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Ship Review

COSTA FORTUNA

In December of 2007 Mrs. Holmes and I had the opportunity to travel aboard the COSTA FORTUNA a 105,000 gross ton Costa version of the Carnival DESTINY class vessels. This ship was created, as all Costa Ships are, for the European market where COSTA is a major player. The ships that visit the US market for the winter tend to carry on this tradition in operational mode as well as in design.



We boarded the ship in Fort Lauderdale and found the boarding process to be a little tedious and far too much walking back and forth instead of a straightaway passage from entrance gate to ships gangway. Entering the ship we were attracted to the fantastic artwork and historical display of the famous ships and liners of the past. Models were everywhere and in one area 26 present and former COSTA ships are depicted sailing on the ceiling. I think my neck is still "cricked" from studying them all.

There are two basic main restaurants, each occupying two decks and well as the Lido buffet and the Club Grand Conte which is an Italian steak house specialty restaurant available for an extra fee.

Ceilings in the casino and the main lounges give the appearance of being very low and traffic flow often goes through one gathering area to get to the next causing the feeling of endless crowds. Activity on a COSTA ship is the secret of their operation plan and from day 1 the cruise staff has interested guests hopping and sipping in an exciting active adventure. Don't plan on a relaxing quite cruise unless you just want to sit on your balcony and contemplate the passing sea. The last nights activity is a ship-wide TOGA party and the crew threatens to throw overboard anybody who does not wear a Toga to dinner and attend the after dinner events!

Our cabin was adequate but, typical of Carnival/Costa style was somewhat sparsely and simply furnished. It was clean and kept well but we did not get a cozy

feeling of "home" like on many other ships. Storage space was at a premium and the bathroom was the most crowded of any ship we have sailed on built after 2000.

One very strong plus is the sliding cover on the pool area. Far too many of the ships that sail the Caribbean do not have this feature and there are many days, especially in winter when the temperature can be low enough to prevent cruisers from enjoying non covered pool decks. The four pools on Fortuna were small but accompanied by 6 Jacuzzis and all were clean, warm, and functional.

The cruise staff was very friendly and seemed to be enjoying their jobs but this was not true of many of the wait staff, a comment which we heard echoed by many of our fellow travelers. While this is not a ships feature, staff attitude comes down directly from the Captain and can remarkably change the "face" of a ship. I remember once sailing on the smallest and oldest ship in a cruise line, prepared for the worst yet came away with a very strong plus feeling just because of the crew.

I guess we have to say that the Artwork aboard FORTUNA was the key and dominating face of this ship.

We rate the COSTA FORTUNA a 90 on a scale of 100

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