

Day 1 & 2 – Off to California

Friday dawned, sunny, and chilly in the Okanagan. D-

Day (Departure Day). Kevin drove Annabelle and I up to Kelowna and he stayed to help us off load the wine, and then to have lunch with us. We all had a great time. Only one mistake, I went to WestJet instead of Alaska. Kevin just shook his head. Oops!



Once Kevin headed home, Annabelle and I cleared customs right away. Ofcourse, I got lucky – secondary screening. The guy was great though and he was telling us the different ways of screening.

We then headed to our gate where we read and knit until it was time for boarding.

Everything went according to Hoyle and we were up, up and away pretty smoothly. The fall colours that I could see from the plane were so pretty. Reds and golds dispersed throughout the green. Fall is my favorite of all seasons.



It was a nice flight to Seattle and one of the smoothest landings I have ever experienced. I told Annabelle that was because the pilot was a woman. Got a bit of a chuckle.

Picked up our suitcases and also had to take the box of wine off the carousel. also had to take the box of wine off the carousel. Didn't expect that. A young lady helped us with this.

Then we went through customs and immigration. Once through there we

were able to get rid of the wine and suitcases again.

We arrived in Seattle on time and started our "Gate" adventure. Our boarding passes said Gate N18, so we started on an exciting train journey. Annabelle thought it was a bit confusing, but that

was because someone told her the story of how she ended up going around in circles for an hour the first time she rode the trains. We arrived at Gate N18 no problem at all.

We checked the monitor and it said that our gate had changed to D1. Annabelle wanted to go there right away, but I spoke to the ticket agent and he said to wait until an hour before our flight to go as the gate can change 2-3 times.

We decided to have a cold drink and a cookie, and that's when I made the decision to get a refillable water bottle. The cost to buy a bottle of water was \$4.00 US.

After that little treat, we did decide to go to D1. Another 2 train rides and we finally got there. It was located in the older part of the airport – not as nice as the N18 Gate Area.

We did however manage to get two window seats and that turned out to be exciting as a major lightening storm passed through Seattle.

The rule is if there is a lightening strike within 5 miles of the airport, the ground crew are not allowed to work outside SO - major flight delays.

The group going to Minnesota were sitting on the plane for over an hour waiting to get permission from the tower to take off. I bet they were all in great moods aboard that plane.

We were finally ready to board – 7:25p.m., when guess what, we had another gate change. Off to D5. We were at least an hour late boarding however the pilot made up time so we were only a little late. Great flight except for the lady next to me who thought she owned her seat and mine.

Arrived in Ontario and got our baggage and our box of wine no problem at all. However, we couldn't find Sharon to help with the wine, and we refused to pay \$5. US to rent a cart for 2 minutes. Hello, like, they were free in Seattle!!

Annabelle went looking for Sharon and found her sitting out in her care in the cell phone area. Annabelle asked her to come in and help us with the luggage. Sharon was very surprised when she realized why we needed help. It was her surprise box of wine.

Nice drive to North Redlands, even though it was 11:30 at night. Sat around chatting while enjoying a wee dram of Laphroaig. It was almost 2 by the time we got to bed. A nice end to a rather adventuresome day.

## Day 2 – North Redlands and Temecula



A very lazy morning. Coffee on the patio, with the sun shining, the palm trees swaying and the dogs trying to catch the gophers.

We even received a phone call from Kevin using What's App. WOW! You've come a long way baby!



We made a trip to Costco to get essentials, scotch and salmon. Then we went to Farmer Boys for brunch. Had some pictures on my phone, but still trying to get them off with out having a charge from Koodo. Also manage to capture one of Sharon's borders. Lots of little geiko's and salamaders in the area. They are cute, colorful and very fast. They will not pose for a photo.

After we got back from our little outing and got the groceries put away we headed out to meet Connor and Sarah in Temeculah.



Sharon took us on a scenic route which was lovely for us, even though it was a little bit more driving for her than if we had taken the freeway. This photo is of the "street of palms". Reminded me of Australia. So beautiful – I think I could live here all the time. M-m-m-m-m Of course with all the forest fires surrounding us perhaps I will rethink that comment.

So many interesting things to see. On the corners, the Mexicans are selling flowers, and the flowers are really nice, and much cheaper than at the florists. Glad to see some folks buying them.



This photo was of our bumblebee lady selling her flowers. Also I saw a “bum rock” Sharon said that she knew exactly what photo I was taking when I focused on the bum rock.

It really does look like a bum.



We went through the area where the fire was - Calamesa so much damage, and 2 lives lost at the trailer park was on the fire path. How devastating for these people. Lots of prayers being sent to their families. It is so amazing how something as beautiful as fire can destroy lives and livelihood.



It is also amazing how something so destructive can killed all around, yet leave patches of “life’ in that same area.



The field of dreams was lovely, but we didn’t see Kevin Costner coming out of the corn field, though we did see the corn field.

Loved the pumpkin patch and all the beautiful sunflowers.



Before we arrived in Temecula, we stop at the Lorimar Winery. What a difference from our wineries! They pour and run, no explanation. I started to ask about the wines and the girl didn’t really want to answer my questions. Lots of fun though. Annabelle and I shared a tasting which was probably a good thing.

Their wines were OK, but I didn’t buy any of them. We did the tasting, and then sat

out in the vineyard and enjoyed a picnic lunch. Annabelle gave Conner (her grandson) the quilt that she

made for his birthday, and then gave Sarah (his lovely girlfriend) a painting that Evelyn painted of her dog that was killed while she was up in Canada. They were both very touched by these thoughtful gifts



The winery was very busy, loud, a wedding, a bachelorette party and a dirty thirty birthday party. We had lots of laughs and had a great time.



The winery had a beautiful orange grove as well, however the oranges were still green – I actually thought they were limes. We did manage to find one that had turned, but you can see the green ones next to Annabelle’s hand. A lot of the vineyards we saw along the



way had already picked their crop for the year but there were a few grapes still hanging from the vines. All of the wines at Lorimar were blends, information I was finally able to get out of the server.

Though we had planned on going to another vineyard, time was running out so we decided to enjoy a picnic snack in the vineyard. It was very nice there and it gave us a chance to talk to Connor and Sarah.



The quilt that Annabelle made for Connor was made from his old t-shirts. He really did love it.

Once we finished our sojourn at the winery we headed to Temecula. It was only about a 15 minute drive, and the scenery along the way was very pretty. The wineries were all packed either with weddings or with the Fall Harvest events.

Temecula was lovely, still a bit of the "old town" look. It has become a very busy place now, it definitely is not a sleepy little town, that's for sure. The kids had phoned ahead to see what the wait time would be at the restaurant they wanted to take us to. They were told there was no wait, however by the



time we actually got there the wait time was an hour. They phoned several other places but everywhere had long waitlists.

We had another reservation to go to a Speakeasy at 7, so we really needed to find a place that could feed us now.

You can see Connor and Sarah on their phones calling different places. Connor lucked out and finally found a place with no wait. Thank heaven for cell phones.

The spot we were able to get into was “Lukes”. It was very nice and the staff was very accommodating. We needed to get some food into our bellies before heading onto our next adventure.



Our waiter explained all the “appetizer” dishes to us and we were delighted with the four that we ordered to share. As you can see by this photo there was an amazing display of whiskey and bourbons behind us. I perused a few of them and I came away with the knowledge that our whiskey club still has a lot more whiskeys and scotches to try.

Luke’s was located on the rooftop of one of the buildings. The view from up there was spectacular.

We enjoyed our food and managed to get out of there by 6:45, plenty of time as we only had to go next door, literally. Another wonderful memory.

Our final stop of the night, as I mentioned above a speakeasy. When we entered the restaurant I knew we were going to have a great time, because of its name. For those of you who do not know what a “Speakeasy” is I found this explanation on the internet.



*“A speakeasy, is an illicit establishment that sells alcoholic beverages. Such establishments came into prominence in the United States during the Prohibition Era (1920-1933, longer in some States”.*



As I mentioned above it was the name of the restaurant that got my eye when we arrive for our reservation at 7.



The hostess checked us in and then the waitress opened up the wall beside the desk and took us into a back room. Now the fun really began. What a surprise when she opened up that door.

To most people coming into the restaurant all they see is a wooden wall with that awesome sign shown in the photo above.

Little do they know that indeed we would be very devilish in the back. What a great place! Actually felt like we were doing something bad. We all ordered our drinks and then sat back and enjoyed the ambience of doing some “illegal”.

It was the drinks that we amazing. It took us 10 minutes just to figure out what it was we wanted to order. They all looked so-o good.

Sharon ordered “The Awoken Corpse” – barreled aged St. George’s Gin, lemon and St. George’s Absinthe/Apertif.

Annabelle had a the Old Man and the Sea – Rm, Cynar, Maraschino, Lime, Dark Pepper and egg whites and I had the “Apothecary’s Ghost” [oops I had 2] Cognac/Rye Whiskey/Bitters/Absinthe Foam . It was so yummy. Of course we all had to taste each other’s drinks to get a full picture of the choices.

Sarah ordered a Sacre Bleu – Gin/Lemon/Lavender/Violet Bergamot. She has 2 as well. So sweet of her! didn’t have to drink alone. Sharon would have had another, but she was the driver and it would be over an hour drive to get back to North Redland. I managed to get a few nice photos of this evening. No only did the drinks taste good, they looked pretty.



We don't really know what Connor had, he asked them to be creative something, dark, bourbon based, with Absinthe which he loves. The first drink they brought him was a far cry from what he had wanted. Though he was going to drink it, I caught the waitress's eye and had the drink returned. The second drink was much better Connor said. We had a wonderful time and I am sure it will be one of the highlights of the trip.

I think that we all looked pretty happy as we drank the 'prohibition" way! Thanks guys for this outing.



It was a beautiful evening and we enjoyed a lovely stroll back to the car park, Sharon filled up with gas and we headed home. I enjoyed a lovely chat with her on the trip back. WOW! What a great day. So much excitement ... and it is only day 1.