

# *The Ship Itself - The Viking Sun*

## *Initial Impressions*



Viking is all in on making themselves competitive in the ocean ship market. It is obvious in the way they have staffed this ship with the cream of the crop from across their organization. The majority of the crew is staying for the entire 120 days with some number rotating out during the seven segments based on their contracts and scheduled vacations.

While they are not doing any major entertainment productions, they are rotating top flight talent in by segment. The Unique3 (three female singers) were outstanding and will be doing another show on Wednesday night. They will be flown back to their base in Los Angeles from Polynesia. Entertainment tonight is Moya Angela who is on a break from starring as Effie White in Dreamgirls on Broadway, was on America's Got Talent, and played Portia on 30 Rock.

The ship also has a cadre of musicians who play every day in different venues. These include a five-person band with two singers (male and female), an excellent pianist, an even better classical guitarist, and a trio (violin, cello, and flute.) Very calm and soothing music.

Departing LA we were treated to a monster fireworks display after the owner of Viking addressed the group. He will be aboard for different segments. Apparently, something special for the ship planned in Australia and Shanghai. All a big secret.

Cabins are great and immaculate. All six of our suitcases fit under the king size bed. Lots of drawer space and closet space for hanging clothes. We put up a 12 pair hanging shoe rack on the back of the bathroom door. Also, put popup baskets of various sizes in all the nooks and crannies in the cabin.

The bed is super comfortable! All lighting is adjustable to include special reading lights over the bed. Plenty of US and European electrical receptacles as well as charging ports. Desk top flips up to make a dressing table. We actually use the area as one big desk. The in-room refrigerator is built into a sliding drawer so that you simply reach down to get sodas, juices, alcohol, candy bars, peanut packs, etc. Refilled every day and you can have a preference on the drinks during restocking.

Nice, tight sliding glass door to the full size balcony with two chairs and a round table. Most folks here say to order breakfast from room service on days of excursions to avoid delays at the restaurants. Good plan.

So far we have met 6 couples one from Maine, 2 from Florida, one from Denmark, one from Seattle, and one from New Orleans. Have had dinner with most of the folks whose reason for being on the cruise mirrors our own: want to pack and unpack only once, previous positive experience with Viking, all retired professional folks, did the math and realized the savings of not trying to do multiple, separate trips.

Have been to the gym facility twice. All new machines to include circuit trainers, rowing machines, stair climbers, bikes, and treadmills. The latter are state of the art, fully programmable and store your workouts on the cloud. Really nice to exercise and watch the waves go by. We have not used the pools or spa yet but people rave about the spa, sauna and "cold room" which is like a grotto with real snow!



The food is incredibly varied. The Restaurant is the main dining area but there is a buffet area called The World Café which shares menus and has other specialties. Last night we had the seafood buffet of crab legs, shrimp, langoustines, mussels, etc. Really, really good. Five other areas on board for meals or snacks. Still investigating those. Standout has been the daily made gelato. As good as any Italian Gelateria. New flavors every day.



I'll send you some photos of menus from time to time to show the range of culinary expertise. Our first specialty restaurant, Manfredi's is tomorrow night. Can't wait. They are already working with Lorraine and a ton of other people who have dietary concerns. The gluten free rolls are to die for. Bottom line is a low probability that Lorraine will starve on this journey.



Finally, we know there are 930 passengers on this ship but we have never seen more than 15-20 at a time. Even meals are groups of say 40-50 people. The design of this ship creates so many living spaces that people are "absorbed" into it. Either that or this is part of a Stephen King novel where every day passengers disappear. Will be interesting to do a head count at the 30 day mark!!!