

Post



Scott Farnsworth

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# Not eyeball soup - April 4, 2023

Updated: Apr 6, 2023

## ***SUMMARY***

Scott wakes up feeling fine but we opt out of this morning's offered excursion, a visit to a local village with an opportunity to shop, followed by kayaking and swimming. It is alarming how much trash is in the water - details from Scott below - and there is a thin sheen of oil on the surface, thanks to the 200+ boats operating in the bay. I think the time to visit might have come and gone a few years ago, but Halong Bay has been on my bucket list for a long time and is still beautiful. We hit the top deck for Happy (two) Hour and another spring roll-making demo. Dinner is very similar to last night's but Scott is able to partake this time. - Karen

### ***DETAIL***

After the excitement of yesterday, we are a bit tentative about eating, or really doing anything this morning. I feel better, but not totally to 100%. This is, for most people, a one night cruise, as such it's jammed with activities. The crew, after seeing how I deal with food, understand when we opt out of one activity after another. Breakfast, we'll do. It's couched, very specifically, as 'not a real, full breakfast'. Most 'just-one-nighters' will wake early, have coffee and maybe some bread-thing, and head out to an activity. The main meal will be brunch later (after which the single-dayers are hustled off the boat. NEXT!)

We treat the breakfast as a real one. This is the first food I'll have had (ok, kept) in my stomach for a day or so. It's breads, fruits, coffee, and your choice of fried or scrambled eggs. I seem to be holding my own. The food I introduce to my body seems to be staying there.

Outside the weather is less welcoming. The clouds have descended around the rocky islands and act as high fog. It's a tad eerie but pretty. We guess it's not great for anyone brave enough to swim or kayak.

We're disappointed by the amount of trash floating in the water. We learn it's not (totally) the local's fault. Apparently there's a ton of trash in the ocean (Alert the media!) and the incoming tides brings in a new batch twice a day. The government pays people to clean it up, but it takes time. Supposedly after the three years of covid ("no tourists") there was so much trash you could not see the water! Sad. They're hopefully a few more months of clean up and it'll be totes clean.

After breakfast, we enjoy some time out on our "porch". In recent days the temp has been in the 90 plus range (both for temperature and/or humidity). Here, now, it's in the upper 70's. We're OK with that. Also of late, we typically have some "OK, not-too-hot weather" early, but know that by mid-day it's going to be 'insufferable'. Here, with the low clouds, we're in for the same weather throughout the day.

We'd asked about when it's 'blue sky and sunny'. There are two answers. One is like a month from now, when it's that, plus 105+ degrees. The other is in November/December, when it would have been blue sky, sunny, and nice weather. (Or is it the other way around??)

One good thing about doing nothing today is: we are somewhere with good internet. I'm three days behind for my promised blog. I hunker down and with my flying fingers, and total disregard of coherency, am caught up in no time. Thank ya Jesus!

At lunch we realize it's a repeat of yesterday, when we boarded at lunch. (Same-same, but different.) We now have a brand new crop of wide-eyed tourists, coming onboard to the lunch buffet we had yesterday. It's fine. Tequila, our waiter, asks what we want to drink. Karen wants a glass of pink wine and I want beer. "Order a bottle of wine and I can get you a 10% discount!" says our cheeky Tequila. His smooth talking works. We get the wine and drink a glass each, saving the other half for dinner. Later we look up the corkage fee, for the bottle of red (from Circle K convenience mart) and find it's 1/2 the price of one of their grossly overpriced bottles of wine. All's well that end's well.

Around 5pm we sniff happy hour in the air. We head up to the "sun" deck (albeit foggy today) and strike up a conversation with a delightful couple from Canada, by way of Portugal and a few other countries. Happy Hour, on this obscenely overpriced boat, means "Buy two, get one free". Never ones to let a bargain get away, we order a couple of Negroni's (Scott's stomach be damned), which means three. By the end of the evening we're up to four, er, six (but whose counting?)

The activity du soir is a 'cooking class'. Tonight's class (same as last night class, which we missed) is Vietnamese Spring Rolls. Wasn't that what Ms. Karen did on the Mekong cruise boat? Karen, emboldened by one or more Negroni [what's the plural of Negroni, anyway?] steps forward to roll once more!! Many others do as well, and so Karen soon gives up her disposable gloves and steps back.

Eventually it's time to eat again (can you say "Pavlov"??) and we head down to the dining room. We've been promised that tonight's meal will be different that last night's. Me, who had only white rice last night, believes that.

In the first round we have blood clams (referring to their color) and cucumber salad. It's totes delicious. The blood clam's claim to fame? They don't retain a lot of sand. I like that in a clam. Next up, among other things, 'Salt toasted Mantis Shrimp'. And they look like (you guessed it) praying mantis! (They're not the only things praying tonight).

Our wonderful waiter, Tequila, separates the body from the tail (much like the female would for a normal Praying Mantis) and we're told to eat the bit of remaining meat on the back end of this front half of the animal. YUM! Next, you take the back half, put the whole thing in your mouth, and pull out all the stuff you wouldn't want to eat. [really??] Ooooh, it is good.

We also have Grilled Oysters with Cheese (yum), steamed bass with soya sauce (double yum), and pork belly with steamed vegetables and rice (yum, yum, yum). What we haven't gotten (yet) that other tables have, is the baby oyster soup with mushrooms. We plead for no more soup. We're done in. One problem? Dessert. It's a 'soup'. Well, a sweet dessert soup. OK, we'll have that.

What is it, you ask? [OK, you didn't ask, but we'll pretend you did] It's (we're told) "Not eyeball soup." Ohhh Kayyy... It arrives and we can see why it's named that. Yes, it looks like eyeballs. Truth be told it's called Lotus Seed Sweet with Logan. It's good, I'm not going to lie.

After that... snoooooore. [See you tomorrow]

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## Photos



We woke to very low clouds, or high fog.  
We couldn't tell which.



There were just a few (ok, a shit ton of)  
boats anchored around us



Karen did manage to find one she'd take, if  
offered



Most of our day was spent out on the 'porch' (if not slaving over a hot keyboard)



But close to happy hour we were obediently up on the so-called Sun Deck



And before long we'd slayed one (or more)  
Negroni(s)



Then came the cooking class. Rolling  
Vietnamese Spring Rolls.



Karen jumped in, early on, but laid down her (cheap plastic) gloves when it looked like they had a full house (kitchen)



Dinner time. Time for the 2nd 1/2 of our bottle of lunch wine. (Like we needed those after the Negronis, groan)



Yummy dinner. Fish and cheesy oysters were great.



FARNSNIENTE 



Couldn't look away from the Not Eyeball  
Soup!



### **HOW TO USE THE HOT WATER INSIDE THE TOILET:**

To use the hot water you will see the RED sign color in all Fosset also in the shower room for hot water and the BLUE sign color is for the normal water. So if you want hot water used the RED color sign and the BLUE is for the cold water.

**( if you need any assistant pls DIAL \*100  
for the reception area Thank you )**

We loved this sign in our bathroom. We have no idea what it says, but we love it.



The images of the other ships were  
mesmerizing in the dark waters



Their lights shimmered on the calm waters

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