



Edwin and Peewee

Copenhagen, Denmark, June 9, 2001

Edwin: I was ambivalent about leaving because we are going through a merger process and it is not a good time to be away. But I have been looking forward to this cruise all year long. We had such a great time on the Mediterranean cruise that the sisters planned on doing it again with a larger group. We're a group of 16, meeting in Copenhagen from 7 different points of the world. We coordinated by email for arrival times and hotels and surprisingly, it all worked out.



Rick

Copenhagen, Denmark, June 10, 2001,

Rick: OK, let's join in—everyone's doing it—take a picture with the famous Mermaid. Boy, Tito Randy loves snapping photos with that miniDV. Cool, the smokestacks and storage tanks will make this picture a little different from everyone else's. Reality is not as picturesque as the postcards, but usually more interesting. I should rent The Little Mermaid on DVD sometime. OK, check that off the list. Let's get back before we miss the boat.



Malu

Talinn, Estonia, June 12, 2001

Malu: This is our first stop. They're selling all sorts of military paraphernalia, like uniforms and binoculars, in this flea market. I feel like I'm in a military camp and am about to be annihilated. It also reminds me of James Bond movies with Russian spies. Imagine, I'm in a country I'd never even heard of. I can't believe they have the cheapest internet cafe.

BALTIC CRUISE Hanggang Dulo ng Daigdig



Dr. Dan

St. Petersburg, Russia, June 13, 2001

Dr. Dan: Some Russian person similar to Julius Caesar was stabbed here. This is my 7th year with Holland America and I've lost count of the cruises. The walls and ceiling of this church are covered with millions of colorful mosaic tile. The flea market behind the church has all sorts of Russian Army stuff. I bought a Lenin bust and old Russian hammer and sickle flag and now I am at a loss as to where to put them.



Paolo

**Hermitage Museum,
St. Petersburg, Russia, June 14, 2001**

Paolo: I'm lagging behind the group but I have to take a longer look at this priceless da Vinci painting. This has got to be the most overlooked museum in the world. I am actually in the heart of the former Soviet Union, taking in a breathtaking treasure that has survived centuries. Before this cruise, I knew nothing of this magnanimous collection of valuable art.



Mitos and Randy

Helsinki, Finland, June 15, 2001

Mitos: This was at Sibelius Park and that hideous sculpture behind us is a monument to who else? Sibelius, the famous Finnish composer. From the looks of the monument, was he Hideous Sibelius? Helsinki is the land of Nokia, Marrimeko, Gevalia coffee. Their language is totally incomprehensible. It was a glorious summer day and people were all smiles and basking in the sun. They had a farmers market and I found chanterelle and morrel mushrooms which got all crushed in my suitcase.



Bill and Rory
Talinn, Estonia, June 12, 2001

Bill: Oh no, don't tell me Nini is escorting another tour! There goes another group of lost tourists. Bahala na. On our way downhill, some guys in black leather jackets were crowding me in the alley and I almost got pick pocketed. I told the thieves *asawa ko Pinay* (My wife is Pinay—a Filipina) and they ran away.



Bob and Lily
Dutch Dinner aboard the ms Noordam, June 16, 2001

Lily: I look like a Dutch woman (*Amis*) or a French maid, but never mind, it's fun! We've gone dancing every night and the Piet Hein lounge has become our favorite hang-out. This is my first cruise (though not Bob's) and I'm really enjoying it! Among the places we've seen, Finland is my favorite. I hope I look skinny in this picture even after all the fabulous dinners.



Nini
St. Petersburg, Russia, June 13, 2001

Nini: The museum curator took us around for a personal tour and was very happy with my one dollar tip. Just before we went aboard, there was a Navy band playing and a group of about 100 young cadet sailors, in their uniforms, and mostly about 15 years old, were leaving. This is a Russian Naval flag which is still being used. We're not supposed to be wandering around St. Petersburg on our own without a visa, but we just took a taxi and the taxi driver is our guide.

Till the Ends of the Earth



Group in bus
On the bus to Berlin, Germany, June 18, 2001

Nonon: I'm glad I sat here. I'm sure to be in the picture.
 Malu: This is awesome! We dock in Warnemunde, Germany and a private tourist bus is waiting for us Laico cruisers to take us around Berlin. This is the Laico style!
 Rory: Boy am I glad I'm now sitting here with my sisters while that lady we picked up to join our private tour of Berlin, is in the front of the bus. She talked my ear off for 2 hours, while I enviously watched everyone else sleep. Poor Edwin got an earful too. Wonder if it was worth the discount we got cuz she joined us.
 Paolo: Major hang-over. I feel sick.



Jun and Nonon
Visby, Sweden, June 17, 2001

Nonon: I'm glad Jun and I decided to just enjoy the day on board and hang around by the deck. We were getting quite exhausted and felt we needed a break from all the sightseeing. Today, we were able to catch up with our sleep and we savored the different activities on board. I feel fresh and relaxed!!



Irma
On the bus to Berlin, Germany, June 18, 2001

Irma: What a life!! *Kain, pasyal, exercise ng kaunti, tulog—bakasyon grande talaga.* (Eat, sightsee, exercise a little, sleep—a real grand vacation) It's really nice to go on vacation with the Laicos. They know how to travel first class. Private bus, our own tour guide, no rushing, and the price is unbeatable! *Magaling magtawad si Tita Rory, bilib na ako.* (Rory drives a hard bargain.) *Sayang* (Too bad), I wish my throat felt better so I could join them *sa daldalan* (gossiping) up front. Anyway, I might as well sleep since I have this whole row to myself. Zzzzzzzzzzzzz!!!