

## First "At Sea" day- Vietnam tomorrow



Two days ago, Karen in Hong Kong atop Victoria Peak

The Celebrity Solstice is a pretty nice ship; we're in an Aft cabin again, same as our prior two cruises, and along with our nicer package comes the premium drink option, something neither Karen nor I will get much out of. I've had just one "drink" so far, something called a Manhattan (made with Whiskey, Sweet Vermouth and bitters). Meh. So far I haven't found anything alcoholic I really like other than a Gin & Tonic, and beer after a tough ride in France. Going forward, assuming we do more cruises, we'll probably be a lot better off doing pay-as-you-go instead of a drink package. It is nice being able to go to the coffee shop on board and order anything I want, anytime I want, and not have to think about the cost.

The ship's a bit older, 2008, which is in keeping with our two prior cruises. When looking for better pricing, older ships cost less than newer ones. There's some signs of age here & there, but the crew is really, really good.

Karen's finally eating a bit more; we're hoping her trend of losing weight comes to an end. I mean, seriously, who loses weight on a cruise? And staff at the restaurant have been great finding things that her fussy stomach will agree to.

How's Karen doing overall? Much better than she expected. Just 4 days before we were to leave, she asked to sit down and have a "heart to heart" conversation, the subject being whether this trip would be possible or not. The main issues were the incessant hacking cough and her inability to eat enough, causing her to steadily lose both weight and strength. But her cough had been gradually easing, and so far, it hasn't been all that bad. I've explained to a few people that her coughing (when it's happen) is from her recent lung surgery... curiously, only one asked the, to me, obvious question. "Did you use to smoke?" But it really hasn't been too bad. And the eating thing... I was hoping that getting her back on her feet would be good for her appetite, and she has, in fact, been eating considerably more than before the trip.

I wish it were as easy to post on Wordpress (which the Almost-Daily-Diary uses) as it is Facebook! Rather than duplicate everything, I'll do the same thing here that I did on my last France trip, posting links and material from the Facebook entries.