

**NO cruises booked ..
Unless you count the
open deposit with
Seabourn**

**This Week @Foxland
17 April 2011**

WE ARE BACK HOME !!

It was the BEST four and a half week holiday ever .. We did so much good stuff .. We went to so many neat places .. We took fabulous cruises .. We stayed in great accommodations with lovely folks .. and now we are home [and have been for a week but the past 7 days have been such a whirlwind of catching up and working for a living that we haven't had time to scratch each other].

So, as is my norm I haven't drafted a detailed cruise report yet .. I like to leave it 2/3 weeks .. and then live vicariously through the writing. So today I'll touch on some hi-lites and some news.

A quick recap of the Holiday

We went to Ft Lauderdale twice and stayed at the Hilton Beach Resort, FL. The suite was excellent, the staffs [porters and bell staff in particular] were super accommodating, and I'd stay there again in a flash. http://www1.hilton.com/en_US/hi/hotel/FLLFSHH-Hilton-Fort-Lauderdale-Beach-Resort-Florida/index.do

In Ft Lauderdale we went air boat riding, mall shopping, and spring training – to see the Florida Marlins play at Jupiter, in a Town Car that we hired. Robyn drove, I navigated, seemed to work. It did get a bit hot when I turned my seat heater on by accident and struggled to turn it off.

The first cruise was on the Oasis of the Seas ..

The second biggest cruise ship in the world, beaten by about a thumb length by the Allure of the Seas .. and we are glad we went on it, glad we went on it before we went on Seabourn, and we would heartily recommend it to our kids if they wanted to cruise. [R&A been there, done that, now]

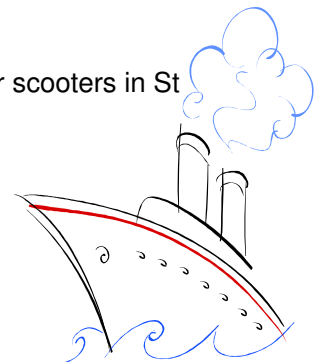
Without spoiling the detailed review – going on the Oasis was like visiting Disneyland, there were lots of interesting things to see and do but it wasn't cruising as we like it – we never spoke to anyone all week other than ourselves – and going out for a meal was either great or sadly average.



We had a couple of exciting tours however .. underwater scooters in St Thomas [real picture] and quad bikes in St Martin.

The Nassau Segway tour was sadly a non event.

Complaint letter to follow !!



The second cruise was on the Seabourn Legend ..

Okay, for those of you who have not cruised on board Seabourn yet – save your pennies and make a booking. **Lord John and Lady T** have been telling us this for years and **now we understand**. We booked – We went – We left behind a deposit for next time – We are converted.

This is cruising as it was meant to be. Luxurious. Pampered. Spoiled. Totally Enjoyable.

It starts when you pull up at the terminal and are escorted inside by a Seabourn greeter. Luggage has of course gone by now and you are assisted through security clearances and guided to the lounge. Having arrived slightly early Zuzanne is on hand with cold towels for the fevered brow.

At exactly 1pm boarding commences in orderly groups with staff assisting with carry on luggage. It actually takes longer than it did on the Oasis but the Oasis didn't serve Champagne and canapés.



I'd heard about the guest photo gallery and the crew competition to see who can match the most names to faces but it's one thing to hear about it and another to have staff you've never met calling you by your name – always Mr & Mrs Fox [never the first name a'la Windsurf] – within days of getting on board. There were 196 [or so] passengers and about 168 staff.

The Suite: biggest we've ever had. Walk in robe. Full size bath. Sitting area with fully stocked bar and set of glasses to accommodate everything from 'on the rocks' to 'with bubbles'. Excellent bathrobes. And a very comfortable bed.

The Ship: old in design but very well kept. The refurbishment last year must have simply replaced like for like [soft furnishings etc] and re painted because no structural changes are obvious.

The Guests: from all around the globe but we were the only Aussies [quite liked that]. 75% of everyone on board was a past cruiser. 66% of passengers either booked another cruise or left a deposit. There were multiple transatlantic crossers [a bit of a club headed by Martha from Texas] and people who just seemed to stay on board continuously.



The Itinerary: 13 days at sea in perfect weather .. with a 4 hour stop in Madeira .. not everyone's cup of tea but there were no complaints from where we were sitting .. and what a sail away party in Madeira – caviar – smoked salmon – sushi – palma ham.

Things we liked: not having to sign a docket every half hour .. being invited to dine with various ships personnel .. mentioning we'd like a pizza and having one made special .. ordering from the buffet whilst seated in the café .. Robyn being escorted to our table by a tall handsome waiter .. people behaving responsibly with alcohol – even though it was 'free' .. the 10 minute massage .. chilled fruit kebabs .. pre dinner canapés in the Club .. excellent music to dance to .. and much more ..

Then there was Spain .. but we're out of room .. thanks Verd – Gill – Val – Jim .. It was wonderful to spend time with you again .. next time we'll play host in Perth.

Until next time .. be good and love the one you're with ..

Allan & Robyn *The World is 70% water ... how much have you travelled if you haven't cruised ??*

