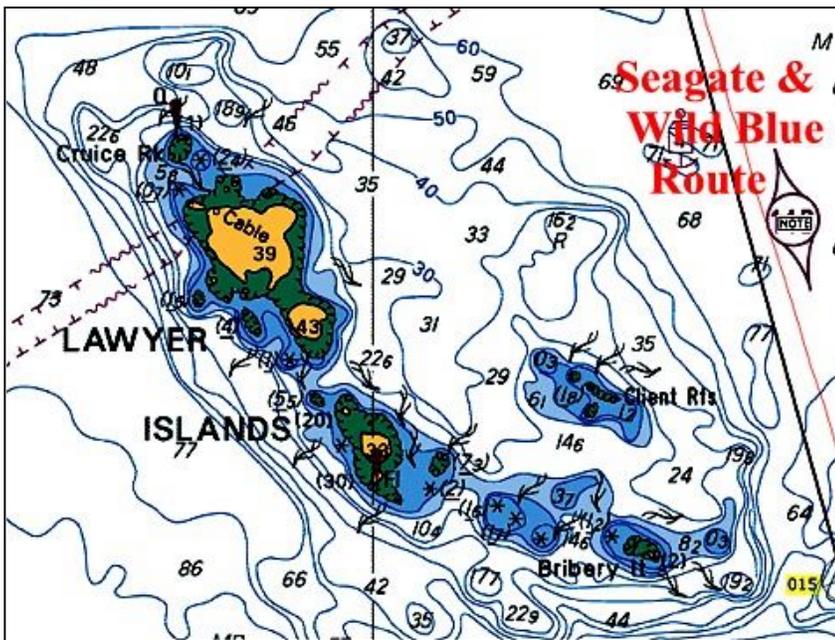


Seagate and Wild Blue Alaska Cruise – Monday-Wednesday, May 12-14, 2008

Monday we weighed anchor at 8:30AM and nosed out into Grenville Channel with Prince Rupert as our destination. PR was decided over Larsen Anchorage as a storm was forecast for the evening and we wanted to be at a dock. Grenville channel continued to provide spectacular waterfalls. We also saw a deer in the water swimming near shore.

The wind was behind us from the south and the seas were building. Normally in calm to moderate wind and seas, the autopilot steers the boat. When winds and waves build, the boats tend to veer off-course as the autopilot cannot anticipate wave action. So we hand steered the latter part of the day entering Prince Rupert Harbor about 3:30PM.

John Pratt is a practicing attorney in San Luis Obispo and a budding navigator on Wild Blue. So he was a bit excited when our course took us just east of the Lawyer Islands, while approaching Prince Rupert Harbor. His interest piqued upon closer chart inspection, as he noted Client Reefs and Bribery Islet were also close by.



(← Lawyer Islands, Client Reefs and Bribery Islet.)

Prince Rupert is a huge, deep harbor. It's two days closer to China than Vancouver or Seattle, 16 days versus 18 days by ship. It has rail service into Canada and the US, and a city of 18,000. So the question is "why isn't it the major hub for receiving container ships into the west coast from the far east?"

The city has high hopes of becoming a major port, but there are some political hurdles to overcome, and they need the infrastructure. Some have bitten the bullet and a brand new, huge container loading dock is already in place. Land and buildings are inexpensive here now so this might be a good time to invest? You heard on the Alaska Blog first!



(← Huge new container loading dock looking for a container ship.)



(← Huge container ship looking for containers to take to the far east. When at sea, this is not a comforting view, except this ship is at anchor in Prince Rupert Harbor.)

We've been seeing dozens of bald eagles everywhere, but each time we get near enough for the shot, they fly off. We need someone like Chuck French of SLO with his \$30,000 zoom lens to capture the perfect bald eagle photo. This is the best we can do so far, Chuck. Not so good.....



(← Best bald eagle photo to date out of many opportunities.)

Of the many marinas available inside Prince Rupert Harbor, we wanted to stay close to town. We chose the Prince Rupert Rowing & Yacht Club. Of course being yacht club members we are envisioning margaritas in the club bar, spending time in the club lounge and dining in the club's waterfront restaurant. A fancy yacht club? Not exactly, but the dock girls were very helpful and did their best to secure for the coming storm(s). And maybe no bar, but free internet access! We will get all the Blogs up to date here.



(← Prince Rupert Rowing & Yacht Club.)



*(← Left to right: Selene 53 Tranquility, Selene 48 Paladin, Seagate, Selene 53 Wild Blue and IMB are all headed to Ketchikan. Dick on Seagate was feeling a bit uncomfortable being surrounded by all these Selenes.)*

We have found everything about Prince Rupert to be just fine, except the weather. We arrived on Monday, it blew and rained all night with forecasts for more. It softened a bit on Tuesday and, looking back we could have

continued our cruise, but the dismal forecast has keep us pinned down. So today, Wednesday, it's blowing in the 30's, with rain and wind. We wait. The forecast for tomorrow shows improvement. We will go at 5AM and push on to Ketchikan, about 80 miles, and a 9 hour run. We have to go as the Wild Blue crew is getting antsy: they've checked the train, ferry and air schedules to Ketchikan. We're leaving PR tomorrow.

So Prince Rupert has all these great amenities. All crew had the local wash, fluff and fold for their entire wardrobes. We've reprovisioned at the Safeway market. We've tried several great coffee houses, and one good restaurant. We learned what a Tim Horton's is. (It's the same as Dunkin Donuts in Boston). We took a museum and taxi tour. We went to the movies. We watched Hunt for the Red October twice. We almost made it through Fargo. We've debated the Clinton-Obama race. We've read and exchanged books between Seagate and Wild Blue. Some of the crew went to the local Indian casino. We've yaked with the crews of the other Alaska boats. It's time to cross the Dixon Entrance and reenter the United States. See you there.