

# EXPLORER

NOVA STAR CRUISES ♦ SPECIAL FEATURE ♦ MAY 16-17, 2014

## Aboard the Nova Star

ALAN & DURLINE MELANSON



Sunny skies, calm seas and a warm, enthusiastic crowd welcomed the Nova Star to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia upon completing her maiden voyage from Portland, Maine on Friday April 16, 2014. One could feel the energy and the electricity in the air as the first tourists drove off the ferry to start their vacation in Nova Scotia, while others lined up to embark in Yarmouth for the inaugural crossing back to Portland. The Explorer Guide was honoured to be aboard, and we were very favorably impressed with our experience.

Upon embarking the Nova Star we were struck by the wide range of amenities on board this brand new, state-of-the-art ship and warmed by the friendliness of her crew. Measuring 161 meters (528 feet), she's the largest sized ship that can navigate into Yarmouth harbor. The Nova Star offers 162 private passenger cabins, all equipped with private bathrooms and a shower. As a comfortable alternative for those who don't wish to book a cabin, Nova Star also offers 254 individually assigned reclining, lounge seats.

Before checking into our Deluxe Ocean View Cabin, Durline and I made our way to the outside deck to enjoy the scenic vistas as we departed Yarmouth Harbour. The view of Cape Forchu, with its picturesque lighthouse, was amazing. Our cabin was well-appointed with a comfortable bed, plenty of storage space, a private washroom with shower and an extremely large porthole and banquette, affording us an unobstructed view of the water. While exploring the ship we listened to music in the Piano Bar, visited the Casino and Novatique Gift Shop, and ate a scrumptious meal at Fathoms Buffet where Nova Star CEO Mark Amundsen's mother, Maureene, was celebrating her birthday. She graciously shared some of her delicious cake. We had an enjoyable crossing – taking many photos, gazing out at the calm seas through the numerous windows located throughout the ship, and relaxing, both in our cabin and the many public spaces.

On the return trip, Durline and I enjoyed the Owner's Suite, and it was the epitome of luxury. Spacious, well-appointed, two large portholes offering front and side ocean views, desk with sitting area, a private washroom with shower and wonderful service from our steward, Carlos, made this a very memorable experience. We indulged in snacks at Piper's Pub, enjoyed sea shanties and traditional songs performed by Pat Melanson's talented group from the Shelburne area, and talked to many other passengers who were enjoying their voyage before retiring for the evening.

While Durline slept in, I got up early and had a scrumptious breakfast buffet. We arrived in Yarmouth under sunny skies with a feeling that we had been part of something truly special. The Explorer would like to extend thanks to everyone at Nova Star Cruises for a wonderful experience, and we wish them all the best for a very bright and successful future. The Starboard Magazine featured 3 pages about Annapolis Royal along with an article by Durline, Editor of The Explorer. Both Nova Scotia and Maine will benefit immensely from this venture, so let's all get aboard and use and promote the beautiful NOVA STAR.



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