tour of the new building at 160 Massachusetts Ave. Again we were caught in traffic, got there almost 5pm, lucky to find parking off Mass Av. Met the 2 boys & we did get a glimpse of the studios on the basement.
- Everybody was still craving for Japanese food, so we started walking towards Haru at the Prudential Bldg, took the short-cut thru the Sheraton. It was just our luck that when we walked up the stairs to the Pru, there was a small chapel that was about to start 5:30 mass - the good Lord did not allow us to miss our Sunday obligation!
- Nice restaurant, great food, and Auntie got her shrimp and vegetable tempura! This was Auntie's treat for me for Mother's Day - Auntie, salamat!
- Going back to the car is another story. Auntie wanted to get some cough drops for her sore throat. Ryan said there's a Walgreen's on the other side of the Pru so we had to take another route - that took us about 4 blocks more we had to walk back to the car! Then we drove the boys to Romy's hotel - the Westin in Seaport district.

Monday, May 11 - Today we fly back to California with Ryan, & Romy goes back to Texas. I was planning to check Ryan's apartment early in the morning, help him pack & clean the place. But they had company Sunday nite (some farewell party, of course!) & people will crash & sleep in, so Ryan said 'not before noon!' which worked out just fine - we still had some doughnuts & had time to pack our bags before heading out. We found the McDonald's off the I-95 & got our lunch to go.

- We drove around the block a few times before we found an open metered parking spot near the apartment on Fenway. I warned Auntie about what to expect to see in a boys' apartment, especially

on finals' week. - - - She was not disappointed! Hardly room to walk - boxes in the hallway full of trash, clothes can't tell clean from dirty - on the floor, on the beds, on the tables . . . bathroom? Kitchen? What else!

- It didn't take very long with 4 ladies' hands to get some order and see the light of day! By 3:00 we got Ryan's stuff put away on the shelves or in the closet, and his suitcase ready for the 5:30 flight back to Long Beach!
- took us only 20 minutes to get to Boston Logan airport, return the car, get thru security, and to the gate. I felt so relieved once I got settled in my seat on the plane!
- We tried to sleep on the plane but half of the time still chatting, catching up on all these years. It was a nonstop 6-hour flight, and when we arrived at Long Beach, Mario and his boys were already in the baggage claim area to meet us & whisk Auntie off to LA!
- We all had a great time, and I'm glad Auntie really enjoyed. And I'm glad she was there for this big milestone and the celebration. This is an unforgettable, memorable week for all of us!

Auntie - OK ba?

- Auntie - I'm sure you also had a great time with everybody in LA - double treat for you!



By: *Ernie*

San Clemente, California

5/18/2015