

MONDAY 7-20 2026: Dallas -> London

This seemed like the trip that would never begin... We had a very relaxed build-up to the start, began packing several days early, and waited... for our 9:30 pm departure time to arrive. We had lots of parking credits at The Parking Spot, so this cost us nothing but time, patience, and a little sweat. We decided to leave at 3:00 so we would have plenty of time to have a nice dinner (as opposed to what we have been getting on the airplane) dinner. It was hot (100°+) and we had to wait outside our car after we parked for a very long time.

I called after a while. Several (new) vans drove past on parallel main but none came to pick us up I finally ran to another road and forced a van to stop, only to be told "I'm not picking up". I yelled a bit and went back to the car. He finally got permission and came to get us. He was very apologetic - even gave us water.

How hot was it? I wore an old t-shirt to the airport & packed a better shirt to wear once I got there... changed in the bathroom after we arrived, and threw away the t-shirt.

Check-in and security were easy, and we went to CRU and had wine and snacks before walking over to the Wolfgang Pucks Italian restaurant. It was OK. Kathleen had spaghetti and meatballs (finally a restaurant that gives you a reasonably small serving) and I had a sandwich (which seemed to please our waiter) that was good but (like the french fries) was not quite warm.

We spent about an hour in the Ambassador club after dinner before our flight.

Our boarding time finally rolled around. Our 777-300 was maybe 30-40% full. Our exit row seats were comfortable, and we both managed to sleep for the entire flight.

7-21 Tuesday: London

Arrived on time (~12:30). Got our luggage, walked to the central bus station, had a sandwich while waiting for our 2:15 bus to the Victoria Bus Station. It was a 1-hour ride, and after a ~10 minute walk we were at our hotel, the ECCLESTON SQUARE HOTEL (#37).

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh



We are in the same Room (102) that we had several years ago. The room is OK but a little short on usable space for clothes and places to put stuff in the bathroom, but the balcony makes up for any of that.

I went out shortly after we arrived in search of somewhere to buy some wine. Ended up at Victoria Train Station to get a Vino Verde for K and a nice French BORDEAUX for me which we are now

enjoying in the cool, fresh air on our private balcony overlooking the street.

Had dinner at the Artist Residence Clubhouse, just a short walk from our hotel. The Focaccia bread was especially good. Kathleen had the Trout and I had the Lamb - both really well prepared, and washed down with a delightful bottle of Pommard wine.

Finished the long day on our balcony over a last glass of wine

7-22 WEDNESDAY: London

Slept late (until 8:30!) mainly because the room was so cold we were reluctant to get out of bed! I hopefully managed to raise the temperature before we went down for breakfast.

It is a beautiful, warm (71°) partly sunny day. We have a leisurely morning before our 2:30 play (Oliver!) at the GIELGUD theatre and dinner at the La Poule au Pot in London.

We decided to walk to the theatre - we were leisurely so it took nearly an hour. Stopped into a nearby restaurant for a glass of wine, walked across the street to the theatre, ordered another glass of wine for the intermission, then settled in for a very professional and mostly entertaining performance of Oliver! (2:40).



Took the #19 for our dining experience which went very well until it didn't. The tables were close to each other, and completely full, but that didn't detract from the atmosphere at all.

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

The food (Dover Sole for K, Duck confit for me, with Asparagus w/ Bearnaise sauce for both of us) was delicious, as was the wine. But we waited for a very (very) long time for desert.

Someone cleared our dishes, asked if we wanted to see the desert menu, and then... nothing. Nobody. Tables around us were served their desert, but we just sat there, a veritable (and increasingly irritable) desert dessert. I finally stared at the manager serving the table long enough and hard enough to get his attention and asked for our check. He asked about some dessert but we declined and told him we had waited too long. Our dessert was a lot of apologies. It was a short and pleasant walk back to our hotel where we again took advantage of our balcony over a night cap.

7-23 THURSDAY: London

Slept well again - I did manage to get the temperature of our room a bit above freezing which helped. Today is our 180 step (up & down) subway experience. We'll see how we feel when that is behind us. I've ordered an omelet for breakfast (9 £ extra) but it has been worth it as the breakfast choices here are pretty bleak - Ham/Turkey/cheese, a selection of Bread, cereal and not-so- ripe fruit.



Took the tube from Victoria Station to CLAPHAM SOUTH for our tour of the WWII air raid facility there. It was an amazing feat of engineering - some 300' underground able to accommodate about 8000 people. Although it did have an elevator in its day the only way in/out is via the 189-step circular staircase. Going down was easier than the return trip, but we were not the last ones to walk out at the end of the fascinating tour.



felt stuffed.

We then tubed and bussed our way to Harrods for an afternoon tea at 2:00. The food was amazing in taste and to look at - tea sandwiches and a variety of sweets (and scones) served with a variety of "home made" jams. We were told at booking that we could have the table for 1.5 hours, but we sat there until 4:30 and

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

Finding a bathroom was an adventure the store is massive and a bit of a maze.

Took the C1 bus back to the bus station and walked back to our hotel. We had stopped at the store between the tour and going to Harrods so had some munchies so just sat on our balcony with snacks and wine and enjoyed the pleasant weather and watched London go about its evening activities.

7-24 FRIDAY: London

Woke up to another beautiful day weather-wise. Just a bit cooler, but with the promise of more sun and temperatures in the upper 70's - perfect for a day on a boat, which is how we plan to spend most of today.

Decided to have scrambled eggs for breakfast, but they were runny, and served on toast with salmon on top - all quite unappetizing to me.

Left with lots of time to get to the boat dock but didn't need it - got there quickly and got a seat on the dock where we would board the boat at 10:00. Lots of people were there already, and more arrived (and had to stand) until the boat arrived & we were able to board. We decided to sit on top to enjoy the view, sun and fresh air.

The cruise to RICHMOND was nice: we were traveling on a part of the river we have not seen before, and it was interesting to see the bridges and other landmarks along the way.



We had 3 hours in town before the boat returned. Ate at a fish & chip restaurant, walked the town, bought some sunscreen at a Boots, found the ice cream shop recommended to me by one of our fellow bomb-shelter tourists yesterday, had a drink at a shady outdoor cafe, then joined everybody waiting for the boat to arrive at the dock at 3:00.

The boat was a little more crowded on our return (especially after it stopped at Kew). We were diverted to the FRIENDSHIP dock when we returned to London due to some sort of accident that had occurred near the Westminster dock. Even the Westminster bridge was closed.

It was a small thing to us - we were actually close to the Savoy Grill.

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

We tried to get into the American Bar but the staff steered us away because it was too busy, but the other bar was very nice, and we enjoyed a bottle of Sancerre. We were entertained by the antics of a group at the bar who caused great consternation among the staff by Re-arranging the bar stools in a semi-circle... They were quickly moved to a table, and the bar stools were soon back in their proper place in front of the bar.

Dinner was wonderful - the service was amazing. We split a Chateaubriand steak with mashed potatoes and mushrooms, followed by Pomodoro salad with strawberries. What a feast!

We had one of our traveler quarrels about the best way to get back to the hotel on the bus and managed to get a bit disoriented walking to the hotel but soon put that all behind us and finished the evening over wine on our balcony.

London Observations

- Lots of diversity on display. People from many parts of the world with quite different backgrounds all seemingly getting along quite well.
- Rented bikes are big here. The rack of bikes across the street from our hotel had a constant churn of people arriving and departing the whole time we were there. The streets were full of them - it was a wonder that we never saw an accident.

7-25 SATURDAY: London -> Southampton

Had a relatively leisurely morning to get up, eat and pack before checking out, walking back to the bus station and catching our 11:00 bus to Southampton where will spend one more night before boarding our ship to begin the cruise.

The bus ride was... a bus ride. We arrived just after 2:00 and took a cab to our hotel and were able to go right to our room. It's nice - has a small balcony, but no chairs! What's the point?



Walked over to the Dancing Man Brewery and shared a hamburger and had a beer. I checked in with Melissa to see how the sitting for the seminar was going and she indicated that all was well so I did not bother to join the Zoom call. Hope it continues to go smoothly.

Went back to the hotel and sat outside over some wine until it was time to walk to the White Star restaurant for dinner. It was not crowded inside (although there was a boisterous crowd outside and at

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

the nearby bar). The menu was a bit under-whelming but we really enjoyed what we ordered (Lamb for me and Pork for K).

Headed back to the hotel for a night cap.

7-26 SUNDAY: Southampton -> Queen Ann

Had a very leisurely morning waiting for 11:15 to roll around when we were to board our ship. Enjoyed the fine weather over coffee outside after breakfast.



The boarding process was easy and quick, although our room was not ready. We sat on the top deck - Kathleen had champagne to get the voyage off to a proper start.

The room was ready shortly after 1:00, although our luggage was not yet on board.

We ate lunch, returned to our room (still no luggage) and sat on the balcony waiting for our 4:00 departure (and our luggage).

We also tried to get our internet connection working. Our steward said we had to go down to the Purser for help, so I headed down (and encountered our luggage on the way!) and joined the line of people waiting for help with one problem or another. My first time through the line seemed to provide the help I needed (the internet.cunard.com URL), but it wanted me to pay for access, so I went through the line for a 2nd time. That person apparently had to reset something in their system and changed the login birthdate associated with the account from Kathleen's to mine.

All was good until I returned to our room and had Kathleen try to log in - neither birth date worked, so I took her phone, went back down to the purser office, waited in line again, only to have her say Kathleen put in wrong my B-date for me. Go figure! We unpacked. I finished first and went up to the 9th deck (our room is on level 6) and took a few pictures as we sailed out of the harbor, got some wine & champagne and returned to our room so we could enjoy our private balcony together. It was sunny and warm, and we had to keep re-arranging our chairs as we twisted and turned our way out into the English Channel. Changed for dinner and went down to our dining room at 9:00.

We were seated next to an English couple - the woman had a very negative view of the state of affairs in England in general and of the number of immigrants in London in particular which she expressed freely and at great length with the couple at the table next to them. We did not engage and hope to be able to change tables as we don't want to spend the next few weeks listening to her drivel.

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

Dinner was OK - had a nice bottle of white Burgundy, onion soup & Salmon (K), smoked salmon and grilled salmon (me) followed by ice cream. Service was a bit frantic (1st night shakedown) but friendly and attentive. We finished our wine (and had a few more drinks) at the bar across from the restaurant.

7-27 MONDAY: Queen Ann -> Belfast

We slept well. Went down to the cafeteria for Breakfast, which was a bit of a zoo - lots of people, had to wait to find a table. Decided to eat at "our" restaurant tomorrow.

Explored the ship a bit after we ate - found the gym and spa, then walked around the ship on the 3rd deck. Stopped by our room to gather stuff and are currently camped out at a table on the 9th level next to the indoor pool. (The PAVILION).

For the most part we just spent the day hanging around and reading. I got cold and came back to the room (less wind) and Kathleen eventually joined me there.



We changed for dinner and headed down about 7:30. Talked to the host about changing tables and he accommodated us. We had to wait until 8:15 (had wine in the bar) but he found a nice table way in the back at a window for us. Apparently its ours for dinner as long as we are willing to eat late (which suits us fine). I had Guinea Fowl and Kathleen had Pork.

Finished our wine in the bar.

7-28 TUESDAY: In Belfast

We arrived about 8:00. The river cruise we had booked was cancelled, so we decided to go to PRONI (to see if we could find another court record documenting what happened to Hugh Murray's estate) then the Titanic museum (since Kathleen had not seen it yet). Queued up with very many people for the shuttle bus which took us to the "VISIT BELFAST" TI office downtown then walked the mile or so to PRONI.

Stopped off at a M&S to buy some socks for Kathleen as she realized she had not packed any.

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh



Got all registered & signed in, looked up the court record books we needed, then headed over to the reading room to begin going through the records after she initial filing (which Kathleen already had). Looked through cases for the next two years (also 8 books) but found no further mention of the case so can only assume they settled among themselves.

Had lunch at the cafeteria there, then walked the short distance to the Titanic museum. It was jammed full, and we would have had to wait more than an hour to get in. As it was already 2:00 (and we need to be back on the boat by 5:30 we decided to skip it and began to walk back to the TI to catch the bus.

Stopped off at a neat little bar set back from an alley we cut through and had a glass of wine and rested a bit before continuing our walk to the TI. There was another long line of people waiting for a bus, but it only took about 30 minutes before we were back at the boat... ... and waiting in another line of people waiting to go through security to get back on the ship.

A bunch of emergency vehicles arrived as we pulled into the parking lot. Apparently someone had breached security and gotten onto the boat. They caught him quickly - we saw him being led off in handcuffs by the police. To his credit the captain made several announcements explaining what had happened.

Once aboard we went directly to the outdoors area on the back of the boat (9th deck) and had drinks, read, and (eventually) watched as the boat left the dock (~ 7 PM) and sailed out into the harbor. Changed, then went down to dinner and sat again at our tiny two-top table at the window. I had Roast chicken & Kathleen had scallops. I have been enjoying a variety of smoked fish as my appetizers - Salmon, Trout and (today) Haddock - all delicious.

However, my "caesar" salad had Rocket lettuce, mandarin oranges and no Parmesan cheese. Outrage. We didn't finish our wine (had a lot when we got back to the ship) and I retired in bed to Read early.

Kathleen has really been enjoying campaign!

7-29 WEDNESDAY: Between Scotland & Iceland

Woke up energetic and went down to the 3rd deck before breakfast to do 3 chilly laps (= 20 minutes) to start the day. Found a very nice place then to enjoy some coffee before I

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

headed Back to the room to get cleaned up before my 9:30 massage. Had to go back up to 9TH deck to wait a bit while the room was being cleaned, but arrived at the spa on time. I had booked a 75-minute massage but bumped it up to 100 minutes and walked away very glad that I did - it was very relaxing. Kathleen has one scheduled for 12:00. We will meet for a late lunch when her massage is finished.

The day is overcast and cooler. The ship picked up a bit of motion overnight, but it has not affected either of us.

I bundled up and headed out to the back of the boat on the 9th deck. It had rained, and it was windy and cool. I lasted for ~30 minutes before heading inside, where Kathleen eventually joined me for a late lunch.

We retreated to our room where we read and relaxed until it was time to put on our formal attire for dinner - it was "black & white" night (we wore blue) and just about everyone was wearing their finest. We aren't much for such cruising - more Viking River Cruise types.

After a few drinks in the bar we headed back to the table we apparently share with someone who prefers to eat early (#271) We both enjoyed the shellfish bisque and chateaubriand. We finished our white wine left from last night and started on a nice Rioja.

We ordered the special dinner for tomorrow (Duck - me & Sole - K). It was after 10:00 by the time we returned to our room and retired.

7-30 THURSDAY: At Sea -> Iceland

Slept later but still decided to brave the cooler and windy weather (10°C - 50°F) to walk 4 times around the outside deck (30 minutes). Again enjoyed coffee before separating - I went up to 9 to have a light breakfast (croissant - egg - bacon - cheese sandwich) before heading down to the gym to go through my upper body workout.

We got cleaned up, then I went down to purser office to sign us up for a "Lunch & Learn" event on Tuesday (\$100 each). Kathleen had gone ahead and staked out a table in the 12th deck observation Room.

Cunard's pricing looks really attractive up front, but they do nickel and dime (make that \$10 and \$100) you for things throughout the trip. They even charge for coffee outside the cafeteria. We discovered the lounge on the 12th deck at the front of the ship. It offers a great view and spent much of the day there reading and enjoying being on a ship at sea. Had ordered the special meal (Duck and Sole) which was a nice break from the rest of the menu..

7-31 FRIDAY: AKUREYRI Iceland

Arrived early in the morning, which was overcast, windy and cool (= 50°). Had breakfast, then headed down to begin our first trip at 8:30. Had to assemble in the theatre first, and one group was departing just as we arrived!

It was a long bus trip to the GODAFOSS waterfall, but the scenery on the way was beautiful - looks a lot like Scotland. Located very near where one of my Y-DNA matches was found.

The falls themselves were rather beautiful - unusual in that they descend from the level that we approached them from - they don't (naturally) tower over you as you approach.

The path from the visitor center to the falls was paved and an easy walk. However, there was a path down to the bottom of the falls that was significantly more of a challenge - very steep and rugged. Kathleen decided to not try it, but I could not resist. It required a lot of careful effort to get down, and the shore itself was very rocky and hard to walk on too, but the view was worth the effort.

We walked back to the visitor center. Kathleen went in for a cup of coffee while I walked across the footbridge and headed up the opposite side of the river to see the falls from that side.

We rode back into town to the botanical garden but left the tour there to walk into town. Visited the Lutheran church, then had lunch at a very local burger joint (even saw a few off duty member of the boats wait-staff there). Did a bit of shopping, very nearly had wine at one of the hotels before panicking about the time we needed to be back on the boat and hurried back to be sure we were not left behind.

We made it with several hours to spare and settled in on the 12th floor observation area a bit before 3:00.

The bar did not open until 3:00 so I (apparently) took step #1 of pissing off the waitstaff by going down to deck 2 and bringing up some wine for us. They did not appear to serve snacks like the bar on deck 2 does, so around 6:00 I got the munchies and went down to 9 to fetch a couple of pieces of pizza. Just as soon as I returned and sat down with the pizza I was nicely but firmly informed that that just wasn't acceptable. When he said that they

served snacks I had to point out that we had been there for several hours and nobody had offered us anything to eat. Chips, olives and nuts appeared almost immediately.

Even though I had already eaten the pizza I felt obligated to eat the snacks. Neither one of us felt like a big dinner so we skipped our



2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

usual dinner. I did grab some chicken & rice before returning to the room (was unsatisfactory).

8-1 SATURDAY: ISAFJORDUR Iceland



Another early morning arrival but today was brilliantly sunny without a cloud in the sky. Had an earlier departure so had to hustle a bit to get ready, grab our breakfast and get down to the gathering point by 8:30. We didn't need to hurry - our bus was scheduled to leave at 9:00 but didn't depart until nearly 9:15 due to some late - arriving members of our group. It was a 75-minute ride through really beautiful country side. Our tour guide was good (so was the one we had yesterday) and he kept us informed about the geography and history as we rode on to our destination, the DYANDI waterfall.

It is an awesome sight, but the trail up to it is really steep and rugged. Kathleen did not feel safe and stopped soon after we started up. I continued and made it most of the way to the top but had to stop due to a lack of time. 1 hour (total) just wasn't enough time to enjoy this spectacular place!

Rode next to SUDUREYRI, a small (300 people) fishing town located on one of the smaller FJORDS in Iceland. Learned a lot about processing fish, tasted dried fish, fish cakes and smoked salmon before climbing back on the bus and returning to the ship.



2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

It was only 2:00 so we opted to walk into town to see what there was to see (not much as it turned out) we returned to the ship, changed, and bravely made our way back up to the 12th deck. Asked for (and got) nuts with our drinks, and a bowl of chips arrived soon after that, so we apparently are marked people but not banned, so all is good.

Had a bit of excitement while we were sipping our wine... the captain came onto the PA system to direct the Fire Aid and Fire Evacuation teams to a reported fire on deck 9. He soon came back and put everyone's mind at rest by informing us that it was a false alarm. I have to admit that prowess... the PA system is probably the most efficient and reliable way to alert the crew when a problem occurs. Plus I guess all passengers always perk up that a problem has occurred.

The view was amazing as we sailed away from the dock (backwards) and out of the fjord. Booked a reservation at the steak restaurant for Friday ... the menu is starting to seem a little repetitive. None the less, we enjoyed pork (m) and salmon (k) for our meal late seating before retiring for the night.

8-2 SUNDAY: REYKJAVIK, ICELAND

Another sunny, warm (for Iceland) morning as we sailed into the harbor early on a Sunday morning. Discussed our plans over breakfast. We will relax until our afternoon tour to see the Lava caves, then will explore the city when we return. We will remain here overnight so there will be no pressure to get back to the ship.

So we settled into the newly vacant bar area on deck 2 and enjoyed not walking anywhere for awhile... My knee is letting me know that it does not appreciate all of the climbing I have been doing. I'm due for another cortisone shot in two weeks and am really ready for the relief it has been providing.

We wanted to go out from town for the afternoon so I and Cht went to one of the "must see" sights for us.



2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

Road the ~ 40 minutes out to RAUFARHÓLSHELLIR to walk through the Lava Tunnel. We had to wait for 15-20 minutes after we arrived for our guide (apparently he was already taking another group through!) so we waited outside in the warm sun. I ate the ham & cheese sandwich I had stolen from the game deck before we left.

Our guide arrived and we geared-up (helmets with head lamps) and made our way into the tunnel. It was amazingly beautiful inside, and the walking was very challenging in the stretches where they have not provided steps on a steel walkway. Kathleen struggled a bit but grew seemingly more confident as we proceeded.

The highlight occurred when we reached the turn-around point and the guide turned off all of the lights - needless to say it was really - really dark!

The walk back out seemed easier - we went at our own pace and we knew what to expect.

We arrived back at the ship ~ 2:30. I had purchased a Hop on - Hop off bus pass before we left, so we walked (past the free shuttle bus) ~ 1/4 mile to catch our bus into town. It had some problem so we detoured into their nearby garage for a consultation before proceeding at ~ 15 mph to our destination (the Opera Center).



It is an amazingly beautiful building - we went inside and discovered that it had a bar, so we stopped off for a drink and a snack. Sadly, the kitchen was closed, but the very friendly bartender brought us a huge bowl of nuts, so Kathleen (who had no lunch) was relieved.

We browsed the gift shop, and I bought a T-Shirt with a cool map of Iceland printed on it.

We walked on and found the old Harbor area that was bristling with bars, restaurants and gift shops. From there we wandered over to the Rainbow Street (pedestrian shopping area), walked uphill to the cathedral (beautiful, but closed for a concert), then walked back down the Rainbow (so-called because it literally has been painted the colors of the rainbow) back to the Opera House, where we caught the Cruise Terminal bus (because the HO/HO bus stopped at 5:00) back to the ship.

We changed, had a few drinks on deck 2, got seated and had dinner (PLAICE SCHNITZEL for K, I had the beef).

8-3 MONDAY: REYKJAVIK

Most of the day was spent on the Ring of Fire tour that starts at the assembly area at 9:10. Since it was scheduled to end at 2:30 we both surreptitiously made and snuck out of breakfast with sandwiches.

Our tour guide was a little lackluster, but the tour itself was fascinating. We started out at a Geothermal power plant that creates hot water and electricity for Reykjavik - learned a lot about it is produced, and the steps they are taking to reduce the already low levels of waste (mainly CO₂).



We toured a small Geo-Thermal Park, stopped at a near-by restaurant for a buffet lunch (so much for our sandwiches!), then finished up at the THINGVELLIR National Park, situated at the junction of the junction of the North American and the Eurasian tectonic plates meet.

It really made me appreciate just how precarious living in Iceland is - they are subject to a major volcanic eruption from any number of active volcanoes, any one of which could make life very unpleasant.

Arrived back at the ship at 2:40. Changed then staked out a table on deck 12. The on-board time is 4:30 and we will be departing around 5:00.

We apparently have been extremely fortunate weather-wise. Today was another warm and sunny day. Everywhere we have gone the past few days has resulted in at least one conversation with a native about how unusually nice the weather has been. Lucky us!

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

Stayed on 12 and watched Reykjavik recede into the distance. The captain announced that the weather tomorrow could be considerably different as we are heading into a storm that may produce some 3 meter waves...

Went directly to "our table" for dinner at 8:15 and found that it was ready for us. I had an overcooked pork and Kathleen upgraded (for \$35) for a filet that was well worth the cost - the best beef we have had so far.

8-4 TUESDAY: At Sea Reykjavik -> Scotland

Slept later than usual. Walked for 30 minutes, then had coffee on deck 3 (very crowded!). I headed down to the gym until Kathleen got cleaned up.

We need to turn in our passports today (presumably for Ireland) - our deck is scheduled to do so at 10:30.

I stayed in the room to work on a marketing email for the North Texas Giving Day. Kathleen will take care of our passports and meet me back at the room at 11:45 so we can go to our "Lunch & Learn" event at 12:00.

At least that was the plan. We had confirmed we had the correct time with our wait-person when we got our coffee after our walk, but she was incorrect - we had changed time zones overnight.

I had just settled in at my PC when the stateroom phone started to ring. It was the staff ringing the room wondering if we were planning to attend! I looked for Kathleen where she told me she planned to sit, then looked down on 2. Finally I thought to call her using Facetime and was able to reach and meet up with her.

We were not sure where the event was, walked to the wrong end of the ship, walked up and down a few flights of steps but finally arrived, about 10 minutes after noon. We just missed the first bit of talking.

The wine pairings were interesting. Old world (Europe) vs New world (US, Canada) and we enjoyed them all. The food was good as well - filet as the main course. To my surprise I found the cheese course to be enjoyable. We pretty much just vegged out in our room all afternoon, then dressed for our 2nd Formal night. Had wine first, then enjoyed Steak Diane.

8-5 WEDNESDAY: STORNOWAY DATE

Arrived just as we woke up. Walked in cloudy, windy, misty weather but finished feeling good and refreshed.

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh



Had coffee, then I went to the gym while Kathleen went to see why she is unable to connect to the internet. They couldn't offer much more than a "everybody is having the same problem" statement. No response when Kathleen said that she had the same problem yesterday and requested a refund (we paid nearly \$800 to have internet access for this trip).

We will have a relaxed day - our shore excursion is scheduled for 3:00.

The weather did not cooperate - wind driven rain greeted us as we boarded the bus for the ~ 40 minute through the countryside to the CALLANISH STANDING STONES.



These are a miniature but much older version of Stonehenge, dating back some 4000-5000 years. Nobody really knows why the stones were created (or why another dozen or so smaller versions were scattered around the surrounding country side, but their age and the obvious effort that went into them being created is impressive, even when viewed through the veil of wind-driven rain.

They just built a visitor center at the site. Coupled with the new deep water port where the ship is berthed: it represents a significant (and hopefully) investment aimed at attracting tourists like us. The down-side for them is the distance to the town from the port (about a 15 minute bus ride) and the (so far) lack of attractions in the town itself. I wish them luck.

It was good to get back to the ship where we shed our damp (ok - wet) clothes and headed up to the 12th deck for some restorative drinks and the always interesting view of the ship leaving port.

Had a small wrinkle when we went down to dinner @ 8:15 - our alter egos were still sitting at "our" table, so we retreated back to the bar and had a delaying drink. The table was ready when we returned at 8:40. I had the roasted Chicken (good) and Kathleen had the salmon (even better). It had warmed up a bit, so we finished the evening on our balcony.

DATE 8-6 THURSDAY: At Sea STORNAWAY -> COBH

As predicted the weather was much improved - no rain and much warmer. We did our 30-minute walk around the deck, then split up for our massages (9:30 for me, 12:15 for Kathleen. Mine was excellent!



The massages (75 minutes) were great! I came back to the room and did some work on Neon for the Genealogical Society while Kathleen was getting hers, then we ventured up to the 9th deck for lunch.

Afterwards we both enjoyed just relaxing in our room until it was time for dinner (Beef Wellington for us both)

DATE 8-7 FRIDAY: Cobh, Ireland



Arrived in glorious sunshine! It looks (only looks - because we cannot access the weather app for some reason) like it is going to be a beautiful day here. We did not sign up for any tours so we will be on our own.

Our first stop was the heritage museum which was located on the dock near the ship. I learned a lot about how the Irish people were deported by the British. It also had a lot of information about the PETER ROBINSON settlers who were sent to Canada in 1825.

Next up (literally) was the cathedral which sits on a hill overlooking the town. A funeral was in progress so we didn't get to see much of the interior but little I could see from the door was impressive.

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

Wandered around some more. Had a Cerveza sitting at another sidewalk tables outside a bar (the weather was great - sunny and warm), followed by ice cream to complete our "lunch".

Headed back to the ship and settled in at a table on the 9th deck where we read while waiting for our ~ 6:00 departure.

We had booked dinner at the steak restaurant on the 10th deck at 7:30. It was nice - no need to dress up, and the food was good.

I finished the evening with a soak in the hot tub. There was nobody else out near the pool, so I probably was there after it had closed for the day... oh well, still a rebel.

8-8 SATURDAY: At Sea COBH -> SOUTHAMPTON

Our last day at sea! We both feel the usual "It feels like we have been gone a long time yet cannot believe that it is over so soon" feeling.

We walked (another beautiful, sunny, warm day). I went to the gym while Kathleen (eventually - the service was slow!) enjoyed coffee on the 3rd deck.

I'm now clean, fed (had breakfast) and getting caught up on our activities in our room.

We need to get packed and set our suitcases outside our room this evening to prepare for our 8:10 departure tomorrow.

The weather was even nicer than it was yesterday... Sitting on the balcony was our choice for this last day of cruising.



We changed for dinner our last time and went down to the Chart Room about 6:00. There was hardly anybody when we arrived, but it became more crowded as time went by.

Our table was ready when we headed over there at 8:15. Nothing on the regular menu looked appealing so we both upgraded (Filet for Kathleen, Lobster for me, \$35 each).

We also got a nice bottle of red wine which we finished in our room after dinner on the balcony.

Got our bags out for pickup by the 11:00 deadline

DATE 8-9 SUNDAY: Southampton -> London -> Dallas

Woke up back in Southampton, tied up at a different dock (Ocean) than we departed from.



Took our bags with us when we went down for breakfast, then walked down to the theatre for our 9:10 departure. Walked all the way to the front of the ship and arrived shortly after 8:00 only to hear that they had already sent our group to the gang plank to depart, so walked back to the middle of the ship to join the line of departing passengers.

The ramp down to the terminal was a zig-zag maze that seemed to go on forever, but we eventually reached the terminal, found our suit cases and made our way outside. Finding the correct bus was a bit of a guessing game so we finally found someone who pointed it out to us.

It took a while to get moving. Someone from the ship came on board and checked off everybody's room number so they must have been missing someone.

It was about a 75-minute ride to terminal 3. Getting our bags checked took a while (all the other passengers seemed to have a lot of bags to check!) but we accomplished that, got through security, found the bathroom and were seated in the Admirals Club lounge by 11:00.

Our flight is scheduled to depart at 2:45.



THOUGHTS ON THE CRUISE

There were a lot of passengers who appeared to be a lot older than us. Very many of them were mobility challenged.

2026: London & Queen Ann Cruise to Belfast, Iceland Stornoway & Cobh

All of them appeared to be very much into the Fancy Dress nights (that probably explains the number of bags being checked at the airport).

We haven't dared to look at the final account of charges that were left at our room this morning. Their upfront cost reflects well when compared to a Viking cruise, but they sure charge for a lot of things (even cokes!).