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Sunday, November 14, 2010

Cruising with AmaWaterways on the MS AmaLegro: Day Two: Cologne, Germany

by, Jan Ross

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We cruised up the Rhine River all night last night as we both slept deeply and peacefully, lulled by the gentle movement of the boat. After another fabulous breakfast (the creamiest oatmeal I have ever eaten), we headed to the forward lounge which has become the gathering place for most of the passengers. With huge windows overlooking the water purling along our sides and the ever-changing scenery combined with very comfortable furniture, snacks and drinks, this is an ideal location.

All the passengers were invited to visit Captain Achim in the wheelhouse, so we signed up and paid him a visit. Seated in his captain's chair, he kindly and amiably explained the workings of the boat to the fascination of our small group.



Who is Jan Ross?

Stay in touch!

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Posts about my wine-tasting river cruise with AmaWaterways in November, 2010.



Posts about my Ireland trip with Brendan Vacations.



Posts about my Hawaii trip with Brendan Vacations.

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Welcome to the MS
AmaLegro Wine-
Tasting Cruise!

Cheese Tasting and
Dutch Waffles Make A
Delicious ...

Welkom in Amsterdam!

The Auberge Bonaparte
Hotel in Montreal



Captain Achim shows how he manages the AmaLegro

Then we were treated to a presentation about European architecture given by **Burt Wolf**. He is onboard with his PBS film crew to film a special about river cruising. As we gathered together, I contrasted this intimate gathering with one I attended just a few weeks ago on an ocean cruise. Hundreds of passengers gathered in the theatre to hear a talk about our next location. I have to say, I much prefer the smaller group in the comfortable lounge on the AmaLegro! After his talk, Sue Obermoser, the Cruise Director, explained what we should expect for our day and night in Cologne.

We had the usual fantastic lunch and headed to the lobby to pick up our QuietVox audio system for the Cologne walking tour. I mentioned these sets yesterday, so here is what I was talking about. You just plug your headset into the box, slip the box in your pocket, put the headphone in one ear and you are good to go. Wonderful for tours!



The AmaLegro was docked right by the riverside path so all we had to do was step out of the boat and we were in Cologne. This is SO much more convenient than the large ocean cruisers!

Nuances Restaurant at
the Casino de
Montreal

Archaeology Museum,
Notre Dame Basilica
and Great ...

Montreal Tower,
Botanical Garden, and
Metro - Oh, ...

Bienvenue a Montreal

It's Not Too Late For An
AmaWaterways Wine
Tasting...

G'day, Mate!

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Shops in Cologne

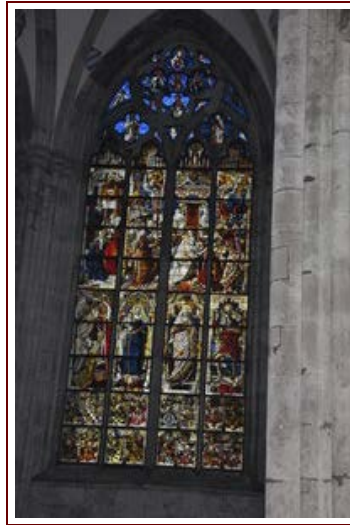
We divided into four groups, since only 25 people at a time can go into the Cologne Cathedral and we set out on a walking tour of the town. This is the second tour guide we have had who was absolutely wonderful. She was friendly, very animated and interesting and extremely knowledgeable about her town. We took a walking tour around town and then ended up at the beautiful [Cologne Cathedral](#). I won't go into all the history of this cathedral, but suffice it to say that is quite a spectacle and you should not leave Cologne without seeing it.



Cologne and the Cathedral



Saint Christopher statue



Beautiful stained-glass windows

They were setting up for the Christmas market in Cologne as we came through town and this looks like it would be so much fun. I would love to take a river cruise and go to all the Christmas markets.



Setting up one of the little houses for the Christmas market.

After the cathedral, our group broke up and headed in different directions. The boat was to remain docked until midnight, so we could choose what we wanted to do and when we wanted to return. Since it was docked at the river and was extremely easy to locate, everyone felt confident heading out on their own. We had only one destination.

The Lindt Chocolate Museum.

As soon as I saw this place suggested in the daily AmaLegro newsletter, I knew we had to go there. The museum is shaped like a huge ship and has a large piece of Lindt chocolate bobbing on the top, just in case you are not sure this is the right place.





The Lindt Chocolate Museum

We paid our admission and then took a self-guided tour around the museum. It's not until you get to the second floor that things really get interesting. That's where you can actually watch them work with chocolate; putting it into molds and then wrapping and bagging some.



Lindt chocolate from molds

We were wandering around when we were approached by a young man who asked if we would like to make a Lindt Christmas commercial. It was free, our commercial would appear on the Internet and might even be featured on TV. My husband abstained but I was completely willing to make a fool of myself once I found out that we got free chocolate if we did it. I would link to my commercial but they said it would take about two weeks to come up on the Internet. But you can rest assured that I made a completely stupendous commercial. And I got a big chocolate Santa for doing it. I plan to eat every bite by myself since Tom chickened out on me.

We headed back to our home away from home as the lights of Cologne appeared in the dark and the shops, cathedral and beautiful bridges glowed with lights like multi-colored constellations on the ground.



Dinner was another equally fabulous meal and I am quickly deciding that I like many different varieties of white wine. We are having wine with every meal and I am gamely tasting a huge variety of choices. The wines are carefully chosen to go with the meals with which we are presented and each is more delightful than the last. Tomorrow night we have a wine tasting with dinner in a castle. Wine. In a CASTLE. Could life get any better?

I didn't think so.

When you are ready to travel with AmaWaterways, [The Travel Authority](#) is ready to help you plan that trip. You can call 1-877-AXP-1515 for information and details about these cruises. Be sure to print out this post or mention the code BLAMA to get the best deal on your trip. I would love to hear your suggestions for future blog posts. You can comment below or contact me by email at jan.ross@thetravelauthority.com. Thanks for reading - I truly appreciate it!

- Posted using BlogPress from my iPad



POSTED BY KYLE WINKLER AT 4:41 PM

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Cheers! I can't wait to share a glass of wine and hear all about your cruise.

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