

Day 15 ~ Monday 4 August, Vancouver and Home.

We rise at 5:45am and are still sailing down Vancouver Island. At 6:10am we pass under Lions Gate Bridge. Breakfast is a scramble and I don't mean eggs. We dock around 7:00am having sailed 1,776 statute miles.

Passengers disembark in waves. We wait in La Patisserie. When called, we leave the ship and enter a large building to reclaim our bags and clear Canadian Customs.

The airport is about 45min away. Here we clear US Customs. The weather in the Mid-West is poor and our flight departure delayed to 2:35pm, but it should only take 3½ hrs.

Twenty minutes out of O'Hare:

"This is the Captain. The control tower at O'Hare has been shut down and evacuated due to storms and a possible tornado. We are going to land at Des Moines to take on fuel."

Later:

"We have a change in plans, there is no space left at Des Moines so we are going to Minneapolis.

We land and are allowed off the plane to get a sandwich. Back in the air:

" There are other flights running short of fuel, so we are being placed in a holding pattern over Madison."

"We are cleared for approach to O'Hare."

"I know you don't want to hear this, but the storms are back and we have to circle Chicago."

Finally we are descending. To the north about fifteen miles away is non stop lightning. The sky is orange.

Touchdown. We taxi, then taxi more and are still moving. Are we driving downtown?

" I am sorry but our gate is not clear."

Finally we deplane at 12:40am Tuesday morning. Our flight has been 8½ hrs. The last bus has long gone, so we sit until 6:30am and catch the first bus back to Rockford.

Home sweet home for 10:15am.



Lions Gate Bridge.



Vancouver.