

## Chasing the Northern Lights



That is not our photo but shows what we were looking for.

We sailed out of Tilbury in London which is not convenient when arriving at Heathrow. Only 14 Americans on this trip with over a thousand passengers.



And the first stop was Amsterdam where we picked up many more passengers



Victoria found this statue which reminded us of the Mishlove's front yard.



Then on to Alesund, Norway. Walked in City Hall by mistake looking for Internet access. They gave us a password. Can't image that happening in the US.





This is the marker denoting crossing the Arctic Circle



Victoria and friends getting out of the wind



Svartisen Glacier was fogged in



Winds got up to 70 knots



And it was getting chilly out



They make use of that wind





Tromsø, Norway docked by the airport



Trolls everywhere and we did see the Aurora that night



Sailing away from Tromsø in evening



Magellan docked in Alta, Norway

This was an important German naval base during WWII. Norway was completely occupied and this area was important as the Allies were shipping supplies to Murmansk, Russia – a very dangerous voyage.



Victoria trying out the local transportation



On to Honningsvaag, the northern most city in the world with only a little over 2000 residents. Temps hit -30C here but the wind added to the fun



We learned that while Norway is in the EU, they don't take Euros and the price differential was significant. Advice is to convert before you leave as the cruise ship will screw you as well.



The hill above Alta





Sailing south. Note my new hat as Victoria bought a new one for me.



Sortland was sort of a wasted stop



This is Erik McVicar, a marine engineer who lectured during the trip. We found his exploits with the Sami shamans to be of great interest. The Sami (previously known as Laplanders) populate several countries in the arctic and have many of the problems other indigenous peoples do. He did describe a unique incident in which he was cured of severe pain without medication.



This is how I dressed for the deck at night



There was a brief stop in Andalsnes



The ship does cruise the Caribbean as well where this design is more appropriate

And then out of the snow and into fog in Bergen. Until noon could not see a block



Romsdalfjord as we sailed south



But it did clear in the afternoon



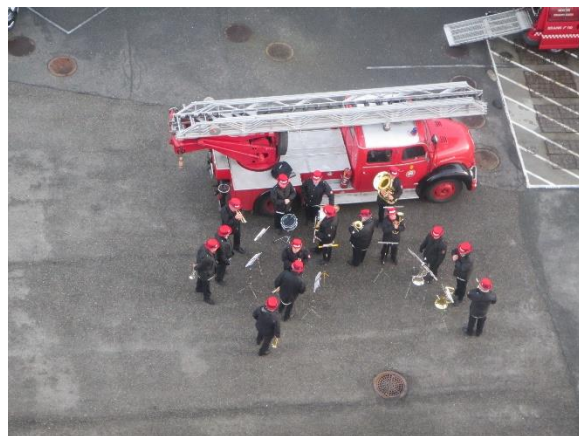


Historic area. We hit MickyD's as they usually have free wi-fi



Very quaint city and second largest in Norway (about 250,000 residents)

On the right is a photo taken of the lights we saw. It was taken by another American, Doug Frazier who had better camera equipment



As we sailed away the local fire department band serenaded the ship – even played anchors aweigh as we sail off for London.



The last night the captain sent down a note and bottle of wine. He had spent time in the Hellenic Navy with their SEALs. This was a gift from one SOF officer to another.





More of Doug's photos



At times the lights were brilliant – other times more of a glow.



It was an interesting trip. The ship was OK but far from the lines we have experienced on earlier trips. If anyone wants to travel to see the Northern Lights I have several suggestions and would be happy to share.