

7/2/2023

Friends:

I got up early this morning and we don't dock for a few hours so I thought I'd write a short 'report' of our trip now that we are a week (of four) out.

We are scheduled to dock in St. John's, Newfoundland. It is about 8 AM here now. They have some strange time zones up here where you set your watch 30 minutes forward or backward at night! It is 3:30 AM PDT time now.

The trip has been excellent although some of the stops are kind of a 'why bother' for me since (as you could glean from my pix gallery) there were some rather boring towns. For those who like to see trees, rocks, and mountain overlooks it's great. But I like to noodle in town, talk to people, and get the 'feel' for the place. Jane and I are serious about moving to Canada if Trump is reelected. So far all the places we've been are too 'small' for us but today is St. John's which is about size of Sacramento or San Francisco.

My one complaint is that the internet is terrible at times... they are using an antiquated analog 'antenna' system with radio-routers on each floor... instead of the new Musk Starlight digital system. I spoke to the internet manager on board and she says it is a massive retrofit which has to be done when the ship is being either dry-docked or re-positioned... and it will be done.

We've met some nice people on board but mostly we eat by ourselves... because we like to eat early and get a window table for two. After dinner we go to one of the bars and have an after-dinner coffee or drink. (All booze is 'free').

Everyone is nice and friendly. When the dinning room is full (holds about 300 people) there is enough money in that room to buy this entire cruise line!!! We met one man (single, gay) who actually LIVES on cruise ships... goes from one to another. He said he owned a chain of restaurants but didn't say which one.

Weather has been OK... a bit of rain but so far the mid 50s. As we go north it will get into the mid 40s but it looks like we brought the right clothes although I did buy a ski hat which I should have brought from home. I also forgot to bring some running shorts and t-shirts to work out in the spa-gym or run the track so I got those in Boston.

The best perk on this ship (which we've never seen before) is nightly laundry. Put your dirties in the bag at night and they come back you around 4 PM the next day... washed, pressed, either hung or folded (your choice.)

We are in the back of the boat so we get a bit more 'rock n roll' than those in the front when sailing at night. It is like sleeping on a waterbed from the 1960s!

We sail a lot in dense fog so I can only hope that the icebergs show up on the captain's radar! The observation lounge is in the back of the boat, not the front unlike most boats. I'm told this boat is due for a refurbish in a couple of years.. or may be sold as it is too small to be as

profitable as the larger ships in the fleet which hold 800 and not the 450 on this one. (Only twice have we had more than 2 other people in an elevator!)

There are a bunch of first-time cruisers who have 'move on up' (like the Jefferson's) to this level of travel who have been on the mega-large ships like Carnival and Princess and they are 'wowed' by this level of service and absence of crowds. I can't quite relate and the stories they tell me are probably exaggerated.

I did some reading the other day online comparing Regent to other luxury lines and this is the only line that has a totally 'inclusive' fare... no drink-packages, wi-fi packages, dining room options, etc. All you pay for are 'premium' wine and booze. (They pour Jack Daniel's 7 but if you want Gentleman Jacks or maybe Woodford or Bullet, you pay about \$40 extra for a shot-plus. I'm good with what they pour. All of the named-brandies and liqueurs like Kahlua and VSOP and Amaretto are not extra.. Jane drinks Kahlua on rocks after dinner.)

The shows have been terrific... Broadway quality... which is not surprising since they are using professional singers and dancers, some of whom have had Broadway experience. They had a couple of 'guest' performers... a pianist and a comedian who were quite good as well.

The food! That is the 'pride and joy' of this line. It is like eating at a 4-star restaurant each day. We've not eaten at the specialty Italian restaurant or the steak house yet, but we plan to. Vegetarians would love this ship as they have lots of offerings including non-meat meat dishes (like the Blossom restaurant in NYC where they make veal out of saitan and you would never know it was not real meat.) And if you are diabetic or need a special diet... no problemo! Each morning I get an envelope with the day's offerings in the dining room for me to mark-up like "no salt" or "no sugar". They can make a chocolate mousse without sugar that you would not believe.. I order one each day for dinner... and their dining room computer keeps track of it so when you show up they look up your room number to see if you are getting special food!

Well, it is time for the breakfast buffet on deck 10 (although we may go for the sit-down dining room breakfast this morning which we have not done before.) Have a good day. Everyday is a good day for us!

-ANC

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