

At Sea – Day 31 Oct. 28:

We woke to a calm sea and sky with broken clouds as the Amsterdam sailed southwest toward Singapore. We knew we were heading deeper into the tropics when we stepped out on deck from our cool air conditioned spaces and our glasses fogged up immediately from the high humidity. However, it was not oppressive and it felt good to walk around the deck.

The sunrise this morning was beautiful and promised a nice day at sea.

Barbara went to the Good Morning Amsterdam TV show where Gene and Adele interviewed the cast members from the Amsterdam Singers and Dancers troupe as shown below. In their interviews they told how they came to be performing



together on the Amsterdam. They all are clients of a company called Stiletto. Their contract with Holland America ends when the Amsterdam returns to the US at Los Angeles.

Alexa Wildish is the lead singer and is sitting

second from the left front row in the picture. She was a charming hostess at our dinner table on October 10th. We discussed blogging with her and it turned out she is writing a blog that is posted on the Internet. The address for her blog that we gave that evening was not correct. We were able to get the correct address and it is as follows:

www.intothewildish.blogspot.com .

The Amsterdam cruised through the day on the way to Singapore. In the afternoon we got a picture of the TV screen with our location indicated as shown on the right. We are over halfway from Nha Trang to Singapore.



When we left Hong Kong we were joined at the dinner table by Elaine. She is an Australian from the Melbourne area. Elaine boarded the Amsterdam in Hong Kong and is on the segment of the voyage between Hong Kong and Melbourne where she will leave the ship. We found her to be a great addition to our table and enjoyed her conversation and humor. Orlin was explaining that our steward's name was Gede (pronounced "G'day") and his last name was Suchipta. Elaine instantly responded that Orlin must be mistaken about the last name which must be "Mate". We got a laugh out of this little bit of Aussie humor.

The dress for dinner tonight was formal and the theme was Black and Gold with the Captain's Grand Voyage Black and Gold Ball scheduled for later in the evening. The Stewards had spent the night decorating the dinning room in tons of black and gold banners and streamers that made for a very festive ambiance. Henk Mensink told us later than the budget for formal night decorations was about \$9000 USD per event.

Tonight our table mates, Bob and Esther, were having a reception and dinner with Captain Eversen so they were not at our table. That left Elaine and the two of us to dine at the table on this formal night. We were pleasantly surprised when Henk Mensink, Hotel Manager for the Amsterdam came to our table to be our host for the night. He is one of our favorite Holland America people whom we first met in 2008. A picture of the four of us enjoying the dinner hour is shown below.



Henk always seems to be in a good mood and attentive to the passengers he meets. We had a great time with him as we discussed the preparations made for Grand Voyages, our experiences on the cruise and some of Henk's career path experiences with Holland America. A very pleasant evening, indeed!

After dinner (we were the last to leave the dining room) we walked around the Upper Promenade Deck to stretch our legs and say hello to people we knew on this grand formal night. We happened to meet with Alexa Wildish whom Barbara had seen earlier today during the interview on the Good Morning Amsterdam TV Show. Alexa remembered us from the night she hosted our dinner table and we had an enjoyable conversation.

Alas, we didn't go to the Captain's Grand Voyage Black and Gold Ball. We choose to turn in early in order to get ready for a big day tomorrow touring Singapore. We plan to team up with Steve and Bobbie and take the Hop-On Hop-Off bus to hit the famous sites, like the Raffles Hotel and huge Observation Wheel (Ferris Wheel) in Singapore.