

DAY 14 – Fjordland



We woke up at 6.30 this morning right as we were entering Milford Sound. The term Sound is a misnomer, because it is not really a sound, but a Fjord. A sound is a passage of water between two bodies of land that is open on each side, whereas a Fjord is a passageway that dead ends.

But, for some reason they named this fjord a sound. Milford sound is 14 miles long and was created by glaciers many thousands of years ago. The waters run over 300 feet deep and sheer cliff faces drop into the sound. The mountains surrounding the sound run 4,500 feet high.



To give you a little perspective, in this picture you can see another cruise ship, note how small this extremely large vessel looks in the Fjord.

The coastline here which is on the South Island (New Zealand is made up of two large islands, North and South) is very craggy, unforgiving

and uninhabited for the large part do to its inaccessibility.

We sailed to the end of the sound where we dropped some people off who had booked an overnight tour and will return to the ship tomorrow. The ship then turned around and headed back out again stopping briefly for us to take a look at a waterfall.



And this is where things started to get a little crazy. The captain for warned us that he was going to take the cruise ship nose in toward the waterfall and stop only a few feet away from the rock face. It was pretty wild, the bow came within 50 feet of the rocks. This above pic I took from the top deck, look past the glass windshield and you can just see the bow of the ship with a bunch of people on it.



Fur Seals Sunning themselves.



We then went through two more sounds – these were actual sounds because the channels were open on each side. Few people other than cruisers ever see these sights as they are only accessible by boat or plane and there are no settlements or villages here. We went through Doubtful and Dusky Sounds.



Captain Cook discovered this part of New Zealand in the 1700s. He named Doubtful Sound because he thought it was doubtful that he could get his ship through it. Turned out he was wrong as our ship – a hell of a lot bigger than his – made it through just fine.



There are waterfalls everywhere – this area gets 25 feet of rain every year (that's right I said FEET not inches).

The first 12 feet deep of the sounds are fresh water, only below that is salt from all the rain and run off.

Nothing here has changed, we were seeing it exactly as Captain Cook saw it all those years ago.



Enjoying big cans of Fosters lager



Poolside BBQ for 2000 people, yummy!



There are caves like this everywhere



Can we fit though the gap?? I think we can!

