

Panama Cruise Diary

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Wed. 12/18 We flew from San Luis Obispo to San Diego to Ft. Lauderdale FL. Checked into Le Meridien Hotel in Dania Beach, FL.

Thu. 12/19 We Boarded the Viking ship Sky around noon. We set sail from Ft. Lauderdale FL toward Cozumel Mexico just after 5:00 PM.

Fri. 12/20 Day at sea. We sailed past the Southwestern corner of Cuba around 4:00PM. We saw a performance by singer **Manny Rodriguez**.

Sat. 12/21 We arrived in Cozumel at 8:00 AM. Went to a **Mayan Cultural Display**. Also went to the **Mayan Cacao Company** and had a demonstration of how they make Mayan Chocolate. When we returned, we took a dip in the hot tub and hot pool on Viking Sky. Departed Cozumel for Cartagena Columbia.

Sun. 12/22 Day at sea. We attended a second lecture by the resident naturalist **Dr. Russell DeFusco**. He is also a wonderful photographer of wildlife. We went to a special dinner at **"The Chef's Table."**

Mon. 12/23 Day at sea. We attended a nice lecture on the history of Panama - The French, and another on the history of Columbia. Connie took a tour of the kitchen and other "behind the scenes" areas. We went to see the second performance by **Manny Rodriguez**.

Tue. 12/24 We arrived at **Cartagena Columbia** at 6:00 AM. Rita and I took the Panoramic Tour of Cartagena and saw Fort San Felipe and the statue of Admiral Edward Vernon. Also walked through the bird sanctuary at Port Oasis. Connie and Kay toured The National Aviary.

Wed. 12/25 We arrived in Colon Panama at 7:30 AM. We took the Panoramic tour to Panama City on the Pacific side of the canal.

Thu. 12/26 We cruised through the Panama Canal. From 5:30 AM until 7:30 AM, the Viking Sky positioned itself in front of the Gatun Lock on the Caribbean side. At 7:30 AM we began moving inside the first lock. By 8:10 AM, we were completely inside the lock after being guided by "The Mule",

2 small locomotive engines. By 8:20 AM, the Sky had been raised 85 feet by **26,700,000 gallons of water** from Gatun Lake. At 9:00 AM we exited the lock into Gatun Lake. At 3:30 PM we went through the second lock. At 5:30 PM we traveled through the third lock and entered the Pacific Ocean.

Fri. 12/27 We Sailed the Pacific Ocean. We attended a third lecture by the resident naturalist Dr. Russel DeFusco. His nature and wildlife photos are wonderful and very colorful. In the evening, we went to see the entertainer, pianist **Carl Wishneusky**.

Sat. 12/28 We arrived at Puntarenas, Columbia at 6:00 AM. Connie and Kay went on "**A Walk in the Clouds**". Rita, Theresa and I went on the Panoramic Walking Tour. We saw indigenous kids dance in a folkloric show. Connie and Kay made it back from the clouds. The Sky sailed away at 4:50 PM.

Sun. 12/29 We began the first of 4 Days at Sea before we will arrive at Cabo San Lucas Mexico. In the evening, we were entertained by magician Nick Price.

Mon. 12/30 Day 2 at sea. We have sailed past Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala and reached the southern tip of Mexico. Connie and Kay took a Caribbean cooking class. Tonight we eat dinner at Manfredi's.

Tue. 12/31 Day 3 at sea. Listened to third lecture by **Dr. Russell DeFusco** on "Mexico and California Flora & Fauna".

Wed. 01/01 Day 4 at sea. Leisurely day. Preparing for Cabo San Lucas tomorrow.

Thu. 01/02 Arrived at Cabo San Lucas at around 8:12 AM. We took I tender into Cabo and did some exploring on our own. We had lunch with Kay and Theresa at Solomon's Landing. Lunch and margaritas were imbibed in. At 1:20 PM we went on our excursion In San Jose de Cabo. Our final excursion of this cruise.

Fri. 01/03 Day 1 at Sea. Day 9 overall at sea. Attended a lecture by **Dr. Kenneth Stein** on the Orion Space Mission.

Sat. 01/04 Day 2 at Sea. Day 10 overall at sea. Last day of our cruise on the Viking Sky.

Sun. 01/05 we docked in Los Angeles at 5:55 AM. We disembarked at 9:30 AM. This was the end of our cruise aboard the Viking Sky. We arrived back in San Luis Obispo County at 6:00 PM.