

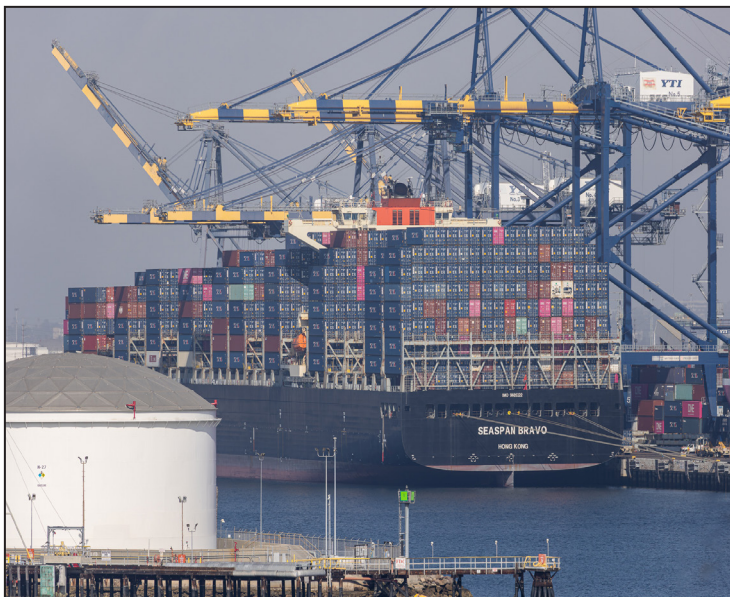
NEW ZEALAND 2024/2025

PART II: LONG BEACH TO JAPAN

We arrived at the San Pedro (Port Of Los Angeles) pier and were processed, scanned, documented and then told to deposit ourselves in a public area on the ship and complete yet more paperwork. We were eventually shown to our cabin, our home for the next two months. Our luggage arrived a few minutes later with no drama.

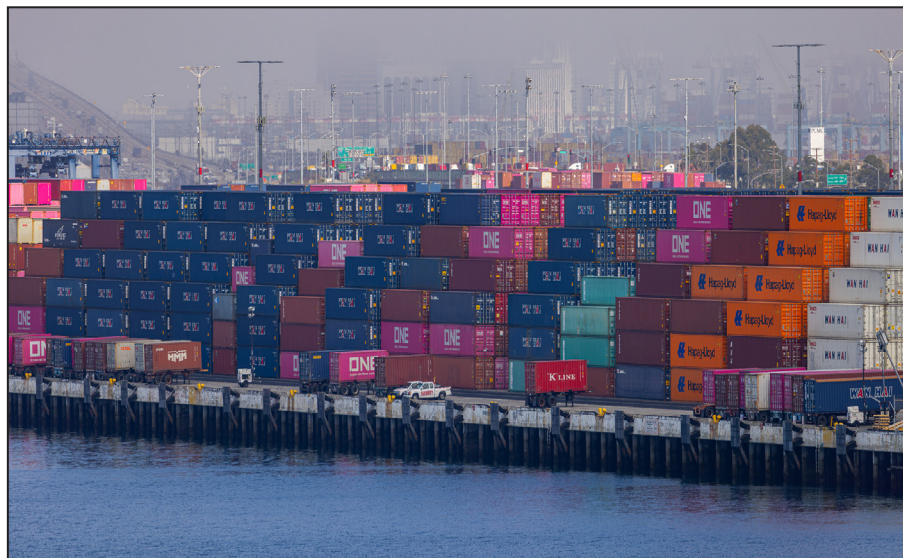


Later that afternoon we explored the various open decks on the ship and I photographed the containers and ships that surrounded us in the port.

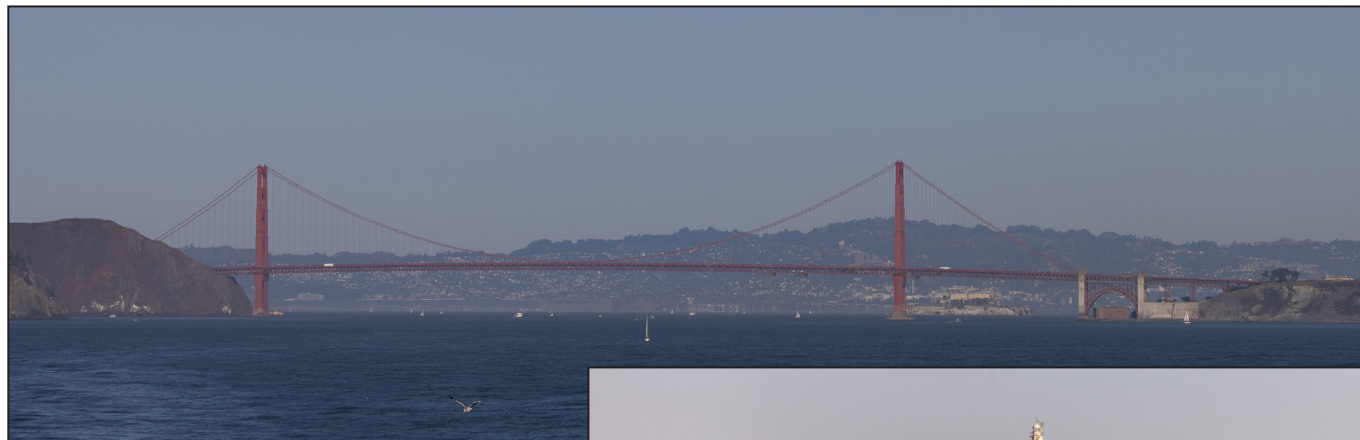


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Our first stop was San Francisco for a few hours.



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We did not find much in the way of manhole covers along the San Francisco waterfront where we docked. We improvised and used this cover to record our visit.



Along the San Francisco waterfront someone has released a whole fleet of these driverless taxis. We did not see any passengers in any of the many Waymo taxis that went past us.



After departing San Francisco and on our way up the coast to Astoria, Oregon we spotted several whales.



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The morning we were to cross the Columbia River bar and dock at Astoria, Oregon I was woken by what I thought was the sound of a drone. It was still dark with just a hint that the sun was going to rise again. I was still way more than half asleep, looked out the window and saw what I thought was a drone. Our room was one level down from the open decks above us and it appeared to me that someone was flying a really large drone off the deck above and directly above our room. I've owned and flown drones but this one had some clearly superior motors and they were *really* loud. It moved even closer to the ship and still directly above our room. It was now so close it was visually blocked by our balcony roof, so I went out onto the balcony to get a better view.

After I'd gotten myself a bit more awake and was able to accurately process what I was seeing, it turned out to be ship pilots from Astoria being delivered to the ship via helicopter (hoisted up and down) rather than by delivered boat. When we left Astoria that evening and headed back out over the Columbia River bar into the open Pacific Ocean, the port pilots would be taken off the ship via helicopter hoist as well. I'd never heard of this before but it happen again during the trip as well.



The Astoria–Megler Bridge spans the lower Columbia River from Astoria, Oregon, to Point Ellice near Megler, Washington. The bridge is four miles (6.5 km) in length. Before 1966, when the bridge was opened, there was a ferry across, the Astoria–Megler ferry. I remember having early dinners at a spot my parents liked in Astoria and then rushing to catch the last ferry of the day back to the Washington State side and then drive onto Grays Harbor where we lived.

In the early 1970s, when there was not so much traffic, my friend and I stopped mid span, got out of the old truck I had at the time, and took portraits of each other.

In 2016, a colony of double-crested cormorants moved from nearby East Sand Island to the bridge, where they began nesting. Their presence caused issues with bridge inspections, as bird droppings and guano covered visual cracks, and nests obscured navigational lights used by ship traffic. The population of cormorants increased to 5,000 breeding pairs in 2020, prompting efforts by the Army Corps of Engineers to scare the birds from the bridge and relocate them back to East Sand Island.

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A little help and protection
as we moved away from our
Astoria docking.

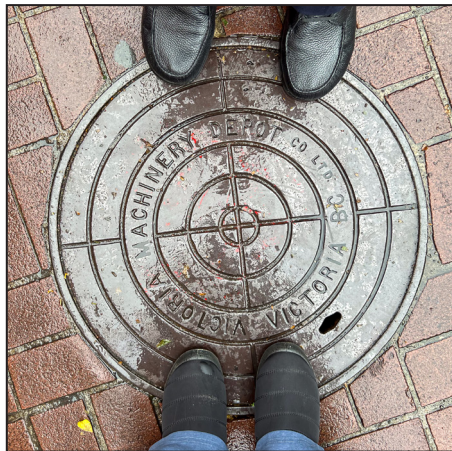


One of several Situation Rooms
we used on board.



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The Olympic Mountains and Olympic Peninsula coming in from the Pacific Ocean via the Strait of Juan de Fuca. It seemed a bit odd that after all the driving and sailing we had done so far we were so close to our Poulsbo home.



Our stop in Victoria was wet, but we did get off ship and take a walk in town.

Afternoon tea with a view was a regular event on the ship.



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In Vancouver we had to compromise again on what would be an acceptable manhole cover to note our presence.



Vancouver is a very busy seaplane airport. We had a front row seat from the ship and enjoyed watching all the activity.



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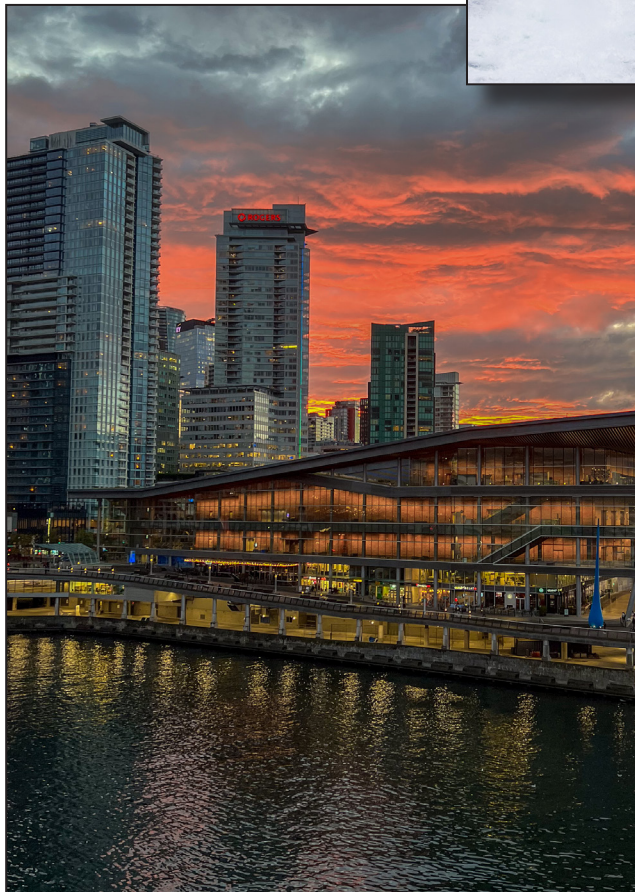
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This is how most port pilots come and go.



Another pretty sunset bid us Farewell as we left Vancouver and headed further north into Alaska.



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The inside passage and Aleutian Islands provided some nice landscapes to photograph.





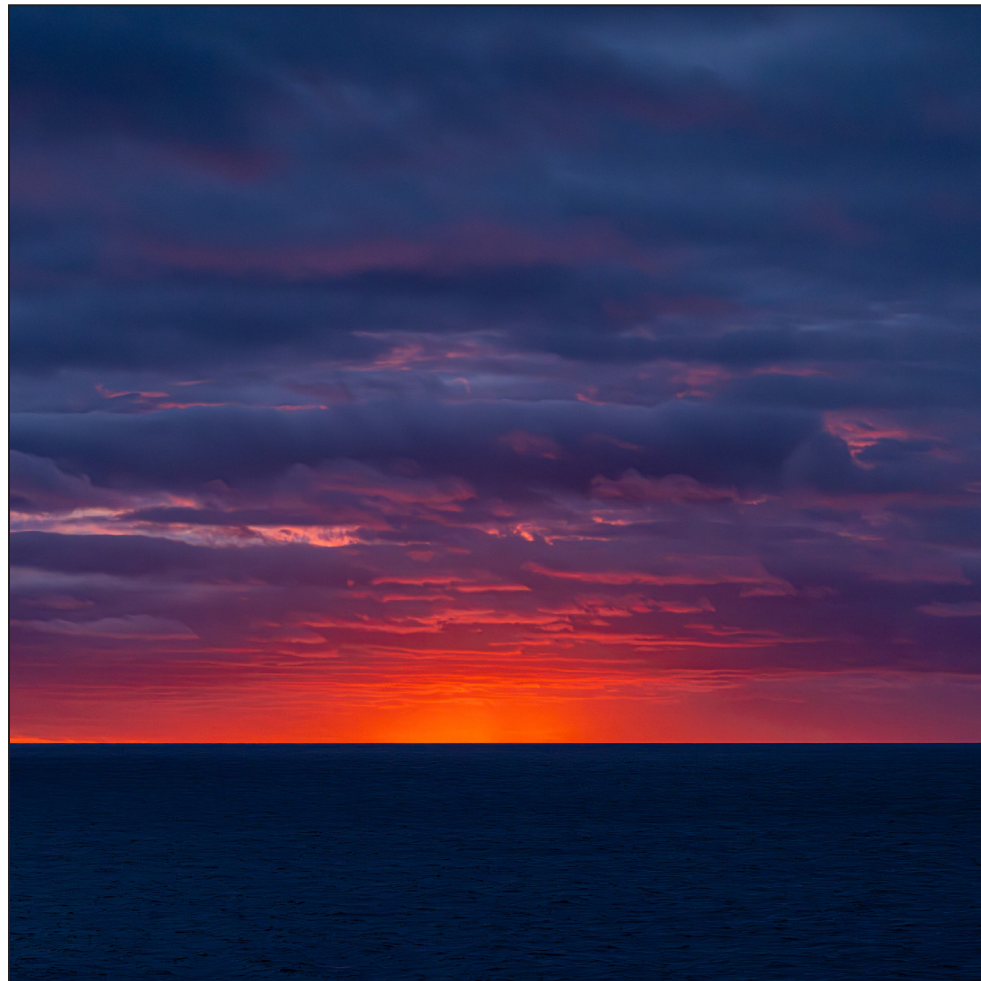
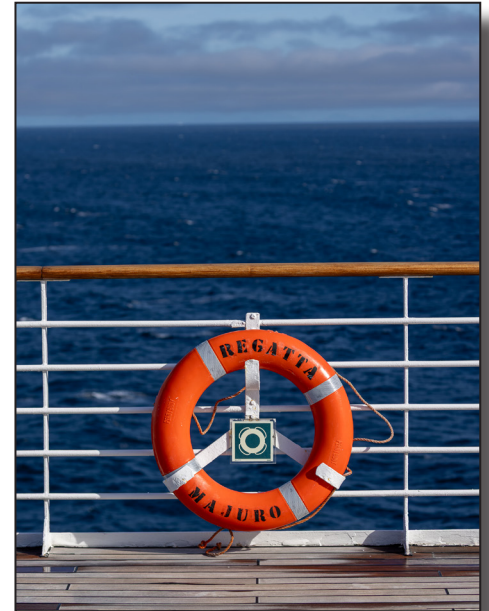
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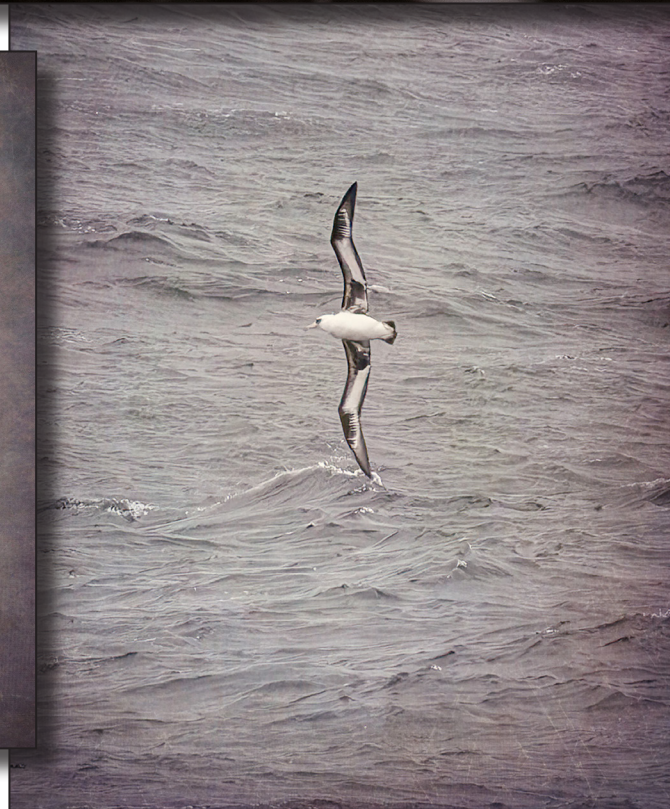
Brown Pelican



Black-Legged Kittiwake



Iceland Gull



Laysen Albatross

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