



Cruise of the Heart: Memoir of a Transatlantic Cruise

Robert D. Ferré

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Robert D. Ferré describes in exquisite detail his daily life on a huge cruise ship crossing the Atlantic Ocean. This memoir wrapped around a travelogue keeps the reader glued to every page as the ship relentlessly plows across three thousand miles of ocean at twenty knots. Between accounts of crisp morning walks on the promenade deck, splendid gourmet meals and a variety of evening entertainment, the author ruminates about a wide range of fascinating subjects: the history of ocean liners, the construction of Gothic cathedrals, his newfound love with Linda, prison time as a conscientious objector, his former wife Ruth's cancer journey, gambling systems, the secret of happiness, and much more. Going to sea has frequently been a means to escape, to lose one's self. But for Robert and Linda, crossing the ocean has empowered them to find themselves. While some enjoy cruise ships as a means to party or see the world, for this retirement-age couple it becomes a tale of new love, renewal and celebration. Within that safe and supportive space, Robert ponders some of the more poignant moments of his life. He reminds us that one's most personal experiences are also the most universal, with which we can all identify. The majority of books about life onboard cruise ships, written by young former crew or staff members, are filled with accounts of sex and drinking and debauchery. In a different vein, *Cruise of the Heart* provides perhaps the most detailed account of day to day shipboard life—for a mature passenger—to be found in modern literature. It describes dinners and menu choices, outlines a day's activities, and reviews the evening performers. The pages are brimming with observations as Robert interviews both a high-ranking officer and the cruise director. With 13 others, he takes an extensive tour of the inner workings of the ship, normally closed to the view of passengers. His review of the ship's gourmet restaurant is insightful if somewhat critical. Humorously, Robert and Linda take dance lessons, and then forget all of their newly acquired moves the next time they are on the dance floor. A reviewer reading a preview of this book on the CreateSpace website made the following comments. This is an excellent example of how good, even inspired, writing can take a fairly ordinary event and make it (into) a completely delightful read. And as all good books do, it delights, informs, inspires, and creates a wonderful space where you feel like you want to do something, to have a similar experience. . . . The end of the book contains an extensive bibliography and resource section reflecting how extremely well-versed the author is in the subjects about which he writes. The book exudes an infectious joy and energy that Robert D. Ferré brings to his writing—about Linda, cruise ships, ports of call, the many moods of the sea, and much more. His curious mind takes him far beyond a basic travelogue and the lucky reader—whether an experienced cruiser or one who has yet to experience a cruise ship—gets a front row seat. With their appetites for cruising whetted, the readers will be glad to learn that a second volume is in the works. The website associated with this book can be found at cruiseoftheheart.com.

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