

## Day 02 – The Adventure Continues at Sea

Today was a light day spent at sea out of sight of dry land.

The water was a bit choppy, although far from terrible, causing this massive ship to sway and bounce more than I had suspected.

Amazing Hugh who has been known to get seasick standing on a dock however, was perfectly fine, and as for me, that's all for which I could ask.

Geddi Master who had suffered through rough seas in Antarctica with us 20 years ago, without anything but a smile, also voiced no complaint or concern.

As for me, although at times it felt like I'm a drunk on a sidewalk as I meander down the hallways, everything is what I like to say "all good".

First, an administrative item.

Although I paid a veritable fortune for high speed internet aboard the ship (nearly \$400), I am sad to report that it tends to be neither. Intermittent and very slow is the order of the day.

Accordingly, I noticed that some of my emails to my wonderful fellow travelers apparently did not land as intended, or at least not on time.

Kindly forgive your correspondent for this issue, as it is truly out of my control. Hopefully as we get closer to land, it might improve. If it does not, please just log into our website, and you will see every day's report by clicking on here:

<http://www.bobfarley.us/0800travels/833scandinavia/scandinavia.htm>

Simply select the day number, and you will see all the day's pictures, and at the bottom, a word file of our narrative that was supposed to be in your email. Click it on and it will pop right up.

Again, so sorry for the hiccup, and I hope it will improve as we go along.

We arose early, at 5 am.

I snuck in and showered and shaved while my companions were sleeping.

I had smartly packed a duffel bag, in which I offloaded my dirty clothes. Such should prove most helpful, and assure that when I check it at the airport as my second bag, my first suitcase will no longer be overweight for the trip home.

We'd all like not to repeat another Gus incident.

The weather wasn't too bad, about 65 degrees and partly sunny. A strong wind was blowing, which I am guessing was what made for the slightly choppy seas.

Sadly, my Dad was rather uncomfortable sleeping, complaining that it was really cold in our stateroom. He asked the steward for a blanket for tonight, which was quickly delivered. I also indicated to him that the room's thermostat had been cranked toward high air conditioning. I adjusted it back, something that's not my preference, but since he was shivering all night, we should make the accommodation. And no, polar bear Bob Farley did not set it on cold blast in the first place. Such was the setting that came with the room.

At 10 am we all swayed (kinda literally) down to the Theater to watch a presentation on our future shore excursions.

The presenter covered both Oslo and Copenhagen. It was interesting and informative, albeit somewhat superficial.

At the presentation we were told that tipping is NOT customary in either Norway or Denmark (good to know). Apparently there high prices everywhere in these very affluent countries have it built into the servers' salaries. Geddi Master expressed extreme appreciation at this news, asking if we could somehow bring this practice to Haganan.

When Dad and I drove up to Lake Ontario last week, we listened to three audio books about Oslo, Copenhagen and Stockholm. As might be expected, our audio books, as part of the "greater than a tourist" series, proved a much higher learning experience than the presentation. But that is not to say that the theater performance wasn't good too (especially the tipping advice).

After the theater presentation, we all returned to our state room, where I did a little work on my email, and the boy's took a little rest.

Soon it was noon time, and Geddi Master suggested we go up top to the Mast Grill and get hotdogs for lunch. The world's greatest hotdog conisouer, AmazingHugh pronounced the natural casing dog "very good", while Geddi Master seemed okay as well. Although a little spicy for my taste, I ate about half.

But off to the right was a serve your self strawberry ice cream machine. Now that was yummy.

I had a cone, Dad had two, and I think Geddis may still be up there (eating at least three – but in fairness they were pretty small). Isn't nice that all three of us are really boys at heart.

While up on the top deck, the wind was whipping pretty strong, placing an arctic chill in the air. So the three of us retreated back to our state room. While returning, we did notice that there were several people in the pools and hut tubs, which were visible to us on a deck below. Hearty souls all. For our part, we did not join them. It seemed a bit too cool for me, and I'm still of the opinion that hot tubs are basically human infused petri dishes.

Back in the room, I resumed working on my email, while Dad and Bob traveled down to deck three to speak with customer relations. There they discovered that collectively we had \$700 in onboard credits to use on the ship (of course like with anything else, restrictions apply). I had depleted the amount by purchasing a \$5 hair brush the night before.

We were, of course, originally supposed to have \$600 (\$200 a piece, as a kind of rebate). But I had complained after being put on hold for 6 hours with the cruise line back in March, and in an attempt to make me feel better, they awarded my account an extra \$100. Such is why the total inflated to \$700.

As the day was nice but cold, we all jacketed up and walked around the ship. Although the forecast had suggested rain, it was still mostly sunny, windy and pretty out. We wandered, watched the waves, and admired the countless amenities on this amazing ship.

At about three, Dad and Bob needed coffee, which I don't drink. So they left me on the balcony at our state room while they explored upstairs. There they found what they claimed were the world's best oatmeal cookies. Apparently they were so yummy, that when they returned, they immediately went back out again to find some more.

At about 430, they returned and it was time to dress for dinner.

It was Chic night, meaning dress your best. So Dad and I sported suits and ties, and Geddi Master sported his handsome black jacket and black shirt combo. AmazingHugh was kind of energized by the suit, choosing to violate his own rule, and telling bunches of people he was a Senator.

Our Chic trio ventured into the 14<sup>th</sup> floor dinning room for dinner. Dad and Bob had chicken, while I had what they called a minute steak. We celebrated Bob's birthday with fine desserts, as I grabbed a delicious blueberry cake. Although pretty much forbidden for me, it was worth the decadence. It was extremely yummy.

Next the three of us went down to the fifth deck to watch the Shamrock Tenors. This amazing singing group from Northern Ireland was simply fantastic. The day's pics, which can be found here, contain two movies, one of the windy seas and the other of the Irish Tenors:

<http://www.bobfarley.us/0800travels/833scandinavia/Day02/>

They are both worth the viewing.

The Tenors ended at about 8:30 and then the three of us wandered over to the shops to pick out a present for my mom.

Dad found something special, and Geddi Master, the skillful negotiator that he is, helped my Dad to bargain down the final price. For his effort, Bob was able to receive from Bishoy the Egyptian salesman, a special gift of jewelry.

Bishoy was an interesting guy. A graduate of the University of Indiana, he worked for the American Embassy in Cairo. He also told us that he is a proud Christian, something that is both rare and difficult in Egypt.

Speaking perfect English, he was a delight to learn from, and from all appearances, is the kind of hard working guy we need as a new citizen. He invited all three of us to stay with him at his home if we ever travel to Egypt. We exchanged emails, and gave him a kind, but indefinite, maybe.

Purchase in hand, we all three returned back to our stateroom. There Dad and Bob packed it in, and went to bed, thermostat correctly set for the night.

Not feeling tired, I returned back to the theater for the second show of the Tenors. This time I sat three rows back. They were just as wonderful, as I belted out the tunes I knew along with them, at their invitation. In a theater filled with hundreds of Irish or Irish heritage patrons, believe me, I wasn't the only one singing and clapping. A good time was had by all.

Speaking of clapping, we came to learn that Geddi Master does not clap. He has no objection to me and Dad clapping out our heart felt exuberance, but Bob said only monkeys, otters and humans clap, and he does not wish to be confused with the other two. Dad indicated that both monkeys and otters are pretty smart, but Bob replied, that they weren't smart enough for him.

After the second Irish music show, I went up to the sky bar to watch the music show for a bit (about 15 minutes) and enjoy the beauty of the evening. I then took a walk around the deck, warmed by my sports coat. Although almost 11 it was still twilight. Interesting place these northern climes. It was still rather cloudy so no chance it appeared for early star gazing or to look for the northern lights. Oh well, maybe later in the week.

After my walk I returned to our state room where my Dad and Geddis were fast asleep. It was good to see them comfortable in their night chamber. It has been a busy and tiring few days, and they earned the rest.

And tomorrow we hit Oslo and the fjords, and it promises to be a busy day.

Hoping to talk to you about that adventure tomorrow.

Thanks so much for joining us. It really means a lot.

Your Bob, the Excited Traveler.