



On October 6th, 2024 the Amphibious Ships 2024 Reunion began. This unusual reunion was “old sailors taking a new cruise.”

We all embarked on the Royal Caribbean’s ship Serenade of the Sea, with a smooth embarkation as we all rapidly went to the open dining area known as the Windjammer restaurant. A great start in our eating experience.

We were all well versed in the emergency evacuation procedure, and with hurricane Milton churning in the Gulf, we were all a little apprehensive as to the quality of the cruise. It all worked out

fine; we safely departed Tampa, Florida. We cruised around that very large storm (known as Milton), bringing us close to the Cuba shores, but avoiding any turbulent waters.

Our first night of dinner, was a little confusing because the ship had inadvertently, changed all our formal seating. After a conversation and proof of documentation, the headwaiter reorganized us for seating at the proper time and location. The dinner variety was excellent and no one left the table hungry.

After dinner everyone went to various locations on the ship to participate in ships entertainment. But, from that point on we all had dinner together.

Our first port of call, Puerto Costa Maya, Mexico, had many shops at the end of the pier, but several of the reunion group stayed on board, (I think the food was much better on the ship). Next day we arrived in Cozumel, Mexico, and had a extended day there due to the hurricane with Milton, heading to Tampa, Florida. This gave everyone plenty of time to invade Cozumel and plunder their shops and bars.

On departure from Mexico, sailing was smooth as the Captain of the ship evaded any possible turbulence; we were all able to gather after dinner on the 13th deck for private meetings and photographs of the group. Then off to enjoy the large verity of ships entertainment, such as karaoke, slots, dancing and comedy acts.

After two extended extra days at sea, we arrived back in Tampa, to find the port clear of debris, but the city devastated by hurricane Milton. We had a slightly chaotic departure due to people missing flight connections, and many were very concerned as to what they might find at home.

I pray everyone had found the homes safe and intact. Ours was full of yard debris and without electricity, but everything else was ok because I was luck to preplan with an automatic generator..

The discussion of next year’s reunion was a major topic as we have decided to join the group known as the “Gator Navy” because, “that is what we are”. This new organization is the American Amphibious Force Association AAFA. The 2025 reunion will be in Portland, Maine on September 14th thru the 17th Best Western Merry Manor Inn 700 Main Street South Portland, Maine 04106.

Please visit their website at www.gatornavy.com fill out their members application and mark you calendars for a “land” reunion in Maine.

Best regards,
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