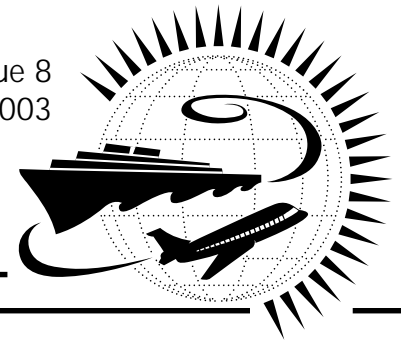


# Routon's **ROUSING** Reports

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A Routon's Romantic Reservations Publication – not for resale

We're back and ready to give you the promised report on our farewell world cruise. And for all of you who said, "sure, it's the last", when in the last issue of RRR I said it would be our last world cruise – **Surprise!** We did **not** book the world cruise for next year! (Of course, after getting emails about the winter here this year, we did book a cruise around South America for 50 days.)

As always, we had a great time, saw old friends, and made new ones, friends from all around the world. To give you an idea, we had a little farewell cocktail party for those on board into Southampton – about 20 people from six different countries on four of the seven continents! For this, the world cruise is unique. But it was farewell for now and a most fitting one – on the ship where Helen and I met on the world cruise in 1999 and then used for a honeymoon on the next world cruise in 2000.

Since a cruise ship is essentially a resort hotel, this time I decided to gather some information that might help faithful readers of RRR get into the business. After all, given a ship and some staff,

how difficult can it be? So, to help you get started on the right foot, I not only made some careful observations this time but got a half hour tutorial from John Duffy. John is the very capable hotel manager on the QE 2 and has been doing this for about 25 years. Now, I wasn't able to glean everything John knows in 30 minutes, but surely you can fill in the blanks.

First, you have to understand that the QE 2 is a first-rate resort hotel with almost a thousand rooms and suites plus lots of public rooms. And everything must be nicely furnished, well maintained, and clean, clean, clean. Beds are turned down every night (with a chocolate on the pillow – total of 16,000 a week), towels changed twice a day, tubs scrubbed, flowers refreshed, breakfast served on time for those who want it in their cabin, carpeting cleaned and so on. You should figure about 75 stewards (maids) for the rooms alone and a similar number for public rooms and supporting personnel. Oh yes, since you cannot send the laundry out, you'll need another 17 men for that. (Figure a thousand sheets and duvet covers

per day along with enough bath sheets to make a path three feet wide and a mile and a half long and daily uniforms for maybe 700 people.)

As manager, if you are a good handy-man that could help with the maintenance. However, you'd better have some staff to help you handle problems requiring painting, plumbing, furniture repair and upholstery, draperies and curtains, electrical, and air conditioning. (For A/C, success is when half of the people (the women) say it is too cold and the other half (the men) say it is too warm!) John gets help from about 25-30 maintenance men, seven of whom are just for furniture, upholstery and drapes.

Excellence in food and food service is also essential to a top rated resort hotel. First, availability: 24 hour room service for sure, breakfast for four hours or so, lunch for three, dinner for two, a late night buffet for an hour and, of course, high tea everyday at 4PM. Some of this will be casual dining, but formal, 5 star service must be available for every meal.

What do I mean by 5-star? Start with formal attire for all of the staff and the tables. White gloves for the stewards and, for the tables, spotless white linen cloths and napkins, fine china, and glassware and silver in the precise number and types needed for each guest's specific course selections. *Never* a need to "save your fork for dessert". And 5-star dining is gracious and beautiful – flowers on the table, plates decorated to please the eye as well as the palette, and service plates appropriate for each course and item. Service or base plates are, of course, separated by paper doilies to add a flair. Example, for salad or soup, the bowl is served on a doily on a service plate. Ice cream is in a dish on a service plate on a service plate with doilies.

Now a question: with about 2,200 5-star meals served per day, how many paper doilies does the QE 2 use per week? A good estimate is 70,000!

In reading this, you may have spotted





a challenge as you start your shipboard resort hotel management career. 2,200 5-star meals a day! But the good news is a thousand of these are breakfast and lunch, only 1,200 for dinner on a normal night – equivalent to about two weeks for a busy, regular fine restaurant! Also, you will have to serve all of these guests in two hours, and they may all come in at once versus maybe 20 reservations per half hour at a 5-star restaurant ashore, so you better gear up. But how and how much? More good news. I was able to get some information to get you started.

First, you have to get and store the food, wine, and so on. (And you only get deliveries every couple weeks!) John uses about 20 people to manage this and an 8,000 square foot “refrigerator” (equal in size to four average houses). Add another 7 “houses” for a pantry and other stores. Then, fill the 30,000 square foot kitchen, or galley, with lots and lots of stainless steel plus 107 chefs and a staff of 60 to support them and wash the dishes, and you’re ready in the back room. Obviously, you need formal dining rooms – the QE 2 has five – with seats for all of your guests and stewards to serve them. Easy. With several maitre de’s for each of the rooms and two hundred or so dining and wine stewards to handle service, you’ll be all set. Oh yes, to keep the crowd happy before and after dinner – and during the

day, you should figure on 17 barkeepers and 35-40 bar stewards (cocktail waiters).

OK, now you’re set for feeding and providing good rooms for the guests at your resort hotel. Next, let’s plan for the entertainment – it is, after all, a *resort* hotel. Plan on lectures, dance classes, party games, and outdoor sports in the morning. In the afternoon, more lectures, daily bridge tournaments, art classes, a movie, and bingo. Live music in the bars for lunch and in the evening. And at night a live night club show, dancing, movies, and frequently a classical music concert. Also, you will need to plan for excursions away from your hotel when you are in port. Again, how much staff? You’ll need someone to manage it – the Cruise Director – plus a staff of about a dozen including two librarians, a disc jockey, and an in-house TV station manager. Add about 25 musicians for cocktails, show, and dancing. Since dancing involves couples and you have a lot of single ladies, find yourself some gentlemen hosts to dance with them – ten good men should get the job done. For the shows, get about ten dancers and singers for

the in-house troop (and use them for morning classes in theater skills) to go with the 4-5 professional, cabaret entertainers around at any one time. Figure another half dozen people for day time lectures and managing the bridge tournament plus five just to handle those excursions away from the ship. Oh, also don’t forget 16 for the casino. Since shopping seems to be entertainment for many of the ladies, the shops will need another 18 clerks. Let’s see, that’s over 100 total, should be enough to keep the guests entertained and busy.

Let’s see, accommodations, food, and entertainment, what else will you need? Well, if the ladies are going to be happy going to all the fancy resort functions, you’ll need a beauty salon and maybe offer massages as well. Figure 20 people for that. And since your resort hotel is somewhat isolated, you’d better have a medical staff – a couple doctors, a physiotherapist, and 5 nurses and staff. Add a couple florists to handle the flowers, three printers for all the in-house publications, and four photographers to capture all the fun and finery for guests’ memories. After all, a resort hotel is in the memory business. And, alas, security these days is a problem. Nine security people should get the job done. What else? Oh yes, you’d better have some way to check in the guests and keep the accounts so you can get paid!! Fifteen people should be able to do that plus a couple more to handle future reservations.

Assuming you can get some experienced people, I think this will get the job done. But you shouldn’t try to manage it



*The Queen's Room at Tea, and where Helen and I met on this end of the dancefloor.*

all yourself. John has about 30 on his management team. One more little detail. Be ready for the morning when *all* of your guests – up to 1,800 – check out at once with 3 to 4,000 bags to be handled, all of your rooms completely to be changed, and then in the afternoon, a full house of guests to be checked in, shown to their rooms, their baggage delivered promptly, etc. But this won't happen more than once a week or so.

Now I think you should be all set for a resort hotel management at sea career. Maybe like John Duffy? You'd have the adventure, romance, and fun of world wide travel and be paid! How about it? For me, after careful review, I think I'll buy a ticket and leave the managing to John.

So forget the work and let's turn to the adventure, romance, and fun part. There were the old favorites in Hong Kong – lunch at Tobey's, crême brulee at Cite, and double decker trams. Then we played with the manta rays in the lagoons of Moorea, found the new location for our favorite restaurant in Singapore, and enjoyed outdoor cafes from Honolulu to Tenerife. Australia was special this time. We made a stopover in Melbourne with friends including “dinner in the diner” in the tram car restaurant where the tram kept rolling and the champagne never stopped flowing. In Sydney it was visiting friends and the opera again. The performance of Rigoletto was brilliant! But we did find some new adventures as well.

We had a great time during our day in Manila. My initial plan had been to do my usual thing – go to the lovely Manila Hotel at noon to hear the string ensemble, eat peanuts and drink the San Miguel beer. But the day before Manila, Helen said she'd like to go on the canoe trip to Pagsanjan Falls. I said OK if space is available, thinking of the San Miguel and hoping for the best. As fate would have it, two tickets were still available and my dreams of San Miguel flew away. Having said that, it was a great trip, one of the best I've had on a ship's tour. (Of course, the more I read the fine print in the excursion

catalog the night before, the more Helen was worried about that for which she had asked. Like “for the adventurous” and “as your boatmen take you through 11 exciting rapids” and “wear your swimsuit and expect to get wet”. One day she will learn to read the fine print!

Pagsanjan (pronounced in Spanish style, pag san han) Falls is about 65 miles from Manila – and 2½ hours!!!! As advertised, the traffic in Manila was horrible, the



“express way” (also known as the bucking bronco ride) merely crowded, and then we spent over an hour wending our way through small towns and observing the many interesting ways people can park cars and block traffic before we got to the small town of Pagsanjan. Once there, we were met by the mayor himself, transferred to motorized “tricycle taxis” and given a tour of the town complete with police escort. The very interesting tour – both as to what we saw and to the taxis themselves – brought us to the resort hotel, the jumping off place for the canoe ride.

The “dug-outs” of the catalog were actually canoes based on a dug-out design, about 15 feet long, and held four people – two passengers and two boatmen – and we had two very good boatmen, a father and son. We were towed to the start of the rapids and then they took over. They could paddle in the stream between rapids and in some of the rapids the son (in the bow) could kneel in the canoe and use one leg out the side to push on the rocks. Other times, they were both out of the canoe pushing and pulling us through the rapids. And then there were the spots

where the rapids in this dry season were mostly rocks. In these areas, someone – maybe the boatmen's association – had put pieces of four inch pipes or logs of that size across the rapid from rocky side to rocky side. In some cases there were a couple of pipes maybe four feet apart. In others there were more, with one “rapid” being made passable by about eight of these “bridges”. When we got to one of these, both boatmen would spring out,

give us a big shove to get started, and then lift and pull us over the “pipe rapid” to get back to usable water. One thing was sure, not only were these little Filipinos quick and good boatmen, they were strong!!!

This went on for at least the 11 rapids and it took almost two hours to get to the Falls. And then coming back!! That was 30 minutes as we flew. On the “pipe rapids” they had to keep us from going too fast and getting out of control. This was similar but easier than coming up. But on the ones

with water – Wheeeee – the son was in the bow with a leg out of the boat pushing off the rocks on one side and then the other in quick succession in rapids maybe 3-4 feet wide and tumbling. They earned a very good tip!

Due to the deletion of the stop in Mombassa, we ended up with two days in Durban. And we used them wisely: one day for laundry and rest and the second for a super, all day tour for animal viewing near the state capital of Natal, Pietermaritzburg (say it fast or not at all). The tour was so popular that they had to have two sections of four buses each and called them tours 72 and 72B. To make it interesting – I guess – they labeled the buses in each section 1 through 4. Our first stop was a joint one for coffee. Guess what happened when it was time to leave. Some of these people are worse than children. They can maybe remember the bus number most of the time, but to remember B or not to B in addition!! Pandemonium reigned.

But *the* event of the day was the “safari” in a 4X4 vehicle holding 10 plus a ranger as we roamed the back roads and went

cross country to see the animals. The preserve was so large it seemed like open country, and there were animals everywhere – glassbok and impala by the hundreds, zebra here and zebra there, families of ostrich with little ones, hippos in the lake, a dozen giraffe among the trees with the old granddad being the biggest I've ever seen, herds of wildebeest (gnus) from the lead male to babies, a crane on the top of a tree, and nine white rhinos – an animal hard to find in the wilds. We had a real close-up of a rhino family – poppa, momma, and the teenager. Let me tell you, they all had weight problems. WOW! This close-up was from maybe 10 yards. There was another rhino wallowing in a mud pool – maybe 15 feet away. Since the animals thought our vehicle was some strange creature, but harmless, we were close to most of them, maybe 20 feet from the granddaddy giraffe, about the same from the ostrich family, and almost on top of the zebra. In fact, we had to chase some of them out of the jeep track to get on with it! However, as for any safari, this was nothing like a zoo – no cages, no moats, and no fences except around the very outside of the property. It was a GREAT 2½ hours. And it was supposed to be a great 1¾ hours! We got back to the ship one MINUTE before they were scheduled to pull the gangway, but back we got.

This wonderful day finished on a high note as well. There must have been a couple thousand people to say goodbye to us as we sailed out of the harbor. They were all along the channel and clear out onto the rock breakwater. Happily, the captain made liberal use of the deep, deep base whistle and the crowd roared and waved. It was more than memorable. The QE 2, an old lady among ships, still gets the love and attention of the crowds.

The next stop, Capetown, was special this year. Oh we did the usual – sip coffee in outdoor cafes, listen to the street musicians, and, once again, dance in the street. But the highlight was a private tour organized by one of the QE 2 regulars, Peter Garland. We started the day with a boat ride from Hout Bay to Dulker Island to visit a seal colony,



*As they see it, a strange animal with 12 bobbing heads*

reportedly over a thousand seals. I've seen seals before but this was great fun. There were lots and lots of seal pups and like all children, they wanted to play. And play they did. First, a belly slide into the water then tag and chase with the other pups. From there it was the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and then to the town of Fish Hoek for lunch overlooking the beach. Actually a lunch and a half!! I had specially ordered meat and it was fine, but those who had the fresh seafood platter couldn't believe their eyes. After a before lunch drink and soup, EACH person got a platter with steamed mussels, barbecued prawns, a fish steak, a fish kabob, a small plate of calamari, lots of rice, and on top of it all was a whole crayfish (like a lobster but no claws). Oh yes, with lunch, and not to be confused with the before lunch drink, there was a bottle of wine for two. (Actually, you probably could have had even more.) Helen only ate about half of her seafood platter, but she did do justice to her half of the bottle of wine!



Then it was on to see the penguins – yes, penguins, a couple hundred of them with many nesting at this time of the year. There is a board walk down over the sand and you get within touching range – but no touching, of course. They calmly went about their business, ignoring the crowd of people. They sat on their egg, they had a couple territorial disputes with much squawking and wing flapping, they waddled to the water and flopped in for a swim (and in the water they are so graceful), and they waddled out sometimes getting knocked “rear over teakettle” by an incoming wave. They looked at us and we looked at them. We loved it and barely made it back to the bus on time to head for Cape Point.

Cape Point at the Cape of Good Hope certainly was the high point of the day geographically. First it was up the funicular and then a climb of 70 plus stairs to get to the light house for the view. It was breath taking – or maybe that was the 70 plus steps?. In any event, we did see the



# Helen's Corner

One question on long cruises is how do I keep up my piano practice routine. This time I asked John Duffy, the hotel manager, if he had a piano I could use. He said "certainly", but the "little piano" he offered wouldn't fit in our cabin. So, I had to use *it* – *it* being a full, 10 foot Steinway concert grand piano – on the stage of the Cinema/Concert Hall! It was great fun practicing there at 6AM – no one was around – *until* a dozen or so Filipinos from the maintenance crew appeared in the balcony one morning for a short, 15 minute meeting. I worked around this until one morning they shouted down and asked me if I could play "Amazing Grace". I immediately became nervous – I'm not a performer – but I said OK and made a feeble attempt to play it without music. They applauded! I was shocked but laughed and waved. From then on they greeted me and waved and often I'd play something for them.

Then one morning the Protestant Chaplain wandered into the hall and immediately corralled me and insisted that I play for his services. NO was not an answer! But it turned out to be a good experience. I got over my stage fright and really enjoyed playing. All went smoothly until Easter Sunday. We were crossing the North Atlantic in rough seas, 30 foot swells. I told the good reverend that I feared the piano, the soloist, and I would surely roll right off the stage. He laughed and said he had been Chaplain to sea-faring people for 40 years and God would not let us down. So, the soloist held onto the piano while the chaplain, the soloist, and I became a rock and roll church group.

## Nagasaki

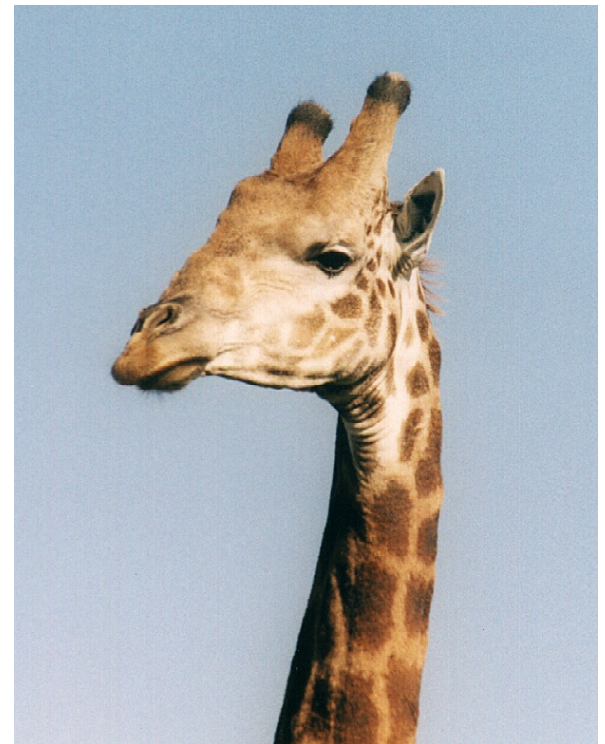
It was my first trip to Japan, and I didn't know what to expect. When we arrived in Nagasaki we decided to take the local tram and visit the points of interest on our own, a bit of a challenge since practically no one spoke English there. I didn't know what we would find in Nagasaki, and indeed what we found was unexpected.

As the tram entered the downtown area, Jerry spotted *a donut shop!* Off the tram and into the shop we went. No one spoke English so we just pointed, and the donuts tasted *s-o-o-o* good. After that, and with some effort, we did find the Nagasaki War Memorial Site where the 2<sup>nd</sup> Atomic bomb was dropped. It was interesting, though not what I expected, a large square with a very impressive, giant bronze statue and notice boards with maps and explanations. The statue was designed to convey hopes for the future of the human race by the posture, gestures and facial expression of the statue.

On the way back to the ship Jerry very carefully got us on the tram going in the wrong direction (also unexpected), but what fun. We saw a practicing Shinto Shrine, off the beaten track, and we said "Let's go see". We climbed what seemed like a million steps. (They like to build their shrines closer to heaven, I guess.) There we found an unexpected delight. They were having a Shinto-type christening of babies with priests, parents, and beautiful babies all in fancy, colorful, traditional costume. I followed the crowd and even did the Shinto stepping and bowing ritual in the traditional Shinto

way. Jerry put up the 2 yen for my fortune, which informed me "Great desire is hopeless, but small wishes will be fulfilled". I guess I need to concentrate on the many, many small wishes to make up for the big one that isn't coming. (Actually, I think the big one has already arrived.)

As we wandered back through the residential neighborhood to the tram stop, Jerry bought me a small bouquet of flowers to brighten up our cabin. Then the most memorable of all the unexpected events occurred while we waited for the tram. A little old Japanese lady standing beside me saw my small bouquet, reached into her shopping bag, and brought out a small bouquet of Wisteria and handed them to me. After we boarded the tram we sat together and she then reached into her bag again and brought out her large bunch of flowers and separated them and gave me more for my bouquet. I was so touched by her kindness that I felt that I, too, had to share and gave her some of my flowers. There was much smiling and bowing by both of us, but not a word could be shared. Words were not needed. It was a magic moment in time that neither of us will forget.



line where the warm Indian Ocean met the cold Atlantic, a difference of some 7 degrees Celsius or about 13 degrees F. We think we saw the line where the two oceans met. The guide said sometimes the colors are quite different, but this day, it was too nice for the full show, even the wind was calm. We finished the grand tour back in Capetown on top of Signal Hill overlooking the city lights as we saluted the city and the day with champagne and hors d'oeuvres.

It was a great world cruise. We got back to the usual: dead battery in the car, bills to pay, a box of mail to sort and process, house to clean, laundry to do – enough to make you head right back to the ship! Instead, Helen has made a trip to see her family in Florida and Atlanta plus friends in Ohio. I visited the hospital so the doctor could kick start my heart back into rhythm (now, I've got rhythm and can't ask for anything more). Following a couple visits TO us (yes, some people do come here – why not YOU?), we got away again to go to Tyler to see the most perfect grand daughter ever – oh, and Bill and Lara also. A stopover on the return took us to Rogers, Arkansas, to see David and Paula and their new business, *Parachuting Penguins*. What do they do? Well it's a graphic design, copy and print, promo items source, package storage, FedEx, and whatever will make a buck business. "Let the penguins parachute in to help you" is the motto, I think. They're just getting started, but things are coming along. *And*, it's thanks to




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*See the newsletter pictures and more, in color, at [www.routon.net](http://www.routon.net)*

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them that the printed version of RRR has some color for the first time. Hope you enjoy the pictures.

August will be the often delayed trip to Romania to see Helen's relatives. Send a note or email to keep your subscription current and read all about it in the fall issue of RRR. 'Til then, my sincere prayer; may a loving God walk with us and with each of you.

*Amen*




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## !! Late Breaking News !!

*RP—Tyler, Texas*

On arrival in Tyler, Helen and I were greeted by Elizabeth Grace (the cutest, best granddaughter in the world...well, 2 year old class anyway). She was wearing her new T-shirt with her new title: *Big Sister*.

Really a big sister-to-be, and that makes us Grandparents-to-be for the second time, this time in January. Then, of course, we'll have the TWO cutest and best!!

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