

North Atlantic

July 20-August 24, 2024

Living the Dream (Cruise)?

Sue and I recently experienced a [thirty-five day cruise](#). Does that sound like a dream to you? Well, this tome is an attempt to describe the experience fairly and, to the best of our ability, factually. Of course, I had intended to write a travelogue like the ones I've done before. After more than a week, I have been unable to determine the format for this travelogue, since this cruise was Sue's first, only my second, and it was FIVE WEEKS on the Holland America ship [Zuiderdam](#). Sure, it was great for a while. Food and drink were available almost anytime. The staff took care of the laundry and cleaned our Ocean View room every day, including preparing for our bedtime.

Our room was small (about 200 square feet). It had a window, so we did have a view from the starboard side of the ship. We tried to spend as much time outside as possible while onboard. There was a promenade deck that provided access for walking around the ship or just lounging on a deck chair. However, many times, especially when we were at sea, it was too cold and windy to enjoy those things.

The food onboard was mostly good, but we soon learned that there were some things to be avoided. We developed an almost daily plan for how to start the day; i. e., coffee in the Crow's Nest followed by breakfast at the Lido Market. We usually had dinner in the Dining Room but we were able to have one dinner at [OTO](#) in [Reykjavik](#) and another at [Newfound Sushi](#) in [Corner Brook](#). Lunches varied between the Lido Market and the Dive-In (good hot dogs) which was near the Lido Bar to accessorize with a cold beer. Drinks were also readily available since we had purchased a drink package that offered fifteen drinks (alcoholic or otherwise) valued at fifteen dollars or less for no charge. I'm sure we never exceeded that number, even including water and coffee.

We also purchased several excursions, some of which were fascinating ([Bird Islands of Cape Breton](#), [Among the Icebergs](#), [Vigur Bird Island](#), and the [Sky Lagoon](#)), but some mostly consisted of long bus drives only to spend a short time visiting the destinations. We even cancelled three of them including the [Giant's Causeway](#), [Qaqortoq on Foot](#), and [Peggy's Cove](#). I also cancelled [Best of the Golden Circle](#) because I preferred to tour Reykjavik by foot.

There were other activities besides excursions. These were especially good for the thirteen days we were at sea. We enjoyed playing trivia with Brandon and listening to [Nathan's](#) piano concerts. We tried origami (Sue was much better than I was). Played games, like Mexican Train, a dominoes game which we learned from our travel partners, Eric and Pegi. Sue and I also played backgammon and cribbage. We also saw a comedy show and two shows by [Breton Thunder](#). Sometimes we were able to spend time walking on the Promenade Deck, lounging in a deck chair reading a book, or even playing shuffleboard on the deck. There were also the special events like the masquerade ball, Orange night (celebrating Holland America), costume party and a couple of others that we missed. There were also several bands playing a variety of music.

So, all-in-all the trip was a mix of good and bad but the main outtake was that thirty-five days on a cruise, particularly one like this, is just too much time. We found that many of the passengers were veteran cruisers and they seemed to enjoy the life but we prefer to make plans on our own and not be so restricted. To read more about this trip, please [click here](#) to see the story on my website.