

12/20/23

**Hawaii Circle Cruise
Holland America Eurodam
March 1 -18, 2020**

February 29, 2020.

Flew to Salt Lake on the Delta Connection. The Salt Lake airport is a mess due to construction of the new terminal. Concourse E, for Skywest and the Delta Connection, has been demolished. The airplanes park out on the tarmac and passengers are bussed to the end of Concourse D. Then it is a catwalk that is rather steep that zig zags up about four switch backs. Rather difficult for people with mobility problems. We lucked out in that our connecting flight was at the top of the stairs.

The flight to San Diego was packed to the gills and not all that enjoyable. A smaller Airbus had been substituted. Our seat assignment had been changed, which did not make me happy. However, we ended up in aisle seats across, so it worked out. An old gent was in Larue's seat and his wife was in the middle. After much confusion she got them to move over. She found out that he had been skiing in Utah and they were on their way home. He was 90 years old.

At the baggage terminal the old gent couldn't find their baggage. All he knew was that they were blue. He was all over the place looking at every bag. When asked for his baggage claim ticket's he had no idea where they were.

We called for the hotel shuttle and were told to get a taxi and they would reimburse us.

Later we had a pizza and large salad delivered and called it a night.

Day 1, March 1, 2020. Embarkation

Cool and windy morning in San Diego with the threat of rain.

The hotel shuttle delivered us tot the cruise ship about 11:45. We signed LaRue in for wheelchair assistance and she was #73 on the list; This is an old people's cruise, and most seem to have mobility issues. We have Priority boarding, but the attendant said it does not work for wheelchair assistance. So, we wait patiently for our turn. When it was our turn we had the same old gent as last year! He was proud to point out his wife, daughter, and granddaughter checking passengers in. All in all it was a two hour boarding process and the slowest we have had in years.`

When we got to the cabin we had an invitation to a champaign reception at 2:30 in the Crow's Nest Lounge. We only had about an hour to get something to eat in the Lido

Buffet.

Then we had to go to the lifeboat drill. It is a pain but required. After the drill the Captain announced that we would have rough seas during the night and the next day. Be careful moving about the ship.

Went to dinner about 7pm in the main dining room and got a table for two. After I booked our cruise we splurged for the new Club Orange which has priority dining and an enhance menu. I am not sure if the menu was any different. It had a white menu cover with orange lettering instead of the black menu cover, and we got a free welcome glass of champagne. I had a corn and green chili soup, shrimp diablo main course and butterscotch sundae for dessert. The shrimp diablo was excellent. LaRue had a green salad, Peruvian baked chicken, and butterscotch sundae. She said her Peruvian chicken was good.

We retired early and the ship started rocking and rolling all directions.

Day 2, March 2, 2020. Sea Day

I was up early and went up to the Lido to get a coffee and assess the weather, which looked extremely bad. It was difficult walking and the outside decks were closed due to the wind, and the ship was plowing through heavy seas. I staggered forward and took the elevator up to the Observation deck and the Crow's Nest lounge to look at the displays. Saw we were only doing 14 knots in a quartering wind. The outside temperature was 54 degrees. No walking today.

About 8am I was starting to feel crappy. We both took a Dramamine and I laid down. By 9am I was ready for breakfast and we went down to the main dining room. I had Texas toast French toast and LaRue had a skillet thing. The elevators are now stocked with barf bags.

Our booking included a complimentary lunch in the upscale extra charge Pinnacle Grill at 12pm. It is located midship and it was an adventure getting there. We counted only about 12 people having lunch. One lady said she had a reservation for 12 people and only four showed up. The others were all sick. It was a great lunch. I started with crab cakes and LaRue had a spinach salad. We both had the beef tenderloin with Oregon blue cheese and asparagus spears. LaRue had a berry sorbet and I had vanilla ice cream for dessert. Excellent lunch.

We made it back to the cabin and settled down to read. My reading turned into a two hour nap, which was aided by another dose of dramamin

Went to dinner in the main dining room and shared a table with two ladies from New York City, except one spends the winter in San Diego. We both had the spring roll appetizer. I had catfish for the main and LaRue had shrimp jambalaya. Both were good. We both had ice cream with berries for dessert. The menu was rather mundane but acceptable.

Day 3, March 3, 2020. Sea Day

Up early and up to the Lido for coffee. The sea is a little better and I could sit outside on the aft Lido deck. Went up the stairs to deck 10 to walk and the wind was extreme. Got to the forward observation lounge and the door was locked, so I proceeded aft to find a way inside. I finally found a door unlocked, but with a rope across. I ducked under the rope and got back inside. Took the elevator down to deck 3 to see if I could walk on the verandah deck. All doors were locked, so I gave up on walking outside. Walking inside was a challenge and hard on the knees, so I gave up and drank coffee on the aft lido deck, which is sheltered from the wind. Two different ladies came out with camera in hand and asked me where the sun would be coming up. I said, "no sun this morning" and they gave me a funny look.

We had breakfast in the main dining room and shared a table with an old couple from San Diego that just travel together. They had the regular menu and LaRue asked if she could look at it and compare it with our "enhanced" Orange Club menu. They were the same except for color. So much for our "enhanced" menu. I had the classic eggs benedict and LaRue had the English breakfast that she likes.

It is now 11am and the sea is calming down to about 6 foot waves and fewer whitecaps. It is overcast with rain clouds around. Things are looking better.

Lunch in the main dining room and we both had a green salad, fish and chips, and vanilla ice cream with mango sauce. All was very good. Shared a table with two ladies from Mississippi. One lady informed us that she likes Holland America but favors Cunard. We didn't say anything.

Formal night tonight and the clocks also go back one hour at 2am. Had a nice dinner in the dining room. I had a shrimp cocktail, a green salad, beef tenderloin with peppercorn sauce, and jumbo shrimp. For dessert I had a strawberry Romanov Sunday. Larue had escargot, a shrimp cocktail, rack of lamb, and a chocolate fudge thing. It was a nice dinner.

Day 4, March 4, 2020. Sea Day

Extra hour of sleep, so was more than ready to get up at 6am. The sea is calm and very little wind. Got a decent walk in on deck 10. Only me and one other guy for a couple of laps. It is cloudy with rain showers all around, but that is ok.

We went to breakfast at 8am and was at a table for two in a rather busy area. LaRue ordered lox and bagel and two poached eggs. I ordered pancakes and two eggs. Her lox and bagel came out and I sat waiting as she slowly ate waiting for me to get my order. When she finished the waiter brought her two poached eggs and my pancakes and two eggs. I guess the waiter considered the lox and bagel a starter and everything else was the main course. I was not too happy.

Got back to our cabin and our attendant came to make up the room. I stepped out on the patio. It was nice and warm and the sun was out. Really nice so we sat outside until he came out to wash the outside glass. It had salt deposit from the spray of the last two days.

Got a surprise in our mailbox. It was a gift notice of \$200 credited to our account from our booking agent, Expedia/AARP. That and \$200 for being a Carnival Corporation shareholder, and another \$100 promo credit, gives us a \$500 cushion on our account.

I am having a blast from the past reading a book I brought along. It is "The Supermen – The story of Seymour Cray and the Technical Wizards behind the Supercomputer". It goes back to when Bill Norris was at ERA and Univac in the 1950's and the hiring of a new engineer, Seymour Cray. Bill Norris promotes and sells stock on the basis they would form a new company and build a revolutionary computer. That led to the formation of Control Data and the first transistorized scientific computer, the CDC 1604, designed by Seymour. It was 10 times faster than the best IBM had to offer. This was followed by the CDC 6600 that was 50 times faster than the CDC 1604, and then the CDC 7600 that was 10 times faster than the CDC 6600.

My first job out of college in 1964 was as an operating system programmer on the CDC 1604 in Las Vegas. Up to then my experience was all on IBM computers. I took the job with great apprehension. I quickly fell in love with the CDC 1604 and then the CDC 6600, and CDC 7600 in Livermore. I eventually signed on with Control Data in 1969. I got to spend two weeks at Seymour Cray's legendary Chippewa Falls Lab in Wisconsin when we were wringing out serial #2 CDC 7600 for the Livermore Lab. To have had professional and personal interaction with Bill Norris and Seymour Cray is something I will never forget.

At lunch today they were featuring fish and chips and a couple of other regional Mexican dishes. Even though we had fish and chips yesterday we had it again as it is very good. I started with a strange Yucatan lemon soup and had a Mexican chocolate torte for dessert. LaRue started with a seafood ceviche and had a coconut flan for dessert. The dining room was jammed and was at a table for 10. It was difficult communicating. I could only hear the couple across from us that were from Albany, New York.

Very nice dinner tonight. I had a bean and pasta soup, prime rib, and a tort for dessert. Larue had a weird salad, oso bucco, and an ice cream Sunday. Had a nice table for two in our favorite area with head waiter, Boubon, and wine sommelier, Kristi, that we like. Boubon is from Jakarta, with Holland America since 2005, and with Norwegian previously. He hung around after we finished eating and we had a nice chat. He said there are only 1900 people aboard and the capacity is 2500. I would guess the coronavirus scared people away. Will try to get Boubon's area again.

Day 5, March 5, 2020. Sea Day

Smooth sea today in the moderate 3-5 ft category. Overcast sky. Started walking on deck 10 and it started sprinkling rain. Moved down under the lifeboats on deck 3. Sailing along at 18 knots with a really blue sea. Temperature was 66 degrees.

Shared a table at breakfast with a nice couple from near Houston. LaRue had a weird bread pudding that she liked, but I thought was more like a dinner dessert. Must be a Dutch thing. I had a made to order omelette that was good.

Walked around the ship this morning to see what's happening; Watched a class making lei's and sat in on the presentation on tours in Hilo. We don't plan on doing anything in Hilo ,but it was a good update.

Sat a while on the patio this morning and it was pleasant. Saw several dolphins cavorting around, and was glad to finally see some sea life.

Shared a table at lunch with a couple from San Diego. We both had a seafood thing for an appetizer. I had penne vodka and LaRue had a half pulled pork sandwich. Dessert was a tart me for me and LaRue had an ice cream thing. Went back to the cabin, sat outside, and read.

Started a new book, "Never Turn Back – The Life of Whitewater Pioneer – Walt Blackadar". Blackadar came to Salmon in 1949 from New Jersey and was a young surgeon that loved the outdoors, whitewater rafting, and later extreme kayaking. People in the book are people we knew in the past. He became famous for one he did solo in Alaska and died doing what he loved on the South Fork of the Payette River. He was getting older and having shoulder problems and was doing "one last trip". The people of Salmon thought he had a death wish all along.

Got a table for two at dinner with Boubon and assistant waiter, Dede, again. Ordinary menu so I went to the everyday side and had French onion soup, New York strip steak, and a cherry crisp for dessert. It was a nice steak and perfectly medium rare. LaRue had a farmers market salad, braised veal with polenta, and triple chocolate Sunday for dessert. Dede asked what we had done during the day and I told him we got off the ship for a while and went to Walmart. He liked it. He is young and likes to visit. He

remembered that I had prime rib the night before, so he asked if I have beef every night. I told him I choose beef if it is the best thing on the menu in my opinion.

Day 6, March 6, 2020. Sea Day

Smooth sea this morning with rain lurking around. 70 degrees outside at 6:30am. Doing 18 knots. Not much activity around the ship. A bald and bearded black guy was doing something like namaste on deck 10. He had three rows of bird tracks tattooed all the way up the back of one leg. Don't know what that means. He had his arms up in the air waving around, and then a rainbow showed up. Whatever he was doing seems to work.

Had breakfast with a couple from Nashville who retired from long haul trucking because of health issues. Heard all about their Cocker Spaniel dog, Blackjack. Blackjack likes bananas, chases coyotes and deer, and acts like a pit bull. We didn't linger after breakfast; I had banana bread French toast and LaRue had yogurt and berries, cottage cheese fruit plate, and a bran muffin.

Read on the internet that airline executives are in a panic and cancelling flights because jumbo jets are flying empty. Wholesale cancellations. We may have to hitchhike home, when and if, we get to disembark.

The dining room was very quiet at lunch. Wonder if it is because of the coronavirus thing? Nobody seems to be talking about it or worried about it so far. I had spaghetti Bolognese, and LaRue had a toasted tuna sandwich. We both had lemon merengue pie for dessert.

The sea is picking up this afternoon with whitecaps and the wind blowing hard. The ride is not bad. Sure is a big ocean out there as far as you can see. Have not seen another ship since we left San Diego.

Our preferred table for dinner was not available. We got the one next to it with different waiters. The head waiter was a young guy from Bali and goes by Summer. Of course we had to tell him that we have a granddaughter named Summer. Really a different menu. I settled on a spicy shrimp taco for an appetizer and a three cheese enchilada with black beans for the main course. Summer was thrilled that I chose the enchilada and said it is his favorite. LaRue had pea soup and then pot roast. I had a strawberry tart for dessert and LaRue had crème brulee. My choices were excellent and better than I ever get in Mexico. Summer wanted to bring me another enchilada, but I declined. LaRue liked her choices also.

Our assistant waiter is an origami expert and we have been watching him other nights. He did a dog and a rose for us and told us he does 27 different animals. Really a talented guy. Then Summer did a couple of card tricks that were amazing. We were

really entertained. Clocks go back one hour tonight.

Day 7, March 7, 2020, Kona, Hawaii

In Kona on the big island this morning. Overcast and 72 degrees. It is a tender port so difficult to get off. I will probably go by myself later this morning.

I went down to the tender at 11:30 and most people were off that were getting off. Only about 20 people so had lots of room. The lifeboats are being used to tender and they are newer, much larger and nicer than any we have been on. They still are not fun boarding.

I walked around a bit in town just off the pier. Nice area with mostly tourist shops and eating and drinking places. Priced the fish and chips that were \$15, which is reasonable for Hawaii. Deluxe hamburgers were around \$12-15. Just looked and went back to the tender about 1pm. I had taken everything out of my wallet in case I got robbed or lost it. So, I didn't have my ID which was a problem coming back through port security. Told the security gal that it looked like I would be living in Kona. However, she had a passenger list which she checked, and I was good to go. Full lifeboat going back and was amazed at the number of wheelchairs and walkers. A lot of those people didn't look like they should be tendering.

Got back to the cabin and LaRue was on the patio watching whales showing off about 300 yards out. Looked like young ones having a good time.

We went up to the Lido deck to get something to eat. I had a salad and a hotdog and LaRue had a large salad. It was vanilla cream cones and cookies to finish on. Very pleasant and relaxed up there, as a lot of people are off the boat. Came back to the cabin and I read out on the patio where it was around 80 degrees. Watched for whales ,but they must have been taking a nap.

Underway for Honolulu at 5pm. Looks like rain ahead. The Captain announced rough seas tonight.

Headed to dinner and the ship was listing. We were taken to the table we had the night before. There were a couple of extra items on the enhanced menu. One was leg of lamb which LaRue had, and a salad 1st course. I had chicken soup and huli-huli chicken. We both had cherries jubilee and ice cream for dessert. The ship was rolling and jerking around, and we sort of staggered back to our cabin for the night.

Day 8, March 8, 2020, Honolulu, Hawaii

The weather is 72 degrees, overcast, and 54 per cent humidity this morning.

Shared a table with an interesting couple from New Hampshire this morning. Seems as all they do is travel and cruise and haven't been home since October. They were in Hawaii for a week and flew to San Diego to get on the ship to come back. Doesn't make sense to us. When we get back to San Diego they fly to North Carolina for something. Every exotic place we talked about they had been there. We were the last people in the dining room so figured we had better move on. Would like to meet up with them again to find out a little more.

Grazed through the Lido for lunch.

I got off the ship to scout things out. Nothing in the terminal but a big empty warehouse. Walked towards town but all I saw was some office buildings and two car dealerships. The prices on used cars didn't look bad. It started to sprinkle rain so turned around and came back.

Finished the Dr. Blackadar book. It is rather disturbing to learn that a pillar of the Salmon community turned into a law breaking hippy like pot smoking drunken ego maniac on the kayaking trips. The other good surgeon, Dr Goggins, was also a drunk. He would come to Patterson and get blitzed. He was at our house drinking one night and told me to take the stitches out of Dad's arm since I said I wanted to be a Doctor. I declined after looking at the stitches. It changed my mind about being a doctor.

Before dinner we went to the Pinnacle Lounge. Two old couples were having a loud conversation about flying home, which we could overhear. They found out they would have to pay \$750 each in government fees if they left the ship to go home. They were pretty upset about it and decided not to do it. They had already made airline reservations on Hawaiian Air and had to pay a cancel fee to them. We got a notice from Delta that for the next year we would not have to pay a change fee, so that is good.

Had our usual table at dinner. Komang, the origami expert, makes an animal for us every night and we have a zoo in our room. He also had a toothpick trick and some card tricks. We both had a shrimp and mango salsa appetizer, Korean beef short ribs, and a banana split for dessert. The short ribs were a surprise. It was two long thin beef strips heavily marinated in soy sauce, and who knows what else. About 4 bites was enough for me. Komang was concerned and wanted to get something else but I was done. LaRue didn't like the banana in the banana split as they seemed to be sautéed and mushy. I thought it was ok.

Day 9, March 9, 2020. Honolulu, Hawaii – 2nd day

Light rain this morning and socked in over the mountains. Our cabin looks out on the Navy island and Battleship Row. I got a picture of a rainbow over it all this morning.

Sent it off to all.

Quiet in the dining room at breakfast. People off on tours, etc. The gal at the front desk is outgoing and friendly. LaRue asked if she went out last night as the crew members could get off the ship. She said they went to a strip club and then her eyes got big and said, "everyone was in their birthday suit!"

LaRue had a Swiss muesli and berry thing and I had a ham and cheese skillet with two poached eggs. Mine took forever to come out and I called the waiter over to complain. He put his hand up to his ear like he was talking on a radio to the kitchen. He mimicked a complete conversation with static and everything. It was good when I got it. We talked about catching the free shuttle to Hilo Hattie's to shop today but decided it is best to avoid crowds of people. No use getting unnecessary exposure.

Nice to have full time internet on this cruise. Before I would purchase a day at a time when I needed it, as it is expensive. On this cruise they offered a pre purchase of the premium plan for \$210, so I prepaid it. When we boarded the cost of the premium plan was \$30 per day which would be \$540 for the 18 day cruise. Really don't need the premium plan that includes streaming. The one day social plan for email that I have always used is \$20 per day. I brought my Roku streaming device for TV but the flat screen TV is mounted to the wall and I can't get to the USB connection. Tried it on my laptop with no success. However, the TV is not too bad and there are lots movies. LaRue watched Mr. Rogers and really liked it.

Our next scheduled port is Lahaina on Maui which is a tender port. We have been notified that the sea will be too rough to safely tender so we will go around the island to Kahului where we can dock. Ok with us. We were there before on the Queen Victoria South Pacific cruise. Not a lot to do but it is scenic and we can get off the ship easily if we want.

It has taken me 8 days to get the settings properly set to synch my fitbit watch and my cell phone to display the correct local time. Finally saw the metered connection to the internet was set to on. Turned it off and my fitbit updated to the correct time.

Hit the Lido for lunch and I had a build to order pizza, that took 12 minutes, and a salad. LaRue had a tuna sandwich. Then it was an ice cream cone. The ice cream is really good.

The captain came on twice this afternoon with announcements and each time we feared the worst (Covid). The first one was about the change for the next port, and we will depart at 10:30pm. Later the 2nd announcement was about enhanced sanitary procedures. Less self serve in the Lido and more enforced use of the sanitizer stations. Also wash hands often. We breathed a sigh of relief.

Had dinner at our usual table in the dining room. Told our waiter no card tricks tonight, so we would not be touching cards. Not many tables occupied around us, so that was good. I had andouille sausage with swiss chard. broth soup, crispy sweet and sour shrimp with rice, and chocolate panna cotta. We shared an extra appetizer which was Kauai style Poke (raw fish). LaRue liked it. Not so much for me. She had roasted baby beet oak leaf, scallop something that was great, and pineapple crisp with vanilla ice cream. Called it a night.

Day 10, March 10. Kahului, Hawaii on the island of Maui.

Rough night at sea last night but we were in bed and was not a problem. Pulled into the small deep water port harbor with a narrow rock jetty entrance about an hour behind schedule. Had a tug nudging us on the starboard bow to keep us off the rocks and then up against the pier. Nice little place and devoid of high rise buildings. Big white breakers rolling onto the beach but do not see any surfers.

Enhanced sanitary measures in the Lido this morning. Mandatory squirt of hand sanitizer upon entering. Before it was your option. No more self-serve which has always been limited on Holland America anyway. Could still operate the lever on the coffee urn so that is a loop hole.

I had pancakes and berries and LaRue had yogurt and berries for breakfast in the dining room. Sat with a couple that now live in Temecula, California. We asked where they lived before California and they didn't answer. Wanted to know what we did for a living but didn't tell us what they did. Only said they cruise a lot. The next time someone asks me what I did for a living I think I will come up with my "convenience store – I rob them" line. LaRue doesn't like it, but I do.

This is an industrial working port with a lot of container activity. I got off the ship and it was a mile walk through a narrow fenced walkway to a small strip mall. Wanted to find a place to have a beer but couldn't find anything. Another two miles or so to a large mall, so went back to the ship.

We went to the Lido for lunch. I had a bratwurst and some pasta. LaRue had roast turkey and some veggies. After that we sat out on the aft deck in the sun where it was close to 80 degrees.

Usual table at dinner tonight. The head waiter, Summer, is always glad to see us. We see him working in the Lido at lunch when we are in port and he always stops to visit. Komang had the deer he made for us the night before as he thought we forgot it. We hadn't forgotten it. We have enough animals. I had a salad, wellington beef, and a blueberry pie Sunday. Larue had seafood ceviche, spicy chili prawns with black rice, and the same dessert. We also had a third entrée to share which was roast duck, as we wanted to try it. Not too bad but seemed to have a fatty taste to me.

Day 11, March 11, 2020. Hilo, Hawaii

Last stop in Hawaii today. Some big clouds and sunshine and warm. Another industrial port and 2 miles from town. We both had a fruit plate for breakfast and LaRue had the English breakfast she likes. I decided on something different which was a skillet with scrambled eggs, spinach, cheese, mushrooms, and salsa. It came on a huge bed of rice that was enough to feed a Japanese army. I picked out what I liked.

About 10am I got off the ship to scout our options and how much walking would be required. By the time you walk the length of the ship and through the big empty warehouse I decided it would be difficult for LaRue. The options after you got there were buy a tour, get a taxi, or a free shuttle to town. I came back and LaRue decided to stay on board. I went and got the free shuttle to town. When I boarded I said to the driver, "are you our capable driver?" He came back with, "There are no capable drivers in Hawaii, but I am the best with a learners permit". The free shuttle to town was really a sales pitch by a tour guide. He was good and made the tour sound wonderful. We could stay onboard for \$50 per person and visit several places of interest. Most of us got off in the old town waterfront area, which was 5 miles or more from the ship. I inquired what the schedule was to go back to the ship and was told the last bus is in 15 minutes. I headed out looking for a place to have a beer and the only place outside of a nice restaurant was closed.

This area of town was not too exciting. After a while I headed back to the taxi stand where I got off the bus. There was one taxi and he said the fare would be around \$10. I jumped in. An old couple walked up and the driver said he was already hired. Then he asked if I would share, and I said I would. We got to the ship and the meter showed \$10.80. I asked him how sharing worked and he said, "You get a break. It will only be \$9;80 per person". I shoved \$11 at him. The old couple stood there fumbling for money and complaining about the cost. I am sure they thought they would ride free or maybe half the meter fare with me.

I walked 11,000 steps by noon.

We had lunch in the Lido as the dining room is closed. I had Chinese and then a taco. Hard to get a good taco when you can't build it yourself. LaRue went through the American line. We finished off with an ice cream cone. Vanilla for her and chocolate for me.

Socketed in rain as we departed Hilo at 5:30pm. The Captain said it would continue through the night and then we would have moderate conditions all the way to San Diego. Glad to hear that.

The dining room was packed for dinner compared to other nights. One of the three tables we like in Summer's area was held open for us. He was happy to see us and

began to laugh about our encounter when I got back on the ship after going to town. The ship was having a crew only emergency drill. I got to the elevator and there was a crew member in a life jacket and official hat saying something to me. I couldn't understand what he was saying and moved closer to hear. He took his hat off and then I recognized Summer and he had a good laugh. We both had a really good shrimp and crab louis for an appetizer. It was like a shrimp and crab cocktail with an excellent sauce. LaRue had roast turkey and I had the cracked pepper crusted flat iron steak with shrimp rosti that sounded great. The flat iron steak was three thin strips identical to the Korean beef short ribs I had one other night. Four bites were enough and the shrimp rosti was weird. Strange beef on this cruise. I had chocolate mousse and a macaroon for dessert and LaRue had a Sunday.

Day 12, March 12, 2020. At Sea

Clocks went forward during the night. Moderate sea and wind with big rain clouds about this morning. Fairly easy walking. Our speed is 16.8 knots and we have 17,000 ft of water under us; I think the depth indicator wasn't working on our way to Hawaii as every time I looked it said 72 ft.

We had a table for two for breakfast. We didn't ask for a table for two but got it. It cuts down on people exposure. Had a Belgian waffle with strawberry compote and LaRue had Texas toast French toast.

The mass tour today of the kitchen was canceled for sanitary reasons. We had a special invitation to a behind the scenes ship tour tomorrow. We just got a call telling us it is cancelled due to the virus threat. We were wondering about it and fine with us. Just saw that Princess has suspended operations for two months. Suspect more cruise lines will follow. Too bad as we saw that Princess was offering book 1 week get 2 weeks free. Use Promo Code Corona.

We were invited to the Mariner's luncheon today where the Captain gave a short talk. The menu was limited to two choices of soup or salad and fish or beef. We both had the shrimp salad and the almond crusted ono fish. Also, got a couple free glasses of champagne. LaRue didn't care for her fish but I thought it was ok.

It was Gala night for dinner which means dress up night. Got our usual table. We both had a giant prawn cocktail and asked for cocktail sauce with it. Summer brought a big bowl of it. I had filet mignon Oscar with crab which was rather suspect. LaRue had excellent roast rack of lamb. She says the lamb is always good. Holland America must have changed their beef supplier as what I have had is not near as good as past cruises with them. Her lamb was supposed to have eggplant with it, but it was missing. She asked Summer for a vegetable and he came back with a huge plate of three different vegetables. The dessert menu was strange and mostly nothing we could recognize. I settled for green velvet cake with matcho and yuzu crème. LaRue had

almond fruit cake, no sugar with cherries, berries and Frangelico whipped cream.

The late show was at 9:30 and was Strings Alive – Multi instrumentalists; LaRue didn't want to walk that far and had a movie in mind. I changed into comfortable clothes and went alone. The gal on the violin was Irish, high energy, and good. Afterwards I walked through the casino and it was busy. Stopped and listened to guy at the piano bar and again at the BB King's Blues Club, which was black rhythm and blues singers swinging and crooning. Not my style and only stayed a couple of minutes.

Day 13, March 13, 2020. At Sea

Sea looks pretty good this morning. Kind of deceiving as there are big swells and a roll that throws you off. Speed is 16.1 knots which is 18.6 mph if I remember right. Azipods are both at 1 degree and 90 rpm. Sea depth is 19,766 ft. Temperature is 70 degrees. It is cool with a rather strong wind. The sky is overcast.

Had breakfast with a nice couple from Indiana that we enjoyed. I had v8 juice, sliced banana (most every morning for both), and classic eggs benedict (good). LaRue had a bran muffin (most every morning), fruit plate, and swiss muesli that she likes.

Lunch in the dining room was a seafood fest and people were lined up in a double row to get in. We ended up at a table for 10 as the small tables were filled. The menu was fantastic. The best we have seen on this voyage or any voyage for a long time. The appetizer list had about 6 choices, the main course about 8 choices, and dessert was about 4 choices. We both had the shrimp and crab on an avocado for our appetizer. LaRue had scallops and chips. I finally settled on white cheddar lobster mac and cheese that was excellent. The best mac and cheese I have ever had. LaRue had strawberry sorbet and I had a strawberry tart for dessert.

The lady next to LaRue was born in Farragut, Idaho and graduated from high school in Lewiston. She said she met a couple from Lewiston on this cruise. He knew her old high school boyfriend and worked with him at Idaho Fish and Game for over 20 years. One couple was from Indiana and the other couple from Houston. A lot of good conversation but difficult to hear. It was a great lunch.

Came back to the cabin and perused the afternoon activities and decided to read.

The Captain came on with an announcement at 6pm. When he comes on, we listen, expecting the worse. He is clear and concise and repeats the message. The ship will cease operations when we arrive in San Diego and everyone booked for the next cruise is required to debark. It was a stunner, but at least no quarantine, so far.

We went to dinner at 7pm and it was a very subdued atmosphere. The crew is in a state of shock, and it shows. This is their livelihood and they support people at home.

You can see that they are hurting. We feel so bad for them.

Our next port is Ensenada and the betting is that nobody will be allowed off the ship. We are hoping that is the case. We might not even be allowed into port for all we know. The Captain assured us that we will complete this cruise and debark in San Diego. Since we are in the middle of the Pacific Ocean that is nice to know. We have heard through the grapevine that the ship will not be allowed to stay in San Diego after we debark. Too early to say what will happen. The ripple effect of all this is unfathomable.

Day 14, March 14, 2020. At Sea (3rd day – this leg)

Cruising along at 16.4 knots this morning. Overcast sky and 65 degrees. Sea is ok with a lurch and roll once in a while.

Our waiter in the dining room was out in space somewhere, but everything came out ok. I had Belgian waffles with a side of ham. Could see the ship was listing to my right as my syrup ran to the right. LaRue had the ham and cheese skillet with two poached eggs. Had our usual starters.

Speaking of “right” nobody has brought up politics on this cruise. Only two short comments, and they were on the conservative side. I did see an elderly couple wearing Trump caps.

Quiet day cruising. We watched the movie Midway. Just so happened I am reading a book on my e-reader about a Navy torpedo squadron operating in the Midway and Guadalcanal area in 1942.

The dining room was not open for lunch, so it was the Lido. Waited until 1pm, and it was not so crowded. LaRue had a tuna sandwich and I had a burger. Topped off with ice cream cones. After a while on the outside aft Lido deck we went back to the cabin to read and nap.

At dinner the staff was more normal after getting the news yesterday. They have not heard yet what will happen after we debark in San Diego. Summer said he has been in touch with his family often to let them know he is ok. LaRue had calves liver and I had a farafal pasta thing. For an appetizer LaRue had salad and we shared coconut crusted scallops. I also had prosciutto and melon. LaRue had a Sunday for desert and I had a tequilla pear with berries, pomegranet, and orange segments. Most unusual dessert I have ever seen, and good.

I went to the late show featuring four young guys called the Dutch Tenors. The theater was only about 20% full. They sang classical stuff. Stuff that I didn't recognize and it was slow and boring. LaRue watched a Harrison Ford movie, Six Days and Seven

Nights. She thought it was a new movie, but I saw it 10 years ago when we got Dish TV.

The Dutch Tenors were on the ship to Honolulu where they were to switch with a group on the Grand Princess for the return trip. The Grand Princess is in quarantine. They stayed on the Eurodam and put together a new performance for our return trip.

Day 15, March 15, 2020. At Sea (4th day - this leg)

Clocks went back an hour last night. Cooler morning at 60 degrees. The sea is glassy smooth with rolling swells and the weather is high solid overcast. Doing 17.4 knots (19.9mph) with 16,077 ft of water under us. Nobody out on deck this morning except me. Saw what looked like a white piece of paper float by. Yesterday I saw the back of something big and then nothing more.

Went to the dining room for breakfast and Heri, the guy that staffs the Orange Club desk in the evening, was standing out front. He always laughs and jokes with us and is fun to be around. He escorted us in and told the gals at the desk that our cabin number is 4152. It amazed us both. I had the all American breakfast and LaRue had raisin bran cereal.

The Captain in his noon announcement said that Ensenada would be a service call only. Nobody will be allowed off the ship. No complaints from us.

Lunch was a brunch with an eclectic menu with items like seafood poutine and corn pancakes. We both had a baratta (sp) and tomato salad not knowing what it was. It was a scoop of a really soft white creamy cheese that was disgusting for me but LaRue ate it. She had strip loin of roast beef with Yorkshire pudding and I had a ham and gruyere cheese monte cristo sandwich with fries. We both had apple crisp and vanilla ice cream for dessert.

I went out on our patio after lunch to investigate the white stuff on the deck. It looks like salt crystals and they are fairly large. I am sure it is salt and would like to taste it to find out. Decided it would not be wise to do that. I took a picture of it.

The last gala night tonight. We both started with the jumbo shrimp cocktail, then had the filet mignon and lobster tail. The beef was not so good, but the lobster was excellent. We both had a chocolate cake like thing for dessert.

The late show was a repeat so skipped it. Stepped out on the patio and it is raining. The sea is picking up.

Day 16, March 16, 2020. (5th day – this leg)

Rocky night last night. Woke up at 2am and we were really rolling. Socked in this morning and the rain has stopped but is all around us. The sea is up and makes walking somewhat unsteady. 60 degrees out and we are doing 16.4 knots. As we get closer to Mexico hoping to see whales migrating north. However, the whitecaps make it difficult to spot them.

Shared a table this morning with a guy from Vancouver, B.C., that we have seen around, and a lady traveling alone that is from Volcano, California. We had not heard of Volcano and she said it is about 150 people near Jackson, which we do know of. LaRue had a one egg classic benedict and I had a build your own omelet. We both had a bran muffin that are very good.

Got back to the cabin and listening to the news. Nothing but doom and gloom with everything shutting down. Wish we could just stay out here in the ocean, and cruise in circles, as everything on board is fine so far. It will be strange debarking in San Diego with nobody arriving at the pier for the next cruise.

The lunch menu featured Indonesian cuisine. It was quite a menu that I have copied below. We were deciding what to have and the waiter said, "I bring it all", and he did. It was mostly all good. The two appetizers and the dessert came out separately and everything under entrée came out on one big plate.

Rijsttafel

Hidangan Pembuka Appetizer

Gado Gado

A refreshing green salad topped with tofu, steamed green beans and hard boiled eggs, tossed with creamy peanut dressing

Soto Ayam

Lemon grass and lime leaf flavored Indonesian chicken soup with glass noodles finished with a hint of coconut milk

Entrée

Indonesian Rijsttafel

Nasi Goreng, Fried Rice Ayam Goreng, Fried chicken

Beef Sumatra, Spicy beef Sumatra style Babi Kecap, Pork in sweet soy sauce with sambal Sate Ayam, chicken sate Orak Arik, Shredded omelet Acar Ketimun, Pickled cucumber

Pisang Goreng, Fried Banana

Pelengkap – Condiments

Krupuk – Shrimp crackers Sambal Kacang – Peanut sauce Sabal Pednas – Spicy chili sauce Kecap – Soy sauce

Hidangan Penutup – Dessert

Puding Gula Jawa. Rice pudding with caramelized brown sugar

Went to the crew show at 3pm in the theater featuring the Indonesian crew members. A lot of talent and a very good show. Our head waiter, Summer, was one of the stars. He narrated a big dancing production and was one of the two lead singers in the closing production. He was the only performer from the dining room staff.

Dinner in the main dining room with Summer. Relaxed atmosphere and many empty tables around us. I had a caramelized onion soup with gruyere croutons, lemon shrimp fettucini, and a Sunday for dessert. LaRue had a salad, salmon, and the Sunday. The food is good and I passed on the prime rib. The crew is still wondering what will happen when we get off the ship. The scuttlebutt is that they will get to hang out and have their meals on the Lido deck. They are excited about that.

Got back to our cabin and heard a large crash on our patio. Our patio extends out about 2 ft longer than the decks above us so anything falling from above would land on it. I turned on the outside light and looked out expecting to find something, but there was nothing there. Glad of that.

Day 17, March 17, 2002. At Sea until 3pm then Ensenada (day 6 – this leg)

Cool morning at 55 degrees and chugging along at 16.4 knots on fair seas. The sun is peeking through in places. It is nice since we have not had much of it on this trip. Saw my first ship at sea this morning and later it was nice to see mountains in the distance.

A simple breakfast, as eating and the breakfast menu is getting old.

The dining room was featuring halibut and chips at lunch. At a table for 10 with the other people from Arizona and Colorado. Everyone is fearful about going home.

We were pulling into the dock about 3pm and the emergency signal came over the loudspeakers. We looked at each other expecting, “this is a drill for crew only”; Then an announcement, “fire and smoke in the engine room – emergency crews proceed to the engine room and emergency stations”. That gets the heart to speed up and all kinds of things flash through your mind. We were in the process of packing up and continued as we waited for whatever was coming. It was about 30 minutes before the next announcement of “emergency is over – crews stand down - there was smoke in an incinerator flue that has been taken care of;” Whew, we dodged a bullet.

Day 18, March 18, 2002 San Diego

Debarked leisurely and caught a cab to the airport for a late afternoon flight. Checked in and were told if we hurried we could get on the 11am departing flight for Salt Lake. Hurried to the gate and were told we were in 1st class and we boarded. We had heard there was an earthquake that morning in Salt Lake. The severity was confirmed when we sat on the ground for an hour. Then we were told to deplane and wait in the terminal as the airport in Salt Lake was closed. We finally took off about 5:30pm. We made the connection with the last flight to Twin Falls.

We formed many friends among the crew of the Eurodam, so I follow the ships wanderings on cruise mapper daily. The only thing they knew when we got to San Diego was that for the time being the crew would stay aboard and conduct deep cleaning. They would get to use the lido deck for meals for a change of environment. The word was the ship would cruise south to Mazatlan or Puerto Vallarta.

I started tracking their position and they departed San Diego and headed south at a speed of 7 knots. This continued until they reached Puerto Vallarta, Mexico on Tuesday, April 24th. The next day it showed them cruising out of Puerto Vallarta and headed towards Cabo San Lucas at 3 knots. The Oosterdam had been anchored at Cabo San Lucas for several days but now headed north up the coast of Mexico.

This morning it shows the Eurodam still off the coast of Puerto Vallarta and heading towards Puerto Vallarta at a speed of 4 knots. It looks like they are cruising close to Puerto Vallarta until something sorts out.

Interesting times. One of my friends emailed that he wasn't bored. He was just wondering why one bag of beans contained 7,456 beans and the other bag contained 7,398 beans.

End