

Post



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# A day at sea with Colonel Klink - April 19, 2023

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## ***SUMMARY***

Lovely, relaxing Day at Sea on our way from Tokyo to Osaka. I had a much-needed deep tissue massage which was awesome! We attended a couple of lectures - one about the U.S.'s political alliances and partnerships in Asia and one about the history of Japan. Both were excellent. Lunch out on the back deck of the ship, relaxing in the room, cocktails in one of the ship bars and very good dinner in the main dining room filled up the rest of the day. - Karen

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### ***DETAIL***

When we wake this morning we're at sea, as we should be. It's a day at sea, no port today. We're motoring from Tokyo down to Osaka. We'll be there by tomorrow morning. My nautical math isn't good enough to know if they're stretching this out, or if 36 hours is how long it takes a lumbering cruise ship to cover that distance. We do have internet, from the shore, so we can't be too far away. The map says we're about 25 miles from the coast. Too far to swim.

At the morning announcement the ever cheerful but serious sounding captain lets us know that after we departed we encountered high winds, and thus high swells, so he hugged the shore.

Explaining our relative closeness, we guess. The seas now are fairly calm. Our smiley room attendant, Sarah, from the Philippines, says the occasional rough seas is the thing she dislikes the most on these ships. Fingers crossed we don't experience any this trip.

As required we put out our breakfast order (if you want to eat in the room) by midnight and it arrives (as we requested) a little after 7:30. We over-ordered but the eggs Benedicts and fruit are good, but we'll order less (and more healthy) tomorrow. Karen works on turning in our laundry order. After being on the road for coming up on two months, we would love to have some laundry done properly. We thought we signed up for two loads during our 17 days, but apparently we get five loads somehow.

I meanwhile add today's activities (that we might be interested in) to our smartphone calendar. This potentially includes a briefing about the US's Allies, partnerships, and "challenges" in the region, and the history of Japan. Should be fun.

We do attend the allies, etc. briefing. It's put on by Colonel Klink (no joke). Family name. He was born in Germany left as an infant and grew up a lot in the US and Europe. He got naturalized and served in the U.S. military and later as deputy attachee or some such thing, to the region. He's fascinating and scary. The various relationships we have with the different countries over here with whom we cooperate range from "fully in bed and totes pregnant" to "it's complicated, but seems to mostly work".

We also do attend the History of Japan lecture. The speaker is also someone born in Germany, sadly though, she didn't leave til she was in her 20s, so she has a heavy 'Cherman' accent. The information, though, is fascinating. The four big islands that make up Japan (plus a ton of smaller ones) lie on the ring of fire, at the meeting point of four tectonic plates. The periodic earthquakes have caused a lot of trouble. The 7.9 Richter scale trembler in 1923 left 100,000 dead. Not so much due to the earthquake itself, so much as the fact that all buildings then were made of wood and everyone cooked inside on open flame. Whoops!

We left Tokyo last night, the nation's capital, and are headed for Osaka, which used to be the nation's capital (well, the home of the emperor of Japan). Why the change? Apparently each time that the emperor died everyone said "Well, this place sucks to be an emperor, he died here... not a good place to be an emperor" and so they'd move somewhere else. Interesting way to do things. But on the positive side they left a lot of nice buildings behind each time.

Not much to see outside throughout the day. We keep looking for flying fish, which we've seen on a previous cruise. They're fascinating, but aren't here yet, that we've seen. We have seen a few gulls, but that's about it. Fingers crossed.

By looking at the various venue menus we have decided to do dinner in the main (more formal) dining room. We're dressed up enough for that. The next question is always "group table", i.e. for six and you sit with whomever they put you with. Or, be less brave and sit at a table for two. Chickening out, we ask for a table for two. On the positive side there's another table for two just inches from our own and Di and Brin, from Australia, are our de facto table mates for the evening. They're a hoot. Brin was a test pilot and has lots of funny stories.

After dinner Karen spends some quality time with her current novel and I head down to listen to the evening's music, a violinist with six piece band musical accompaniment. He performs some Vivaldi Four Seasons and "We are the Champions" by Queen, some Cold Play and everything in between. He's very entertaining. I behave and don't get a drink there. It's over by 10 pm and I'm more than ready for bed.

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## Photos



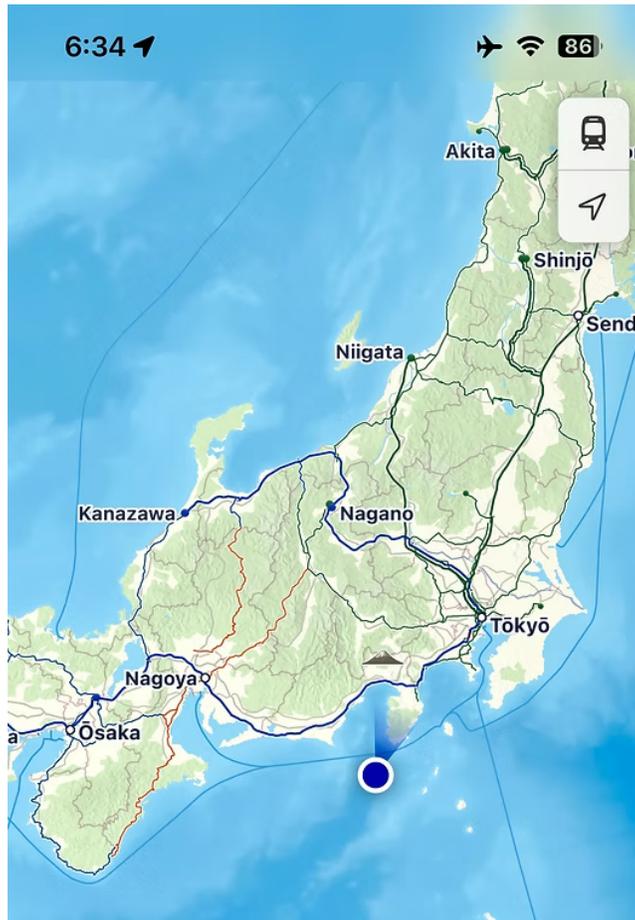
Our fairly small room looking from the balcony side



Same room, but looking from the entry door/bathroom



Karen feeling a tad chagrined at how much food was ordered for breakfast for two. Whoops!



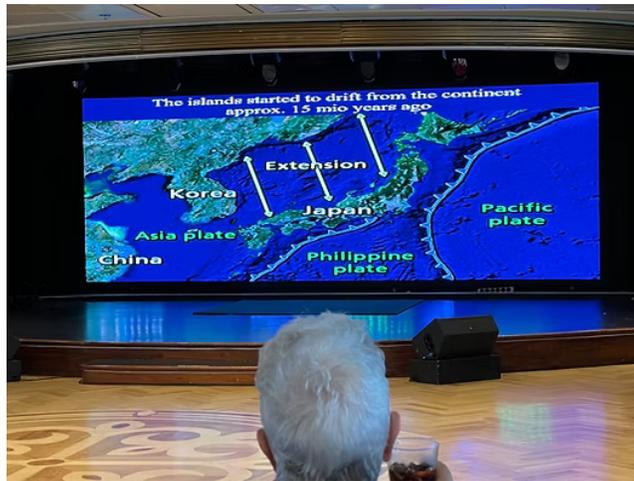
Where GPS says we are at 6:34 AM Japan time



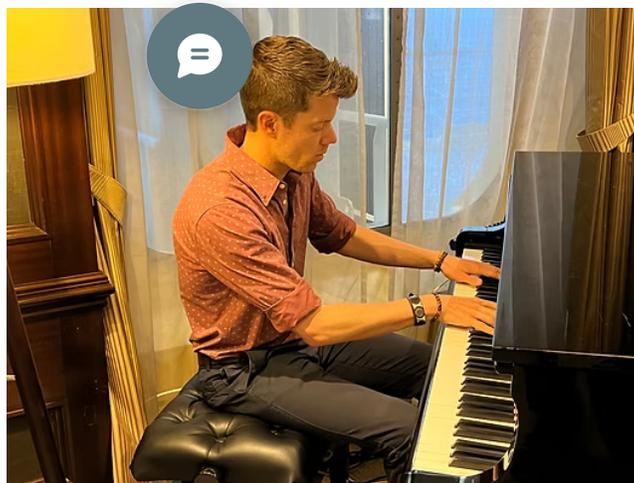
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Colonel Klink about to enrich us as a part of Azamara's Enrichment program



At the other talk it becomes clear why Japan is the shape it is. Spoiler: Tectonic Plates.



Happy Hour piano music. It's really good and no one is listening. Oh well.



Roy Theaker and his amazing violin. Some good stuff. He'll be back in four days, tip your waitress.

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