

North to Alaska!

A review of our recent voyage on the Regent Seven Seas Mariner from
Vancouver BC, Canada to Seward Alaska

06/25/2019 – 07/03/2019

Alaskans are justifiably proud of their state! And, as we found out.... in Alaska size really does matter (as we were reminded constantly!). Alaska is BIG! So big they consider Texas "Cute" :-). So BIG that if the outline of Alaska is superimposed on the outline of the "Lower Forty-Eight" It stretches from (almost!) COAST-TO-COAST!



BTW... most of the Texas vs. Alaska t-shirts appear to be somewhat of an exaggeration :-)... Hey! I'm just sayin' Alaska!



More to scale than the T-Shirts!

But, Alaska is stunningly beautiful and awe inspiring on so many levels and in its big BIG way!

Overview and Why

My wife said, “it’s time to visit Alaska” and I agreed. We looked at the various options and decided a cruise would be just the thing to give us the opportunity to experience a wider sampling of what Alaska had to offer... in a pampered sort of way of course!

We looked over the different cruise offerings and decided to try Regent Seven Seas despite the much higher price tag attached. We reasoned there were some perks offered that would somewhat offset the higher costs.

1. It is an “All Inclusive” cruise line so alcoholic beverages are included. Not that my wife is a big drinker (she’s not :-)) but I have been known to tipple a bit.
2. A gourmet food experience that Regent advertises as “Exquisite Cuisine”
3. All balcony suites on the ship (SS Mariner)
4. And the real equalizer... A very good selection of included shore excursions. The only excursions that sported an additional cost were usually the helicopter and seaplane sort of excursions and a few of the all-day sort of things. *I thought to myself “we could make up the difference in cost by taking advantage of this”.*
5. Regents reviews and reputation as a first class, luxury cruise line. Note: I should have dug deeper!

As we discovered some of the above is true and some not so much.

The following is strictly my opinion and written from my own observations and experiences. If you want more specific day-by-day notes you can visit my website at www.TomsMultiInterest.com for a day-by-day travelogue complete with more pictures.

The purchase experience couldn't have been easier. After choosing the cruise I simply called Regent and spoke to one of their representatives. He was helpful and guided us through the process smoothly.

One thing to note is that Regent supplies airfare and all transfers as a normal perk of your cruise package. You can save some money by doing it yourself of course but then you have to take care of all airport/hotel transfers yourself. In the case of the Seward to Anchorage transfer (2.5 hours) that could be up to five hundred dollars!

If you book one of their cruises and are flying intercontinental the covered airfare is Business/First Class. Since ours was not an intercontinental flight it was cattle car class. But since the flights were direct to Vancouver and a direct return from Anchorage it was all good...

On the surface this certainly looked like a great cruise. It was rather shorter than many of the other itineraries (only 7 nights) on Regent or the other cruise lines. That was good for us as this was sort of a last-minute decision (at least for us) and was only booked three months prior to departure. Looking at the cabins we booked a "Concierge Suite" and were "treated" to an extra day in Vancouver at the Four Seasons Hotel.

I liked this idea, not because of the extra day in Vancouver, but because we arrived a day ahead of the cruise to minimize any possibility of a travel snafu.

Pre-Cruise - Pick up at the airport went well. Regent was well represented and greeted us as we exited customs. Transfer to the hotel was in a nice van with five other passengers. We were dropped off at the Four Seasons the rest of them went on to the Trump Towers.

Luggage was handled appropriately while we checked in at the front desk. The hotel clerk immediately tried to up-sell us to a suite. If I understood her correctly it was "only" \$950 for the night. After a split second I was able to choke out... "No thank you..." I told her... "we will be fine for the one night in the room booked by Regent."

The Four Seasons itself was nice but somewhat tired.... definitely showing its age. The neighborhood was fine and was great for walking.



After taking a walk we took a look at the hotel food offerings and opted to go outside. At the recommendation of one of the hotel bell staff we tried the Cactus Club Restaurant just down the street. It was great! A great choice whenever in Vancouver!



Regent supplied a decent breakfast through the hotel the next morning. After breakfast there was plenty of time for another walkabout around the hotel area and at 11:45 we were bused to the Ship.



Embarkation started smoothly. We had to once more go through customs only this time it was US customs as our destination was, of course, Alaska.

We had **one heart stopping moment** as one of the Canadian customs agents announced we needed to have our “TICKETS” in hand. “TICKETS??!!?? I don’t know anything about stinking TICKETS!” I started canvassing our neighbors in line to find while many had a printout of their “ticket” many did not. I snagged the first official looking (uniformed) person I could find and asked the question....”Do we REALLY NEED a ticket?” Thankfully the answer was “No, just show your passport and state what ship you will be boarding...” Whew! First bullet dodged.

Heart Stopping Moment #2

We wended our way through customs (Thank you sir, enjoy your trip!), found and made our way through the Regent line to the check-in counter. They had eight or ten positions open and were smoothly processing passengers until, of course, I step up and hand them our passports. We took pictures in turn and then the agent went to find our ship passes and keycards and came back empty handed. While the agent approached us still clearly standing there in line another passenger pushed pass me and my wife and laid her documents on the counter glaring at the gate agent. I paused just a second and politely (kind of) said “excuse me... I don’t believe we are quite finished here.” She looked at me like I had a bug on my nose... for a moment I didn’t think she was going to yield but she did sort of huffing and puffing and with a bit of blustering and posturing....

Turning back to the gate agent I noted she appeared somewhat flustered as she told me it would be just a moment before calling a floor supervisor over. I glanced back to see “Pushy Lady” visibly fuming at the delay. Smiling inwardly, I turned back to the agent now joined by a supervisor.

I heard snippets of their conversation and understood her to say she couldn't find our reservations in the system or our keycards in the pile. The supervisor calmly typed for a moment and pointed something out to the agent, left and came back with our documents a moment later while the agent stood frozen smile on her face.

All was well and we boarded the ship leaving the dazed gate agent and "Pushy Lady" behind.

We boarded the ship thinking to go directly to our room and drop off our carry-on stuff. Well that was the plan but we discovered that our boarding time was considered "early" and nothing was ready. In fact they later made a ship-wide page to the effect the rooms were off limits until announced. That could have been made clear upfront but it was not. A simple note via eMail or being told that at check-in would have been sufficient but neither effort was made to the best of my knowledge. A kind of ship-wide announcement in a semi-scolding tone was made but was probably was not the best way to make that known.

In any event we were able to tour the public areas of the ship and have a nice lunch at the Pool Grill.

Initial Impressions



Initial impressions of the Mariner were very favorable. As we moved about the public areas of the ship we were struck by the cleanliness and overall well-maintained look of the vessel. The lounges, the restaurant areas, the seating areas and other public areas were clean, comfortable and inviting. Public toilets were spotless.

The Pool Grill and Pool Deck was a great place to chill out while waiting for our room to become available. Food was sampled and found to be of good quality served buffet style.

The Mariner is one of the oldest ships in the Regent fleet but has aged gracefully and appeared to be in great condition and more than serviceable.

When we were finally able to enter our cabin it was a very pleasant surprise. A very spacious “shotgun suite” awaited us. The suite contains a sleeping area that can be separated from the seating area by a heavy drape. The seating area has a, more or less, full size couch (actually more “Love Seat” size), small table, 55” flat screen TV atop drawer/vanity area, bar essentials (glasses and corkscrew) and a mini fridge stocked with beer and soft drinks. You also have the option to customize the stocking of the mini fridge by contacting your room steward.



Andy on the tube welcoming us to the ship :-)

Fresh fruit along with a bottle of Champagne were waiting for us. Neither of us are much in the way of champagne drinkers so it eventually went back into the fridge to be passed along to the next customer or, hopefully, a crew party.

The WALK-IN CLOSET had a generous supply of hangers with ample room for clothes and a nice row of drawers for storage. The closet also has a safe and the Life Vests.



The bathroom is large with a very reasonably sized shower equipped with both rain shower and handheld shower heads.

Each suite has its own balcony... excuse me.... Veranda.... that was generous in size with two wicker chairs and a small table and topped with Teak decking.

All in all a SWEET Suite!

Mariner is a “No Gratuity” ship. “Gratuities are neither expected or required” as it was stated. That is certainly the case and never was there a hint from any of the crew that they were fishing for an additional tip.

The Hospitality Crew and the Room Service Crew was universally polite and attentive and I could fault none of them. I enjoyed conversations with several of the service staff. The majority seemed to be from the Philippines with several other Asian nations represented. There were also many others from Eastern Europe and Russia.

The officers and administrative crew again represented several nations with our Captain from Italy, the Cruise Director from the US, and the rest from all points in-between.

While our service crew and operational crew seemed to really be engaged in their jobs, our administrative and entertainment directors really just seemed to be “phoning it in” and were somewhat disconnected.

Entertainment was a mixed bag. There were several entertainment venues on the ship. Most of the lounges, including the Observation Lounge, Mariner Lounge and Horizon Lounge had grand pianos or even a full stage that were in turn manned by a pianist, a duo (guitarist and a singer), single guitarist, or a full band.

There was also the late-night Stars Lounge that featured either Denis and Elina (Guitar and Vocalist), Karaoke or a jukebox request sort of thing.

The Constellation Theater was the venue for the Broadway style Mariner Production Cast singers and dancers with the Mariner Orchestra (6 piece), the Featured Entertainers and the occasional movie.

Throughout the voyage we took in several shows and found them to range from very good to just OK.

Since Broadway shows aren't our thing, we really did not attend too much of the Mariner Cast Productions. What we did see was fun and good but did not strike me as stellar. The band was always good and the singers/dancers good but a bit variable.

A brief review of all the other musical entertainment...

Denis – A very good guitarist! I enjoyed Denis in the various venues and combinations he performed in. As a part of the duo Denis and Elina he was good supplying a surprisingly full sound with programmed drums, bass and other parts as needed, as well as employing a little "Looping Magic" and playing several layered guitar parts.

In all of the other venues/productions he was very good. There were a couple of times he actually over-extended himself because he was stretching. I'm all about risk-taking musically so I really appreciated the effort in an environment where most musicians would not take the risk or make the investment and play it safe.

Elina – A competent singer. Had a vaguely snotty attitude. One small suggestion.... give up the smoking Alina... in the long run it will do nothing but harm your voice.

Nick Messina – An excellent pianist with a great touch. I especially enjoy speaking with, and listening to, Nick perform.

The Mariner Orchestra – A six-piece band that was very competent. Various members would break out and play the different venues as a musical background during High Tea and such.

The "Headliner" this trip was **Matilda with Patrick Murray**. Billed as "Jamaica's Number One Comedienne" Matilda is a ventriloquist's dummy and the alter ego of Patrick Murray. Together a charming and funny duo!

Overall the entertainment seemed slightly sub-par for a uber-luxury, and expensive, cruise line experience.

The voyage itself was a relatively short itinerary. That was what we were looking for as we have much longer cruise coming up in August so thought this shorter cruise would be ideal... as it turned out, it wasn't the best choice we could have made.



Our published itinerary;

June 25th – One night extension in Vancouver, Canada

June 26th – Embarkation – Vancouver, Canada

June 27th – Cruising the Inside Passage

June 28th – Ketchikan, Alaska

June 29th – Juneau, Alaska

June 30th – Skagway, Alaska

July 1st – Sitka, Alaska

July 2nd - Cruising the Hubbard Glacier

July 3rd - Seward, Alaska – Debarkation

This looked like the ideal short-form itinerary but it wasn't to be. What it ended up looking like was this;

June 25th – One night extension in Vancouver, Canada

June 26th – Embarkation – Vancouver, Canada

June 27th – Cruising the Inside Passage

June 28th – Ketchikan, Alaska

~~June 29th – Juneau, Alaska~~ *Just another lovely day "Cruising the Inside Passage"*

June 30th – Skagway, Alaska

July 1st – Sitka, Alaska

~~July 2nd - Cruising the Hubbard Glacier~~ *Just another lovely day "At Sea"*

July 3rd - Seward, Alaska – Debarkation

About the TWO MAJOR stops on the itinerary were missed for different reasons.

Regent is billed as one of the world's premiere cruise lines so we gave it a whirl. Reviewers rate Regent very highly... I can only speculate they were not on our cruise!

On the second day of the cruise one of the starter engines for one of the main engines failed stranding us overnight in Ketchikan Alaska. That might have been marginally OK if they had let us off the boat to go explore Ketchikan (again) at night... but no, that didn't happen. Instead they kept quiet about the issue even though everyone could see that the departure time had come and gone. A 4:30 pm departure had slipped to 4:30 AM with no information forthcoming from the Captain or the Cruise director.

And, even as we got started, it was easy to see the ship was not running on both main engines and was just limping along! The constant TV presence of our Cruise Director, Andy, still extolling the wonderful sights we were about to see in Juneau suddenly shut off without a word leaving only a blank screen.

Finally, **mid-morning**, there was an announcement.... Cruise Director Andy informed us that due to the (and only just now announced) engine problems. we would be skipping our stop at Juneau and would have another lovely day at sea on our way to Skagway. The passenger's grumbles were louder than both engines when working.

(Just a note... Regent claimed, when they did finally reply to me (I sent them this review), that the Captain did indeed make THREE announcements concerning the engine woes and the change in schedule. If he did, it was not broadcast ship wide... at least not to where I was standing.)

I was very disappointed because Juneau would have been our first Glacier experience!



The Missed Mendenhall Glacier

In my opinion it was unconscionable, inconsiderate and childish of Regent to keep us, the passengers, in the dark for so long on the status of the mechanical problem. It also blows my mind that a mission critical part was not stored on the ship. Sometime in the early afternoon we all heard and felt the second engine start and the ship jumped back up to a brisk 15 knots. Too little too late to save our Juneau stop....

In any event... while a major stop on our voyage was canceled, we were still going to go to the face of the Hubbard Glacier, one of the four largest Tidewater Glaciers on the planet, and the largest in Alaska, on the next to last day of our trip. *Right!!??!!*

Skip ahead 5 days.....

We were supposed to go in, on the last day of our sail on the SS Mariner, through Disenchantment Bay to the face of the Hubbard glacier. The **Hubbard Glacier** is the largest tidewater glacier in North America and is a stunning seventy-six miles long, seven miles wide and over one thousand two hundred feet deep! At least that is what we were told.

Cameras were checked and rechecked.... Parkas and foul weather gear donned and snugged up tight. The big day comes and several passengers, including myself, are up early on the top deck freezing our "you know what's" off. As we started to round a bend in the fjord called Disenchantment Bay we were faced with a monstrous wall of dense fog still several miles ahead stretching from mountain to mountain across the bay. The Captain and the Passage Pilot made the decision not to enter the fog because of some significant icebergs floating about. A second major disappointment was about to rear its ugly head... This one weather related! :-0

Whether right or wrong, or for better or worse, we were ***told we could still see the glacier as that bright line across the top of the fog bank!***.... I, for one, would have rather **NOT HEARD** that little tidbit!



Disappointment on Disenchantment Bay how apt is that?... Ironic or not???!!!

This second MAJOR disappointment on this short voyage was very hard to take.

Really, I certainly have no issue with the safety decision that was made... just disappointed (again).

After returning to the cabin to lick and bind my wounds (metaphorically speaking of course!) I emerged and prepared for our now established daily routine..... BREAKFAST, LUNCH and DINNER!

The next day was Seward and the end of the trip. Getting home was no problem... seeing what we were there to see was the issue. Two major issues.... First issue... Regents fault (IMHO) and the second weather and scheduling.

This was a rather pricy disappointment... but live and learn :-)

But! We liked what we saw and experienced in Alaska so much that my wife and I agreed we would return in a year or so and give a different cruise line a chance!

A brief note on the rest of the stops and sights we did see.

I liked Vancouver, at least what I saw of it. It was a beautiful city and it would certainly be worth spending some time in the city and the area... at least more than a night and part of a day to see more of the city. Chinatown maybe???

Ketchikan, Skagway and Sitka were great stopovers and with more time in port could have been fantastic! Hey wait! We had that extra time in Ketchikan that was totally wasted and inaccessible!

Seward, well, nothing to say or see... Got off the ship.... Got on the bus.

The FOOD!



The Food

I know that this is what some of you were waiting for so here goes.... Regent touts the food on board as;

"EXQUISITE CUISINE"

"Nothing can elevate travel quite like cuisine. That's why we take so much pride in creating exquisite dining experiences that are nothing short of superb. Experience all the wonderful flavors and delightful scents of choice cuisine from around the world." (direct from the Regent website)

And, it goes without saying that the food is one of the most important components of a cruise for many passengers. From elegant A La Carte dining to the Grand Buffet the food is oft the star of any voyage.

And while, for the most part, the food at most of the Regent Mariner venues was good, sometimes **VERY** good, it was far from consistent. Get the blow-by-blow day-to-day descriptions at my website www.TomsMultiInterest.com if interested, but here, in this review I'm just going to detail our experiences at the two Regent Specialty Restaurants, Chartreuse French Restaurant and Prime 7 Steak Restaurant and give you a few overall impressions about the other eating venues.

Chartreuse French Restaurant

The evening we boarded I had scored an early reservation (it was the best I could do) at one of the Regent Signature Restaurants, Chartreuse French Restaurant. I was excited to try what Regent called "Modern French Cuisine".

While the dining room was well appointed and comfortable the initial service, and later the food, were a disappointment.

We were the first in the restaurant (right at our appointed time) and service was, for lack of a better word... inattentive. For being the first customers (read ONLY Customers) it took a while to be noticed and seated.

The sommelier was slow in visiting the lone table we were occupying. Then the sommelier immediately tried to up-sell me to a \$275 bottle of wine and it took me just a moment to catch on. I did ask him what the featured wines were that evening and he recited them showing them to me on the wine list.

Regent advertises as an "all-inclusive" cruise and indeed they are. At least two wines were included that night, as in every night, a red and a white.

But.... If I had not noticed the tiny prices displayed following some of the selections, I would have purchased a \$125 to \$300 bottle of wine. When I quizzed him about the wine list he reluctantly confirmed that there was indeed an "upcharge" for those particular premium selections. I told the sommelier please just bring the "house red" after I was clued into the rules. He was visibly disappointed at the lack of the sale :-)

I afterwards found that there may have been additional wine selections included for the asking. However, even though I had asked, no other options were offered or the selection possibilities clarified.

The waiter came to the table immediately after the sommelier vacated and told us of that evenings chef's special choices then left us to peruse the menu.

He returned after an appropriate amount of time and left with our order.

For appetizers my wife ordered Escargot and I ordered the seared Duck Foie Gras. Entrees were roasted lobster for her and double cut Lamb ribs for me.

The Escargot were terrible. Served in a disgusting gravy of some sort they were rubbery and served removed from the shells, a good indication they were (possibly) frozen or even (GASP!) from a can.



My Foie Gras was somewhat better. It was nicely displayed/presented with three little apricot dots arranged on the plate. Taste was meh... rather tasteless and bland.

The entrees didn't fare any better. My wife's entree, *Roasted Lobster with Scallop Mousseline, Green Asparagus and Fava Beans (no Fava Beans were visible)*, was displayed well but was extremely overcooked resulting in a tough, tasteless piece of unrecognizable meat. The vegetables that were there were fine and well cooked.



My lamb was delivered beautifully presented and flanked by two Chickpea Fritters. However, I had ordered the lamb Medium RARE. It arrived terribly overcooked and tough. As a result of this criminal treatment of what likely started as a decent piece of meat it was largely tasteless and tough.



My desert, Creme Brûlée, was well presented and was tasty, rich and creamy with a satisfying sweet/bitter crunch from the caramelized sugar on top while the wife's Chocolate Napoleon selection was inedible.

Prime 7 Steakhouse

Hey! Surprise!... Time for DINNER!

Tonight, was our second specialty restaurant reservation. This time at Regent's steakhouse, Prime 7. We had been by the restaurant several times on the way to the Compass Rose and it was always busy and packed.

We had a late reservation at 8:30 pm on the 30th. We showed up about five minutes early and were asked to wait in the lounge area. No big sacrifice for me but the wife grumbled a bit. The Maitre D' came and collected us at 8:33.... Perfect!

After being seated we were immediately approached by our waiter and the sommelier.

The menu as suitable for a steakhouse, was simple and to the point featuring mostly beef offerings with a few chops, seafood and poultry choices.

We made our orders and sat back with a little of the house vino of the evening.

A Palate cleanser of Tomato Bisque was delivered to the table followed closely by the appetizers. The presentation on her appetizer, the Tuna Tartar was very nice and she enjoyed it. My appetizer was Foie Gras Sliders with Rhubarb Chutney. It came out looking like two tiny little hamburgers, which I thought entirely appropriate for a steak house lead-in and they were delicious.



Our entrees arrived. She had ordered King Crab and I ordered a 18oz Bone-In Ribeye.

Mine was delicious! This was at least a pound of steak-y delicious-ness. Billed as a Prime, Dry-Aged piece of meat, it was cooked perfectly to my ordered medium-rare temperature with a beautiful seared crust on the outside. It was all I could do not to pick up the bone and start gnawing away at the steak like a wild animal. Luckily, I was able to control myself and waited until the end of the meal before making a fool of myself in that respect.



As delicious as my steak was, my wife's King Crab was not. She certainly received a big ol' plate of Crab. But that plate was overcooked, dry and lifeless. She could finish only a small portion of the total before calling it quits. I definitely felt bad for her and told her so between mouthfuls of my perfectly done steak!



Dessert was Cheesecake for me and a Berries in Creme Anglaise for her. Both were a good choice and satisfied that Dessert Jones....



We said thank you to our stellar waiter Rochelle.... and headed out.

We caught the last five minutes of the second *Matilda and Patrick* show and headed to a quiet spot at the bar for a Mai Tai (Her) and a nice glass of Bourbon Neat for me.

Ahhhh..... What can I say? Life is good :-)

Some brief thoughts on the other dining venues....

Compass Rose – Compass Rose is the main dining room. Comfortable and well-appointed we found food here consistently good. Everything, with few exceptions, was well prepared and generally tasty no matter what was ordered. Service was always prompt and extremely courteous. Surroundings and ambiance were open, elegant and comfortable. It is open seating and we were always able to score a table by a window. Open for Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner it is always menu driven.





La Veranda – Our choice on deck 11 for Breakfast and Lunch. La Veranda is buffet style serving. More elegant and more variety than the adjacent Pool Side Grille Buffet. It was consistently good.

In the evening La Veranda transforms into the menu driven (only buffet in sight is a salad bar) **Sette Mari At La Veranda Italian Restaurant**. Sette Mari is a great alternative to the Compass Rose and other eating venues. The food is very good with an Italian themed menu offering.





The Pool Grille - was the one breakfast, lunch and dinner venue that allowed a casual dress in the evenings. The food there was served buffet style and usually had a good mix of everything from hamburgers to some simple seafood selections. Ice Cream and deserts were also featured along with a Fresh Juice Bar. For convenience it was located adjacent to the Pool Bar.

NOTE: One thing that was, unfortunately, true across *ALL of the RESTAURANTS* is that they could not deliver a piece of fish that was not overcooked to the point of being criminal. Shrimp and Scallops on the other hand were usually delivered perfectly. Lobster and Crab... not so much. Meat temperature was better with my lamb served at Chartreuse being the major exception. My steak at Prime 7 was perfection!

**I also give you this as a sample excursion/meal... A Shore Excursion that featured a Crab Feast!
Note that this was one of the MANY Shore Excursions that was supplied at NO ADDITIONAL CHARGE.**

Cruise St. George Inlet and Crab Feast

We enjoyed our time in Ketchikan walking around the city before going to a freakin' Crab Feast.

Before the feast we went on a bus trip and then a small boat into the St. George Inlet. we saw some Bald Eagles and pulled up a crab trap to play with some crabs (yes, I know what that sounds like :-)



Heading back to the small boat dock at the restaurant, The George Inlet Lodge, we indulged in our feast. It was all served with a large heaping bit of wit and wisdom from Asley our Charming Young Lady (I never thought I would live long enough to use that term... But there it is!!) of a server. It was very simply, a salad, a cold beer, and a never-ending pile of the best Crab I have ever eaten.



If you ever find yourself eating Crab at the George Inlet Lodge and served by Asley give her a big hey from Regent 06/28/2019 :-)

Debarkation was fairly well organized but had a few hiccups.

Debarkation occurred through an exit on Deck 6. Luggage was tagged and picked up from the cabin the night before.

We had our breakfast and then made our way to the Coffee Connection area on deck 6 to wait for the call to exit and board the buses that would take us to Anchorage.

The only sore spot was the lady's restroom on deck 6 was closed for whatever reason (men's restroom was fine).

My wife had to go down one deck to get to a bathroom..... That would not have been that much of an issue, but all of the other ladies-in-waiting had to do the same and almost immediately a line formed. There were of course other public bathrooms but on the higher decks and not as convenient. As the traffic became heavier in the one bathroom on deck 5 the toilet paper ran out and was not replenished.

It seemed to be "a not so fond farewell...."

The bus ride to Anchorage (2.5 hr) was fine but stretched to 3.5 hours because of an accident on the one highway into Anchorage.

Upon arrival, because our flight was in the evening, we were taken to the Anchorage Hilton to a "Hospitality" area arranged by Regent.

For the end of a supposedly "high-end" cruise the "Hospitality" area was rather weak.... It was an old, no longer used, restaurant at the top of the Hilton. It was a bit tired looking and had little in the way of amenities. No water, hours old coffee, no hot water, and only a tray with a few cookie crumbs being there. No one replenished anything during the time we were there.

There were people to help us with the shuttle transfer to the airport at our designated/selected time.

We went out for lunch and settled on a nearby restaurant called "The 49th State".

It was a casual nice place and had cold freshly on-site brewed beer and upscale pub grub. We ordered a pizza featuring Reindeer and Elk sausage that we enjoyed very much. When in Anchorage it would be a good lunch or evening meal stop!

We wandered about downtown Anchorage for another hour or so and returned to the hotel for our trip to the airport and back to "The Lower Forty-Eight".

The Wrap Up!

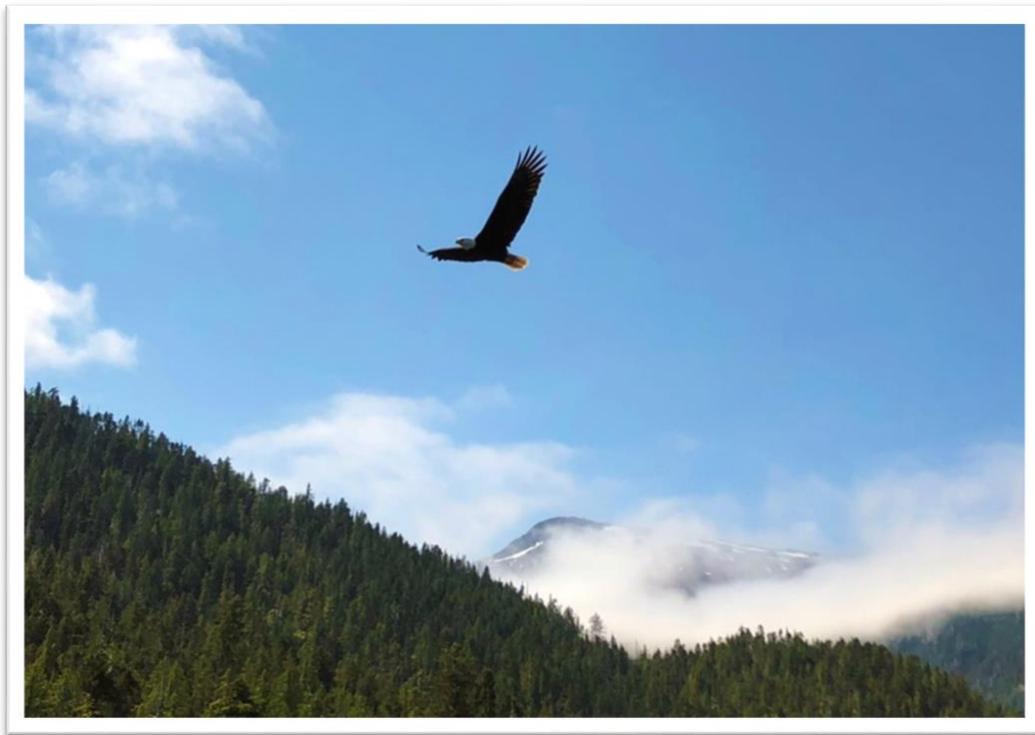
The Regent cruise certainly wasn't a total bust. The accommodations (cabin) and the hospitality crew were first rate.

The fact that out of five stops we only truly made three was more than a little disappointing. I can't say that Regent didn't offer an accommodation because of the issue in by-passing Juneau, they did. But, it was not enough, in my opinion considering. What was offered was a \$750 per passenger (\$1500 total) off your NEXT CRUISE with Regent. Sorry, those of us that were on this voyage, at least in my case, were probably not going to sign on again.

We have been home now since the 4th of July and have heard nothing from Captain, Cruise Director, Chief Engineer or Regent Corporate concerning what happened. That seems like a bad case of "don't give a crap" at the very least. A head-in-sand attitude at best.

Would I cruise again with Regent? No, not as it stands now. That said.... If the perfect itinerary at a decent price appeared at the perfect time... I never say never :-)

If interested there are lots of pictures to be found at my travelogue on www.TomsMultiInterest.com .



**Keep scrolling down to the next section for the
Blow-By-Blow Daily Travelogue!**