

Day Four - At Sea

Yesterday we spent at sea headed north going through the inner passage. This is in Canada, because as you know Canada separates Alaska from the USA. The inner passage is a natural channel that runs in-between the many hundreds of islands off the coast of Canada.

It is a safe passage for even the largest ships. So even though we headed over 700 miles North in the Pacific, at no stage were we really exposed to the open seas as we were surrounded by islands on all sides. Here are some pictures:



One of the very few boats we saw.



The inner passage! Forge ahead.



Being on board was fun, we went to the "Not so Newlyweds Game", where Wendy REALLY wanted to be chosen and we were, but I talked her out of it as I am not overly fond of making a spectacle out of myself on stage in front of 100s of people. But we played between ourselves and turns out if we had gone on stage we would have won! We got only one question wrong. I guess we know each other too well!

Food is great and we are LOVING the Norwegian Cruise Line system of no allocated seats or times at dinner and NO dressing up. You arrive whenever you want, sit where you want and get a private table - you don't have to share. It's GREAT! Shorts and T-shirts totally acceptable. We feasted on lobster one evening and our waiter brought us 2 additional of these sumptuous wonders

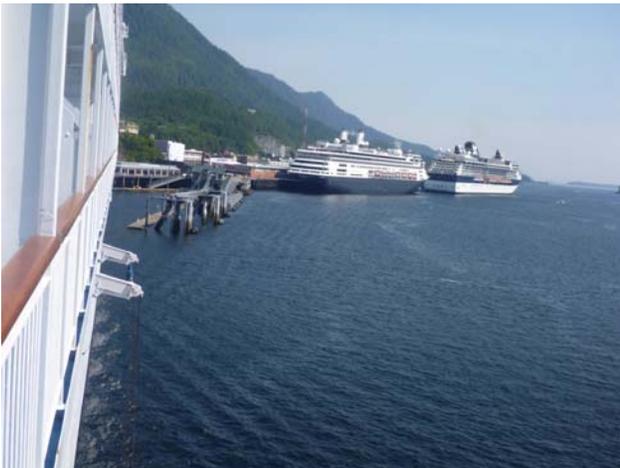
(must have thought we looked hungry). As Wendy was eating vegetables at the time, I scolded her and said, "Bloody hell, woman! You can eat vegetables at home. Eat lobster now!!" We both ate like pigs that night.

Day Five - Ketchikan, Alaska

Wendy was up at 5 AM taking photos (the sun rises at 4.30AM and sets at 10.30PM). We docked Ketchikan at 7AM, Wendy was out the door shore side by 7:05AM and I dragged myself out of bed finally about 8AM. What a quaint town!



The place has a population of 13,000 people and is on an island 60 miles long and 40 miles wide. No roads to the mainland, you get there by boat or plane only. Tourism is very big to them so the place is a little touristy. There were THREE cruise ships in the port today. Tourist overload.



Apart from exploring the town, we had booked a tour to see EAGLES!! They also threw in a lighthouse and totem poles. Naturally it was on a boat (we always land up on boats when we go on vacation)!



The weather was amazing, it was nearly 80 degrees! Until you got out on the water, then the temperature dropped the minute that wind hits you. The water here is 55 degrees virtually year round - warmer than Victoria 700 miles to the south, go figure!

But the goal was to see Eagles and we saw tons of them!! Many nests with babies and the angry parents stared us down.



Alaska has been instrumental in assisting the lower 48 States with reintroducing this beautiful National

Bird off the endangered species list in virtually every area of the USA.

The Ketchikan International Airport lies on another island opposite Ketchikan and the only way to get there is by ferry. Our guide joked that the only reason it is called the Ketchikan INTERNATIONAL Airport is because one day a plane from Canada landed there by mistake!

We've been fortunate to see eight Orca right from our balcony. First wild Killer Whales we have ever seen! It's been amazing! Sadly, as soon as you see them, they are gone, so photos are impossible. Tomorrow we do our proper Whale watch in Juneau.



The lighthouse was unimpressive...It was short, squat, old and deserted.



Ketchikan boasts the largest collection of original carved totem poles in the world dating over 600 years old.



Of course Wendy wanted to drive the boat! And what Wendy wants....



The boat ride was very pretty and we saw some harbor seals too.



For the sailors - here's what they use for boat jacks - too funny!



In this town you park your plane on the same dock as your boat.



Seaplanes are EVERYWHERE! It's the primary means of transport.



They just take off and land in between the boats wherever they can spot a gap.

After the tour we took a walk around town and stopped at the Arctic Bar for a local beer called the "Happy Bears Lager"...



Take a closer look at the company logo for the bar and you can tell why they call them Happy Bears!!! Good Lord!

Cheers,
B & W

