



*Welcome to Rott's Manor*

Pete & Mary Clukey

## Southern California 2004 Trip Report

### Christmas 2004/New Years 2005

**12/23/04**

2:45 pm - 4:17 pm

American 425 (ATL) - (DFW)

5:27 pm - 6:37 pm

American 1083 (DFW) - (SNA)

Our arrival to California was made interesting by the strong winds, but American Airlines put us safely on the ground.

To save a little money we decided not to get a rental car for the first few days of our trip. We pre-arranged for Super Shuttle ([www.supershuttle.com](http://www.supershuttle.com)) to pick us up at the airport and take us to Disneyland. Super Shuttle's instruction to "Claim luggage & proceed to the Transportation Courtesy Phone Board behind the baggage carousel and dial 33 on the black phone", were not correct. They have shuttles waiting for the passengers at this airport. So, after some confusion, a little wasted time, and a very helpful airport information desk, we found our way to our shuttle & were whisked away to "the happiest place on earth".

Disneyland Hotel ([www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com)) was understaffed and we had to wait awhile in line at check in. We were concerned that this would make us miss the fireworks. As it turned out, the high winds that gave us an exciting landing, caused Disneyland to cancel their nightly fireworks for this evening.

Our room was furnished nicely with "Disneyfied" furniture. For the most part we liked our room. Though Mary almost had to duck in the shower because showerhead was so low. The water pressure was great & the temperature remained fairly constant. Our biggest complaint about our room was that the walls were paper-thin.... at times our neighbors could be very noisy!

We could tell right away that staying at the Disneyland Hotel would be very convenient to parks.

Since we wanted an early start the next morning, we filled out the breakfast room service request card requesting some pastries to be delivered between 7:00-7:30 & hung that on our door as directed. Then Mary called to set up our 6:30am-wakeup call.

**12/24/2004**

Everything worked out perfectly. The phone rang at 6:30 & played some soft music. Room service was prompt, arriving just a few minutes after 7am.

Disneyland Park ([www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com)) – With the map from the “Unofficial Guide to Disneyland” in hand, we spent all day riding the rides. First comment is that Disneyland is quite a bit smaller than its’ Florida cousin Disney World, but still there is a lot to do & see. Our favorite ride was the Indian Jones ride. It seemed that most rides were breaking down or being maintained for short periods of times while we were there. As a matter of fact, we were stuck on the Pirates of the Caribbean ride for a few minutes.

We had lunch at the House of Blues in Downtown Disney. Nothing too special, but it was expensive. The really great thing was being outside of the parks we enjoyed a fairly quiet meal.

Around dusk we were cold & were enticed into a bowl of clam chowder in Disneyland. It was so hearty it was enough for our dinner.

Our night was ended with Disney fireworks.

## **2/25/04**

Mary woke up not feeling so well today. So our first stop was to the Disneyland Hotels store, where Mary picked up some cold medicine (after we got back to Georgia we found out that she was fighting a sinus infection). Today we were scheduled to do Disney's California Adventure Park ([www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com)), but since it didn't open until 10am, we decided to go back into Disneyland to see a few things that we didn't get to yesterday. It is very sad that the FAA won't allow Santa to drop in anymore ([www.clukey.com/DisneySantaDrop.pdf](http://www.clukey.com/DisneySantaDrop.pdf)).

Later we explored Disney's California Adventure Park. One of the perks for staying in one of Disney's hotels is the "secret" entrance into California Adventure through the Grand Californian hotel. Mary wasn't feeling quite up to riding the rides, but Pete enjoyed them!

We had lunch at the Naples restaurant in Downtown Disney. Again we enjoyed being outside of the hustle & bustle of the parks.

We had a great dinner at Yamabuki, Disney's Japanese restaurant at the Paradise Pier hotel. Service was excellent, there was more food than expected, and considering it's location the cost wasn't outrageous.

## **12/26/04**

Today Hertz ([www.hertz.com](http://www.hertz.com)) picked us up at our hotel and took us to their office where we picked up our rental car. Then we drove down to San Diego with a stop at Point Loma where we toured Cabrillo National Monument Park ([www.nps.gov/cabr](http://www.nps.gov/cabr)).

Our last stop before finding our hotel, was to Gelato Vera, an Italian Cafe, for gelato (Italian ice cream that we got hooked on while in Italy a few years ago). We have the travel channel to thank for this little treasure.

Then we checked into the Red Lion Hanalei ([www.hanaleihotel.com](http://www.hanaleihotel.com)). It was a nice hotel. The hotel was very convenient to the highway. We really enjoyed the Hawaiian theme of the hotel grounds. Our room was very quiet. No highway noise at all. Our only complaint was the shower water temp was highly variable... Sometimes scalding hot then the next moment very cold.

We ordered room service for dinner one night and the food was delivered promptly.

### **12/27/04**

Today was spent at the Wild Animal Park ([www.sandiegozoo.com](http://www.sandiegozoo.com)). We had a photo safari schedule for pretty early in the morning. On the safari we hand feed some giraffes & a rhinoceros. Throughout the day there were animal encounter opportunities, animal feeding to view, and animal shows to see. I think what surprised us was that it took all day to see the park. And we didn't even catch all of the shows.

### **12/28/04**

Today we had planned to visit the bay area around San Diego and hop over to Tijuana for lunch, before heading north to Chino and our final destination Universal City (near Hollywood). However, Mother Nature had released what seemed like a monsoon on the southern coast of California. The rain was blowing sideways. So, we lounged around the hotel for a while before we headed straight to Chino. After a quick bite to eat, we toured the Yanks Air Museum ([www.yanksair.com](http://www.yanksair.com)) and the Planes of Fame Air Museum ([www.planesoffame.org](http://www.planesoffame.org)). Then Pete drove us to our hotel near Hollywood. We checked into the Hilton ([www.hilton.com](http://www.hilton.com)) and found a surprise fruit basket in our room. It was great.

### **12/29/04**

Universal Studios - Mary was feeling better, so we rode almost every ride! We had bought online a Front of the Line Pass & boy was it worth every penny. I don't think we waited more than 5 minutes in any line!

For lunch, we left the park & went to the Hard Rock Cafe in Universal City Walk. Nothing too special in the food & it was expensive, but we enjoyed looking at all of the memorabilia.

For dinner, we ate at Cafe Tu Tu Tango ([www.cafetututango.com](http://www.cafetututango.com)) in Universal City Walk. It was a fun place. We enjoyed it.

### **12/30/04**

Pete drove us up into the hills above Hollywood. Where we found the perfect photo spot, placing the famous Hollywood sign in the background behind us.

Then we went to the Hollywood Walk of Fame. We walk the whole thing reading every name. We even had an Elvis sighting

For lunch we decided on a sub shop right on the Walk of Fame.

Then we were on then road again. Pete had a personal mission to locate some F-104 Starfighter jets. This lead us to Burbank & then onto the Mojave desert. Yes, we crossed the San Andreas Fault line. We stopped by the Mojave airport, so that Mary could see the Scaled Composites ([www.scaled.com](http://www.scaled.com)) building. Scaled Composites is the company that won the ten million dollar X-Prize for being the first private manned spacecraft to exceed an altitude of 328,000 feet (space) twice within the span of 14 days. Burt Rutan, the designer, & the rest of the staff were not there.

For dinner we located a consistently reliable source for good food - the Olive Garden. We had to wait a little while but it was worth it to Mary.

**12/31/04**

Today we lounged around the hotel & enjoyed a late breakfast at the hotels buffet. It was pricey, but good.

Then Pete drove us to the Sunset Strip, Hollywood for some more sight seeing. We had to find Whiskey A Go Go. A club where many famous rock bands were discovered. Then we visited the Guitar Center super store. Some how Pete managed to leave without adding another guitar to his collection! One thing we didn't expect to find was the Hollywood Rock Walk that is right in front of the Guitar Center. There we found the palm prints & autographs of bands like AC/DC & Van Halen. Speaking of Van Halen, Eddie Van Halen was reportedly in the Guitar Center two days before we were there. After checking out the Hollywood Rock Walk, we walked across the street to Sam Ash, another music store. And again, Pete managed to leave without adding another guitar to his collection.

To our disappointment we were unable to get on the Warner Brothers tour. They were all booked up. So instead we went to the Science Center museum to locate another F-104 Starfighter jet. There was such a long line to get in, so we didn't even try. That's OK since the airplanes we came to see were on display outside. While poking around outside the museum, we found the California ScienCenter Air and Space Gallery, a gem of an exhibit tuck in a back corner of the main building.

Then we returned back to the Hilton & went over to Universal City Walk for movie night, National Treasure. With your ticket stub you get a meal deal at your choice of several Universal City Walk restaurants. We chose Wasabi, the Japanese Restaurant. The food was plentiful & very good.

**1/1/05**

Rose Bowl Parade ([www.tournamentofroses.com](http://www.tournamentofroses.com)), we had to be there at 4:30 am for parking! Mary had purchased online tickets for bleacher seats & parking. It was really fun to actually be there. Everyone stood to honor the Marines when they marched by. Supporters of both the Texas & Michigan teams surrounded us. Each cheered for their teams float as they went by. Everyone was there to have a good time. One of our favorite floats was the Antelope Valley float. It had airplanes on it. And now we know why Burt Rutan & the rest of Scaled Composites were not at their Mojave office when we were there earlier this week ([www.clukey.com/AntelopeValleyFloat.pdf](http://www.clukey.com/AntelopeValleyFloat.pdf)).

For lunch, we went back to the Cafe Tu Tu Tango in Universal City Walk. Then we went to the Crepe place down the walk for a dark chocolate & strawberry crepe dessert.

Then we went back to the Hilton to pack... boo hoo. While packing we heard rumbles, thinking it was a thunderstorm Pete went to the window to look. It wasn't a storm; it was the "explosions" from the Water World show at Universal Studios. So, we took some neat pictures of that.

For dinner, we ate at Gladstones, the Seafood restaurant in Universal City Walk. They serve a lot of food.

**1/2/05**

Up early & off to the airport.

8:07 am - 1:12 pm  
American 2422 (LAX) - (DFW)

2:13 pm - 5:12 pm  
American 1096 (DFW) - (ATL)