

## Days 04 and 05 - The Denmark Adventure - Beautiful Copenhagen

My Dear Fellow Travelers:

Days four and five saw us explore the beautiful nation of Denmark and its magnificent capital city of Copenhagen.

Another wonderful place of kind, friendly people who are very proud of their heritage and their modern, clean, prosperous, and active city.

Up at 5 am on both days we arrived in port around noon on Thursday and departed around 2 pm on Friday.

Big news update for me on Thursday evening (afternoon your time), as we are delighted to report that my beautiful, darling, daughter Katie gave birth to our beautiful, new grandson, Theodore Jay Marcou, 7 lbs 13 ounces. Pics of my incredible, first grandchild, in all his charm and handsomeness, can be seen in the day four photos (<http://www.bobfarley.us/0800travels/833scandinavia/Day04/>) at pics 0562 to 0565, and on day five photos (<http://www.bobfarley.us/0800travels/833scandinavia/Day05/>) at pics 0775 and 0776.

AmazingHugh and I could not feel more proud or happy at the arrival of our new great grandson, and grandson, respectively.

This has been quite a cruise, which, in the Viking tradition, has spent a great deal of time at sea, punctuated by intermittent adventures on dry land, only then to return to the boat. I keep looking for my horned helmet, shield and sword, but I think the Geddi Master hid them on me (for my own protection). Good guy that Geddis.

The weather has been pretty good, with mostly partly sunny skies, and temperatures in the 60s and 70s. There have been some occasional showers, but then it will clear up to relative blue skies again. I'd say we've been pretty lucky.

As we cruised into the beautiful port of Copenhagen, we were greeted on our port side (that's the left for you land lovers) by a huge line array of spinning, off shore windmills.

I know others might have a contrary opinion, but I think they are rather beautiful.

They are located just off shore of Copenhagen's designated industrial island, on which also sits a huge resource recovery, generating, incinerator which burns garbage for all over the Baltic region. It supplies a large portion of Copenhagen's electrical power. And being on an island, it also has the added benefit of having the particulate (which I understand is rather minimal) blow out to sea, from its tall, white, smoke stack.

Like Norway, Denmark is also a peninsula, but also surrounded by a series of islands. Indeed, Copenhagen is on one such island.

Like the Norwegians, the Danish are also very proud of their Viking Heritage, and are similarly a happy, sea faring, adventurous, friendly, determined people. And despite the fact that the Viking Culture may largely be attributed to Norway, Denmark had an undeniable role in the Viking Age, and in many of the contemporary accounts of the Viking Raids, those commanding such activities were most often referred to by those being invaded as Danes.

More specifically, Denmark is a Nordic Country residing north of Germany, and south of Sweden, with its west coast on the North Sea and its East Coast on the Baltic Sea. Its peninsula is known as Jutland. Copenhagen is on the island known as Zealand.

Although its German influence is pronounced in both its Danish Language and in many of its commercial preferences (nearly every car on the road is a Mercedes, Volkswagen, BMW or an Audi), its affinity is without question more with its Nordic/Scandinavian neighbors.

Its peninsular principality with surrounding islands, however, is not its only territory, as the constitutional unitary monarchical state also includes the semi autonomous territories of Greenland and the Faroe Islands, both of which are in the North Atlantic.

With a land area (outside of Greenland) of 16,000 square miles, Denmark is slightly larger in geographic size as the State of Maryland. Greenland adds another 836,300 square miles, which is 170,000 square miles larger than Alaska (the U.S.'s largest state). It is interesting to note that in 2017, the United States offered to buy Greenland from the Danes, but the offer was firmly declined.

With a population of nearly 6 million people, Denmark is also about the size of Maryland (which has 6.1 million). Its Capital, Copenhagen has a population of 800,000 and a regional population of nearly 2 million.

During the age of the Vikings, the unified Kingdom of Denmark emerged in the 8th century as a proficient maritime power. In 1397, it joined Norway and Sweden to form the Kalmar Union, which persisted until 1523.

The remaining Kingdom of Denmark–Norway endured a series of wars in the 17th century, all of which saw substantial defeats, and territorial cessions.

In 1849 Denmark adopted a constitutional monarchy, with a parliament, which exists today. Like many of its Nordic neighbors, Denmark has high taxes and broad social programs, with generous government based health care, pensions and social services.

Like Norway, Denmark remained neutral during World War I, and tried also to do so during World War Two, until it was swiftly overrun by a Nazi invasion in April 1940. Also like in Norway, during German occupation, a strong resistance movement was active throughout

the Country. Indeed, after the German invasion, the highly popular Danish King Christian the Tenth, publicly declared that he would wear the Star of David, commanded by the German occupiers, if the countries Jews were ordered to do the same. Fearing societal uprising after such a statement, the Germans chose not to enforce this edict in Denmark.

Denmark is a highly developed country with a high standard of living. Tipping is frowned upon as insulting to workers. Denmark is also founding member of NATO and the United Nations, and maintains close political, cultural, and linguistic ties with its Scandinavian neighbors, Norway, Sweden, and Finland.

Denmark's northernmost point on the Jutland peninsula is Skagen point at 57 degrees latitude, and which we will visit at the end of our trip.

Upon pulling into port Thursday around noon, we ventured off the ship on our own and took advantage of the free, but lovely, shuttle bus that took us directly into the center of downtown Copenhagen.

AmazingHugh, ever attentive, found the shuttle bus ride to be almost as interesting as a tour, and asked our Russian bus driver several questions along the ride. My Dad has such a beautiful way with people. His sincere, friendly personality is almost always reacted to in kind. There is never a time he does ask a person how they are, where they are from, and little bits of personal, complimentary observations. People just love AmazingHugh, and its really a delight to be in his company. Its easy to see how he was so successful in public life for over a half century. And for me, no one ever had a better Dad.

When we arrived at the City Center, we departed the bus, and decided we should take a walk toward the Danish National Museum. On our way, we saw the famous Danish Canals, the Parliament Building, where I took a picture of Dad and Geddis in front of the door (Senatorial standing does have its privileges), and the museum. In front of the parliament, is another statue, this one with a previous King Christen (a very popular Danish royal name). Dad kept using the popular Irish expression, "look at the boots on em". My response back was simply, "well you know, its good to be king".

The National museum was very impressive. A three story building packed with exhibits all in both English and Danish. We all blanched at the 120 Krogen entrance fee, until we learned that it only translated into about \$18 US dollars. AmazingHugh and Geddi Master still found that figure to be a little high, but happily handed over their credit cards none the less.

The museum tracked Denmark's history from the stone age to the present time, with countless exhibits and artifacts for viewing and examination. The best exhibit room was an entire wing devoted to Viking raids and conquests, together with the remnants of an authentic 100 foot Viking ship, complete with battle armor. It was both scary and impressive. There was also a room by room film presentation (a kind of moving theater) that detailed an

actual Viking raid, and what the combatants actually went through, as well as an enormous interactive map, that tracked Viking Raids and conquests from the late 700's until the 1100s. This exhibit was nothing short of fascinating, and I for one, was so glad we were able to see it.

When we emerged from the museum we found it had rained, and hard, while we were inside. AmazingHugh and Geddi Master are indeed lucky ducks, as I had brought two very small umbrellas in my jacket pocket, neither of which were needed.

By the time we walked back to the bus, it was about 4pm, and Dad resumed his chat with our Russian Bus driver, who's name was, that's right, Vlad. Happily chatting all the way back to the ship, my Pops now has another new friend in Copenhagen.

After we dressed for dinner, we went to a sit down restaurant aboard the ship. I got a steak and AmazingHugh and Geddi Master ordered chicken. Mine was fine, but Geddis shared that Dad's and his chicken's died in vein. This cruise has overall been fantastic, but sad to say the quality and preparation of the food has not been anything to write home about (as I write home about it to you).

Perhaps one of the reasons we were not really able to enjoy our food too much was that I, and perhaps my Dad and Bob to some extent, were all nervous over my daughter Katie.

As I previously mentioned, as we sat at the dinner table, she was in an Austin hospital, about ready to undergo surgery for a caesarian section to deliver my grandson. I, at least, was on pins and needles.

After the three of us eat some apple pie for dessert, we ventured to the Ship's theater for a singing, dancing and acrobatics show. As a lawyer, all I could think of was the liability, and the potential accidents waiting to happen. Most of the time, however, all I could do is text back and forth to Austin, checking in on Katie's status.

We left the show early, and returned back to our state room. Although it seemed like hours, in much less than that, I received a text and a picture of my beautiful new grandson. Both he and Katie were doing fine. I at last exhaled a big sigh of relief.

The next morning, I awoke elated. Showered and dressed at 5am, I ventured up to breakfast at around 630.

We were all back at the stateroom by 730am then down at the theater for our shore excursion by 8am.

After checking in and being assigned to the number 28 bus, we soon were allowed to depart the ship and boarded the bus. Dad again made sure that we had the seat behind the driver,

but much to his sadness, Vlad had been replaced by Michael from Denmark. Michael, despite Dad's overture's, was much less chatty.

Our new tour guide however, Hans, was excellent. Friendly, understandable and knowledgeable. A native of Copenhagen, he had had a career with IBM, including a few stints in the United States, to his credit.

As we made the trek from the boat back into town, Hans regaled us with several stories and interesting facts. Its nice when the guide has a pride and concern for his city.

Soon we were at our first tour stop. The Little Mermaid.

Copenhagen, of course, is the home town of the world famous story teller and author Hans Christian Andersen.

Born in 1805 and living until the age of 70, Andersen created some of the greatest stories ever. The Emperor's New Clothes, Thumbelina, The Ugly Duckling, The Red Shoes, The Snow Queen (from which Frozen was derived) and, of course, The Little Mermaid.

Andersen was an incredible story teller, whose tales always included a moral of upbeat principle. In the 1960's Danny Kaye and Walt Disney renewed interest in Andersen's volumes of work. A museum to Andersen exists at his former house, and although we would have loved to see it, sadly at two hours away by car, it just wasn't doable.

But here, along the waterfront of Copenhagen is the statue of the little mermaid.

Although rarely visited before the famous Disney movie, today it has proven to become one of Copenhagen's most prominent picture stops. Our Day 05 pics begin with some shots of this remarkable lady.

From a dock nearby the Little Mermaid Statue we boarded a local tourist water taxi, that would take us on a water based journey along the Copenhagen water front and canals.

Here we would see the beautiful Oprea House (where each glass panel will play a musical note when struck), the Blox Building (the home of the Danish Architectural Association – who built the 6 story building to look like Lego Blocks), the Black Diamond (the Royal Danish Library – whose walls are designed to reflect off the water below), Christen the IV's Brewhouse (where here the former 17<sup>th</sup> century king would buy every soldier a gallon of beer for their service every day), Frederik's Church (with its enormous green dome), Amalienborg (the the official residence for the Danish royal family), the Mearsk headquarters (the global shipping conglomerate – with its seven ray star symbol), and Bergum's Yellow Mansion (a typical palatial home of Dutch Nobility).

The boat tour was loads of fun, and we were able to get a great feel of the city by traveling the harbor and canals of Copenhagen. It really showed what a maritime culture it has, with so many private boats, boat slips, house boats, and commercial and pleasure craft. The canals make a statement how old the city actually is, and how people traveled in the day and age before cars, paddling their boat around town just like in Venice, Italy. Great cities do copy great cities.

After the boat tour, we landed, and much to the Geddi Master's non delight, took to foot, to walk around the city a bit more. On this walk we saw the royal palace and its grand statues. An amazing square dominated by four incredibly large old, royal buildings. The scene really brought me back to a smaller version of Versailles, which I visited last year. But this should not prove surprising, as these palaces were built about a century after Versailles, and even less rich royalty like to copy more wealthy royalty.

We next walked around the near by marina, which is surrounded by high end restored condos. It was a beautiful, sunshiny day, warm and pleasant, and surrounded by my 70 closest new friends from the tour bus.

A few steps from the palace, we made a detour to get some of the most delicious Danish pastry I have ever eaten. No wonder they named it after this place. The crust, the filling, the texture, and the taste were simply perfect. To say it was yummy would be an extreme understatement, and I think it has ruined me in respect to all future Danish, because I really am afraid that nothing will ever compare.

Soon we returned back to the ship via our bus, and now Dad would chat non stop with Hans the tour guide. After identifying him as a new friend, since the bus driver was the strong silent type, AmazingHugh did it again, and now has a new bff for life. He even invited him back to New York, where he said he would give him a personal tour of the Senate. There is a reason we call him AmazingHugh.

After the tour, Dad of course was referring to Hans as the best tour guide ever, and a man that we can understand. He would ask all we would meet, "Didn't you just love that tour guide"? "Wasn't he just the best"?

If Dad likes you, he will always let the whole world know.

Back on the ship it was now about 6pm and time for dinner.

We went upstairs to the trough, and we ate together. Afterwards, we watched the Piano Man Show in the main theater and then went over to the deck 14's sky club, a top floor lounge, surrounded by floor to ceiling windows. There we clapped the sun down (as my Mom would say) off the port side of the ship, and admired the Oresund Bridge that spans over 8 miles between Denmark and Sweden.

Our cruise ship, the Silhouette, is so tall, that it seemed like it would strike the bridge's bottom as we sailed underneath it. We cleared it, but boy it seemed close. Pictures of all of this are available here:

<http://www.bobfarley.us/0800travels/833scandinavia/Day05/>

Its quite amazing to sail underneath a bridge that used to require people to travel hundreds of miles by boat prior to it being built.

The sky lounge, from which we watched the bridge, is really quite a wonderful place. Every night it hosts trivia, games and some sort of music and dancing. Indeed, one cannot walk 50 feet on this ship in the evening when some signing group or band is not performing. And they are all good.

But one added benefit of the sky lounge is their rocking chairs. Dad and Bob both love them, and nearly fall asleep in their comfort when they are able to snag one. It really is good to see them so happy and relaxed.

And now is as good a time to mention as any, Bob and Dad's new preoccupation with oatmeal raisin cookies. There is a spot in the 14<sup>th</sup> floor cafeteria that bakes fresh cookies. Dad and Bob discovered they have soft, hot, gooey, oatmeal raisin. Its right next to the ice cream stand. So now, ever free moment, they sneak up to grab "the best cookie in the world", and when they don't have them (or sometimes even when they do) a strawberry ice cream cone. Yep, as older men, sometimes we do revert.

Before we sign off for the day, let me take a moment, however, to offer just a brief comment on the people we have encountered. Like the people of Norway, the people of Denmark could not be more physically attractive, nor nicer. They are so honest, that even the thousands of bicycles one sees people riding everywhere, are stored all along the street without locks.

What a beautiful place, filed with beautiful people. And that term applies in every sense of the word. I have not admired people more since I visited Ireland back in 2016. Scandinavia is simply a wonder of the world.

Well, that includes our report on our Copenhagen Adventure. In just a few days, we will return to Denmark, to visit its northern most city in Jutland, Skagen.

Our next report will be on Stockholm, Sweeden.

I hope all is well with all of you in the meantime.

Thank you all for reading.



My Warmest Personal Regards,

*Bob*

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The Excited Traveler

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