

Trip to Dubai – 02/07/2011 to 02/15/2011

02/05/2011 (Saturday) – Flew Delta Airlines from Harrisburg to Detroit where we had a long delay in Detroit because there was a malfunction with the entrance ramp. It took about an hour to repair, followed up by another hour to de-ice the plane. After leaving Detroit we had an overnight flight to Amsterdam where there was only a short layover to our next flight, due to the lateness of the flight from Detroit. It was another 9 hours until we finally arrived in Dubai. It took another 2 hours to clear customs and find our shuttle bus to the Holiday Inn Express where we stayed for the night.

02/07/2011 (Monday) – We woke up early and decided to try out the Dubai Metro tram. We hopped on it at the nearest terminal and rode it all the way to the other end of the city. On the way back we stopped at the city center and walked to the World Trade Center to visit the Dubai Rotary Club. We got there too early so we took a few pictures of their meeting area then made our way back to the hotel to pack up and catch a cab to the port where we boarded the ship – Royal Caribbean – Brilliance of the Seas. Upon boarding we headed to the food for a very late lunch; then after completing the on-board safety drill we cleaned up and went to dinner. We had a table for 10, mostly Americans, and one couple from England. Following dinner we went to the opening show; then off to bed as the ship was making its way to Fujairah.

02/08/2011 (Tuesday) – We woke up at 7:15am, went to breakfast in the main dining room then off to tour Fujairah. The ship's shuttle bus took us to the tour gate area where we hired a taxi to take us around the city. Fujairah is one of the 7 states that comprises the UAE (United Arab Emirates), and the first stop on our 7 day cruise. We took a 2 hour tour which cost us \$60 and visited the following places:

- Fort Fujairah – UAE's oldest fort – No charge to walk around the outside
- Museum at Fort Fujairah – 5 dirhams/person to visit (Note: \$1 = 3.6 dirhams)
- Fish & Produce market
- Heritage Village – 20 dirhams/person to visit
- Al Hayl Palace – 10 dirham tip
- LuLu shopping center – Very much like a Walmart

Following the tour we went back to the ship for a light lunch and some time at the pool area to relax. At 4:00pm we went to the Fitness Center on board the ship, for an hour, then on to dinner and the show. Tonight's show was Tango Buenos Aires, which was appropriate for the type of crowd that was on this cruise. There were 2000 passengers, half of which were from the United Kingdom, another 1/3 from Germany and a large group from China. There were 119 Americans on-board. The ship departed for its next port (Muscat, Oman) and we were on our way to bed for the night.

02/09/2011 (Wednesday) Woke up early; had breakfast and headed to the port terminal to the shuttle bus which took us to the port gate. We walked the sidewalk along the Gulf of Oman for several hours, covering several miles, before returning and stopping at the Muttrah Souq market. The market area is several square blocks in size and sells every imaginable souvenir. Donna bought a few things for the grandkids. We found an Internet Café nearby and spent an hour there before heading back to the ship for lunch.

At 3:45pm we headed for the Fitness Center again for another hour workout, then went to dinner. Only 4 couples showed up this time. After dinner we went to the theater to be amused by the cast of the Love & Marriage Game Show, then hiked around the ship on Deck 5 outside for an hour or so before heading off to bed.

02/09/2011 (Thursday) – Another day in Muscat, Oman. Today we hired a taxi to take a two hour tour of the city. For our \$60 we went to the Grand Mosque, then over to the Al Alan Palace, and back to the Muttrah Souq for more shopping; all before lunch. We bought a few more souvenirs then headed back to the ship for a late lunch. We rested for a few hours before going back to the Fitness center for our daily workout. This time we decided to end the work-out with a visit to the Solarium and hot tub area. After dinner we went to the show – tonight there was a magician/illusionist – John Taylor who was fascinating. We’ll never figure out how he did some of things he did. We spent an hour or so after the show, at the Colony Club to listen to one of the ship-friendly game shows they always put on; then off to bed, as the ship was heading to Abu Dhabi.

02/10/2011 (Friday) – Today is a “Day at Sea.” After breakfast we spent the morning in the Solarium, reading and contemplating the trip. This was a day to relax and unwind as the ship made its way slowly to our next port. After lunch we did the usual and spent another hour or so at the Fitness center before dinner. Tonight’s show was The Rat Pack, impersonators of Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr. They did an excellent job, but it wasn’t really our kind of music.

02/11/2011 (Saturday) – Abu Dhabi – we booked an excursion on 4-wheel drive Toyota Land Cruisers to the largest sand dunes in the world. After driving for an hour we arrived at the dunes and so began the wild ride through the desert. We took lots of pictures while stopping at a camel farm in the middle of the dunes, then back to civilization. Our final stop was at a local “date” market where we purchased several boxes of natural and chocolate covered dates. We had dinner then went to the show; a musical/variety show featuring songs from the Full Monty and Momma Mia (ABBA). Great show.

02/12/2011 (Sunday) – Arrived back in Dubai. This morning we took the shuttle bus to a local shopping center, where we walked for a while toward the Atlantis Hotel on one of the famous Dubai palm islands – Al Jameriah. We finally caught a taxi which took us to the Atlantis where we visited the largest aquarium in the world which was inside the hotel, then spent another hour or so checking out the hotel. We took a taxi to the Metro then walked around for a few hours looking for the Green market area. Being unsuccessful in that effort we caught a taxi back to the ship. After dinner we went to the final theater show – 2 acrobatic gymnasts, and the cast of singers and dancers from the ship who presented their goodbye extravaganza to all the guests on board. Later that night we went back to our room to pack for the trip home.

02/13/2011 (Monday) Began our day with a departure excursion tour of the city of Dubai. We visited the 7 star Burj hotel which charges \$2000 per night. It’s one of the most exclusive hotel on Earth. From there we toured an older part of the city, made a brief stop at the spice and gold souq then dropped off at the airport. We proceeded to check our

bags in a holding area for 40 dirhams then took the Metro back to the Mall of the Emirates, which is famous for its indoor skiing area. We walked around the mall for a few hours then headed back to the airport to check in for our flight home. We were on a Delta overnight flight (15-1/2 hours) from Dubai to Atlanta. Watched about 4 movies during the long flight; had dinner and breakfast on board and finally arrived in Atlanta at 5:45 am. We spent a couple hours clearing customs then re-boarded a flight to Harrisburg. Arriving in Harrisburg at 10:15am, Charlie picked us up and took us back to York, PA where we resumed our Pennsylvania visit. Josie was really happy to see us.