

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

Cruise and Visit

Day 3, December 27, 2013

Trip Overview:

In case you've forgotten, this trip was a combination 3 day cruise on the Disney Dream, followed by 3 days/2 nights at the WL at WDW.

Day 2 forgot-to-mention:

Before going forward to Day 3, we must go back to our first night at sea.

Something we didn't report on about our first night was the "movement" of the ship.

At a basic fundamental level, no matter how big the ship and how calm the sea, the Disney Dream is subject to all three of Newton's Laws of motion. I know our resident physicist, ZapperZ, will back me up on this. In other words, let's just say there is some "movement."

There was just a general constant "movement" in all three axes (the plural of axis) with an occasional bigger "movement" that would make folks involuntarily say "oh". Nothing fell off the dinner table, there was no discomfort for either us, but you could tell the ship was not sitting still on dry land. It was difficult for even the most sober among us to walk in a perfectly straight line.

I was able to determine the root cause of the "movement" by using the tablet NHShorty had given me for Christmas. Prior to the trip I had installed a GPS application that uses the GPS satellites to determine among other things, position, heading, speed, altitude. This allowed me, when we on the upper decks with a view of the sky, to know how fast we were going, what direction the ship was headed, and what our latitude and longitude were. I know, what a geek. Anyway, by using this app and the maritime chart I had just so happened to have brought along, I was able to determine that the captain had the Dream going diagonally crossing the Gulf Stream towards Nassau at about 20 knots (top speed is advertised to be 23.5 knots). Basically, he had the hammer down and was cutting the corner. No wonder there was some "movement".

Day 3 details:

When we woke up we were greeted by this view through the portholes.



I don't think it had rained even though the window has water drops on it. In the foreground of the picture is part of the ship that was immediately outside our window, and then there is the sea with the sun coming over the horizon. Nassau was about 30 miles directly ahead of the ship.

Over the next hour or so, the weather cleared and NHShorty took advantage of the window seat.





The above picture of the port holes shows the Christmas window clings that NHShorty put up and how the weather continued to improve. The picture below actually shows two islands, the Atlantis Resort on Paradise Island is in the center, and to the right is New Providence Island where the city of Nassau is located.



The approach to Nassau for all the cruise ships is a narrow channel between Paradise and New Providence Islands. The docks sort of stick out into the channel and as the Dream approached the docks; she did a 180° turn, and then backed into its parking space. In case you are wondering, the Dream does not make a beeping noise while backing up.

Here is a picture of the docks with the bridges between the islands in the background. The city of Nassau is off to the right out of view.



Once we were docked, I took pictures of the view to the left and right of the ship. On the left is the Atlantis Resort, and on the right is the City of Nassau.



NHShorty and I have been to Nassau and the Bahamas multiple times in previous lives, and did not feel the need to experience it ever again. We avoided Nassau by simply not leaving the ship. There is nothing magical about Nassau in our opinion.

Here's some more of the view of Nassau from our portholes.



While the majority of the Dream's passengers headed for the tourist traps of Nassau we staked out a couple of lounge chairs on deck 12 and caught some rays. The temps were in the upper 70's, which was a huge improvement over the 20's at home in NH. Later in the morning, a Carnival ship docked near us.





Another shot of the area on deck 12. Crowd levels were down while we were in port.

On a very personal note, during the afternoon we took a ride on the Aqua-Duck. This is the water coaster that runs in a clear tube above Deck 12. For me this was a blast that had me grinning from ear to ear. For NHShorty it was an act of extreme bravery. The water depth throughout the ride is only a few inches, but for someone with a serious nervousness about water to be also “trapped” inside a clear plastic tube ten feet over the deck below and then shot out over the side of the ship; it took a lot of courage. We rode together in a two person raft and I am very appreciative that she did this for me. I do hope the finger marks she left on my legs will heal eventually.

OK, you know how clean it is in the parks? Well, on board the Dream they take it to a whole new level. Here are some examples I found of the freakish attention to detail and cleanliness.

First, what do you do when a bird has left something behind on one of the Dream’s funnels????



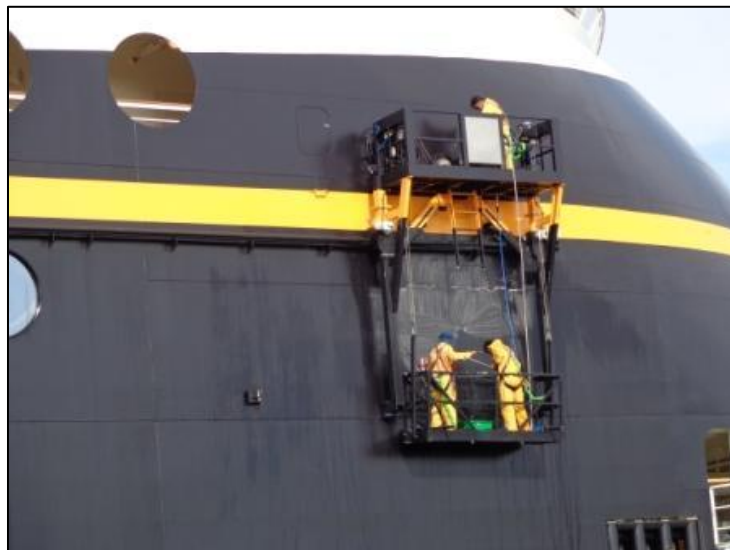
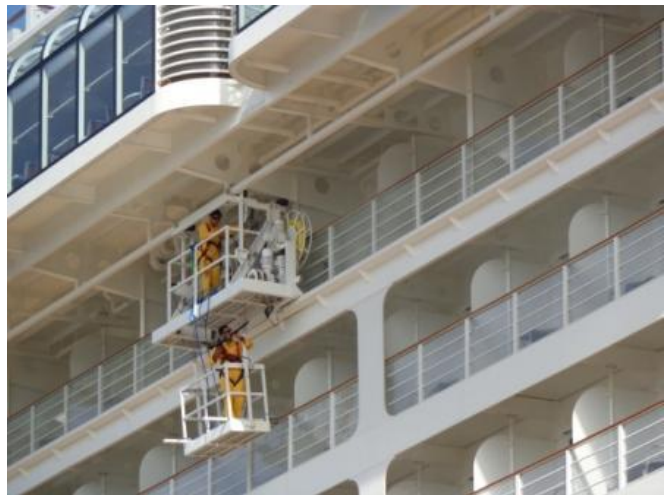
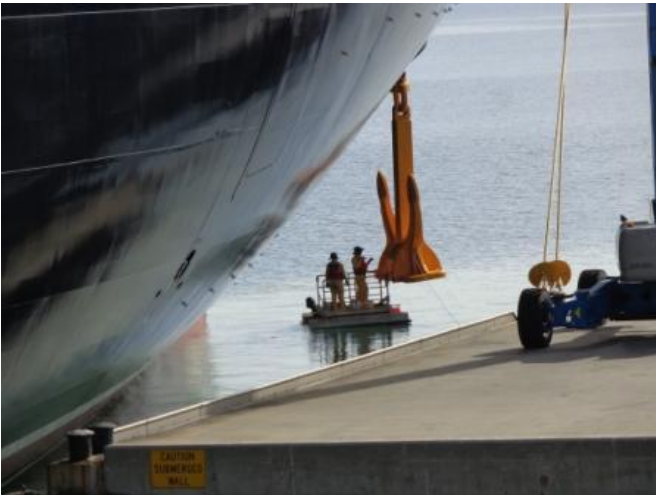
Of course, you break out a cherry picker and get some guys up on the funnel with rags and power buffers to get that stuff off before it fades the paint. Seriously, these guys were doing “wax on, wax off” on the funnel.

The second example I saw was this guy touching up a scratch in the paint on a winch.



Yes, he is using an artist's brush to fix a scratch in the paint in a place no one will see!

Lastly, every time the ship was next to a dock, there were guys washing and painting. Here are a couple of shots of more unsung heroes of the Disney Cruise Line including two guys cleaning the freaking anchor.



During the day while we were working hard on our tans, we had numerous adult beverages and snack foods from the many bars and food service stations located no more than 50 feet from our deck chairs. Life was easy.

I found the self-serve soft ice cream machine. Forget the Kegerator, I want one of these!



As the day wore on, two more cruise ships parked alongside the Dream. The Norwegian Epic silently slipped in between us and Nassau. That ship dwarfed the Dream and the two Carnival ships.



OK, time for some more random pictures taken as we walked around later in the day.



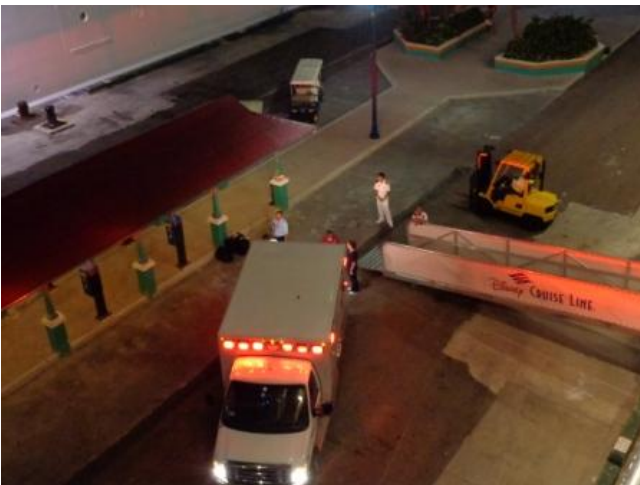
And what would a Buffalobill and NHShorty trip report be without some cool public bathroom shots?



Eventually, we had to retire to our cabin to get ready for dinner at Palo. Of course some of my Palo ensemble needed to be touched up in the laundry area on deck 6.



The ship's departure from Nassau was delayed about an hour so that someone who been injured could be taken to the hospital by ambulance. Not a good way to end your cruise.



After all this drama, the captain and crew pushed all the right buttons and got the Dream started and we put Nassau in our rear view mirror and headed out to sea. In case you are wondering, it was almost 8 before we left.



And now, Palo...

According to the DCL website, “Palo on the Disney Dream is an intimate Adult Exclusive restaurant located on Deck 12 Aft that boasts Northern Italian cuisine for dinner nightly. Along with its rich cuisine and upscale atmosphere, Palo offers sweeping ocean views and an elegant décor—a perfect romantic setting for Guests 18 years of age or older”. Well, all that is true, but it still doesn’t come close to our experience.

First, the place is just beautiful. Here is a picture we took in the daytime on our first day before leaving the dock. To change this daytime picture to what Palo was for us at night, just lower the lights to a romantic level, add the sounds of soft romantic Italian violins, breathe in the romantic smells of the wonderful dishes, feel the romantic “movement” of the ship, and think romantic thoughts. In case you don’t get it by now, the place is romantic.



In fact Palo is so romantic; we didn't take a lot of pictures beyond these.



The meal, the service, and the atmosphere were excellent. Truly, one of the best dining experiences we've had. But, they should rename the restaurant "Marco."

The maitre d' was named Marco. The sommelier's name was Marco. And of course, our waiter's name was Marco. It was a three Marco night for sure. I was able to verify that the 3 Marcos were a humorous coincidence and not a one-nametag-fits-all situation by chatting with Marco the waiter's wife the next day. Her name was Sonja.

Seriously, if you take a Disney cruise, splurge on this "must do." Go to Palo and be sure to ask for Marco.

So, what could top off the great food and romance of Palo? Yup, FIREWORKS!



These are not great fireworks pictures, but take special note of how the fireworks were reflected on the funnel. The wax-on, wax-off guys did an excellent job.

As a final bit of Disney magic on our day of relaxing in the sun, NHShorty's bravery, and a swanky romantic dinner followed by fireworks, we opened our decorated cabin door at 11:30 PM to find this:



Good night everyone. Get some rest, because the next installment will cover Castaway Cay.