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Cruising Panama's Canal



Synopsis

Who would have guessed that it would have taken an almost fatal car accident to motivate Al and Sunny Lockwood to take a cruise ship vacation to the Panama Canal? Riveted by their near death experience, this charming couple decided to make their bucket list dream cruise vacation come true, and now they want to share it with you! Come along with them as they share intimate details of their 17-day odyssey from San Francisco to Fort Lauderdale via the Panama Canal. Sunny provides the facts. Al adds delicious humor. A perfect recipe for cruise travel fun! Get a firsthand look into what ocean cruising is really like: the service, the staterooms, the entertainment, the surprises, and of course the food -- from endless buffets to amazing gourmet dinners and decadent desserts, Al's enthusiastic descriptions will have your mouth watering. Stand on the bow of Holland America's MS Zuiderdam with Al and Sunny as they share the sights, sounds and feelings of transiting the Canal; watch as the sun rises over the Pacific Ocean and then sets into the Atlantic on the same day. Miraculous! Let Al and Sunny be your guides to exotic ports of call such as: Zihuatanejo, Mexico, Putarenas, Costa Rica, Cartagena, Colombia and Half Moon Cay in the Bahamas. Learn about the building of the Panama Canal and how the locks actually work as huge, modern ships squeeze into 100-year-old chambers to take the world's most famous short cut. What readers and experts are saying about this book: "Their writing is inviting, funny, contagious and just flat out a joy to read." top reviewer William D. Curnett "The pages just flew when I picked this book up." Janice Condit "Al's descriptions of desserts made me want to rip the pages out and eat them!" Karen Zaccheo Finalist in the 2014 National Indie Excellence Awards Whether you are thinking of a Panama Canal cruise, looking for a humorous and heart-felt travel memoir, or are an armchair traveler seeking a fun and entertaining read about cruise travel, you are going to love Cruising Panama's Canal. Order your copy today!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The friendly...voice of the book is fun, inviting, and endearing. While readers will learn and be entertained throughout the book, the biggest lasting impression will be the feeling of having spent time with some great people: the authors. The anticipation of seeing the canal and the description of the locks and other details sets this apart from a typical cruise. The interviews with cruise employees are a unique touch."

-- Judge, 22nd Annual

Writers'

Digest

Self-Published Book Awards

Al and Sunny Lockwood have traveled by foot, car, rail, air and cruise ship. They’ve camped in national parks, hiked mountain trails, photographed springtime flowers in Death Valley and explored the rugged beaches of Northern California. And everywhere they go, they capture unforgettable moments -- Al with his camera and Sunny with her reporter’s notebook. Their work has been published in magazines and newspapers. Cruising Panama’s Canal is their first travel memoir.

Such a delightful book - “Cruising Panama” is a beautiful, even enchanting. It wrapped its darkness around us with a gentle tropical breeze warm enough to lull us to sleep. Who knows how long we stood entwined at the railing, as the ship slid through the sea and the night was black

magic embraced us” (Day 6, p.72). Al’s humorous yet mouth-watering descriptions of the desserts made me want to rip the pages out and eat them! And oh, Sunny’s perspective of the Magellan lecture was educational, entertaining, insightful and deep. Evidently the maps Magellan sailed by were quite inaccurate and exhibited no resemblance to how the world actually looks. She writes “Obviously, we can get through life believing almost anything that the world is flat, that there is no ultimate meaning to life, that we are the creator or victim of our circumstances, that I am right and you are wrong and so on. But I suspect life is easier (and a lot more pleasant) the closer our inner maps match with reality, just as these early explorers would have had an easier time if their maps had borne some resemblance to actual geography” (Day 6: p.74). Wow! Think about that one. My inner map should match with my reality. Hmmm, yes it should!

Al and Sonny Lockwood are a ‘senior’ couple who ‘have made 137 trips around the sun’ - inveterate travelers who have taken their life careers (Sunny as a newspaper and magazine editor, reporter, owner of a PR marketing business etc and Al as a pilot, a Silicon Valley engineer, contractor, minister, and photographer) and parceled those aspects needed to provide one of the most fascinating ‘travelogues’ published. An auto accident caused this couple to realign their plans to form a bucket list - a trip on a cruise that would connect them from San Francisco to Fort Lauderdale which just happens to be a cruise through the Panama Canal - 17 days of luxury...and oh the lessons they share, Sunny writing and Al photographing a trip to remember. Sunny has written books before - ‘Living the Velvet Revolution and ‘Shades of Love, stories from the heart’ - and she comfortably shares her literary facility with Al who adds some wonderful aspects of food and other forms of humor to the trip. What this treasureable book contains is a discussion of the ins and out of cruises, expectations, realities, and facts, and this is followed by a day by day diary of the 17 day cruise accompanied by photographs of the ship, ports of call, and food (of course) and a rundown of all the activities of seeing the world from the deck of a cruise ship as it passes before, into and out of the Panama Canal. Little known facts about the entertainment supplied by the cruise (from live entertainment to movies to cooking classes), to the stops at fascinating ports along the way (San Diego, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, the Bahamas, etc) to expand the experience. Yes, there are the expected glitches to happiness (bed bugs, etc) but what this book supplies is a journal of a great trip that also serves as a guide to those who have never done the ‘cruise thing’ - information difficult to find in guide books. From beginning to end this is a vicarious experience as related by a couple you want to invite over for supper! Grady Harp, January 14

We have cruised quite a few times, and in 2009 went halfway through the Panama Canal on Princess. We have visited a number of the ports that the Lockwoods wrote about, so I was eager to read their book. I was not disappointed, and since the Canal was on my bucket list, I relived much of what I read. I enjoyed Sunny's descriptions, and Al's very humorous takes. Their writing styles complement each other very well. This book would be an excellent guide for those who have done little or no cruising. I even picked up a few tips. However, you should do research to find the cruise line which suits you best--not all are created equal. We prefer the slightly younger crowd on the Princess than on Holland America. We did a HAL Alaska cruise tour in 2011 on the Zuiderdam. I was not quite as enthralled with the ship as the Lockwoods, and felt that the ship needed some updating. We prefer the mini-suites, even though they cost more. I'm the joiner, while he likes to sit on the balcony and watch the ocean go by. The food is excellent on all lines, and passengers are almost always very interesting. The one criticism I have is that the book reads like PR copy for Holland America. By doing research and talking to travel agents and friends, finding the right cruise line and even cabin type and location is worth the effort. CruiseCritic.com is a very helpful site.

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