

Post



Scott Farnsworth

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Off to Amsterdam! - August 29, 2023

Updated: Sep 1, 2023

SUMMARY

"At sea" most of the day, arriving in central Amsterdam in the early evening. - Karen

[Photos](#) | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

DETAIL

Yesterday we did the Kiel Canal and were on the ship, motoring, pretty much the whole 24 hours. Today we get into Amsterdam and to do that we'll be sailing (motoring) til our 6 p.m. arrival. So quite a long time without going ashore. At least we'll get some time to mill about off the ship, once we get in. We're staying overnight and have free time in Amsterdam tomorrow, too, so one way or the other we'll see the city.

We're towards the tail-end of the cruise and so there'll undoubtedly be lots of people in the guest laundry cleaning their clothes before they pack them for the trip home. We're continuing on so we also need all clean clothes. To that end I (like yesterday) wake early and try to sneak out of the room without awaking Karen. With all our dirty clothes in my arms I got to the laundry room. The good news is that there's no one in the laundry. The bad news is that this is due to the hours. The laundry doesn't open until 8 am, two hours from now. Grrr, I 'm sure I knew. I returned at 7:45 and was first in line and the laundry was done in no time. Quite the social locale, that laundry room. All in the same boat (with dirty clothes) so to speak.

Another thing we have to do for what comes after this cruise is arrange how we're getting to our next spot: Dubrovnik. We have a flight from Gatwick to Dubrovnik, but we have to get to Gatwick. Thankfully there are a few trains that are cheap and convenient. Sadly there'll likely be a train strike on that day (September 1st). So we've lined up a cab. Hopefully the air traffic controllers are not striking that day.

Current weather is 'Mostly cloudy'. Today's weather? Who knows? There's no internet. In the ship's newsletter for today, which was printed yesterday, they're projecting a high of 64° and a low of 57°. That's comfortable. We did hear a report that yesterday Austin's high was 109° but it looks like the super high temperatures there may be on the way out. Yay! (Oh please, oh please)

When we finally do get access to the internet to read the news one thing catches our eye. France is paying winegrowers \$215 million dollars to destroy their surplus wine. Apparently they have a glut and demand is shrinking. Bad news for French wine growers and France. Good news for us lovers of French wine. Cheap(er) wine!

Not getting in til 6 p.m. there's lots of free time on the ship. We do our stretching routine in the gym. I go to a Q&A panel with the captain and many of his top officers. Very interesting.

At the edge of The Netherlands we encounter yet another lock. Once through, we're motoring past some not really pretty area. It's very industrial. Mostly clean and organized, but industrial nonetheless. We do glide past some weird looking building that looked like a giant covered snow skiing run for year-round skiing. I look it up and that's correct. Cool.

As we get further along, out of curiosity I look up where we are on my smartphone. Er Ma Gerd! We're about to motor through the heart of Amsterdam. Around the next bend will be the city central station. We'll be SO central! Apparently the locals don't like this and so will be limiting (or maybe eliminating) this kind of boat traffic here in the heart of the city.

Just beyond the Amsterdam Central Station the pilot does a 180 and we nudge our way up to the dock. We can get off, but we have dinner reservations.

Dinner is at Aqualina, one of the ship's two fancy restaurants. This one is Italian. We have a lot of fun and good food. We end up talking the whole time with the couple at the next table. They live in Florida, on the coast near Orlando, but she's originally from Switzerland. As such she speaks perfect French and we spend a lot of the meal 'parlez vous'ing' with her. Fun as always.

After dinner, Karen reads a book in the room and I go ashore to get my bearings and stretch my legs. It's good to be back in Amsterdam. We look forward to tomorrow.

Photos



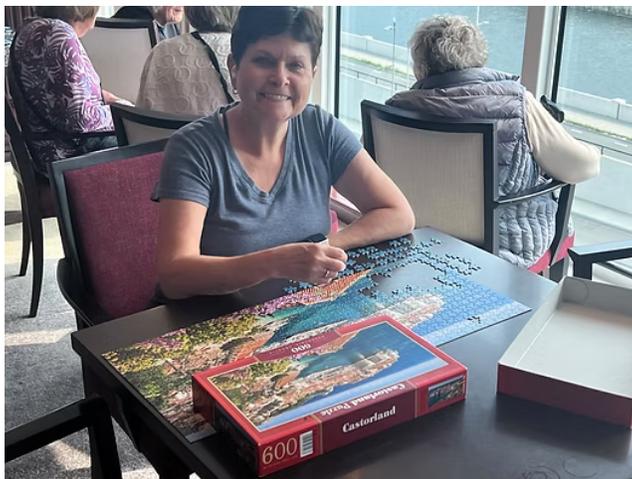
Free time on the ship. One of the activities was asking questions of the Captain and some of this officers.



A part of that involved a demo of how you steer the ship. The captain says it's pretty easy that even a monkey can do it. I'm not sure about that.



Finally we get to the lock at the edge of The Netherlands



Karen works on a jigsaw puzzle



Scott watches the progress with the lock, staying hydrated in the process



In the US there's a lot of talk about "working from home". How about taking your home with you while you work, like these guys? They have living space, a car, a boat, a hot tub, some bikes, and a spare propeller.



First world problem (charger's too loose and slips out) calls for first world solutions (rest it on a champagne cork)



The indoor, year round ski hill with real "snow". The enclosure is to let them keep it cold, I gather.



A lot of YIMBY here, the opposite of NIMBY. Yes in my back yard!



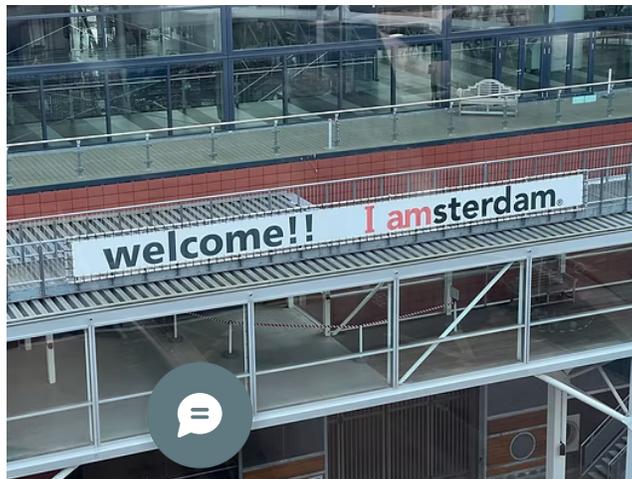
FARNSNIENTE



Well situated in Amsterdam. Close walk to everything.



Amsterdam looks like it did when we were here last year.



The cruise terminal says "Welcome!!", but the recent legislation to keep us out seems to say we're not really welcome.



Yummy white bean soup at dinner.

[Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Index](#)

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