

# **NHShorty & Buffalobill's between Christmas & New Year's**

## **Cruise and Visit**

### **Day 1 and Day 2, December 25 & 26, 2013**

#### **Trip Overview:**

This trip was a combination 3 day cruise on the Disney Dream, followed by 3 days/2 nights at WDW.

Because NHShorty has now been on 6 Disney Cruises and this was Buffalobill's first ever cruise, we will try to present both of our perspectives in this report.

#### **Day 1 details:**

We had a big family breakfast at Buffalobill's house Christmas morning. All of BB's kids (ages 20 to 34) were in attendance including the youngest daughter who attended via Skype from North Carolina. A good time was had by all.

Our getaway involved dropping BB's truck at the repair shop so it could get fixed while we were gone. NHShorty's sister graciously drove us to the airport and suffered through us singing at the top of our lungs, "We're off to cruise the ocean on the wonderful Disney Dream" (sung to the tune "We're off to see the wizard").

Our check-in with Southwest Airlines was quick and, thanks to our extensive travel in 2013, we were both deemed unlikely to cause trouble and we were afforded TSA Pre-check status. Basically this means that we didn't have to take off our shoes or take our toiletries out of our carry-ons. We arrived at the gate at the same time as the flight crew. We are not nervous fliers, but who wouldn't get concerned when the captain is elf-sized and he's wearing a Santa hat.



The flight from Manchester to Orlando was uneventful, even with an elf driving the plane.

Once we were on the ground in Orlando, it was a quick walk from the gate to the Hyatt. Check-in was a breeze. Here are pictures of our room and our view overlooking the main area of the terminal.



We had very average dinner at McCoy's in the lobby of the hotel. It may have been that it was Christmas Day, but the service was pretty bad. Anyway, after dinner we strolled around a fairly empty MCO and took some pictures with some characters we met along the way. We retired for the evening with visions of Disney Magic swirling in our heads.



## Day 2 details:

We woke up early, checked out of the hotel and, with our day bags and luggage in tow, we hit the airport's food court for a little nourishment. We kept our luggage with us instead of having the DCL transportation folks pick it up from our hotel room because one of us, who shall remain nameless, but has the initials BB, was afraid that there would be some screw up and our luggage would not magically make it to the ship.

Here are some shots of our healthy breakfasts at the airport food court. Don't judge us, we were on vacation.



After eating we trundled to the DCL cruise line area on the first level of Terminal B. There, they checked our documentation and put our luggage on a truck. All that was left for us to do was to get on the bus, watch the video, and start singing our song with all the other passengers. "We're off to cruise the ocean on the wonderful Disney Dream".



The picture on the right is a close up of the driver's rear view mirror. Note the idiot in the second row of passengers, wearing a red hat, and leaning out into the aisle to take a picture. There's one of these guys in every crowd.

Seriously, the bus ride was a lot of fun. Everyone on the bus was excited about getting to the ship and the video they showed was informative and fun.



Actually we had made this same trip from MCO to Port Canaveral on our April 2013 trip when we visited Fish Lips (home of PortCanaveralWebCam.com). There's always a little thrill when you cross the bridge over the Banana River and see the funnels of the ship. Here's a picture from that visit.



Upon our arrival at Disney's terminal at Port Canaveral we were ushered into a large hall full of friendly Disney Cruise Line cast members who checked our travel documents, took our pictures, produced our room keys/IDs, and give us our boarding time. As you can see we were on one of the first buses to arrive and the place was pretty empty. I attribute the smoothness of the check-in and our early arrival to NHShorty's experience and organization. Also, note the Christmas decorations and the Mickey hands that NHShorty is wearing.



Once you are all checked in, you are free to wander around the terminal. We went out on the observation deck to check out our ride for the next three days. Isn't she pretty?



While we were observing from the observation deck, NHShorty looked over the railing at the luggage containers being loaded on the ship and observed her suitcase.



NHShorty's suitcase



Soon it was our turn to board the ship. Here are pictures of both ends of the gang plank, the ship's Christmas tree, and the DCL terminal. We actually boarded the ship a little after noon, which gave us plenty of time to explore.

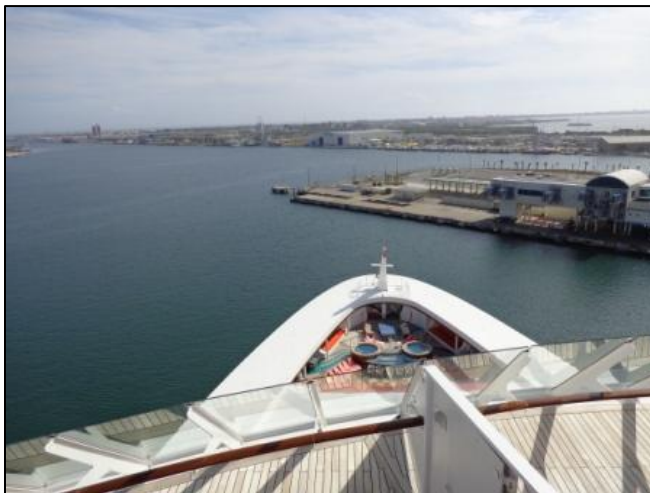


Since you can't get to your cabin or your luggage until around 3 PM, everyone was wandering around, eating, drinking and generally trying to figure out where everything is. We went to a DVC event and drank free flavored vodka drinks and got some free swag. A good time was had by all.



What follows is a random sample of pictures we took while we were waiting for our cruise to begin.









Hidden Mickey in a lifeboat davit.

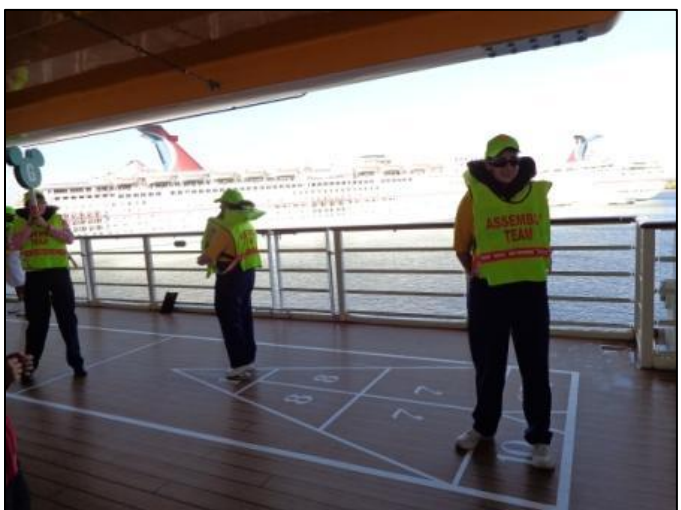
Eventually we were able to get into our stateroom/cabin. We had cabin 5018, which was on the port (left when facing forward) side of the ship. It didn't have a veranda, but it has two LARGE portholes with window seats.



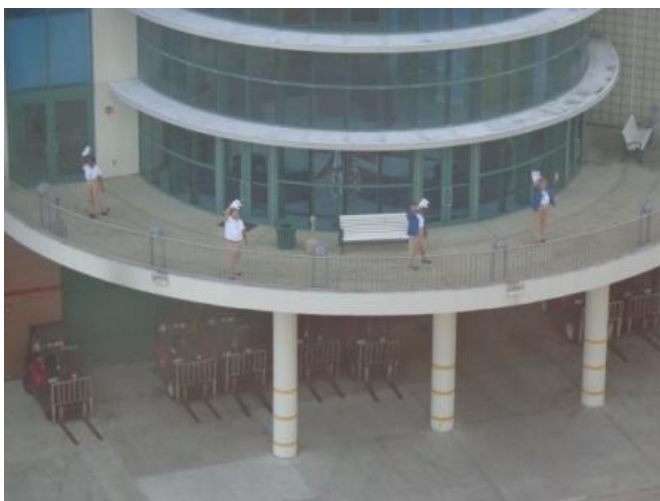


There will be some additional cabin pictures in future installments of this report.

One of the early highlights of the cruise was the safety briefing at our lifeboat station. Turns out those are not yellow submarines after all.



Eventually, the captain and crew cranked up the engines and the cast members left behind at the terminal assembled to wave at us a bon voyage from the observation deck.





NHShortySanta came prepared to wave bon voyage to everyone watching us on the Port Canaveral WebCam.



Actually our families back in NH were watching us on the Fish Lips webcam. My son sent us a screen shot he took from his computer screen that showed NHShortySanta waving from the ship.

Once we got out of the port, NHShorty went to work decorating our cabin door. Apparently this is a big thing on the Disney cruises. The hallway was too narrow to get the whole door in a single shot.





During my explorations of the ship I found that many families went to great extremes to decorate their cabin doors.

The cabin door of the Acetylene Family, while not overly creative, was very informative.



We had chosen the late seating for dinner and our first night's dinner was at Animator's Palate where the bread baskets are full of Mickeys when they are not full of bread. The food was good. We are pretty sure we had steaks of some kind. The atmosphere was controlled chaos, but fun and we had a table all to ourselves.



After dinner we strolled around the ship before turning in.



Get ready for Day Three when we spend the day avoiding Nassau and have the best dinner of the trip at Palo.