

**Day 6 (Thur. 9/25/08) At Sea, Other Blogs, Date Line, Cruise Critic Lunch:**

Today the sea was calmer than yesterday. There was some sunshine, and the temperature hung in the mid 50s. It looks like good Capt. van Zaane and his navigator Ms Emmely Kik have threaded the needle between storms saving us landlubbers some sea sickness time.

We hiked around the Promenade Deck for about three miles. Today, for the first time we saw a whale spouting and there were some birds skimming over the waves. On the bulkhead of the Promenade Deck are signs that become very familiar to the deck walkers. Here are a couple of them. The "No jogging" request is a favor to the folks in the staterooms below the Promenade deck who could be annoyed by the pounding of feet on their ceiling.



This brass plaque on the right confirms that the

Amsterdam is a relatively new ship constructed by Fincantieri in Italy in the year 2000 and only 8 years old.



When we pass the stern of the ship on each round, we enjoy the sensation of the surging vibration from the ship's propellers and roiling water extending out toward the horizon as shown in this view.

Today after clocking about 3 miles around the deck we adjourned to the Lido for breakfast.

**Other Blogs:** In addition to postings on the 65 Day Asia & Australia thread of the [www.cruisecritic.com](http://www.cruisecritic.com) website, we have become aware of two other blogs that are covering the Asia & Australia Grand Voyage. One blog is written by Chet & Ann and the address is <http://boyd-carbertfamily.blogspot.com> . The other blog is written by Jeff and the address is <http://amazingvoyages.blogspot.com> . As usual, getting the precise address is important. In the case of Jeff's blog we found that if you use the singular "amazingvoyage" you will get some entirely different blog.

**International Date Line:** Sometime before midnight on Tuesday, 9/23/08, the Amsterdam crossed the International Date Line passing from east to west. Let's say it was 9pm when we crossed the Date Line. When we crossed the Line the hour stayed the same but the date turned from Tuesday 9/23/08 to Wednesday 9/24/08. Wednesday, 9/24/08 existed on the Amsterdam for three hours until midnight when the date changed to Thursday, 9/25/08. The Amsterdam could have kept track of this brief 3 hour period of Wednesday, 9/24/08, but instead elected to keep Tuesday, 9/23/08 going to midnight and then go directly to Thursday, 9/25/08, skipping Wednesday, 9/24/08 completely. This procedure of skipping the brief period where Wednesday, 24 September, existed on board probably avoids having some special book keeping for tracking the unusual situation where both Tuesday and Wednesday would be less than 24 hours long. This option simply keeps Tuesday and Thursday as complete 24 hour days with no accounting needed for Wednesday, 9/24/08. Whatever, for us folks traveling across the ocean at about 20 knots, it matters little. This calendar adjustment will assure that we will be using the correct calendar day when we arrive in Hakodate, Japan on Monday, 29 September.

Barbara, like most people, just accepted the International Date Line as one more annoying technical detail of travel. However, Orlin had to wrestle with the concept. We had faced this issue when crossing the Date Line on the 2007 World Cruise. Eventually a mental exercise was hatched that brought a satisfying answer to the question of why we need the Date Line. The argument goes like this. Accept the fact that in circumnavigating the earth a person passes through a complete 360 degrees of a circle. The 24 hours of any day is distributed around those 360 degrees in 1 hour increments. When traveling west one must adjust the clock 1 hour backward at each time zone to keep the sun directly overhead at noon where you are located. It is this protocol that has had us all complaining about having to set our clocks back one hour each night since we left Seattle, Washington. Well, consider this, what if you left Seattle at noon on 19 September and traveled westward at a high speed so that you circumnavigated the globe instantly? As you traveled you would set your clock back one hour for every time zone as you traveled westward. If you followed this procedure you would set your clock back 24 hours while going around the world and arrive back at Seattle at noon on 18 September, a day before you started. This illogical result would take place in less dramatic fashion even if you traveled at a slow speed. The paradox of losing a day relative to the starting point cropped up and mystified people when Magellan's crew completed circumnavigation of the globe in 1520. The use of the International Date Line avoids this lack of closure on calendar dates when circling the globe. It does this by adding 24 hours to your clock when crossing east to west or subtracting 24 hours when crossing west to east. In the example of instantaneous global circumnavigation given above, the presence of the International Date Line would require you to add 24 hours to your clock when crossing the Date Line east to west. Then you

would continue to subtract one hour at each time zone of westward travel. When you returned to Seattle you would find that it is still noon on September 19<sup>th</sup>, a logical result for instantaneous circling of the globe. The International Date Line facilitates commerce and record keeping in activities that involve travel around the globe. It is a marvelous example of how the nations of the world can come together and agree on a solution to a problem.

**Cruise Critic Luncheon:** Barbara volunteered to help MaryAnn (wowzo) organize lunches for interested Cruise Critic (CC) folks from time to time in the La Fontaine dining room. This would provide a pleasant way for the Cruise Critic people to get more acquainted with folks they had previously only known through posting of notes on the [www.cruisecritic.com](http://www.cruisecritic.com) message board website. Last Monday Barbara had gone to the maitre d' in the La Fontaine dining room and asked if on Wednesday she could reserve three tables at lunch time for seating of 22 Cruise Critic people. The maitre d', with a straight face, informed Barbara that there was no Wednesday this week. Thanks to the mysteries of the International Date Line such a ridiculous statement was true. The poor lady had not anticipated such an unusual calendar event when volunteering for this job and for a moment was taken aback. However, adapting quickly to the prospect of a week with only six days she suggested a Thursday reservation at 12:30 would do nicely.

As predicted by the maitre d', Thursday arrived one day early this week and the Cruise Critic folks started to arrive at the La Fontaine dining room about 12:30. Several Cruise

Critic regulars are dedicated to the on-board Trivia Game that is played each day until 12:30 or a little later. Most Trivia participants would rather play than eat but eventually even those sharp minded individuals trickled into the dining room and the luncheon began. Here are some candid shots of our assembled group of Cruise Critic fans.

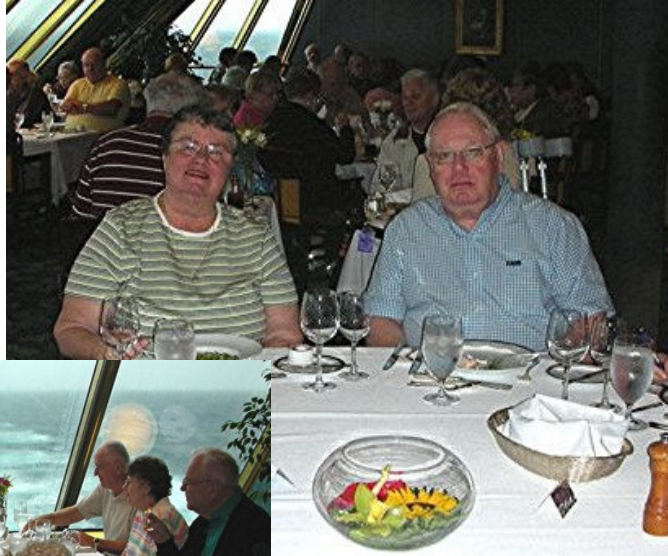


Above: MaryLou & Diana (lusrsgirl) ; Trudy



Right: Hennie ; Darrel & Karen (cruisertwo)

Right: Anne & Dick (ansalberg)



Below: Orlin & Barbara  
(Tenncruisers)



Left: Lois & Ken (tabK) ;  
Anne (travelinggg) Note –  
the trailing "gg" stands for  
great grandmother!

Below: Chet (travelinggg) ;  
Rosemary & Bob

(rozo'sbeau)





Left: Jack & Evelyn  
(itravel2much) ; Lyle (70 +)

Below: Marjorie (70 +) ;  
MaryAnn & John (wowzo)



The luncheon gave us all a chance to get better acquainted with our Cruise Critic pals so we decided to schedule another sit-down event. Barbara gathered up the names of people who would be interested in getting together for another Cruise Critic lunch on October 9<sup>th</sup>, a sea day after we leave Shanghai. We'll be looking forward to that.

The dress code for dinner tonight was formal so there were plenty of tuxedos on the men and nice formal dresses worn by the ladies. Before dinner, Bob and Esther had Joan and us join them for drinks in their cabin. Bob mixed up margaritas and we had a good time discussing Bob's latest photography projects. Here are Bob and Esther preparing

margaritas in the blender that they brought onboard just for these occasions. The rest of us wait in anticipation.



Dinner time at 5:30pm rolled around too soon so the party broke up and we all tramped down to Table 142 in the dining room.

After dinner we made our way past the Rembrandt Lounge with Steve Lynch, the piano man, playing a popular tune. We paused and couldn't help but think of our friends Paul and Maria on the 2007 GWV when you could count on finding them here. Taking our nostalgia with us we pushed on to the Ocean Bar and a little slow dancing. We decided to make this Ocean Bar visit a nightly event for the rest of the cruise.