

Post



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# Rollin' on a river - April 21, 2024

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## ***SUMMARY***

Mostly lazy morning but did make it to the gym for an hour or so. Went on a boat cruise on the Savannah River on a paddle wheeler which included a very nice brunch. Proceeded to eat far more calories than we'd worked off at the aforementioned gym visit. #WorthIt! Took a Moron's trolley tour which featured two self-described "lesbians in rompers" guiding us through old Savannah with accents, costume changes and general craziness. Rained most of the afternoon and evening so we had a cozy stay-in dinner in our room. - Karen

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## ***DETAIL***

We wake and see more gray clouds than yesterday. We'd been warned that there would likely be rain today, although it's not supposed to show until after lunch. As we promised ourselves yesterday we get into our workout togs and head to the gym. We give our name, hotel name and room number and we're in. They don't check anything.

The gym is very well appointed and almost all of the equipment is working, yay. That's not always the case. We bike, and treadmill, push and pull, climb stairs and stretch. Before long we're sore and feel virtuous. We'll see if that happens again on this trip.

Changed back into civilian clothes, appropriate for maybe cooler weather and definitely rain, we head back out. We're headed down to the wharf to board a huge paddle wheel boat. We'll be dining aboard for lunch and in the process cruising up and down the Savannah River. We'd heard that the river changes level a fair amount and so we're not surprised to be walking down a steep drive down towards the water. Much of the city is cobblestones, but this surface is big uneven rocks. We manage to get down without twisting any of our four ankles.

As we wait to board we see we'll be aboard the Georgia Queen. We wonder how many queens (drag queens) have been on this boat. In the famous book set in Savannah, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (know here simply as "the book") there was a very famous drag queen, The Lady Chablis. In a tour we learned that in the movie she actually played herself (himself?) and she (he?) was fantastic. Bravo!

As we wait in line to be shown to our table for lunch the people in front of us ask if they can sit by the window. They're told "Sure!" (For an additional \$15 each). We decide we don't need to be that close to the glass. We're seated and order drinks (bubbles for both of us... sparkling wine for Karen and beer for me). In the buffet line we're offered all kinds of local delicacies, served in big portions. We get the fruit salad, shrimp salad, shrimp and grits, bacon and sausage, quiche and fried chicken. We say "no" to the waffles and syrup, biscuits and cream gravy, and some other stuff. When we sat down we were offered "bread". This, for us, turns out to be a giant cinnamon roll with lots of frosting. You may not recognize us after this trip.

After we eat we waddle up to the top deck to watch the castoff and the cruise upriver. There's a big boat in front of us. It's a RORO boat, we're told. This is a Roll On/Roll Off boat and this is what's used to transport things (cars, vans, trucks, etc.) that can be driven onto and off of the ship. We sail under the very tall bridge that leads from Savannah to the island to the north (Hutchinson Island) and on to South Carolina, just north of the river. The bridge was built in 1991 and already it's too low. With container ships getting ever bigger, and with the tides, they're now planning on raising the bridge soon by 20'. And they already have plans to replace it with a more respectably big bridge. Sheesh.

As we motor upriver, before we turn around, the tour guide explains to us what we were seeing, including the 52 huge cranes (that look like big steel horses) that help unload the container ships. We're told we might see alligators, dolphins, bald eagles, and manatees, but we're not holding our breaths.

After turning around and heading back downriver we again pass the port of Savannah and we're told interesting facts about what we're seeing. Apparently back in the day ships would carry all types of cargo back to Great Britain, but didn't have a lot to bring back here. So, they loaded the ships with rock for ballast. They were used (since they were available) for some of the buildings we see and for the drive we walked down from the city proper. That explains a lot.

We're again told the story about how Georgia was started as a debtor's colony, which meant they had to follow certain rules. No bad elements were allowed... no alcohol, no lawyers, no slavery, no catholics, you know, the "bad" stuff. We did see a bald eagle (so we were told) way off in the distance, sitting atop a high power line support. But no alligators, dolphins, or manatees. The ride was fun, and it was interesting to think that back in the day this was the epitome of high tech. We receive solicitations, by email and regular mail, to take a river cruise up and down the Mississippi River. On this paddlewheel ship we get an idea of what that would be like and what we'd see. Nah!

After lunch we head to our second big planned activity for the day: Savannah for Morons. We're not thrilled by the name, but the idea, a comedy tour of Savannah, does appeal. We arrive at the pickup location, outside, with lots of others with the same interest. The two girls ("sisters") were a hoot. They are in tacky matching rompers and joke, and sing, and jump all around the trolley we are in.

We laugh and learn a lot about Savannah. It is raining when we start and all through the tour. Half way through we stop at a bar for everyone to buy a drink or two. We're much louder after that. One thing pointed out is a very old Georgia Live Oak tree, huge, the Candler, that was the inspiration for the book *The Giving Tree*. Most all of the tour was fun and funny and poking fun at Savannah and Georgia, and where we're all fun. But at one point they get serious and talk a bit about Savannah's darker side, with a sad tale about two farmers who had a gambling problem and ended up having to sell all of their farms and property, including so many slaves. Very serious and sad, and oh too real. But after we all acknowledge that dark part of our shared past, we're back to laughing and ending the ride, tipping and saying goodbyes.

It's pouring rain as we get off the trolley and we have a very soggy fifteen minute walk back home. We stop at Parker's Fancy on the way home for dinner in the room (a chicken salad sandwich on whole wheat and chips) and a small styrofoam cooler for our drive tomorrow. Back at the room we strip out of our soaked clothes, have dinner, and relax until beddie-bye time.

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## Photos



Amazing Jasmine (confederate) on pedestrian bridges over the ballast rock drive to the port.



The proud Georgia Queen



Lunch. Enough food, and calories, for a (confederate) army



Top deck of the Georgia Queen. The smoke stacks are not smoke stacks, but rather hold life preservers, in case we need them.



The "too short" (Talmadge Memorial) bridge. Looks tall enough to us.



A RORO boat. Who knew?



We were told these were piles of breakfast cereal. It's due to be loaded onto a ship and sent to the UK. The narrator came clean and said in truth they were wood chips.



Statue on the shore of a lady who waved to every ship going by for 40 years.



The hostests Danny and Danni (or is it Danni and Danny?) on our Savannah for Morons trolley tour.



Danny lifted Danni from the movie Dirty Dancing which was filmed here.



What our walk back to our room looked like.

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