



Welcome to Rott's Manor

Pete & Mary Clukey

Windjammer SV Mandalay Trip Report

May 27, 2006 – June 5, 2006

Saturday May 27th, we got up way to early too catch our morning flight on Spirit Airlines. We were pleasantly surprised at the comfort that the coach seats on Spirit Airlines offered. Mary actually had leg room. Our flight from Atlanta to Ft. Lauderdale was uneventful. While waiting for our connecting flight to St. Thomas, we were able to grab an early lunch. The flight from Ft. Lauderdale to St. Thomas was smooth. And our luggage made it too! Getting from airport to ferry terminal was easy with the eager taxi service that's available. And once at the ferry terminal we were directed to the next available ferry to Tortola (Smith's Ferry)... not a direct ferry to Road Town, but it will offer a nice scenic ride and still get us to Road Town before the next available direct Road Town ferry. With hardly any wait time, we're on the ferry leaving the U.S. Virgin Islands on our way to Tortola in the British Virgin Islands.

Arriving at the ferry terminal in Tortola we had a short wait in line to clear customs/immigration, whatever it was (FYI – it takes approximately 3 minutes for each person to be “processed” and for the most part you have to wait outside the building - no shade). Then we grabbed a taxi to whisk us away to the Mandalay. From the ferry dock we could easily see the Mandalay across the bay tied up to the pier, but the advice that we had was to take a taxi since you could easily get lost and you are dragging your luggage around. Arriving at the pier security gate, we had to produce paper work to show that we are Windjammer passengers. With that hurdle cleared, we were on to the next one... could we even get on to Mandalay yet. The first issue, does the Mandalay crew even know that we are arriving today? We purchased Windjammer's cruishare package, which entitles us to arrive a day early or stay a day after the cruise on board. The reservations office & the ships have, in the past, had communication glitches as to the arrival date of cruishare owners. The second issue, can we board before 5pm (it's a little after 4pm now)? We were pleasantly surprised, when not only did the crew know we were arriving today, but Captain Matt personally greeted us and carried our luggage to our cabin. On the way to our cabin we passed the daily message board where the crew had written a welcome to us and to one other cruishare couple that arrived on board today. Our bed was made up with our towels arranged in a pretty bow and a bottle of champagne even awaited us. We weren't sure if the bottle of champagne was standard for everyone in admiral suites or if it was for cruishare owners. It was a nice unexpected surprise.

Matt gave us a quick schedule run down: time for dinner tonight, breakfast & lunch tomorrow, and that our official check-in (paperwork processing) would be handled tomorrow at 4:30pm. We let Matt know that we had other dinner plans tonight (C&F for ribs). In hind sight, I wish we had stayed on for dinner, C&F was good (more on that later), but the crew may have had something special planned, don't know for sure. We thought that we would be “out of their hair”, with this cruishare deal the crew doesn't get even one nights break from passengers.

So, after unpacking we walked into town and caught a taxi to C&F restaurant. We were early. I think we got there around 5:30pm and they didn't open until 6:30pm. But in true Caribbean spirit, we were invited in to enjoy a drink while the staff set up the tables & warmed up the kitchen. We ordered a couple of Carib beers & waited. By 6:30 the restaurant was half full of people waiting for them to open. Now, we were warned that the plates were huge and one dinner was plenty for two to share. So, we ordered an appetizer – conch fritters, and for dinner we ordered one baby back rib plate to share. The fritters were OK. The rib plate was bigger than huge. It had two racks of ribs, potatoes, & vegetables. We couldn't finish it all. The ribs were really good too. Then it was back to the Mandalay for an early evening.

Sunday May 28th, we met a few passengers at breakfast, the other cruishare owners (Eric & Sarah) and a few passengers that were staying on Mandalay for another week. After breakfast, we took a self guided tour of the ship. The crew was still preparing the cabins for the arriving passengers, so many of the cabin doors were wide open. While a few cabins were smaller than the others, we quickly came to the conclusion that staying in any cabin on the Mandalay would be better than not being on her at all when she sets sail. Then we took up our position under the shade on the fantail to begin our intensive program of rest & relaxation. After lunch, from our position on the fantail, we began to see several passengers arriving to drop off their luggage. Soon it was 3pm, time to walk into Road Town to meet up with the Windjammer passengers at the local pub Pusser's. We ordered the specialty drink, a pain killer, and an appetizer. We didn't hang around long, since we had our official check in at 4:30 pm - we didn't want to keep Chantal (the purser) & Freddie (dive/activities mate) waiting for us. After check-in we went to the top deck to watch preparation for snacks & swizzles... and the arrival of our fellow passengers. One of the passengers we met yesterday, was Mac. Mac has been on over 50 Windjammer cruises, WOW. He is a character. He was NOT thrilled when one of the passengers boarding was a "little rug rat". And oh, did that give Captain Matt some fodder material for ribbing Mac the rest of the week. It ended up that the little passenger (Calista) & her mother (Catherine) were passengers on our first Windjammer cruise aboard the Legacy last year. What a small world.

We had a dive meeting with the activities mate, Freddie. She was overwhelmed with the number of divers this week. The zodiac only holds 6 – 7 divers, so she explained that not everyone would get to go on all the dives... bummer. The first dive would be on Tuesday, it will be a discover scuba dive, for new divers or for divers without recently log dives as a skills refresher. So, the earliest we will be able to dive is Wednesday... the week will be half over before we get to explore the underwater world with an air tank strapped to our backs.

The rest of the evening is a blur... I know a few of the passengers ventured over to Cane Garden Bay for the BVI Music Festival.

Monday May 29th, we got up for breakfast late and thus didn't get to story-time until half way through. After story-time, we went into Road Town shopping. Mary had heard that there would be a wedding on board (Saïd & Sharon), so we went looking for a gift. We had the idea of getting a map of the BVI's then having Captain Matt chart the course of our cruise, having all crew & passengers sign it, and then have Captain Matt present it as a gift from the crew & passengers of the Mandalay to the newlyweds on their wedding day. We found a really neat map. So, back to the ship we went to relax... shopping is really exhausting! Soon it was lunch time. Following lunch was the moment we had been waiting for... time to depart Road Town. It wasn't long before the call went out for "volunteers" to raise the sails. Amazing Grace was played while crew & passengers worked the lines together raising the sails. Captain Matt got the wind in our sails and we were off on our way to Prickly Pear. With an hour or so sail time, we settled in again on the fantail reading our books. Between the storyline and the gentle rocking of the Mandalay, Mary was half asleep when "BOOM".... Captain Matt was firing the cannon on something... did a "Foo Foo" ship dare cross our path? No, it

was a catamaran flying the Jolly Roger and firing on us with a water balloon sling shot. How dare they! The Captain returned cannon fire a few more times & a few of the Mandalay passengers mooned the cat, then the cat increase it's distance from us (Later we found out that the crew & some of the passengers were preparing to "return fire" with the ships fire hose. The cat must have seen this and knew that they were outclassed!).

On the way to Prickly Pear a few of the passengers are having some luck fishing. We watched them catch quite a few red snapper and a few other fish.

Our arrival at Prickly Pear gave us plenty of time to take a dip in the pool (AKA the ocean off the side of the ship) before snacks & swizzles. Captain Matt was the first one in the pool, he wanted to check for jelly fish. Then just about all of the passengers abandoned ship for a nice cool ocean swim. We had snacks & swizzles onboard and watch the crew setting up the beach barbeque. Launches began to run passengers over to the beach pier. At story-time Matt had warned us to wear shoes over to Prickly Pear, since a passenger on a previous week had picked up a splinter from the pier and to use bug spray since the mosquitoes could be very voracious. We waited until it was almost dinner time before we put on our sandals, doused ourselves with bug spray, and caught the launch over. It was a really nice beach with a single bar – the Sand Box. Dinner was awesome, we washed it down with a few Caribs from the Sand Box. Mary wasn't happy though, she forgot "The Book" (The Drinking Man's Guide to the BVI's) back in our cabin on the Mandalay. The Book has pages of 2-for-1 drink coupons & other freebie offers, including one coupon for the Sand Box. After dinner, Nigel brought over his guitar and drum - a little impromptu sing along & jam fest ensued. There is some pretty impressive talent on the Mandalay this week. When it started to rain some pretty big drops, we moved inside the Sand Box to wait for the next launch back to the Mandalay. Back on the Mandalay, one of the passengers, Roy, is trying his luck fishing. The lights from Mandalay are attracting some Tarpon. These are some smart fish... Roy is baiting the hook with some raw bits of chicken and then lowers the hook over the side of the ship into the water, he also throws some more bits of chicken into the water, hoping to cause a feeding frenzy... these fish clean the water of all the chicken except the piece on the hook. Roy isn't happy. We watch this for a while before calling it a night.

Tuesday May 30th, we got up for breakfast and even made it to story-time on time!

Today we're signed up for the morning snorkel trip. It has two stops. At the first stop is at the dogs, we get into to water, swim over towards the shore, and started to see a few tiny jelly fish. We spotted a really hard to see Peacock Flounder. We snorkeled for about 15 minutes before the number of jelly fish sightings started to unnerve Mary. And even though, no one had reported being stung yet, we decided to return to the safety of the boat. We weren't alone in that decision, by now just about everyone had decided to get out of the water. Once back on board the boat captain told us that these were harmless jellies (yeah right). So, he took us to the next stop. This was a pretty neat spot. It had huge boulders sticking out of the water at the point of an island. We swam between and around these rocks, seeing lots of neat fish (and still a few more jellies). We swam here for about 30 minutes before it was time to get back on the boat.

The Mandalay was still anchored out at Prickly Pear and the crew had set up a buffet on the beach for lunch. So, the snorkel boat took us right to the pier on Prickly Pear arriving sometime around 1:00 pm. The food was good. They even served up some of the fish that was caught yesterday. The beach was nice, but we were ready to get back on Mandalay to get the salt water rinsed off of us and our snorkeling gear. And besides Mary still did not have The Book with her for the 2-for-1 drink at the Sand Box. Back on the Mandalay we get cleaned-up but really don't have time to go back to the Sand Box for our 2-for-1 drink special... guess we'll just have to come back to the BVI's again!

Before we know it, it's snacks & swizzles time. Tonight following snacks & swizzles are the crab races. This is a lot of fun and all the passengers really get into it. There even had to be a rematch when Chantal changed the rules that the whole body of the crab had to be across the line. Pete won enough to buy Mary an ankle bracelet. Mac, remember Mac, he had been bugging Mary to go get a bracelet...he didn't think she would. A few of the crew members earn extra money buy weaving bracelets. So, Mary tracked down Rudy and had a red, white, & blue bracelet weaved onto her ankle. Around this time the sign up sheet for tonight Karaoke was going around. So far only Roy, the fisherman, had signed up... OK, so Roy didn't actual sign up to sing "It's raining men", someone from his group was playing a trick on him. Since there is not enough rum in the Caribbean for us to do karaoke, after dinner we retired to our suite.

Wednesday May 31st, we woke up to the swaying movement of the Mandalay sailing to Virgin Gorda. It was another gorgeous day. Unfortunately Mary's contacts had dried out and gave her trouble. She took them out, gave them a rinse, and thought all was well. So, off we went to the baths. A really cool geological formation of granite boulders pushed up at one end of the island. It was really neat to hike the path and then go off the path, climbing over these huge rocks. We took a break from exploring to take a little dip. Then it was back on the path from The Baths to Devils Bay. The beach at Devils Bay is a gorgeous sight. We spent just a little time here before hiking the trail from Devils Bay back up to the top of the Baths where there was a restaurant with excellent pina colodas and shrimp sandwiches. Mary's contacts were acting up again, so after lunch it was back to the Mandalay. Mary spent a few hours in the cabin reading & napping, while Pete ventured topside with his book.

Before long it was snacks & swizzles followed by Seahunt (Windjammers adult scavenger hunt). The teams were the Coral Reefers led by Saïd and the Bushwackers led by Kim (from NY). We were on Saïd's team... how could he loose, he's getting married onboard Friday. Having done this before we knew the rules:

1. no whining
2. no running – safety first
3. that about sums it up.

So, Mary enlisted a few of our male teammates to give the female judges foot massages – kicking our team into a significant lead in the points. Soon the judges had some cool drinks & some cash courtesy of team Coral Reefers... team Coral Reefers was safely in the lead! Like Vegas, some things that happen on the ship "stay on the ship" – Seahunt is one of those things... we had a great team and everyone gave it their all... so why in the end was it a tie? No whining, as Saïd was famous for saying, "it's all good"!

With Seahunt over our next order of business was "dressing" for dinner. Now this ain't no foo foo cruise, when Windjammer dresses for dinner it's for the PPP party (pirates, pimps & prostitutes... or anything that begins with the letter P). Pete was dressed in one of the most outrageous pimp outfits. Mary was dressed as a Polynesian princess. The captain came as a pirate, and a mighty fine pirate he is. One guy dressed like Freddie, the activity/dive mate, but spelled his.. ah, I mean her name "Phreddie".

Thursday June 1st, under way to Jost Van Dyke. This morning the captain gave the passengers a neat opportunity to get into one of the launches to photograph the Mandalay under sail. Thanks captain, this was great!

Today will be our first salt water dive. We are very excited. First Freddie has to present her info at story-time, before she can take the 6 divers out to the playground. It seems to take forever for story-time this morning. Finally, it is time to meet Freddie & Rudy (Rudy drove the zodiac) at the zodiac and were off bouncing across the water. It takes about 15 - 20 minutes to reach the dive site. With

all the gear, there is just no room to maneuver in the zodiac to put on the gear. So, we jump in the water and Freddie hand us our assembled gear. Once everyone had wiggled into their BCD's, we all went down together. Mary had a little trouble equalizing her ears, but in no time at all she got that worked out. Soon we were following Freddie, floating weightlessly in 40 feet of water looking at all of the little fishes. Then Freddie turns back to the group and gives us the "fin" sign – SHARK. Don't worry mom, it was a nurse shark, pretty harmless unless you go poking at it. There area was covered with sea fans, soft corals, and lots of pretty fish. We felt, at times, a little rushed through this dive... there was no time to stop and really look at the little life forms around us, the few times we stopped to take pictures we'd look up to see Freddie and the group were fading out of sight. We did see a lot of neat things but personally we would have liked a slower pace to really absorb the beauty that surrounded us. Soon it was time to surface. One at a time the divers would hand their weights to Freddie, then their BCD's, then Rudy would assist you in the most graceful "re-boarding" of the zodiac. Soon we were bouncing across the water again on our way back to the Mandalay. We were suppose to drop off one diver and then go out for a second dive. Pete wasn't feeling at the top of his game, so we told Freddie that we weren't going to do the second dive.

Once we got us and our gear cleaned up, Mary was starving. It was 1:30 and a buffet lunch was being served on the quarter deck. After lunch, Mary grabbed The Book and we were off to find One Love bar and Soggy Dollar bar. There is no dock here, the launch takes you as close to shore as they can but it's a wet landing. The name of the bar, Soggy Dollar, came about because since it's a wet landing the money given to pay for food & drinks was all wet. At the Soggy Dollar, we found our favorite bar game – the ring on string that you swing to catch on the hook on a wall... or in this case the hook was in a tree. Mary improved her skills since last year at the Compleat Angler in Bimini. After 15 minutes of the ring game, we became bored and moved down the beach to One Love. We settled in at One Love to listen to the musician play until it was the next to last launch back to the ship.

Before we knew it our lazy afternoon was gone and it was snacks & swizzle time. The captain moved Mandalay from our afternoon location to another bay on Yost Van Dyke. Later we found out that one couple was having such a good time that they missed the last launch back to the ship from the first bay and had to take a taxi to get to the other bay. Glad it wasn't us... can you imagine how disappointing that must have been to look up and see the Mandalay sailing away without you!

After snacks & swizzles, Mary grabbed The Book and we were off to find Corsairs bar & restaurant for our 2-for-1 drink special. We had a lot of fun here. The owner is quite a character. Unfortunately we had a 7:30 pm dinner reservation at Foxy's and we had to leave Corsairs. Foxy's was a zoo... everyone was there. We were told not to miss having one of their lobster dinners. The food was really good, but the service was awful. It was hot & very noisy too... we couldn't carry on a conversation without yelling. Next time we will make reservations at Corsairs for lobster dinner... much better service there. Later we heard that the food was really good at Corsairs, too. By the time we got our lobster dinners, and then our bill, it was late and Mary was yearning for the air-conditioning in our cabin back on the Mandalay. So, we called it a night and returned to the Mandalay. On the launch back we could see the movie playing, it was Captain Ron. We made it back just in time to see the end of the movie. This was our second Windjammer cruise and the second time that we watched Captain Ron from the top deck of a sailing ship. It was a good way to end an evening.

Friday June 2nd, our last full day on Mandalay... Norman Island. Norman Island was the inspiration for the island used in Treasure Island.

At story-time the captain presented Saïd & Sharon with the map. They're getting married this afternoon on the Mandalay. During the week we had managed to have most of the passengers pop into our room to sign it.

This morning we were suppose to go diving on the wreck of the Rhone. Pete still wasn't feeling the best. So, we called off the dive. Instead we enjoyed laying around the decks of the Mandalay reading and resting until lunch. Mary grabbed The Book and we were off to the Willy Thorton for lunch. Willy T's is a ship anchored at Norman Island. It's very famous with the "yachting & bareboating crowd". On the launch over to Willy T's we picked up Saïd and Sharon. So, we had a great lunch at Willy T's with the soon to be newlyweds. Right after lunch we caught the first launch back to the Mandalay to relax a little bit before the wedding.

It was a gorgeous day for a wedding. Just about everyone returned from shore to be there to wish Saïd & Sharon the best. Pete & I didn't drink the champagne that we had in our cabin since getting onboard, so we brought it up for the toast. Another cruiseshare owner brought up their champagne, and there was almost enough to go around.

The engine room tour was scheduled to start at the same time as the wedding... but I think they delayed it a little. Pete went back to the room to get his ear plugs and was on one of the first tours. Nigel was giving the tours. Sharon even took the tour in her white wedding dress.

Soon it was time for snacks & swizzles followed by the crew & passenger photos. The final call for volunteers went out, the sails were raised, and we were headed back across the channel to Tortola. We hung out, enjoying our last night on ship. We sat with Saïd & Sharon at dinner and Captain Matt joined us. After dinner we enjoyed watching Thadiaz make the fruit flambé.

Saturday June 3rd, we got up for breakfast and hung around saying goodbye to people as they left for the airport. Around 10:30 we decided to head into Road Town to find the grocery store (Bobby's) to pick up a few things. We passed Itgo car rental and decided to check into getting a car for our last few days on island. It seemed that we would save money by getting a car verses taking taxis everywhere we wanted to go. We continued on our journey to find the grocery store. Next we ran into Mac who was on his way back to the Mandalay after he stocked up on a few things from Bobby's. Now we knew we were on the right track. Bobby's had everything we needed. It was now close to 11 am and we decided to stop by Marina Cay Restaurant for the, you guessed it, 2-for-1 Mango Bango drink offered in The Book. Oh no, they're out of the Mango mix.... So, we adapted and they made it out of strawberries. It was very yummy and nice and cold. It was time to get back to the ship for lunch.

It was just a small group of us left onboard. Sharon & Saïd decided to stay another week (which sounded like a good idea to us too). Mac was also staying another week. Lunch was good. Some fried chicken with just a hint of curry.

We dragged it out as long as we could... It was time to grab our luggage and take our leave of the Mandalay. The crew thought Mary was about to cry... and she was. Neither one of us wanted to leave. One week was just too short. Next time we'll plan for two weeks.

Dragging our luggage across the pier we made our way to Itgo to pick up our car. Soon we were on our way to Nanny Cay, were we stopped at Blue Water Divers to see if we could get on tomorrow's dive on the wreck of the Rhone. A couple that we met on the Mandalay, Ken and Jennifer, will be diving tomorrow, so we thought that we would join them. No problem, Blue Water Divers has room for two more divers – were in.

With that settled, it was now time to find our hotel on the beach at Cane Garden Bay. No problems. We found Rhymer's and got checked in. Remember Catherine & Calista, guess what, they're on the beach in front of our hotel (they're staying at the Elm, the hotel next door). Rymer's is not the

fanciest of places, but our room appears to be clean. We have room 21, which is on the second floor and closest to the beach on the side facing towards Quito's. After unpacking, we grabbed our snorkel gear and headed up the road to Brewer's Bay.

Brewer's Bay was a really neat spot to snorkel. Mary kept thinking that this would really be a neat place to do a night snorkel. The water here seemed cool and before long Mary was wishing she had worn her wetsuit. So, it was time to get out.

We headed back to Cane Garden Bay in search of some dinner. We wandered up and down the beach looking at the menus. First we stopped into Rhymer's restaurant and bar for a 2-for-1 rum punch and an appetizer. Then we went to Quito's for their 2-for-1 drink special... it was blue. Pete thought it tasted like cough syrup. We ordered dinner and waited for Quito himself to take the music stage. Just as we were finishing up dinner, Ken and Jennifer (that we're going diving with tomorrow) showed up. We talk for awhile with them and then, Quito starts playing. It's really loud where we are so we decide to go enjoy the music while strolling down the beach. Since we have an early morning tomorrow we call it an evening. Back at our room we could hear Quito's band playing.

Sunday June 4th, it's too early for anyplace on Cane Garden Bay to be open for breakfast. So, we load up the car with diving gear and take off to Nanny Cay. We arrive at Nanny Cay, get our paperwork, and sit down at the restaurant just outside the dive shop. We should have plenty of time to get breakfast... ah, but we forget we are on island time. It takes a really long time for breakfast to be made and we have to tell our waitress to package it up to go. It's a little past 9 am and the dive boat is ready to take us to the Rhone. The wreck of the Rhone is just off of Salt Island. This was an awesome two tank dive. We saw a sting ray, a spotted moray eel, a French Angel fish, lobsters, banded shrimp and lots of other pretty fish. The wreck itself was really neat. On the first dive we swam through the bow of the wreck. During our surface interval, our dive leader tells us the story of the wreck of the Rhone. On the second dive we swam through the stern of the ship, coming out right over the huge propeller. This morning goes by all too quickly and now were on our way back to Nanny Cay.

It's hard to believe that it's already time for lunch. Mary references The Book and finds Peg's Leg Restaurant and Bar is somewhere in the marina at Nanny Cay. Off we go to get lunch. Wow, what a gorgeous view we have. We kick back and watch the sailboats coming and going from the marina. Lunch was really good.

After lunch we decided to do a little exploring. On the ferry ride to Tortola the ferry stopped at the West End and there we saw a neat looking pub called the Jolly Roger. The Jolly Roger is in our book, so off we go to check out this little pub and get our 2-for-1 rum punch. It's a cute little place at the West End marina. And we enjoy sipping on the very strong drinks while watching the sailboats coming and going.

On the road again, we travel back towards Cane Garden Bay. We stopped at Long Bay where Mary made friends with a German Shepherd mix. OK, now Mary was beginning to feel ready to go home and see our "kids" again.

Somehow the afternoon was almost over, we made it back to Rhymer's and cleaned up for dinner. Tonight Mary wanted to check out the BBQ next door at the Elm bar & restaurant. We weren't starving yet, but we've learned on this trip that you should order dinner in the BVI's about an hour before you're really hungry (it takes that long for it to get to your table). Mary orders a chicken & rib plate, Pete orders the red snapper. There's even a band playing tonight. So, we kick back listening to the band while we wait for dinner. This place was the fastest, two huge plates were brought to our

table. The food was awesome. We had such a great time here. The band played everything from Jimmy Buffet to the Eagles. Unfortunately we have to leave before the band finishes playing.

Back at our room we survey the mess, all of this stuff has to go back into those bags tonight. Tomorrow we leave the BVI's and head for home. We cram everything back into our bags while we listen to the music coming from Paradise restaurant & bar. If you're a light sleeper do NOT stay at Rhymer's. We could hear everything, music from the yachts in the bay, music from Quito's, and the not so pleasant doors slamming in the halls at 3 in the morning.

Monday June 5th, it's too early for anyone to be at the desk at Rhymer's. So, we leave the key and a note in the chair at the front desk. We decide to take a different route to Road Town. We arrived in Road Town with plenty of time to run into Bobby's to pick up a little breakfast snack.

After breakfast we do a quick drive by Itgo's office... yup, they're open. So, Pete drops Mary and the luggage off at the ferry terminal. Mary gets us checked in on the 9:45 ferry to St. Thomas... this is not a direct ferry, it stops at the West End. We have plenty of time until our 2:30 pm flight, so we decided we would take the scenic ferry trip. One little glitch Mary can't find the immigration paperwork that we got when we arrived in Tortola... we need to turn that in before we leave the BVI's. When Pete returned we tore apart the luggage and luckily found the two little slips of paper... Mary thinks Pete hid them so we would have to stay in the BVI's. With the paperwork all settled we are now allowed to go into the air-conditioned waiting room. Would you believe that Catherine and Calista are there waiting for the 10 o'clock ferry. They were suppose to leave the Tortola airport on Saturday afternoon. It ends up that the ash from Montserrat volcano had caused flights to be cancelled. They spent all day Sunday at the airport trying to get out. Ends up flights out of St. Thomas were unaffected.

The 9:45 ferry took off some time after 10:00. It was a nice ride between the islands. The first thing we noticed about the USVI's is all of the houses. The BVI's are much more "natural" looking.

After clearing US customs, we were quickly loaded into a taxi for the airport. At the airport we ran into Catherine and Calista again when we went to the cafeteria for lunch.

The flight back to Ft. Lauderdale on Spirit Airlines was pretty uneventful. At the Ft. Lauderdale airport we had just enough time to grab a couple of hot dogs for dinner before our flight back to Atlanta started boarding. We arrived in Atlanta a little ahead of schedule, yeah. Our bags arrive too!

We had a safe drive home.. ending another unforgettable and definitely repeatable vacation.