

Days 20 and 21 (Thursday & Friday 10/09-10/08) At Sea

We left the pier in Shanghai about 9pm on October 9 and started the journey down the Huangpu River in the dark. We were hoping that progress would be slow so that by daylight some view of the broad Yangtze River would still be possible. Unfortunately, when the day broke with bright sunlight we were far out to sea. The good news was that we had calm weather and smooth sea. We were headed south toward Hong Kong and the temperature was getting a bit warm in the high 70s.

The most exciting event of the day was the luncheon for Cruise Critic members in the dining room. Barbara had called around a few days ago to make people aware of our gathering and we ended up with 24 people at 4 tables. With all the activity during our visit in Shanghai there was no lack of things to talk about. We took some photos of the happy diners as shown below.



**L to R:
MaryLou (lusyrsgirl); Larry & Carol (webecruisinnow); John & MaryAnn (wowzo)**



Above, Left to right: Trudy, Hennie, Diana (lusyrsgirl); Ken (tabK) & Lois (sotl)



Above, Left to right: Chet & Anne (travelinggg); Jean & Doug (aussieoz)



Rosemary & Bob (rozo'sbeau)



Above, Left to right: Doug & Jean (ausieoz), Dora & Ron



L to R: Barbara & Orlin (tenncruisers); Vera, Teresa (cctac); Anne & Dick (ansalberg)

MaryAnn has scheduled the next meeting of Cruise Critic members for 23 October in the Crow's Nest after our visit in Singapore. We know that Nick (foxpaw) joins the ship in Singapore and we will be welcoming him on board.

At one point we passed many small fishing boats as shown in this photo. We were in the East China Sea and headed for the Taiwan Strait.



Apparently these are good fishing waters. We were surprised when the Captain announced in his daily navigation briefing that the ocean is rather shallow here, on the order of 700 feet deep.

The dress for the evening was formal on our first day out from Shanghai. Before dinner we went to Bob and Esther's cabin for some of Bob's famous margaritas. Joan joined the party and we let the good times roll.



Soon it was time to go down to our table in the dining room. The theme for the evening was "Oriental Night" so Gde and Dibya were waiting for us in their shiny silk Chinese jackets.



Before the meal was finished, our head waiter, Janar, dropped by to ham it up with Esther as Bob keeps a close watch.



Finally, for the foodies we want to record the fact that the lobster tonight in the surf and turf dish was superb. Barbara can attest to that.



We finished off the day with some really good news in the email. Back in Oak Ridge our daughter-in-law, Becky, had completed surgery to repair a herniated disk in her back and everything was looking good. We had been worried about her operation and now we could relax a little bit. This was a time when we wished we could be in two places at once.

On Day 21, October 10, we spent much of the day catching up on the blog and email and in-general relaxing around the ship. We received email from our friend, Karen, who mentioned that

she is following the Amsterdam daily location on an Internet website. For those interested here it is: <http://www.sailwx.info/shiptrack/cruiseships.phtml> .

The Amsterdam is currently cruising through the Taiwan Strait. The temperature is climbing into the mid 80s and humidity is rising so we are breaking out the tropical clothes.

At 2pm we attended a presentation in the Queen's Lounge by Dr. Wolff, the Explorations speaker. His subject today was entitled "Mao-Tse-Tung, Power from the barrel of a gun". Dr. Wolff described the life of Mao-Tse-Tung with particular emphasis on his later life. As chairman of the Communist Party Mao was responsible for government policies that resulted in a 100 million or more Chinese starving to death and being executed. Dr. Wolff called Mao the greatest killer of humans of all world history. Although Mao-Tse-Tung's picture can be seen hanging in public places, there apparently is a government policy in place to begin downplaying his importance in Chinese history. For example, a book on Chinese history was published in Shanghai in 2006 for use in all Chinese schools. According to Dr. Wolff there is not one mention of Mao-Tse-Tung's name in the book.

Tomorrow we arrive in Hong Kong, one of our favorite places. We are looking forward to the visit.