

CARNIVAL PANORAMA:

Brand new Ship in this area and we couldn't be more excited to attend the naming ceremony and the to be one of the first guests to cruise in the inaugural cruise for a 3 day cruise down to Ensenada in Mexico!

We were at the Hotel Maya the night before and watched her dock beside the Queen Mary – she certainly made the Queen Mary look tiny in comparison!



Tuesday 10 December:

What can I say, a naming ceremony – something I've never attended before and WOW!! Amazing to think that we are among the first people on board this brand new Carnival ship!! What a great experience. As mentioned above, I have never had the chance to attend a naming ceremony before – what an honour.

From the marching band, to the officers on the red carpet to the President of Carnival herself Mrs Christine Duffy, Micky Arison the chairman of Carnival Corp and Arnold Donald, the CEO of Carnival Corp before the Godmother of the ship is walked down on the arm of Captain Carlos, Ms Vanna White. The Captain was amazing – so approachable, perfect Captain to lead this brand new ship on her journey! He said (more than once) if you see him around the ship to say 'Hi Carlos' Not Captain! The ceremony was also attended by 2 brand new famous chefs that will have restaurants on board the brand new ship due out August 2020, the Mardi Gras. This is Chef Emeril Lagasse (who is extremely popular in the USA) and Chef Rudi Soliman plus the very popular Guy Fieri of the food channel fame and who has been associated with Carnival for many years.

Guy Fieri has Guy's burgers on most of the ships which are complimentary plus on the Vista class ships and the Mardi Gras he also has RedFrog Pub and Brewery and replacing these on the newer ships is Guy's Pig and Anchor. The Red Rum Pub and Guy's Pig and Anchor are surcharged restaurants but well worth it. They do open these for lunch (along with the Cuciana Capitano (Italian) and Jiji's on a sea day and it is complimentary to give the guests a wee taste of the menu.

She had just completed a 39 day trip from the Venice ship yard to Long Beach and cruised empty so they could take their time coming down.

After a speech from Christine Duffy and Vanna White, the ship was christened and the party started!
And what a party!!



We had an amazing meal in the Vista Dining room that had tastes of all the specialty restaurants on board. There are 2 main dining rooms on board that are complimentary – the Vista and the Horizon. The Vista Dining room is situated at the aft of the ship and is larger. The Horizon is smaller and is located midship off the main atrium. Plus of course – the Carnival Signature Dessert!! The Melting Chocolate.....



After our amazing dinner – we got to visit 2 different categories of accommodations:

Havana Cabana Suite (cabin 5234:

What a great space! Love these categories but very very hard to book as not too many of them and they sell out very quickly!



The Havana Suites are a great size and gives you a bit of added luxury with the small open 'balcony' where you can sit and watch the world go by (middle pic). This is a private area that can only be accessed by Havana Suite guests with their room key. They have the main deck on deck 5 outside their cabin and this gives them access to the Havana benefits of a small wading pool and 2 hot tubs (bottom pic). This area is closed off from the public at all time.

The Havana Suites are like having your own exclusive Cuban resort! These all have a unique décor which is quite different from the other cabins on the ship.



Children 12 and above are welcome in the Havana if sharing with family, but no children under 11 years are allowed.

This is a great area and as mentioned above, just a little bit special and exclusive so guests can have their own area.

There are only approx. 22 Havana cabins and 4 Havana Suites so book early!



Family Harbour Suite (Cabin 2412) which comes with the Family Harbour Lounge:



Family Harbour Lounge

Family Harbour Lounge



The accommodations are great here and excellent for families! They get exclusive access to the Family Harbour Lounge where the whole family can enjoy breakfast daily, snacks through the day, plus general activities like games (video and board games) and family movies. The other benefits are children eating complimentary in many of the specialty restaurants and 1 night free babysitting in the Night Owls (kids club)

They have a very nautical theme as the furnishings and plenty of space plus there are interconnecting options also.

My photos are not great so have a wee look here: <https://www.carnival.com/cruise-ships/carnival-panorama.aspx#staterooms/3>

Once we finished viewing a couple of the different cabins we got to enjoy a sneak preview of the brand new show in the Liquid Lounge (the main show lounge on board). What an experience! Such a fun, vibrant show with singers and dancers and full of great Rock Music with live musicians. Highly recommend this show to passengers of all ages – Rock Revolution. This show is inspired by the legendary Woodstock Music Festival and pays tribute to music from the Summer of '69.

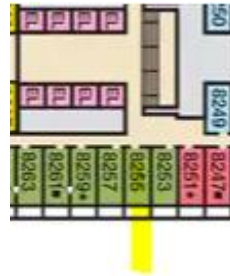
Wednesday 11 December:

Inaugural and Sailing day!!

Another painless check in process. For a 4000 passenger ship this was an extremely easy and smooth process. Nowadays with Carnival your room card is waiting for you on board the ship by your cabin door! You definitely need a copy of your boarding pass, this is scanned, a photo taken and a quick queue through a security scanner and we are on board. As mentioned above, our key

cards (which are used at all paying venues on board) are waiting for us in our door so we can get in. Also they stagger the check in, so guests pick a time that they want to check in – Nice and easy.

Our cabin was ready when we boarded (cabin 8255), a very nice and roomy balcony cabin, category 8D and a great location.



Our cabin was just outside the stair well and the lifts but this didn't disturb us at all. Wouldn't hesitate to recommend these cabins at all! Far enough away from lifts and stairs to not be bothered by any passenger noises.

After wandering around the ship there are very few changes from the Panorama's sister ships, the Vista and Horizon. The main changes to note is instead of the Imax theatre they now have the first trampoline park at sea called the Sky Zone which is fantastic and the ship no longer has a sports bar. In the sports bar's place is the Heroes Tribute Bar which is just amazing. Carnival and the President Christine Duffy are very passionate about the service men and women. What a great concept this is and will eventually be a feature across the Carnival fleet of 27 ships! The bar still has sports playing but with every drink purchased there is a donation made to Operation Homefront, a non-profit organisation to assist service people's families on the Homefront. Carnival are also very involved the St Judes Hospital fund.

We meet for an early dinner and the food was exceptional. Here we discussed all the other dining options on board – early, late and open plus the many different speciality restaurants on board. Tracy came up with a great quote – 'what other 4 star ship can you be on that gives you the opportunity to eat El Fresco?' This is so true, there are many options to eat outside from the Bonsai Sushi to Guy's Pig & Anchor!

After Dinner we wandered the ship and took in the different areas and just people watched! Then we attended the late night Comedian show – very funny. I sometimes don't enjoy these shows but the guy that was on board was great.

Another thing that our group has noticed – different Carnival shirts everywhere? Turns out you can pre order these in advance via a website in the USA and have them delivered pre cruise – wow...So many cruisers that are on here for the inaugural cruise for the 3 nights and then staying on for the 7 night cruise directly after!

For those of you that are laundry conscious, there are self-service laundries throughout the ship – US\$1.50 for detergent and \$3.00 each for washing and laundry.

Thursday 12 December: Day at Sea

This was a day at sea and a great time to explore the ship further! After a round of meetings in the morning we got to wander around and enjoy this amazing ship.

The skyride is still a very popular feature and constantly in use! There is now a weight restriction in place for this which is 250 pounds. As mentioned only a couple of little differences to her sister ships. This is the 3rd and last ship in the Vista class ships.

On board they have the first Carnival Kitchen at sea. This is a surcharged event but not the run of your mill cooking demonstration – at the Carnival Kitchen you join in and enjoy your meal at the end! Very popular and was sold out for our 3 day cruise.

Carnival Kitchen:



We also attended a Military tribute in the Limelight Lounge today at 4pm. Standing room only and what an amazing experience. The room was full of both general public and the Military from all services and times – including a few from the Vietnam War. After we applauded all the men and women there, they opened up the floor and so many got up to speak. It was just very heart-warming and lovely to see. I highly recommend that you attend a service like this if you ever have the opportunity.

Tonight we ate at the Cucina Del Capitano which is the Italian specialty restaurant on board. What an amazing meal that was. There was a group of us and we all shared starters, wow, just amazing food from Parmigiano cheese bread (served warm) to arancini balls. Then onto the main...Just delicious and highly recommend at only USD\$15.00 per person.

Dinner ran a bit late so rushed to see the other new show on board. This was called Broadway Beats, we missed the beginning but what we saw was another amazing production! Follows a band of entertainers as they immerse themselves in NYC with LED screens projecting the skyline of the famous city. Once this finished I popped in to the piano bar for a wee bit before heading back to the comedian show again.

Then to bed for me.

Friday 13 December: Ensenada

Before we debarked for a look around Ensenada, we were lucky enough to be allowed a time to view the brand new feature on board the Panorama, the Sky Zone! This is the first Trampoline Park at Sea. For us Kiwis – it is the same as Jump and great for all ages. The cost is US\$12.00 per person per hour and you get the socks, this goes on your card.

There are 12 separate trampolines for 12 jumpers and there is maximum of 20 people in the sky zone at one time.

Then on the other side you have a bit of an obstacle course. There is an interactive climbing wall where you can race your friends or the computer plus a lot of different courses to choose from, then you have a climbing rope that times you – you have to get across and hit the button. Plus the extra as below that has a balance beam and tug of war.

Great fun for kids of all ages!



Also another special tour – we got a quick behind the scenes tour of the crew area! Again a new experience for me and it was great to see where the crew eat and relax after hours. Unfortunately we weren't allowed to take photos in this area due to security but it was a great experience.

They have their own chef's, their own gym and of course a crew area with a pool table and a fuse ball table. There are only 2 staff members to each cabin, unless you are an Officer and then you will have a single cabin. The cabins are a great size too!

Tonight we ate at the Vista Dining Room and again the food was just exceptional! The crew put on a wee show for us in the dining room which is a regular Carnival feature and lots of fun. The dining room have the portion size correct too and not are not serving large meals with a lot of wastage. On that note, Carnival are very up to date with Environmental wastage and the process of

eliminating unnecessary waste through food and plastics amongst others. Their straws on board are even edible!

After our dinner (and dessert...) we headed up to the piano bar. There was a gentleman playing background music up until 10pm and then another pianist starts up that is livelier and sings with the backing of the crowd.

During the earlier show, the wall between the piano bar and another speciality restaurant on board, the Steakhouse (US\$38.00 per person), is open so the diners can listen along to the piano. When the later pianist starts up the wall is closed. Very cool.

Overall:

I would definitely recommend to download the Carnival Hub app prior to boarding. This is a great and innovative tool and tells you everything – from what's going on around the ship to what to wear to dinner!

Again, another amazing ship and so close for us Kiwi's to travel to – right there on the West Coast enjoying 7 night cruises Saturday to Saturday. They have renamed the West Coast the Carnival Coast! This is the first time that the West Coast gets to enjoy a brand new ship from the fleet as generally they are based on Florida.

As I have said before after past Carnival cruises – I would highly recommend this to any passenger or any age! This is a great option and no longer the Contiki of the Sea!