

New York City

February 19-22, 2024

Monday, February 19 – Sue and I drove to the Portland Jetport (PWM) where we were forced to park in one of the newly added external parking lots (more on that later). We left on Delta flight 5354 at about 14:00 and arrived at JFK in New York around 15:45. After a hectic search outside of the arrival terminal, we finally spotted our Blacklane driver, Harvinderpal Singh, who took us comfortably to the Hilton Times Square. When we checked in online, I was also able to attain a virtual key to our room and we headed there immediately. However, the room was obviously not the type of room we had reserved. However, since we had a dinner reservation at **BOQUERIA** shortly, we decided that we would just stay where we were since the room was comfortable enough. We walked to the restaurant and enjoyed a tasty tapas dinner, despite the loud music. We had a nightcap at the hotel bar before going back to our room.

Tuesday, February 20 – This was Sue's birthday and I walked to a nearby Starbuck's to get her a cup of coffee. When I returned, Sue had read on Facebook that Henry Jost, friend and master bartender from Enoteca Athena, had died yesterday. The news certainly put a bit of a damper on the celebration but we determined to carry on. So, after a simple breakfast at the hotel, we began our journey to the **NYBG** (New York Botanical Gardens) in the Bronx. It was a long trip from the Times Square-42nd Street station on the 2 line, to Allerton avenue in the Bronx, then a fairly long walk to the east gate. We finally arrived at the Haupt Conservatory, where the Orchid Show was located, and were treated to a fabulous array of all kinds of orchids. We walked through the beautiful displays for about an hour or so, then had lunch at the Hudson Garden Grill before starting back to the hotel. At that point, we were so far from the Allerton Avenue subway station that we decided to hire an Uber to take us there. We then took a reverse trip back to the Times Square-24th Street station and walked to the hotel.

We left the hotel and walked to **GABRIEL KREUTHER** for our reservation at 17:30. The restaurant is in the **Grace Building** across 42nd Street from **Bryant Park**.

We were seated at a corner table where we enjoyed the Chef's Tasting

Menu.

It was a wonderful way to celebrate Sue's birthday and the chef sent a cake made especially for her, along with several



other desserts, including their famous chocolates.

Wednesday, February 21 – After breakfast, we began walking up Broadway toward 34th Street and the **EMPIRE STATE BUILDING**. When we arrived, shortly before 10:00, we encountered a line of visitors about a block long but were ushered into the building. Our first stop was on the 86th floor where there was a museum, containing a plethora of information about the history of this landmark building, and an outside observatory that offered amazing 360° views of the city. Finally, we reached the 102nd



floor observatory, which was enclosed but offered even more amazing views. Next, we walked to the 34th Street-Herald Square subway station and boarded the B line going south toward our destination for lunch, **Dim Sum Go Go**. Afterwards, we walked back toward the Grand Street subway station. Along the way, we were able to get a glimpse of the **Brooklyn Bridge**.



We took the B line from the Grand Street station on a crowded subway car to the 42nd Street-Times Square station and back to the hotel.

After a drink at the hotel bar, we walked to **Sushi of Gari**.

We were anticipating a great sushi dinner but it was just so-so. We walked from the restaurant to the Eugene O'Neill Theater to see **THE BOOK OF MORMON**, a hilarious play by the creators of the South Park TV series.

Thursday, February 22 – I walked up Broadway to a bakery, called Paris Baguette, that we had spotted on our walk to the Empire State Building. They offered a beautiful almond croissant for Sue, and a nice little pizzetta for me. Paired with a fair cup of coffee from the hotel, we enjoyed a pleasant breakfast in our room, watching the lovely flashing Target sign across the street for the last time. To pass the time until we took our Blacklane from the hotel, we decided to go to **Madame Tussauds**. It was convenient, only steps from the hotel, just fine for a touristy side trip. Our driver, Mohammad Afzal, picked us up at the hotel and we arrived at JFK Terminal 4 about an hour later. On the way to our gate, we stopped for lunch at the **Palm** restaurant for an overdue lunch. Thanks to Delta, we arrived on time in Portland, then home to Brunswick.