

2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 1 – Friday January 4th – We Depart Pittsburgh



Today Marcia and I (Jim) leave for our two-week motor sailing vacation in the Caribbean Sea. Daughter Jaime picks us up at our house at 4:45 AM and drives us to the Pittsburgh Airport. Jaime will be watching our house and our little dog, Pepper, while we are away.

We will be cruising on the Island Windjammer's ship Sagitta through the Northern Leeward Islands and the British Virgin Islands. One year ago, we first cruised on the Sagitta. We were scheduled, then, to sail this itinerary but due to the severe hurricane damage in the northern Caribbean, Island Windjammers changed our route from St. Kitts south through the Leewards and then back north. We had a great time! Here is a link to my Trip Report (with pictures) and Marcia's Photo Show from last years' cruise:

<http://theelvings.com/2018Leeward.pdf>

<https://vimeo.com/259230420>

We booked this years' trip right after getting home from the 2018 trip (and got the \$1000 "early booking" discount) and then discovered that three great people we traveled with on last years' cruise are also booked on this one; Kathy (from Greece NY), Michelle (from Regina, Saskatchewan Canada) and Wally (from Asheville NC). We are really looking forward to seeing them again!

Our three-hour flight from Pittsburgh arrives on time in Miami and as planned we meet up with Kathy. We board a full AA 737-800 for another three-hour flight to St. Kitts. On our plane are USA students returning from holiday break to their Veterinary University on St. Kitts. Several have their "emotional support" dogs with them in the main cabin, although we know that they were really their pets. The dogs (and students) were very well behaved on the flight!

We land on time in St. Kitts at 3:30 PM and the three of us secure a taxi driven by a nice guy, Samuel.



He drives us to the Timothy Beach Resort, where we all stayed last year. It is a nice locally owned hotel with a calm beach on the Caribbean side of the island at Frigate Bay. We again take advantage of the 30% "Island Windjammer" room discount. We come in a day or two early before our Sunday cruise departure, just to make sure any winter travel



delays would not keep us from catching our ship. When we arrive at Timothy's, Michelle (who flew in Wednesday from Canada) is in front to meet us. After warm greetings we secure our rooms, unpack, and meet at 5 PM for Happy Hour at Timothy's beach front bar (on the right in the picture to the left).

We enjoy drinks with Michelle (left in the above photo) and Kathy (on the right), catch up on things and discuss our upcoming cruise. A couple near us in the bar ask if we are sailing with Island Windjammers and we find they will be traveling with us, Ann and Jimmie

from Arkansas. We learn that they had traveled on the Island Windjammers smaller ten passenger sailing ship, the Diamant, last year. We have nice discussions and it's apparent to us they will be great traveling companions.

Now, several months ago Kathy had e-mailed us and asked if we would like to join Michelle and her for the special Friday Night Lobster Fest at a restaurant on Reggae Beach. At 6:40 PM our ace Taxi driver, Samuel, picks us up for the interesting drive to the very eastern part of St. Kitts. Kathy has reserved a great table for the four of us and we enjoy a wonderful dinner of lobster, shrimp, and nice side dishes from a separate buffet. A great local band plays from a small stage on the beach. They do some excellent reggae songs but also cover everyone from Elvis to Bruce Springsteen, never taking a break.

At 9 PM Samuel picks us up and we travel back to Timothy's. A great night with excellent food and even better companionship. After a somewhat long and exhausting day of travel in cramped airplane economy seats we quickly fall asleep.



2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 2 – Saturday January 5th – St. Kitts



Above is a photo of St. Kitts and the areas we visit on our stay on this beautiful island. St. Kitts and Nevis are a two-island independent country of 50,000 people (and 60,000 monkeys). St. Kitts is about twenty miles long and five miles wide with a mountain 3500 feet high. Last year we spent an enjoyable day on a guided tour of the whole island of St. Kitts.

We find our room at Timothy's most comfortable and with great views.





From our balcony we see a huge cruise ship sail past Frigate Bay on its way to dock at the capital city of Basseterre and we are glad that this is not the ship we will be sailing on tomorrow!

The weather is great; clear with high temperatures to be around 80 degrees and lows about 70 degrees. This is the forecast for the next two weeks.

After breakfast we are surprised to see our ship, the Sagitta, anchored in Frigate Bay. They are unloading passengers from their last trip. After the disembarkation the Sagitta motors to Basseterre to



provision for our trip.



At 10 AM Taxi driver Samuel picks the six of us up (Kathy, Michelle, Ann, Jimmie, Marcia and I) and drive us to the Capital City of Basseterre. We spend the next two-and-a-half hours shopping and exploring.

I find the National Museum and enjoy walking through their exhibits. I learn that St. Kitts was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1493. In 1626 the French and English cooperated in regrettably eliminating the 3000 remaining indigenous Caribe people. The French took control of the island in 1666 and the English in 1690. The Treaty of Versailles ceded St. Kitts to the British in 1783.



African slaves were brought to the island to work the sugar plantations. Their descendants make up the majority of St. Kitts population today. St. Kitts and Nevis gained full independence from Great Britain in 1983. I really enjoyed my time at the air-conditioned museum.

I do some shopping and buy a beautiful painted wood carving of my favorite Reggae artist, Bob Marley. I look forward to hanging it on the wall in my home office with the other “wood objects” that I always try to bring back from trips.



A little before 1 PM Samuel picks us up and drives the six of us back to Timothy’s. We walk across the street for lunch at the famous Mr. X’s Shiggity Shack restaurant. Here we first meet Isobel and Phil from



Vancouver, British Columbia Canada and learn that they will be traveling with us on the Sagitta. They traveled on the Diamant, last year, with Ann and Jimmie. They are seated in the picture, above, at the end of the table. Ann and Jimmie are in front of them. Most of us have the Fish and Chips for lunch and declared them to be the best we've ever had.

In the picture to the left our room is on the top floor between the palm trees. This is a great place to stay. Accommodations are great, location excellent, and the staff are the best; everyone with a smile on their face.



At 5 PM we meet at Timothy's beach front bar for Happy Hour. Sally and Tom from Aptos in Northern California join us. They will be traveling with us and have cruised before with Ann and Jimmie on the Diamant.

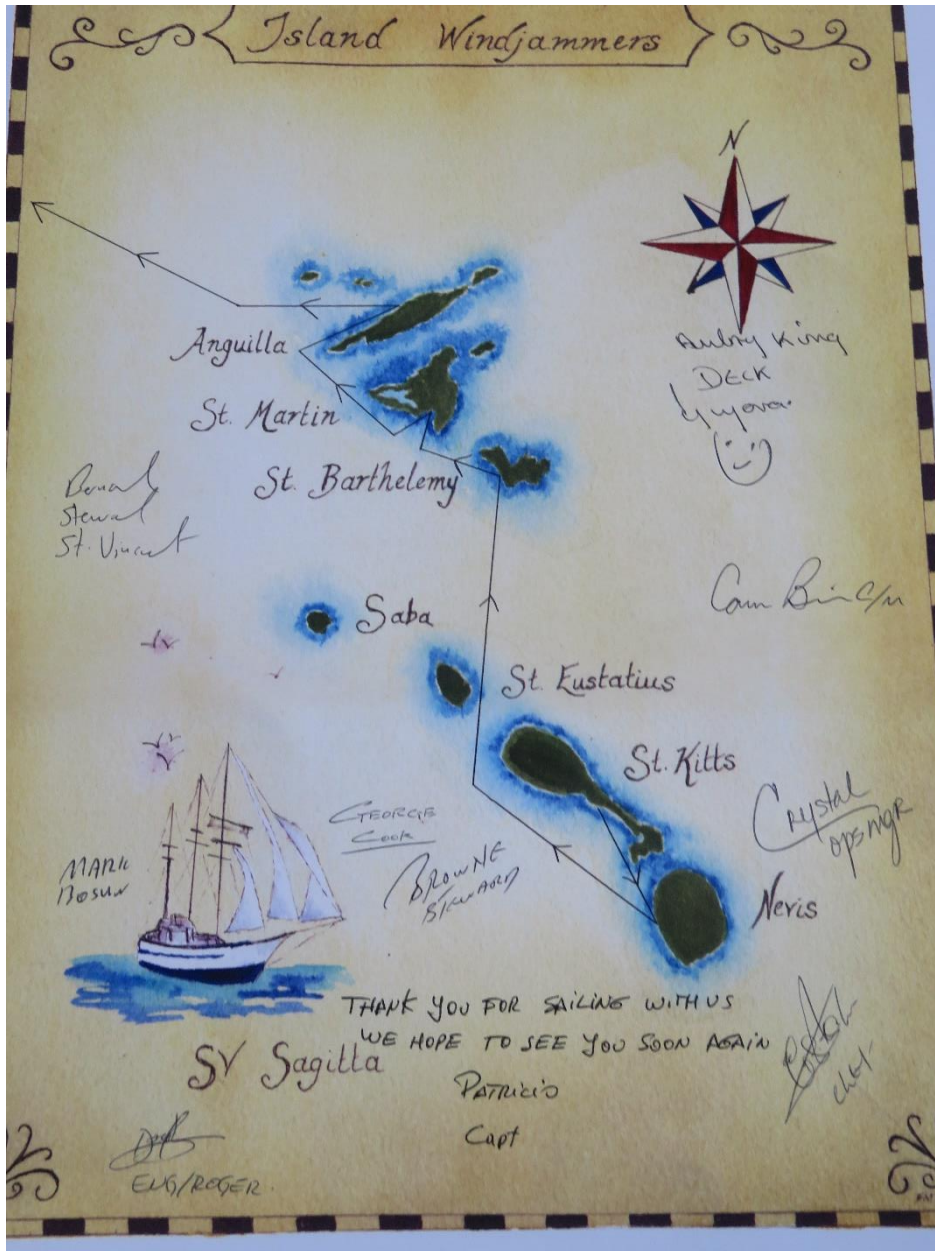
Next, Wally from Asheville North Carolina arrives. He traveled with us on the Sagitta last year. He's always a wealth of information as he has traveled twenty or thirty times with Island Windjammers and even more trips with the defunct Barefoot Windjammers. In fact, Wally will be doing "back-to-backs"; after our twelve-day cruise he will be

doing another twelve-day cruise on the Sagitta. We all know that after this last cruise the Sagitta will go into dry-dock for a complete inspection, repair and renovation; no idea when it will again sail.

We enjoy a nice sunset at 6 PM.

Wally organizes a walk towards town to find key provisions (mostly liquid) prior to when we will board the Sagitta tomorrow. While we know that our ship will be providing soft drinks, beer, and wine at no charge whenever we want it, they have also told us that we can bring our own liquor aboard and they will provide mixers. Marcia, Michelle and Kathy join Wally. They return at 7:30 PM. Most of us skip dinner due to our excellent, filling, late lunch at the Shiggity Shack.

2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 3 – Sunday January 6th – Boarding the Sagitta



Today is the big day; we will board the Sagitta for our twelve day motor sail through the Northern Leewards and then the British Virgin Islands.

Here's a map of where we will spend our first four days. We will travel from St. Kitts to nearby Nevis Island. Then up to St. Barts, St. Martin, and Anguilla. Then we will have a long journey to the British Virgin Islands for the balance of our cruise.

This map is a great souvenir of the trip that is given to each of us on our last day on board; signed by each member of the crew with the route drawn by 1st Mate Cam. You will see the BVI map later in this Trip Report!

It rained, sometimes quite hard, overnight. The sun rises at 6:30.



The sky quickly clears and we spot the Sagitta anchored in Frigate Bay in front of our hotel (upper left in the photo).

We check out at noon and walk down to the beach front restaurant to await our embarkation at 2 PM.

On our way down Marcia and I spot a few of the 60,000 monkeys said to populate the island. They are said to all be the descendants of the pets brought to the island by the original plantation owners.



As we wait, we meet the last few folks that will be traveling with us that we have not yet connected with. They are Dina and Dave from Northern New Jersey (they previously traveled with Ann, Jimmie, Isobel, Phil, Sally and Tom on the Diamant), Sarah from West London, England, and Anita and Richard, residents of the Turks and Caicos Islands, which are between the BVIs and the Bahamas. We learn that Anita is an accomplished photographer (weddings and such) and Richard is a builder and developer, among other things, on the islands. The folks we will be traveling with all seem to be the most interesting folks; we will try not to bore them! They are maybe “plus 5 to minus 15” years of our age. There are only sixteen of us passengers. The ship capacity is twenty-four. This is the same number as we had last year, and we all agree it is a perfect number.



Prior to 2 PM the Sagitta’s dinghy comes to shore. We check in with Crystal, our Operation Manager, and the crew takes our luggage to the ship. Then, we are transported by dinghy to the Sagitta. We have a nice view of Timothy’s from our ship. The Captain introduces himself and gives us a safety talk and life jacket drill. In the above photo, Tom and Sally (from CA), Sarah from England and Isobel from Canada listen to the safety drill. The ten-man crew next introduces themselves:

Patricio – Captain (from Ecuador...spent some years on ships in the Galapagos Islands of Ecuador).

Cam – First Mate (2nd in command; from New England in the USA).

Crystal – Operations Manager (like a Tour Director; from the USA but now a resident of Granada).

Roger – Engineer (he manages the engine room, electricals and water systems) from Venezuela.

George and George – (Respectively, Chef and Cook. They prepared our food on our great cruise last year; they are the best).

King – Deck Hand (works all around; raising sails, maintaining the deck, and always on the dinghy).

Mark – Bosun (in charge of motoring the dinghy and safely getting us old folks on and off it; Also helps raise and lower the sails, among other duties; he was the Bosun on our cruise last year).

Browne and Bernard – Stewards (they set up our dining areas and serve our meals to us; also serve drinks and food at cocktail hour and prior to breakfast; they also clean our cabins every day).

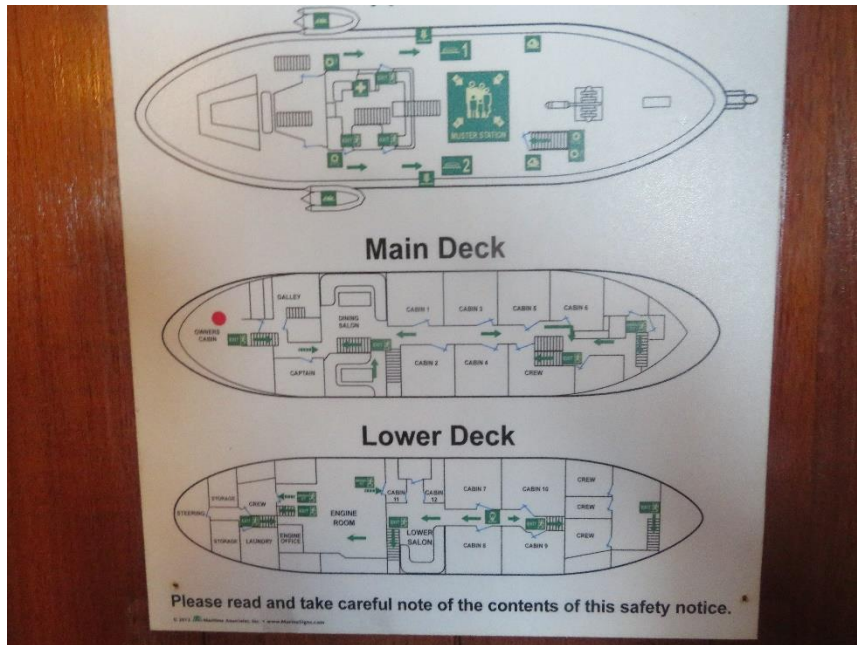
The last six crew members listed are either residents of the islands or from Guyana on the northern coast of South America. It is apparent that Island Windjammer's has again provided a hardworking and most amiable crew on this ship.

We know that breakfast will be served every morning at 8 AM in the seating area downstairs on the main deck. Lunch at Noon and Dinner at 7 PM on the outdoor seating area on the top, stern deck. In addition, Rum drinks (Sagittaritas) and snacks will be served in the lounge every day at 5 PM. Freshly popped popcorn is always available in the lounge.



Marcia and I have again splurged and booked the "Owners Suite". It's huge and occupies a good part of the stern of the ship. We will be most comfortable. We will enjoy our five large windows.

The other cabins on the Sagitta are known to be larger than the cabins on the other ships in the Island Windjammer fleet, so all our fellow cruisers should also be most comfortable.



Here's a diagram of the ship's layout. Our cabin is indicated by the red dot.

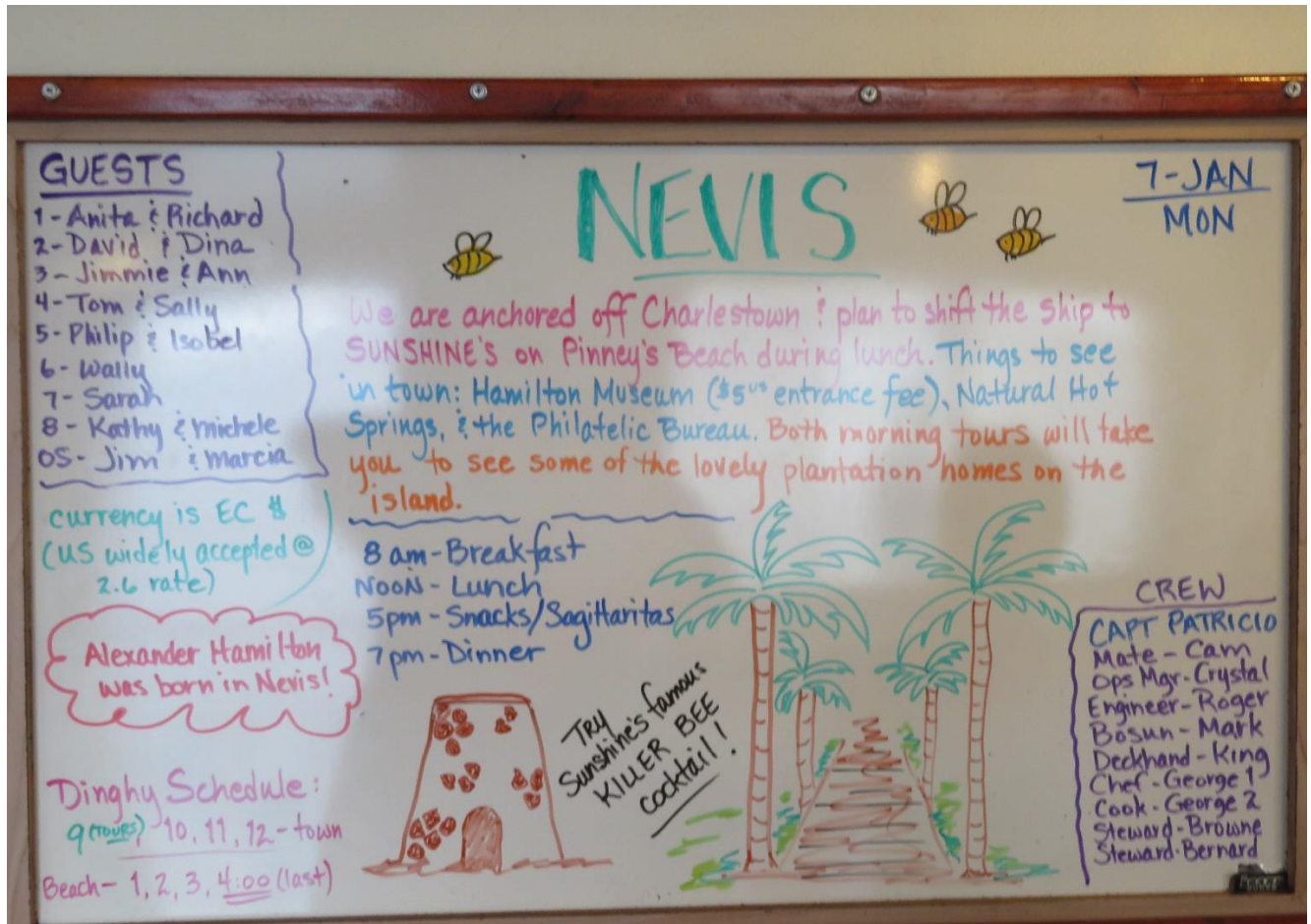
We sail and motor a short distance to the island of Nevis and anchor off the capital city of Charlestown. The ocean is very smooth

Below, right, Michelle, Tom and Jimmie chat with First Mate Cam at one of the tables in the dining area in the ship's stern.

We enjoy a nice sunset and great dinner.



2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 4 – Monday January 7th – Nevis Island

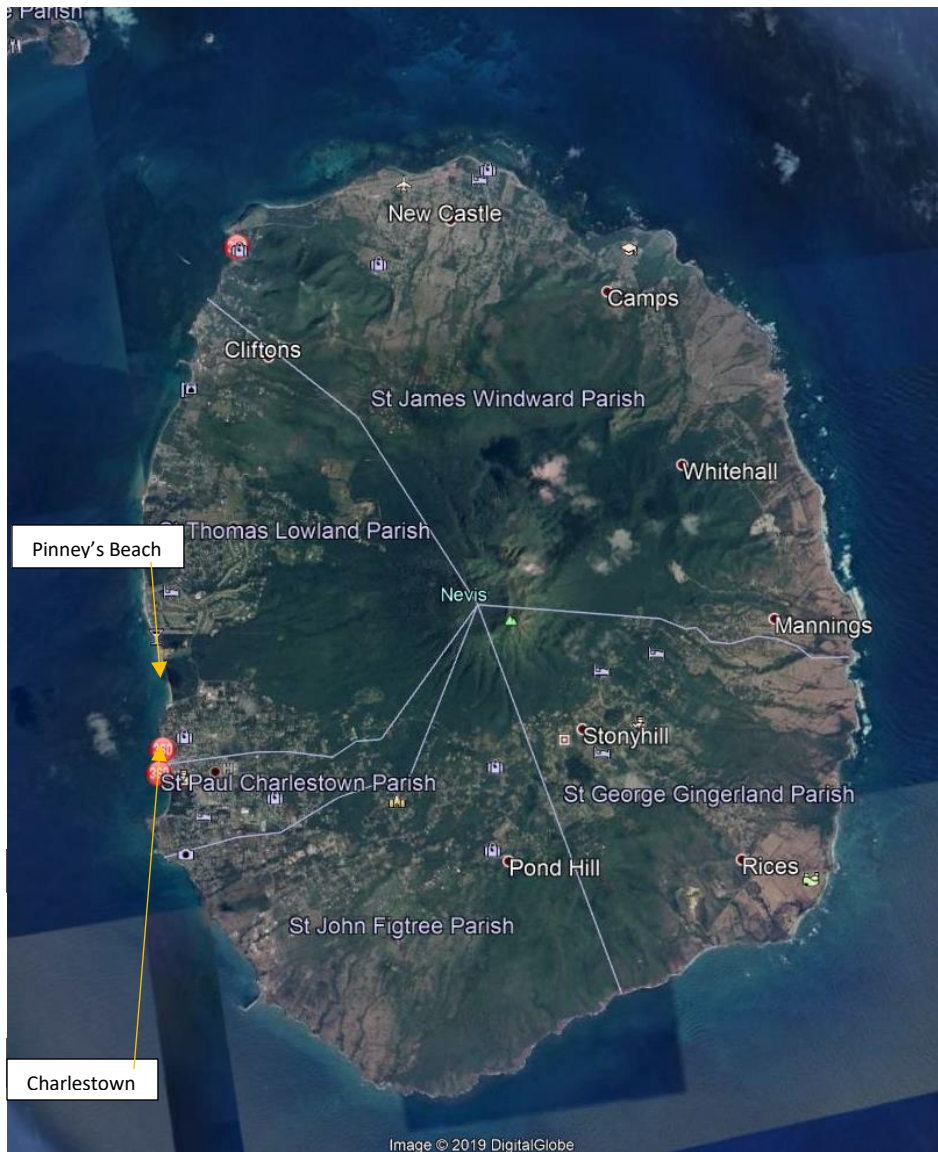


Late each night Crystal posts good information on the next days' activities on a large whiteboard in the lounge. It tells us where we are, major attractions, any tours offered and the dinghy schedule between the Sagitta and shore. Crystal also posts the breakfast, lunch and dinner menu on another whiteboard on the breakfast area on the main deck. Folks are welcome to have meals on their own on shore. They are just asked to notify the Chef so that he knows how much food to prepare.



Nevis is an island about six miles in length and five miles in width. In the middle of the island sits Nevis Peak, over 3000 feet high. The peak is normally cloud covered. Population is 12,000 folks.

To the left is the view of Nevis Peak and Charlestown where we are anchored.

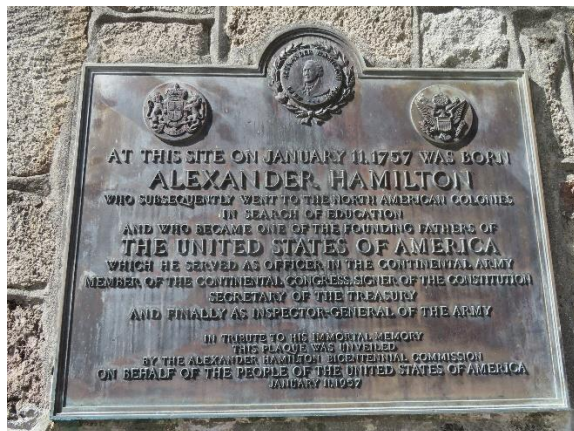


A nice tour of the island is offered which takes you around the island and stops at several old plantation estates that have been turned into small hotels. Marcia and I took this tour last year at the end of that cruise, so we are now skipping it.

Marcia and I take the 10 AM dinghy to shore in Charlestown, walk around for a while and hook up to Wi-Fi.

We see the birthplace of Alexander Hamilton.

We dinghy back to the Sagitta and relax on deck prior to having a nice lunch in the outside dining area on the stern of the top deck.





After lunch the Sagitta travels a few miles to the north and anchors off of Pinney's Beach.

We dinghy to shore and have the options of swimming, snorkeling or going to Sunshine's famous beach bar. Sunshine's is the home of the potent "Killer Bee" rum drink. The owner has famously said that he will reveal the Killer Bee formula to anyone who can drink five of them. He reasons that whomever can will not be able to remember the

formula when they wake up!



We choose to snorkel, which is just OK at best. The water, however, is very warm and refreshing.

After dinner we start motoring on an 11 hour trip to St. Barts.

2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 5 – Tuesday January 8th – St. Barthelemy



We wake up this morning anchored in the port at Gustavia, the capital of St. Barthelemy, commonly known as St. Barts. We motored for about ten hours overnight from Nevis. There was only moderate rocking during our trip; the seas remain much calmer than we experienced last year.

St. Barts is a Department of France. Citizens vote for the French Parliament and President. France gave St. Barts to Sweden in 1784 for free port rights in Gothenburg. The Swedes sold St. Barts back to France in 1878. It's a small island, only about four miles in width.

We are told that the island is the home and/or playground of the rich and famous. We expect to see some very large yachts.

After breakfast we dinghy to shore and walk around Gustavia seeing luxury stores, the yachts, evidence of the Swedish influence and much traffic on the narrow streets. We also see big fish near the dock!





We notice almost everyone we see is Anglo (white skinned) unlike the other island we have visited in the Caribbean. We guess this is because the geography and soil of St. Barts were not good for growing sugar (and hence no importation of slaves from Africa) and living costs on this expensive island probably limit the number of folks that can move here. St. Barts prospered as an early free trade port.

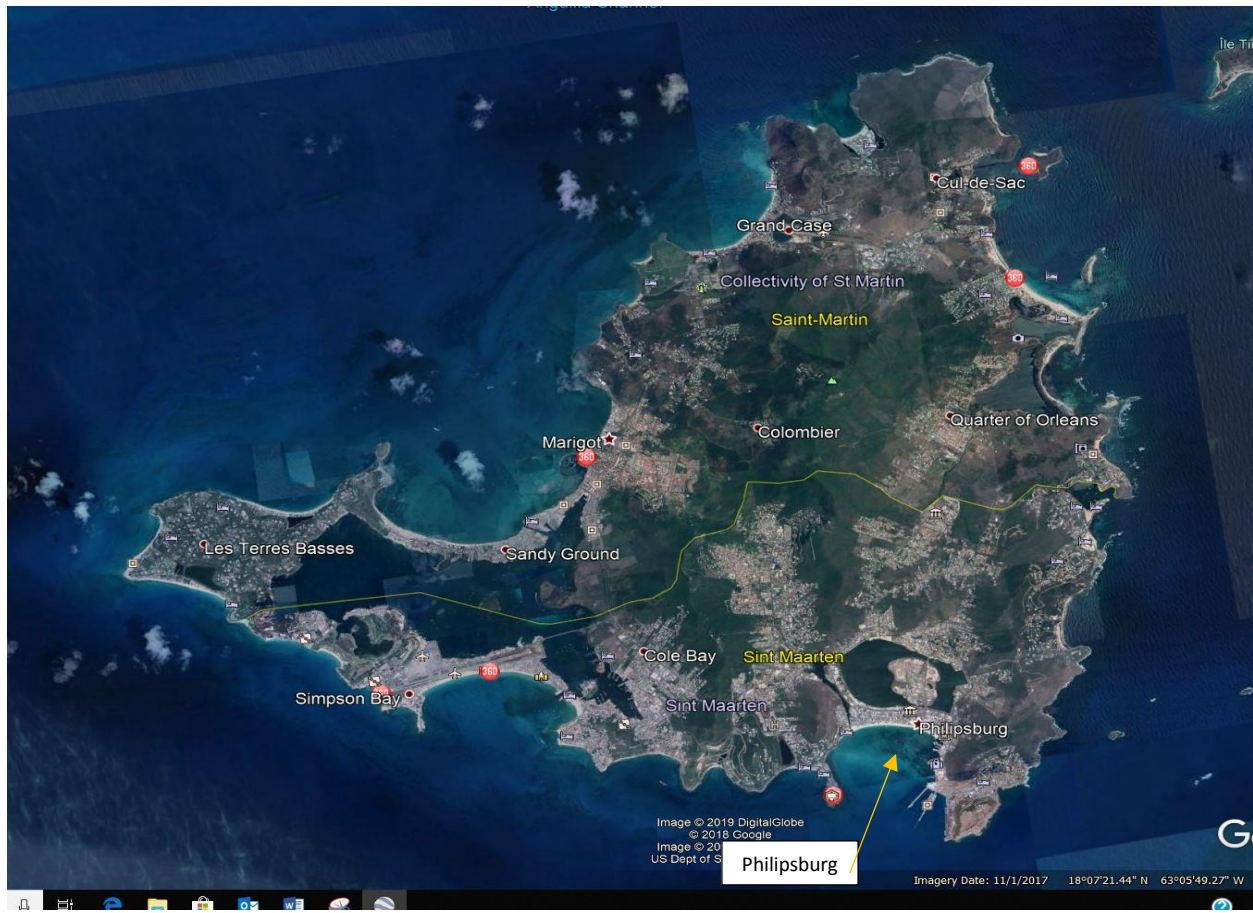
We have each been asked to buy a bottle of wine while in Gustavia for our 5 PM Sagitaritta/Wine and Cheese party. Crystal will supply the bread and cheese. We return to our ship. After swimming and “rope swinging” off the ship the Sagitta raises sails at 4 PM and motor sails towards St. Martin.



At 5 PM we meet in the ship's lounge for our wine and cheese party. Bernard mans the bar. Crystal briefs us on tomorrow's activities. We also play a game. She has asked us (and some of the crew) to write down something interesting about each of us. She then reads each of them and our fellow passengers guess who it is. We anchor at St. Martin and have dinner down on the main deck as a weather front is moving through.



2019 Caribbean Cruise- Day 6 – Wednesday January 9th – St. Martin



We wake up this morning anchored in the harbor at Philipsburg, capital of the Dutch half of the island. It rained quite hard overnight but has now cleared up. Although this island is only about seven miles wide and seven miles long it is probably the best-known holiday destination in the Leewards. It is also the smallest island divided between two countries; France to the North (Saint-Martin) and The Netherlands to the South (Sint-Maarten).



Above is the view of Philipsburg from where the Sagitta is anchored. There are four huge cruise ships in port. The one on the upper right, the brand new MSC ship Seaside, is 1060 feet long with cabins for 5119 passengers.



There is also a beautiful sailing ship in port, the 140-foot-long Staad Amsterdam which we believe is a training ship for the Dutch Navy. Most of us take the 9 AM dinghy to shore. Mark motors us near the Staad Amsterdam for good views. Above, Mark and King bring Crystal to shore with all our passports and some money. When we enter a new country, Crystal must report to the authorities, show them our documents, and pay an anchoring fee and a passenger fee.



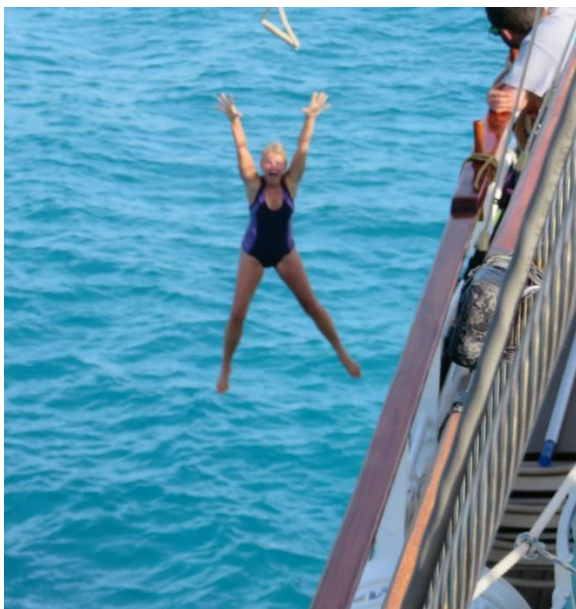
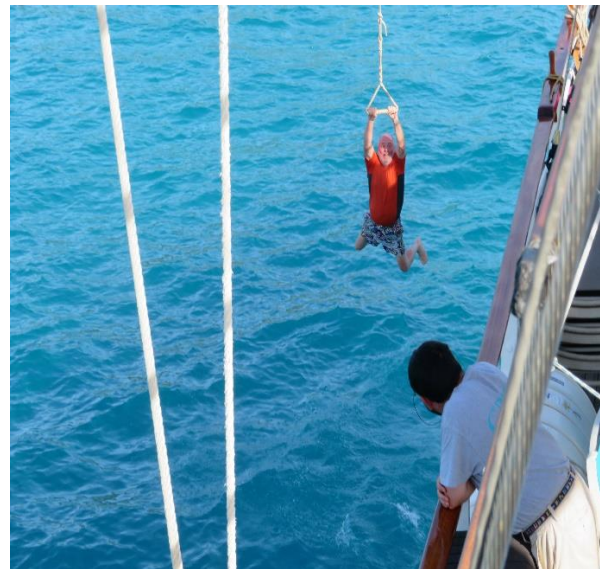
There are two main shopping streets in Philipsburg; Front Street with all the luxury goods shops and Back Street where locals shop and with the less expensive souvenirs. We find the shops and the streets surprisingly uncrowded. The cruise ship passengers must be having late breakfasts! Marcia buys three T-shirts on Back Street, which she shows to me when we get back to the ship. One is covered with little green plants. I show it to our fellow passengers from California and they confirm my suspicion. It is illustrated with marijuana plants!

We have a great "three salad" lunch onboard.

I am not a “foodie” but want to comment about the great offerings and service on the Sagitta. The food is delicious, varied, and with great presentation. Special dietary requests can be handled. The portion size is just right (not too large) but Stewards Bernard or Browne always come around and ask if anyone would like seconds. Chef George or Cook George regularly dinghy to shore to buy fresh produce.

Marcia dinghies back to shore to access Wi-Fi (the restaurants were not yet open when we returned to the Sagitta at 11 AM). Swimming off the side of the ship or using the rope swing to jump overboard are again open to us. Below, right, Dave gets ready to let go of the swing as 1st Mate Cam supervises. Next, Sally shows perfect form as she lets go.

I take a photo of the Captain’s wheelhouse. It is crammed with navigation, communication gear and numerous sensors.



2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 7 – Thursday January 10th – Anguilla



The Sagitta raises anchor at 5 AM and sails for two hours from St. Martin to the island of Anguilla. We anchor at Road Bay. This will be our last stop in the Northern Leewards before we motor to the British Virgin Islands. Anguilla, a former British possession and now an independent country, has 12,000 inhabitants and is about fifteen miles in length. They are famous for their powder sand beaches.



Above are pictures of the inside breakfast dining areas on the main deck we use every morning at 8 AM for breakfast. Bernard serves some juice to Kathy. The George's daily menu is displayed on the whiteboard (upper left, picture to the left left) courtesy of Crystal.

At 9:30 AM most all of us board a small air-conditioned bus for a trip to Shoal Bay Beach. This two-mile long beach is said to be rated #1 in the Caribbean. We still see a lot of hurricane damage from Fall 2017.

For a small fee we all secure the lounges and umbrellas that have been reserved for us. We have brought along from the ship a cooler filled with beverages and another with wraps for our lunch. The beach is not busy at all! The water, said to be most calm the last few days, is quite rough with some nice waves coming into shore. This proves to be a most relaxing time. The water is warm and great.



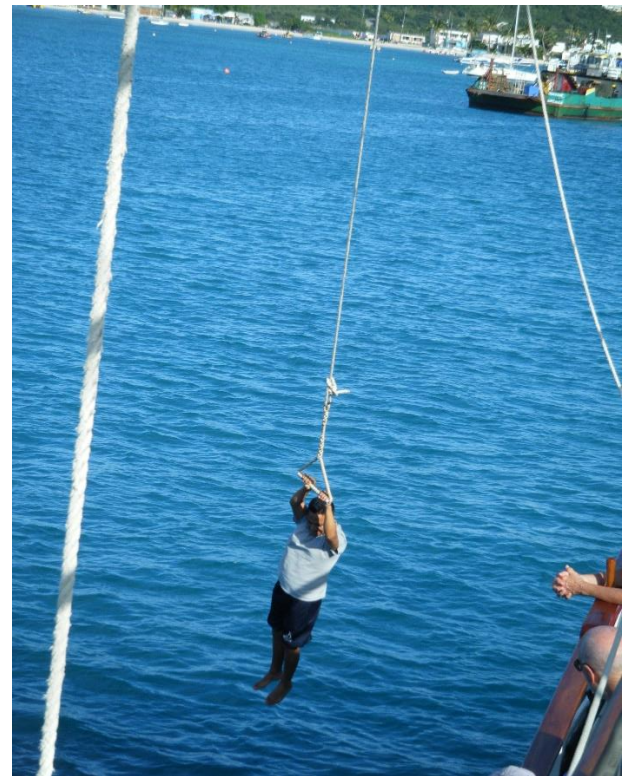
At 3 PM the bus picks us up and takes us back to Road Bay where we dinghy back to the Sagitta.

Our afternoon snacks and rum drinks (Sagittaritas) have been moved up to 4:15 PM and dinner to 6:30 PM. This will allow the Sagitta to start the long motor sail to the British Virgin Islands a little early and we will be able to spend more time on the island we will first anchor at in the BVIs.

There is time for more rope swing activity and swimming off the ship before Sagittaritas. The rope swingers start from the aluminum platform at the top of the stair at the lower right. Cam has improved the rope swing by moving the yardarm, from which the rope is suspended, closer above the platform.



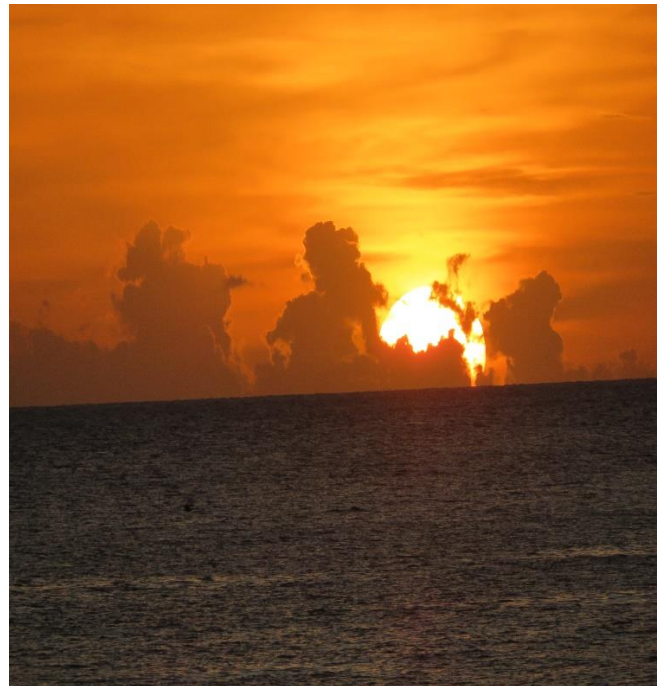
Sally lets go while Captain Patricio supervises. Then Patricio show us how it's done.





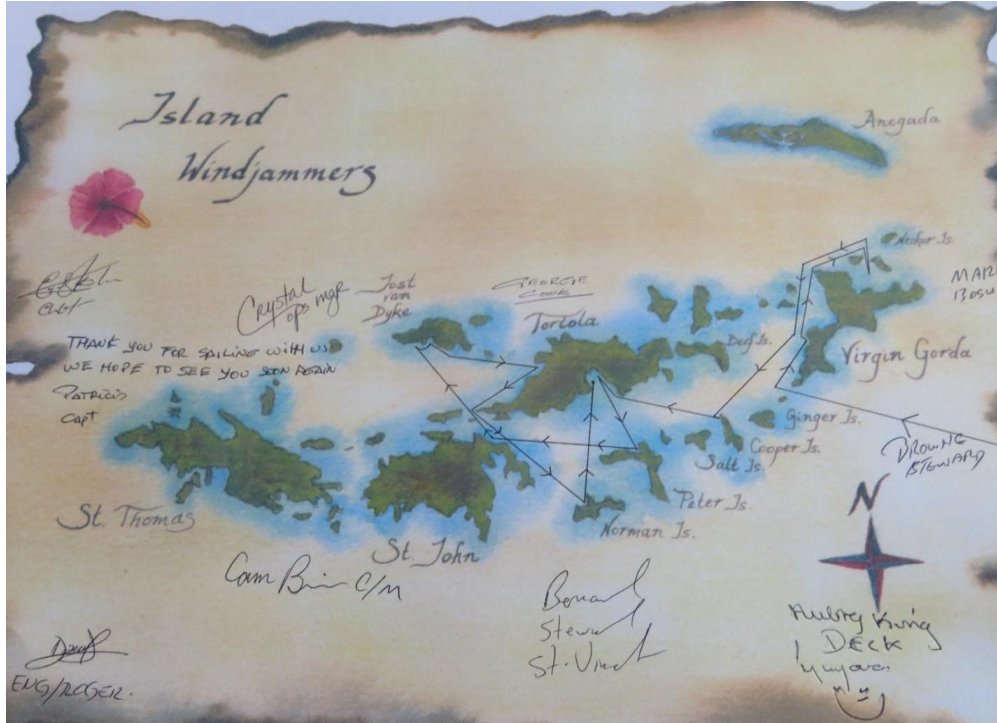
Richard successfully launches.

Dinner tonight is a cookout. Cook George applies the special marinade to the ribs and chicken on the charcoal grill on the top deck. We enjoy a nice sunset before we depart for the BVIs at 8:30 PM.

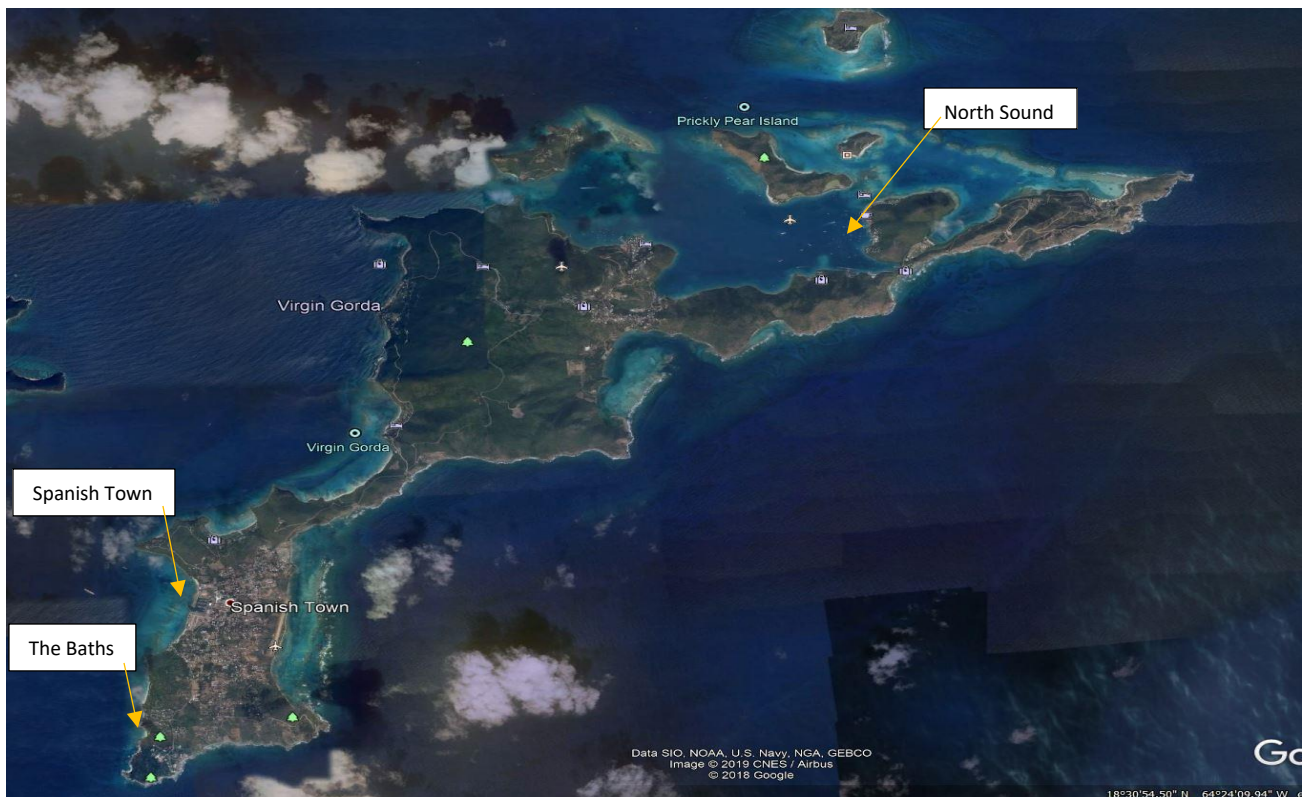


2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 8 – Friday January 11th – Virgin Gorda – BVIs

Overnight we motor for 12-1/2 hours to the British Virgin Islands. We make good time on calm seas. For the next seven days we will cruise through the BVIs, ending our cruise at Tortola.



To the left is the second laminated map, signed by the crew, that was given to each of us at the end of the cruise. It shows the route we take through the BVIs, drawn by 1st Mate Cam. It looks pretty complicated but the islands, beside being beautiful, are quite close together. Typically we can see several at the same time.



We anchor in the Harbor at Spanish Town at 9 AM. Shortly before we arrive the crew captures a large barracuda from a fishing line they were dragging behind our ship. It is very calm and beautiful. We can see Tortola from where we are anchored at Virgin Gorda. We relax on deck this morning and read.



After lunch we feed the Needle Fish and Remoras from the railing in the lunch area on the top deck.

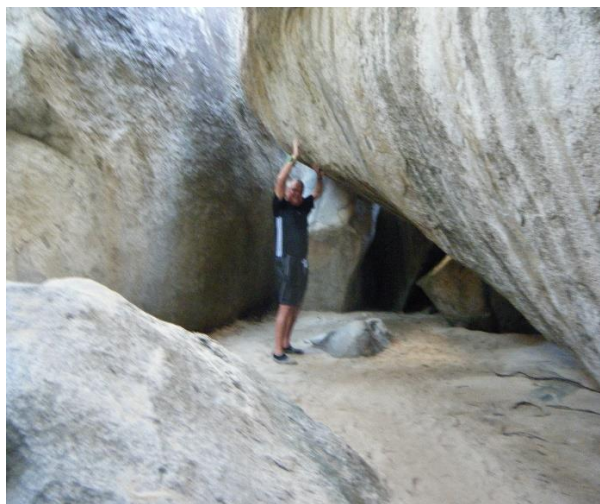
At 1 PM we dinghy to shore. Most of us signed up for a small fee (\$30 per person, I believe) for a tour of Virgin Gorda and then on to The Baths, which are a natural collection of slowly eroding boulders lining the southern end if the island. There are also granite caves at The Baths that we can explore; snorkeling that is said to be quite good. We board an open bus and get some great views of the island.





Above, left is a photo of Gorda (North) Sound where we will spend all day, tomorrow. The weather continues to be great. Sunny with highs around 80 and lows around 70 every day.

Below, we are in the caves at The Baths.



Next Marcia and I spend some time snorkeling and see some nice tropical fish.



We walk back up the stairway from the beach and get nice views of the boulders and have some refreshments with our fellow travelers in the open-air bar area of a restaurant.





We are really enjoying traveling and conversing with our fourteen fellow passengers. They are all most interesting, intelligent, and well-traveled. No complainers and most adventurous, which I guess you would expect from folks that would sign up for this type of cruise. In addition to being from all over the USA and Canada our group has international flavor. Sarah is a native of England and lives in West London. Anita and Richard are now residents of the Turks and Caicos Islands but are originally from The Netherlands and Ireland, respectively. Isobel and Phil live in Vancouver British Columbia, but she is originally from Scotland. Phil was in the Canadian Ambassador Service and posted all over the world.

Our ten-man crew is also most interesting to converse with.



We travel back to Spanish Town and dinghy back to the Sagitta where we enjoy another nice dinner and sunset.

We remain anchored in the harbor overnight.

2019 Caribbean Cruise, Day 9 – Saturday January 12 – North Sound Virgin Gorda

The Sagitta raises anchor at 6 AM and motors for two hours around the island of Virgin Gorda and anchors at 8 AM in North Sound. This is a beautiful area. It is also a popular area for folks who have come to the islands to rent sailboats.



We also see some fancy private yachts. Below, left is one with a blow-up slide. We also see a freighter wrecked on the coastline, probably from hurricane Irma in October 2017.



For a short while this morning I relax on deck, reading, and Marcia relaxes in our cabin. The crew tows paddleboards to shore and carries over floats and coolers. This will be a beach day. We dinghy over to shore and get all set up on the beach.





The hurricane damage is still visible.



We enjoy the warm water and nice beach. Anita ferries Richard around on a paddleboard. What a guy!
We pretty much have the beach to ourselves.



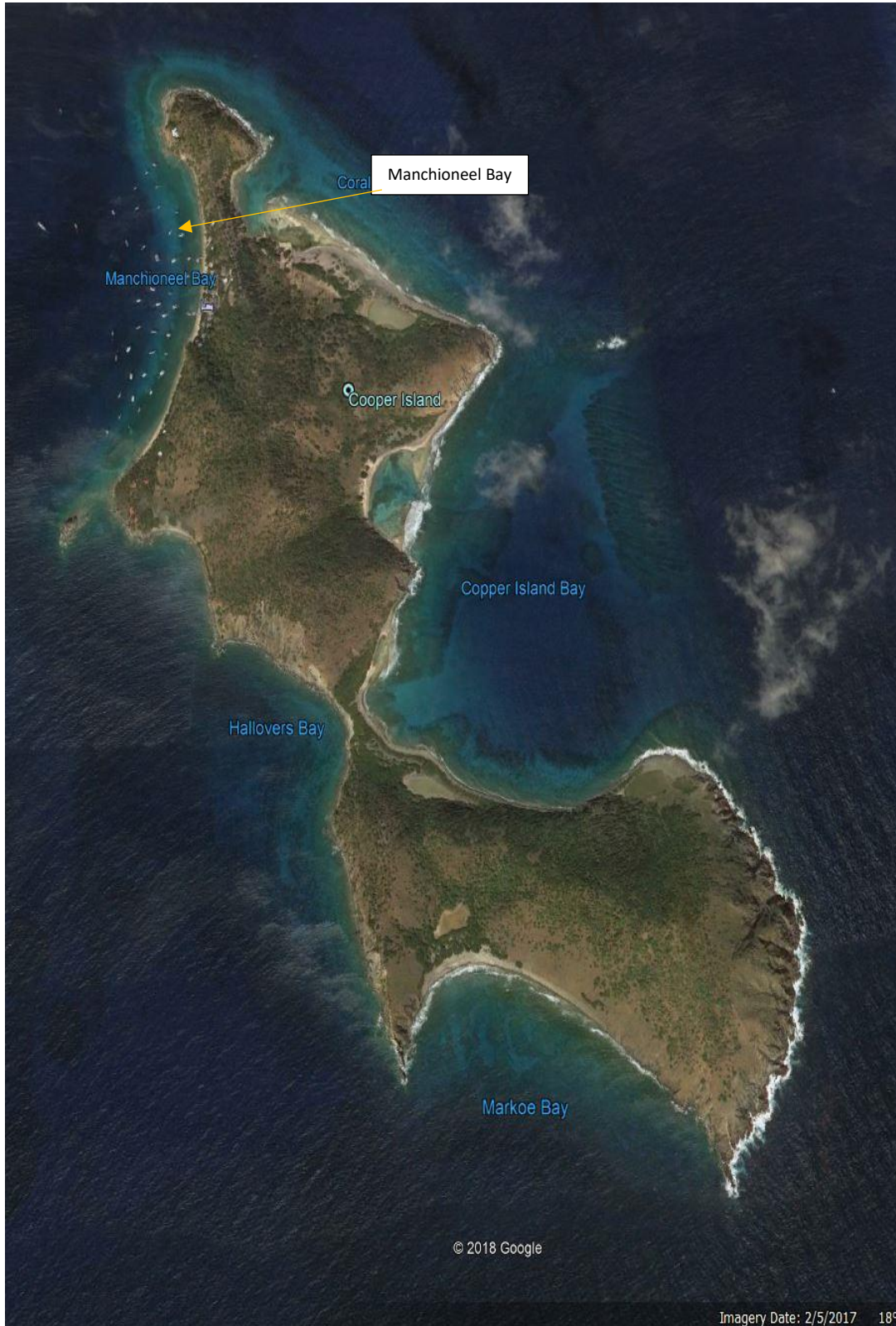
There are a lot of goats that live on this island!



Back to our ship for Sagittaritas and later dinner. Another nice sunset. We remain anchored in North Sound for the night.



2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 10 – Sunday January 13th – Cooper Island

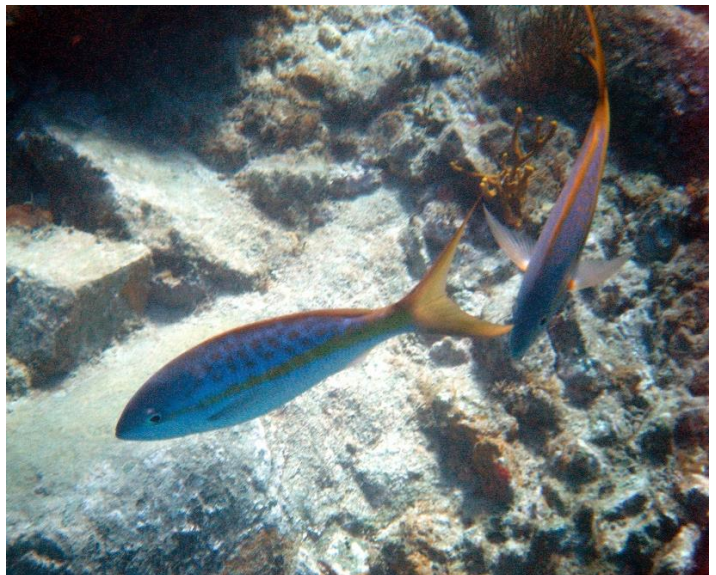


We raise anchor at 6:30 AM, raise the sails, and motor sail to Cooper Island, getting some great views on the way.

Cooper Island is only two miles in length. Its high point is 500 feet. It is said to have some of the clearest water in the British Virgin Islands.



We anchor in Manchioneel Bay. At 10:20 AM we take the dinghy to a snorkeling area at the end of the beach. The snorkeling is good. We snorkel off the dinghy. Mark and King have the task of hoisting me back aboard!



After lunch on board (cheeseburgers in paradise) we then dinghy to shore. We enjoy walking around and accessing W-Fi.



We dinghy back to the ship on the last one at 4:45 PM for our Sagittarittas and a shower before another great dinner and sunset.



2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 11 – Monday January 14th – Tortola & Peters Island



Tortola is the largest (about fifteen miles long) and most populated of the British Virgin Islands. The capital of the BVIs is Road Town.



We are making an unscheduled stop this morning in Road Town. The Sagitta is having problems with its fresh water systems; sometimes the water doesn't run! We need to get a new pump switch for the system and Road Town is the place. This problem does not affect the toilets which utilizes a different, salt water system.

After breakfast we motor the relatively short distance from Cooper Island to Tortola. We get a good view of the town and harbor as we approach.



Mid-morning we go to shore, getting off the dinghy at the dock in the Yacht Harbor.

Marcia and I are kind of glad we are making this unscheduled stop. We don't think we have enough US Dollars (the official currency of the BVIs) to last the rest of the trip and to ensure that we have enough money for the taxi ride to the airport when we depart. We quickly find an ATM.



We walk around town for a while. We see many buildings damaged from Hurricane Irma in October 2017 that have still not been fully repaired. All the rebuilding materials need to be shipped in, but I am told a bigger problem is scheduling a contractor.



We dinghy back to the Sagitta. Prior to lunch I peak into the kitchen and take a photo of Chef George (foreground) and Cook George at work. It's amazing the great meals that they are able to prepare in such a tight space. They have their cooking supplies and food supplies stashed in storage areas all over the ship.

The Sagitta is not a large ship, but with its wide beam (60 feet) and 110-foot length it is surprisingly roomy. It's not a classic sailing ship but we like it!





After lunch the crew raises that sails and motors a relatively short distance across the Sir Francis Drake Channel to the pretty Great Harbor of Peter Island.

We've learned that Peter Island is a private island and there are no real facilities ashore. The few building we can see appear to still be destroyed.

Cam sets up the Sagitta for swimming and the rope swing.

Sally has mastered the rope swing technique.

Two young fellows on paddleboards paddle over to the Sagitta. They said they wanted to get a close look at the prettiest/most interesting ship in the bay. I invite them to come aboard and use our rope swing, but they decline.

In the photo below there's a dark wooden boat near shore. It's the William Thornton, called Willie T's. It's a floating restaurant and bar that's anchored here to refresh the moored cruisers.



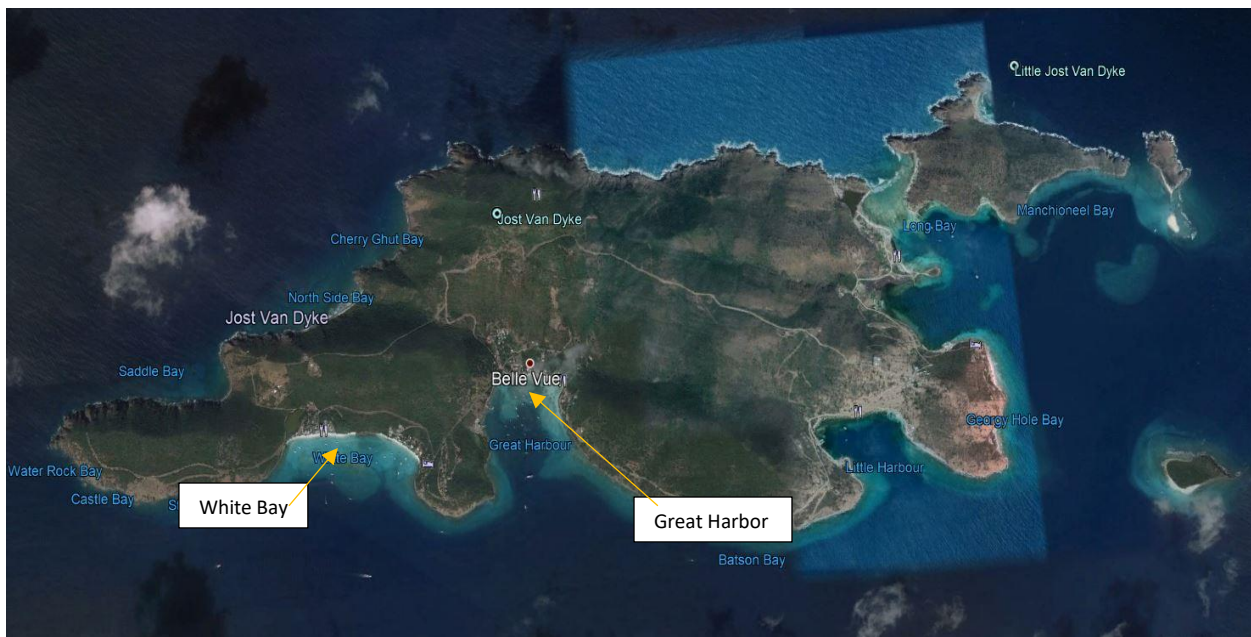
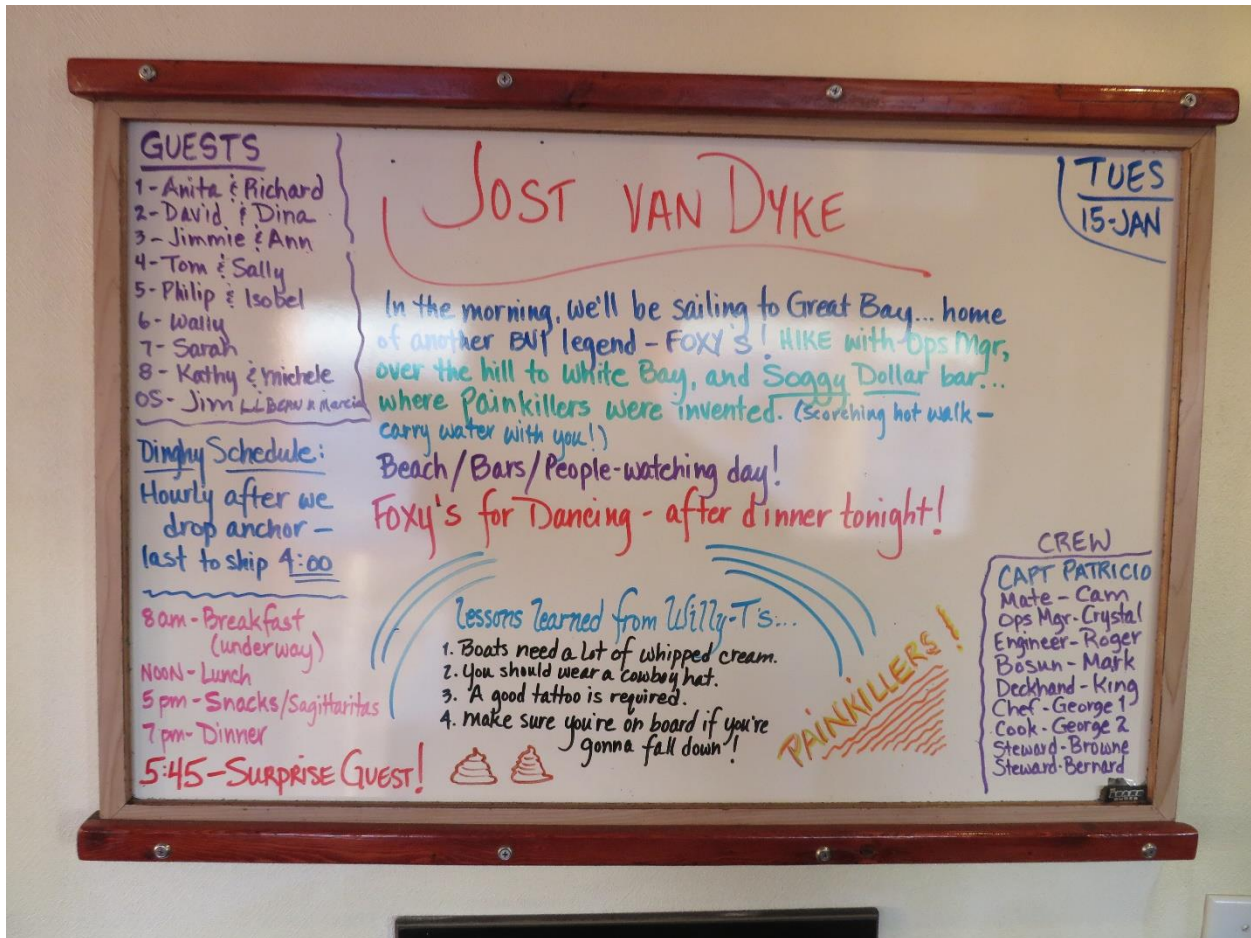


Later in the afternoon most of our passengers dinghy over to Willie T's to check it out and have a drink. Upon their return Richard shows the politically incorrect tee shirt he purchased.

After another great sunset and dinner many dinghy back over to the Willie T's which is said to really rock at night.



2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 12 – Tuesday January 15th – Jost Van Dyke



At 6 AM the Sagitta raises anchor and motors from Peter Island to the island of Jost Van Dyke.



We have breakfast while underway but the seas are most calm so there are no issues.

We anchor at White Bay and dinghy ashore to the beautiful beach.

This beach is a little busier than some of the others we have enjoyed, but not crowded. The Club Med 2 Cruise ship is anchored and the Disney Cruise Line has a ship hidden

somewhere and is tendering folks to shore.



We relax on the many beach chairs, enjoy the warm water off the beach and do a little shopping. Dina, veteran walker/hiker, climbs across a mountain to Great Harbor and back.



We visit the famous Soggy Dollar Bar. So named as folks used to swim from their boats to shore for refreshments and pay for their drinks with "soggy dollars". We dinghy back to the ship for lunch.



After lunch the Sagitta motors a bit to the east and anchors at Great Harbor.



We dinghy to shore where the main attraction is Foxy's Bar and Grill. It has been in operation for over forty years and is still presided over by Foxy himself. We enjoy some drinks and viewing some of the memorabilia posted all around the establishment. We dinghy back to our ship, enjoy snacks and Sagittaritas and then go out on the top deck at 5:45 PM to await the arrival of a Special Guest.



The Special Guest turns out to be our own ace Deck Hand, King. He turns out to be quite a comedian and has us all laughing for over half-an-hour.



After dinner several of our voyagers head back to shore to Foxy's for some music and dancing and maybe meet the man himself.

We get a view of the moon through the rigging and see a nice sunset.



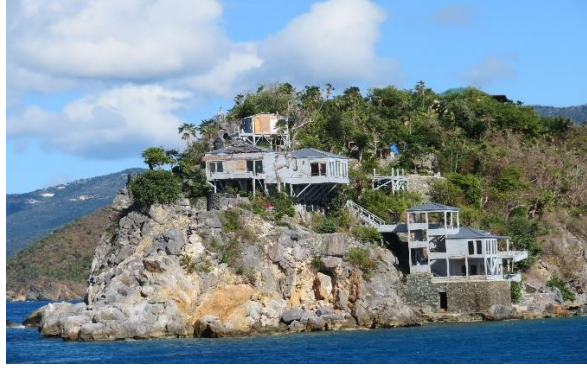
2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 13 – Wednesday January 16th

Cane Garden Bay, North Tortola and Norman Island



At 6 AM this morning our ship raises anchor and motors from Jost Van Dyke to Cane Garden Bay on the northwest coast of Tortola. As a Jimmy Buffet fan, I had always wondered where Cane Garden Bay was, as he mentions it in his song Manana on his Son of a Son of a Sailor album from the mid-70s. We anchor at 7:30 AM at Cane Garden Bay. After breakfast we dinghy to shore and the nice beach.





After lunch in our outdoor dining area on the top deck we depart at 1 PM for Norman Island.

The scenery is great, but we still see a lot of the hurricane damage.

Cam and Bosun Mark and Deck Hand King raise all the Sagitta's sails and then take us out on the dinghy to motor around our ship and get photos of her under sail.





At 4 PM we anchor at The Bight at Norman Island. It's a beautiful island only about two miles in width.

This is a popular mooring spot with the folks that have rented boats in the BVIs. We see the wreck of the original Willy T's bar ship. Later, a dinghy comes up to the Sagitta and the passengers ask if we are the Willie T! Guide books still say it's anchored on Norman Island. In retrospect, we could have made \$\$\$.



After Sagittaritas and snacks our Engineer, Roger, conducts dance class on the top deck.





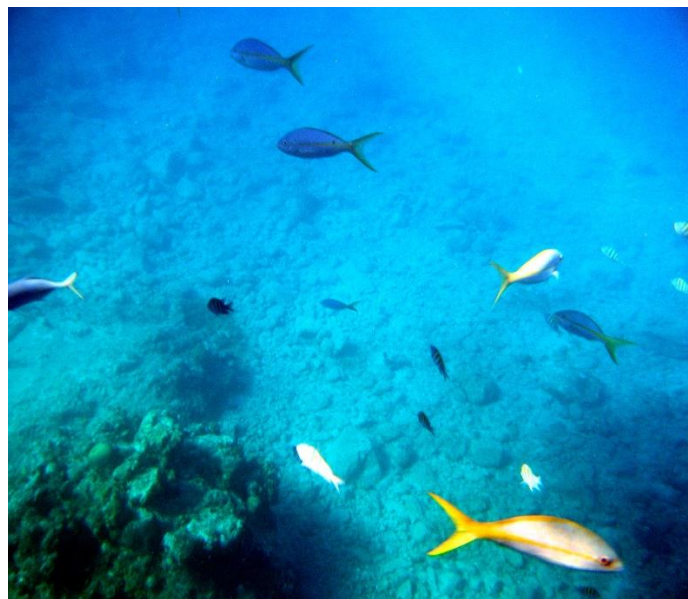
Dinner tonight is another great BBQ, ribs and chicken. Captain Patricio adds his culinary expertise.



2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 14 – Thursday January 17th – Norman Island



We wake up this morning still anchored at Bight Bay at beautiful, two-mile-wide, Norman Island. At 9:15 AM the snorkelers dinghy to The Caves where we are told we should have our best snorkeling. It is.





We return to the Sagitta and quickly dinghy to the beach.



I hike to an overlook and get some photos of the Bay. Back at the nice beach Anita and Richard are playing a “full size” version of Jenga. Here, Richard does a Victory Lap after moving another wood piece.

Sorry about the blurry photos! I didn't clean the lens on my underwater camera after earlier snorkeling!



After lunch back on the ship, we motor a few miles to an interesting formation of rocks protruding from the sea near Pelican Island. These are called the Indians and is our next, and last, snorkeling site. The snorkeling was very nice in some real coral formations and, as always, most refreshing in the warm water.

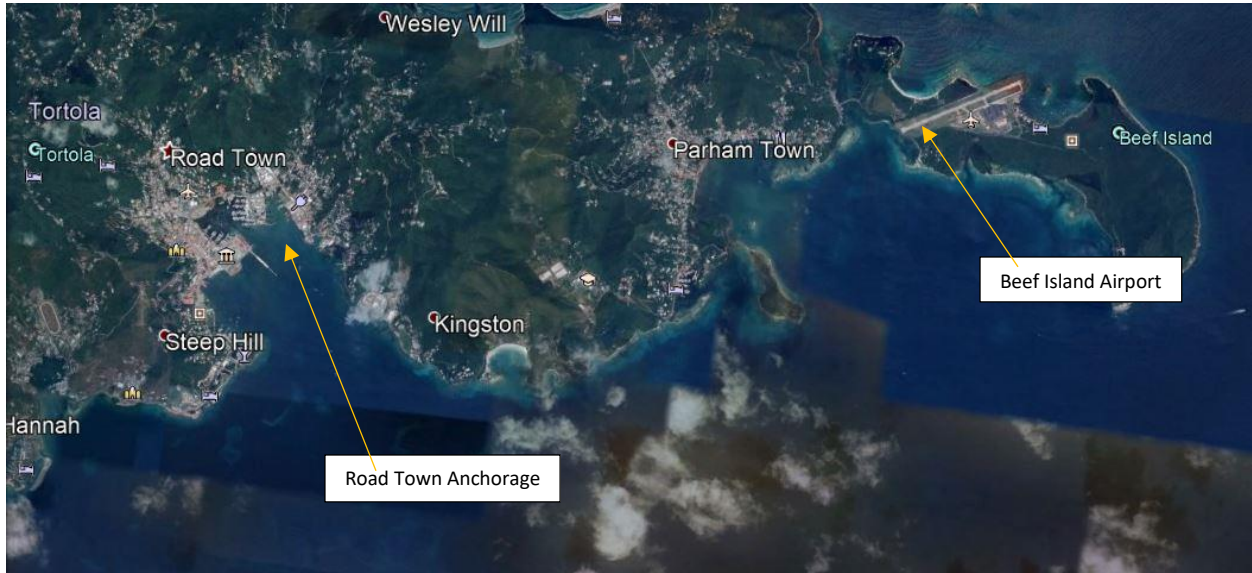


Back on board, after snacks and Sagittaritas, the crew gets all dressed up in fancy shirts and we have photo time. Then a great "Captain's Dinner". Michelle jumps in (lower right).





2019 Caribbean Cruise – Day 15 – Friday January 18th – Going Home



Today we all go home except for our great crew and Wally, who is going on the Sagitta's last twelve day cruise before the ship goes into dry dock for refitting. Wally will spend a couple of nights at a hotel in Road Town, Tortola and then reboard the Sagitta for the return to St. Kitts.

This morning we motor and then anchor off Road Town, Tortola. Bags out after breakfast and we depart the Sagitta, via dinghy, at 9:45 AM. Bags dinghied in first.

Six of us have a taxi secured by Crystal. We say goodbye to Isobel and Philip as they are first dropped off at the ferry terminal. No, that luggage is not all theirs!



Sally and Tom are with us for the remainder of this ride to the airport on Beef Island, which is connected to Tortola by a bridge. It is a scenic, if somewhat harrowing drive over very narrow roads.



We have a snack in the airport restaurant, along with the Rooster, and then board our plane for the flight to San Juan.

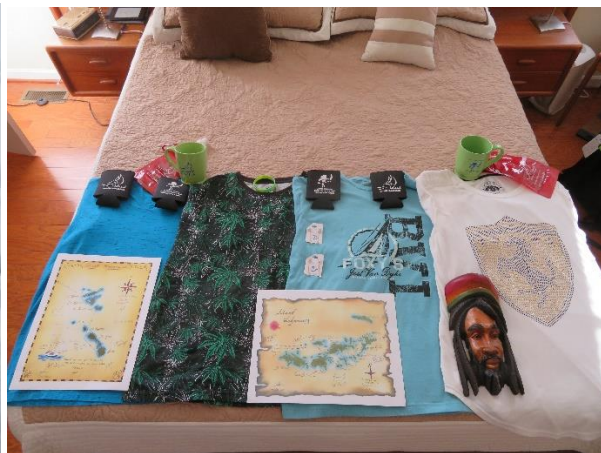




We have some nice views on the way to San Juan, where we clear passport control and customs. Then on to Miami and we make our very tight connection to Pittsburgh. We flew economy on the way down but have somehow secured first class for the flight to Miami and then to Pittsburgh. My knees are happy!

Daughter Jaime picks us up, our winter jackets in her hands, and we get back to our house a little before midnight. We are glad to see our small dog, Pepper, but not the snow. Below, right, are our souvenirs. Marcia's "marijuana T-Shirt" is second

from the left.



This has again been a most restful vacation for us. The crew was great as were all our fellow passengers. Everybody with a smile on their face all the time! The weather could not have been better. The seas were most calm.

I apologize if my sore knees caused any delays on the ladders or getting on or off the dinghy; my sore rotator cuff precluded me from trying the rope swing! It's tough getting old!

Best, Jim