

**Day 52-At Sea – Winter White Formal Dinner – 17 Nov. 09:** The day started with scattered clouds, calm sea and temperature in the high 60s. Barbara was able to get a wonderful picture of the sky shortly after sunrise as shown on the right. A beautiful sunrise always sets the right tone for the rest of the day.



We worked on the blog for Napier New Zealand. Editing the pictures for the blog takes more time than the actual writing.

In the evening the big event was the formal dinner with the theme of “Winter White”.

The ship was festooned with sprays of plastic snowflakes along the corridors and on both levels of the dining room. At 5:30 we dressed in our finest and went down for dinner.

The dinning room management greeted us at the entrance, as shown on the right. From right to left: Komang Sumartha (In Room Dining Manager), Tom Grindlay (Dining Room Manager) and Jacobus Louw (Celler Master).



The Assistant Dining Room Manager for our Table 53 is Nugroho Sulistyo. He goes by the nick name of Nugi and is shown on the right.



The dining room was draped in brilliant white streamers with snowflake cutouts hanging from every nook and cranny of the ceiling, as shown below. It was a wonderful scene and made the dining even more enjoyable than usual.



We appreciated all the hard work the ship's staff puts into planning of these special nights. The decorations usually go up overnight or in early morning and then by the next morning they are taken down and stored away.



We had an officer host at our table. His name was Bernard O'Connell and he is the Lead Medical Officer. He is the fellow who is in charge of the response when there is a medical emergency on board. Bernard was gracious and interesting to talk to. We slowed our steward, Romli, down long enough to take a picture of our table with Bernard, as shown below. From left to right: Karen, George, Judy, Louise, Bernard, Phyllis, Barbara, Orlin and Valerie. Valerie did her usual thing of avoiding the camera. We have to take surprise snapshots to get her in the picture.



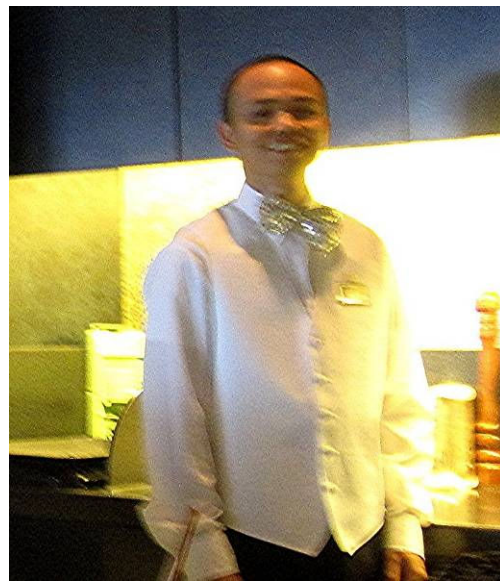
Bernard is from Canada and so are Louise and Phyllis so we had to get a picture of just the three of them sitting at our table, as shown on the right.



The chef's recommendation tonight was lobster pot pie. We both ordered the lobster pot pie and it was delicious. This dish is the result of collaboration between the Executive Chef Bernie Rius and the Hotel Manager, Henk Mensink. For our Foodie Friends we include a picture of the lobster pot pie on the right.



We couldn't get a photo of Romli before the night was over but we did get one of our other table steward Didi, dressed in white as shown on the right.



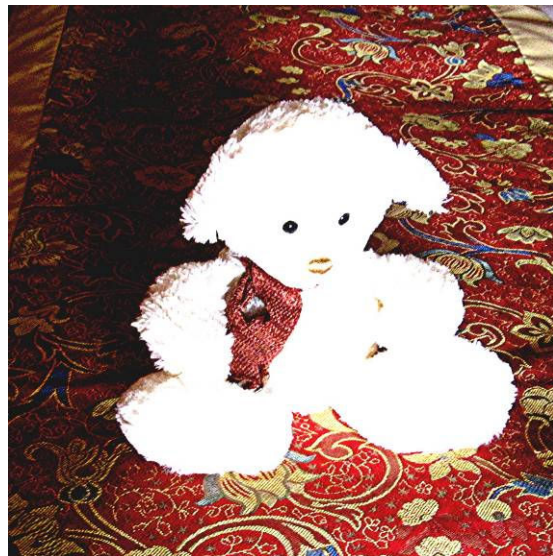
After the meal we took pictures at the entrance to the dining room where there were special decorations tonight.



After dinner we walked along the Upper Promenade Deck and at the Rembrandt Lounge we saw our friends Bob and Rosemary all dressed up and getting ready for a cocktail hour before their dinner at the main seating. Karen came by and joined us in a picture taken by Barbara.



Later in the evening when we returned to our room we found a little pillow gift in the form of a little stuffed lamb as shown on the right. We had no trouble going to sleep counting sheep on this night.



The ship continued sailing through the night on the way to Tonga which lies about 1200 miles northeast of New Zealand.