



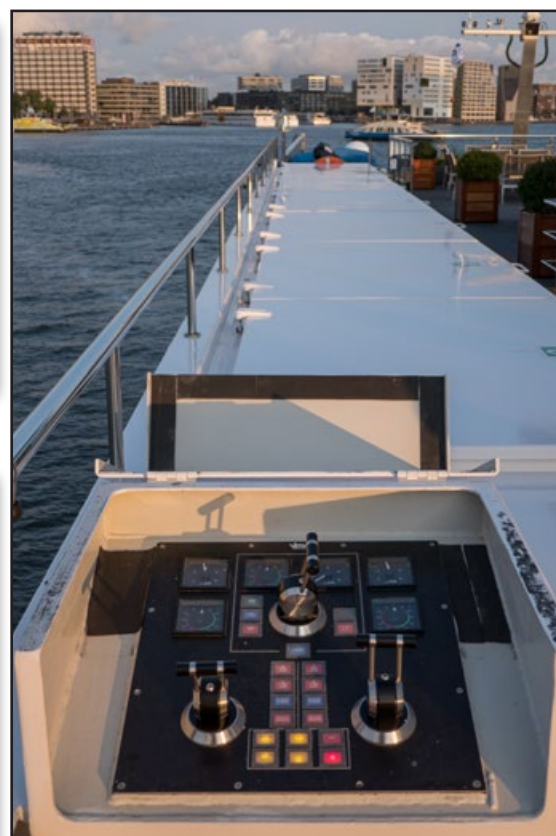
AMSTERDAM - 2018

Well into 2021 we have been COVID-19 quarantining for over a year now and have taken no new Flying Pig Adventures. We have been doing chores, home based projects, record keeping and other mundane things we wish we'd not the time for.

Back in 2018 we took a trip from the Black Sea to the North Sea via the Danube / Main / Rhine rivers. We flew in and out of Amsterdam, spending a few days there as well. We did not finish a Flying Pig Adventures travelogue on the Amsterdam part of the trip so we catch up with that one with this.



On the last day of our Black Sea to North Sea journey, very early in the morning and still dark, we turned north off the Rhine River into the Amsterdam–Rhine Canal. This is a canal that was built to connect the port and capital city of Amsterdam to the main shipping artery of the Rhine. It was just after sunrise as I piloted the cruise ship into the heart of Amsterdam.





Many buildings are still standing due to a little help from their neighbors.



A left leaning Situation Room



The New



The Old





One thing leads to another.



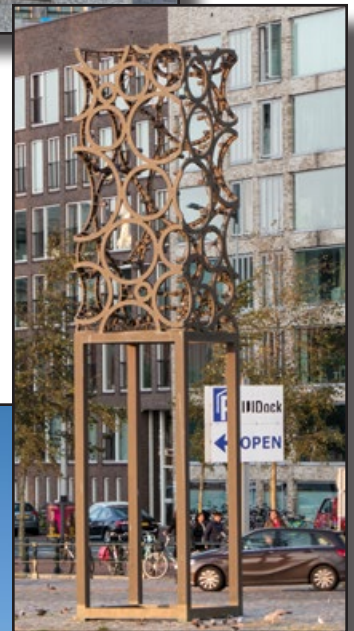
A queue to a 'Pop-Up' store. I am not sure how all that worked, but for some reason it was sure popular. They even had a traffic monitor outside the door.

I was not able to figure out what it was they were selling.





Public art we saw on our walk-about...





In one section of Amsterdam there were several sculptures like these.



Of course, Amsterdam being famous for the number of bicycles that are there, we saw many.





The canals offered up many photography opportunities too.



Below is the Homomonument on Keizersgracht canal. The Homomonument commemorates all gay men and lesbians who have been subjected to persecution because of their homosexuality. Opened on September 5, 1987, it was designed to “inspire and support lesbians and gays in their struggle against denial, oppression and discrimination”. It was the first monument in the world to commemorate gays and lesbians who were killed by the Nazis.





We passed by Achmed's eye doctor. If you don't know who Achmed is, Achmed is an un-dead terrorist and a suicide bomber who is not very bright. He has appeared in countless stand-up specials, and appeared as a recurring character in The Jeff Dunham Show as well as the main protagonist of the 2014 animated film Achmed Saves America.



At 135 euros (about 160 USD) this was the least expensive item I could find at this Leica store.

The COOPH Photographer's hat would have been the perfect hat should I have been piloting that Ferrari across the street at the Hublot store!

This shopping area was definitely for the 'Beautiful People', of which we fiscally are not.





There was always places nearby for coffee and pastry pick-me-ups.



We found a nearby suitable Situation Room near the hotel and spent many of our mornings there planning out our walk-about and catching up on news.

The boss of the place was this cat, with it's own private entrance to the office.





The three X's from the Amsterdam Coat of Arms (shown above) can be found on all sorts of things.



The three X's do not have anything to do with the Amsterdam sex trade.





Translated to English 'Nee' is 'No' and 'Ja' is 'Yes'. The Nee-Ja and Nee-Nee stickers relate to bulk mail in the Netherlands and determine how much of it they are willing to receive. A mailbox with no sticker at all will receive the largest amount of bulk mail, while those with Nee-Ja stickers receive a smaller amount and those with Nee-Nee stickers receive virtually no bulk mail.

There are two types of bulk mail, addressed and unaddressed. Addressed bulk mail is intended for anyone living at a specific address. That can include such things as the free local newspaper. Unaddressed bulk mail is generally flyers and packets containing multiple advertising circulars.

The first word on the sticker is for unaddressed bulk mail and the second word is for addressed bulk mail.

A Nee-Ja sticker would indicate to the deliverer that the resident will accept addressed bulk mail but not unaddressed bulk mail.

A Nee-Nee sticker indicates the resident does not want to receive any bulk mail. If there are flyers stuck inside the local newspaper, the delivery person would need to remove them before they could put the newspaper in a mailbox that has a Nee-Ja sticker.

I read where Amsterdam was the first city to introduce a different approach to bulk mail. It decided to set its default to no bulk mail unless signaled otherwise. This required the introduction of a new Ja-Ja sticker which communicates the resident wants to receive both types of bulk mail. I also read the Nee-Nee sticker is no longer used in Amsterdam but I saw mostly those and do not recall seeing a Ja-Ja sticker so maybe that went into affect after our 2018 visit.





Some random photographs from our walk-about...





Some good friends from Paris (Poulsbo expatriates) came to Amsterdam to spend a couple days exploring Amsterdam with us. This view was from where we had one of our evening cocktails and watched the sunset.



There are lots of parks and public spaces with some wildlife and even public BBQ facilities (apparently well used in this case).





The harbor walk-about was really enjoyable. The image below is the NEMO Science Museum (from latin Nobody). The museum has its origins in 1923, and is housed in a building designed by Renzo Piano since 1997. It contains five floors of hands-on science exhibitions and is the largest science center in the Netherlands.

Unfortunately we did not have time to go in and explore, giving us reason to go back (like we really need a reason?).

Of particular note is all the traditional boats along the pier in the foreground. It is a special pier reserved for these traditional boats, most were liveaboards and the public was welcome to stroll along the pier.



Colorful water taxi



Below is a replica of the three masted *Amsterdam*. The original *Amsterdam* was a large Dutch East India Company vessel. It is part of the The Amsterdam National Maritime Museum (et Scheepvaartmuseum). The *Amsterdam* made its maiden journey to Batavia but then sank in a storm in the English Channel in winter of 1749. The wreck of the ship was discovered off the English coast in 1969, and the museum replica was completed in 1990. I really enjoyed touring the ship and seeing the spaces on this ship that housed 350 people.

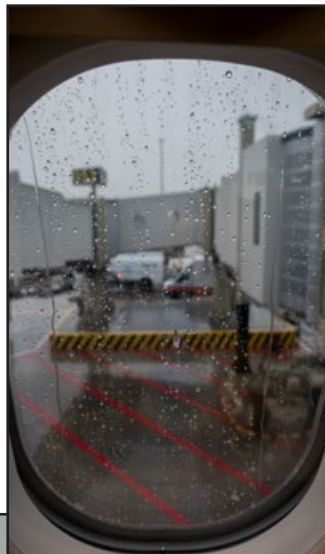




Our room in Amsterdam was very convenient to the train station. So convenient that the trains actually passed under our room. Our room was on the first floor above the tracks and when we initially looked out the window and saw the view (the image to the right) all we could think about was that this was going to be an experience right out of the 1992 movie 'My Cousin Vinny'. I don't think we unpacked until a train actually passed under so we could figure out just how loud this was going to be, expecting the hassle of changing rooms. We were really surprised that not only did the building not shake when a train passed under, but it was not very loud at all. We ended up staying in the room and it worked out just fine (except for the domestic terrorist attack at the train station next door). A young man from Afghanistan stabbed and injured two American tourists. The attacker was shot and injured by the police. If you want to read more about it, click this Wikipedia link: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2018_Amsterdam_stabbing_attack

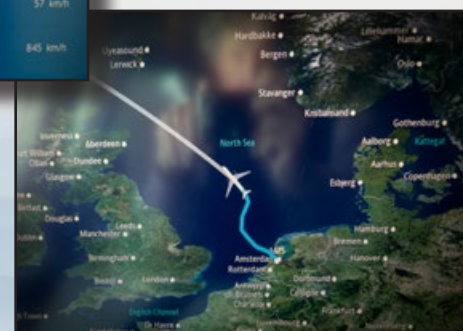


The day we exited Amsterdam for Seattle it was a pretty dreary, damp and gray day.





DESTINO Seattle/Tacoma			
Tiempo hasta destino	9:11	Distancia al destino	7667 km
Hora local en origen	10:52	Hora local en destino	01:52
Altitud	6876 m	Viento de cola	57 km/h
Temperatura del aire exterior	-25 °C	Velocidad en tierra	845 km/h



We had hoped that the smoke from all the fires in the NW would have been gone by the time we got back to Seattle, but that was not to be. While we didn't see any of the huge plumes of smoke we saw when we left Seattle the month before, the smoke seemed to have settled in and blanketed western Canada and the United States.

