

Day 59 – At Sea – Grand Show Buffet – 23 Nov. 09: The day started with big rollers in the sea but no significant whitecaps. There was a stiff headwind with broken clouds and temperature in the low 80s. We continued on a northeasterly course toward Honolulu, Hawaii.

We went to the Explorations Speaker Series presentation by Dr. George Losey. He covered the history of the Hawaiian Islands from arrival of the first humans in approximately 1600 B.C. to the annexation of Hawaii by the United States. The most interesting bit of information was that the first humans probably came from South East Asia and were of small stature. They were still around when the Polynesians arrived from the Samoan Island and Tahiti in about 1200 A.D. The little people were probably wiped out by the Polynesians and they may have given rise to the legends about the mysterious small Menehune people who are like the Leprechauns of Ireland. Hawaii is going through some serious adjustment as the agriculture base has shrunk to about 20% of the economy. This downturn was caused by pineapple and sugar cane production going to foreign countries. Tourism now accounts for 50% of Hawaii's economy.

FOODIE ALERT !! The big event of the day was the gala Grand Show Buffet that was orchestrated by the Amsterdam Executive Chef, Bernie Rius. The lower dining room was a beehive of activity all morning while the kitchen staff assembled the presentation created by the team of chefs. At 11:30am the lower dining room was opened for 30 minutes to allow people to file through the marvelous display of food delicacies and take pictures. If there is one thing cruising folks appreciate it is a glorious display of food prepared with special care. Today's Grand Show Buffet was a real treat for the eyes as well as a great temptation for the pallet. Our steward friend, Rudy, was there to help people around the display and then to serve tables later when the buffet was open for today's luncheon. He and the other stewards sure looked first class in their stylish outfits. Barbara snapped this picture on the right. Then she busied herself taking pictures of just about everything she could see.

We have selected some of the displays that were particularly attractive and they are shown below. The food speaks for itself and to our Foodie Friends so no comment is necessary.









All of the chefs were assembled at the end of the buffet line as shown below. They were beaming from all the compliments and knowing they were playing to an appreciative crowd. Executive Chef Bernie Ruis is on the left and appears to be cheering his team on.



The seas grew a little bumpier during the day but sea sickness was not a problem. The dining room was full for the evening meal and that is the best sign that we have not reached the uncomfortable threshold for sea sickness yet. However, we suspect that the ship's stabilizers are getting a real workout.

We continue sailing northeast toward Honolulu where we will arrive the day after tomorrow.