

Day 11: Trondheim–Kristiansund–Molde–Alesund. 25 July 2013

The distance Bergen-Kirkenes-Trondheim was given as 2,292 nautical miles or 4,244 kms.

Once again the “White Night” took its toll. I was in bed shortly after 22:00 and had no trouble getting to sleep with my black bandana covering my eyes. But, I was awake at 02:00 and thereafter it was just cat napping. Hurtigruten really should do something to black out the windows. I am now feeling really run down, not having had one decent night’s sleep since the flight of 14/15 July, during which I got no sleep at all.

I also had the beginnings of a head cold. There had been a lot of sneezing on board as various contingents got on and off the ship. So, I took an anti-histamine and hoped for the best outcome.

At 06:30 we docked in Trondheim for our second visit. We lay alongside the Hurtigruten MS Trondheim – how prophetic!

We had cloudless skies again today. What a remarkable change in the weather. Clad in my new Norwegian T-shirt, I had to slather on sun block. I also decided that my broad-brimmed Tilley hat would be most appropriate.

My mission was to walk to the Cathedral, which I did with ease. Once again Trondheim was sound asleep at 07:45 and walking was unimpeded by traffic. The cathedral was not open, so I will have to find some Google images of the interior. The adjacent Archbishop’s Palace was as sterile as ever. I walked a total of 5.5 kms at a brisk pace and was back to the ship at 09:20, having had a good workout.

We departed at 10:00 hrs to pass Monk Island for the second time.

The Germans had their disembarkation briefing at 10:30 – I dropped in to see how many people were in the seventh deck lounge. They filled the whole venue so I guessed at 300 out of 420 passengers.

I had my dreaded Disembarkation Briefing at 11:00 hrs. It was not as bad as I thought. Suitcases out by 09:00 and cabins vacated by 10:00 on July 26th (the last day of the voyage).

Although the weather was sunny, I found today's cruising a bit boring. Equally, although it was mainly sunny, we started to run into belts of sea fog. In the fog, the temperature dropped like a rock.

I was so tired after lunch that I dropped my bunk bed tray and decided to lay down. Unbelievably, I fell asleep with the drapes wide open in full sunlight. Something woke me up just as we sailed into Kristiansund at 16:30 for our thirty minute stop. I had visited the other KrisitanSAND on a cruise out of Copenhagen a couple of years ago. We all trooped to the centre of the harbour to take a photo of the statue of the "Klipfish Frau". The local women split the cod, salted and dried it on the smooth rocks along the coast. The product was exported and consumed as a great delicacy in southern climes.

We had the Antarctic lecture in English by Marco at 17:30 – he had been there 30 times. He gave us the story of the 2005 – 2006 MS Nordnorge and MS Nordkapp sorties and the evolution in 2008 to MS Fram. I remember well the ten Nordnorge Polarcirkel boat landings to see the Gentou, Adelie and Chinstrap penguins.

At 19:00 there was only a single sitting at dinner tonight – it was a combination of people having departed the ship at Trondheim and others on a long excursion that did not return to the ship until 21:30 hrs.

Dinner started with potato and paprika soup. Baked halibut followed, with herb crust served on seafood risotto. We finished with rhubarb and strawberry soup served with puff pastry and mint-flavoured cream.

We passed a large shore installation that processes natural gas. The gas wells are on the sea bed 120 km northwest of the liquifying plant. In full production, the plant will satisfy 20% of the UK's natural gas requirement.

We stopped at Molde at 20:45 to recover the passengers who had done the Atlantic Ocean excursion. I went ashore to confirm what I already knew. It was far too civilized, upscale, neat and tidy. We had left the wilderness and the adventure was over.

At 21:30 the Hurtigruten MS Midnatsol docked alongside.

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