

# THE COMPASS



For Culture-Collecting Clients & Friends of **Imagine Going There Travel**

[www.ImagineGoingThere.com](http://www.ImagineGoingThere.com)

770-421-9627

JULY 2025

## Did You Know?

**Viking is now booking river cruise itineraries in India!**

Has India been on your bucket list? Now is your time! The brand new 15-day Wonders of India I and II cruises are open for booking travel between December 2027 and April 2028.

Embark in Delhi, historic epicenter of empires, and then sail to Agra - home to the Taj Mahal, the vibrant pink city of Jaipur, and the diverse landscapes and wildlife of the Kaziranga National Park.

Climb aboard the brand new *Viking Brahmaputra*, specifically built to navigate the Brahmaputra River with only 80 guests in 38 Veranda Staterooms and 2 Explorer Suites. Amenities include an open air sky bar and a spa and fitness center.

Pre and post-cruise extensions are available to spend more time in Delhi, head to the southern part of the country for Mumbai (Bombay), or explore a new place like Kathmandu, Nepal or opulent Dubai.

These new itineraries will undoubtedly book up quickly, so call us today to reserve your cabin!



## What Were You Doing in Mexico?



Yes, Viking sails to ports in Mexico, particularly on their Panama Canal cruises, but that's not where I was this month.

We attended an event called Mastermind in Paradise which met at Xcaret near Playa del Carmen, an amazing all-inclusive resort that reminds me of Disney. It has a lot of opportunities for thrill seekers to enjoy, as well as natural attractions such as swimming in underground rivers, an expansive Aviary, a Butterfly Pavilion and the Coral Reef Aquarium.

The park complex has many hotel options to choose from (including an adults-only property if you're not taking the grandchildren!), and because there was such a wide array of included activities and entertainment opportunities - we just weren't able to do it all!

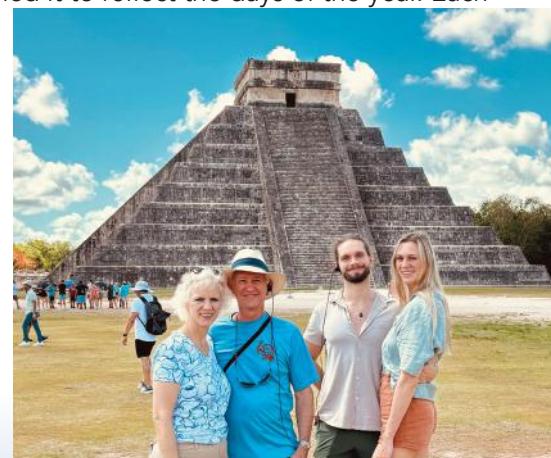
This part of the Yucatan Peninsula is also known for its cenotes, which are natural sinkholes in limestone bedrock that allow the underground springs to fill the caves with fresh water. In fact, the majority of the world's cenotes (somewhere between 6,000-10,000) are located in this area.

Our daughter, Cherise and her husband Joshua flew in from Sydney to be part of the events of the week. While business-building was the impetus to get together at this resort, we fully embraced as much as our schedule would possibly allow.

The first day, we visited Chichen Itza, an ancient Mayan city with much historical significance. Archeologists date the beginning of construction to approximately 750-900 AD, and it is designated a World Heritage Site and one of the new Seven Wonders of the World. The Mayans were skilled astronomers and built the ancient pyramid, El Castillo, 98 feet tall, and designed it to reflect the days of the year. Each of the four sides has 91 steps, then the top forms the last step representing 365 days of the year.

After our guide gave us an in-depth tour of the site, we left there to experience a cenote for ourselves – a welcome break after the heat of walking around the ruins. It was amazing how the temperature dropped as we descended the steps to the cave below and the cool waters were illuminated by the opening in the limestone ceiling. The thirty-minute swim was the perfect stop

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## Mexico

*(Continued from front)*

before an authentic lunch at a Mexican restaurant with some extra time to shop.

The next day started with morning meetings, followed by time to play at any of the seven adventure parks on the expansive property. The Xcaret family of hotels and parks covers 700 acres, so there is something for everyone.

Our first day we climbed the 200 steps to zipline 147 feet high off the ground, where we soared over the jungle.

After morning meetings the next day, we went to the aviary and butterfly center, then did the underground river swim in the cenote – it was about 650 yards long and took about 45 minutes. What a great experience!

While my favorite form of vacationing is sailing with Viking, we genuinely enjoyed Xcaret. In my opinion, any place you can take your family and have fun is the definition of a great vacation! Combine that with some inspiring learning, (a highlight was hearing author Dr. Benjamin Hardy talk about his



new book!), and you have the perfect mix of intellectual stimulation and enjoyment.

All-inclusive resorts are a specialty all their own, and I was once again reminded of the value of travel professionals who are true experts with boots-on-the-ground experience. Our Viking focus takes up most of our time, so we don't book these vacations. However, if you're interested, I recommend Carolyn Waffle Travel (Carolyn@CarolynWaffle.com; 607-821-7071). She ran our event seamlessly and has a wealth of knowledge in the Caribbean.

If you're looking for a family vacation, you might want to give this resort a try. I hope you'll enjoy it as much as we did!



Of course, we would love to help you book a cruise that does stop on the Yucatan Peninsula. You can explore pre-Columbian Mayan sites, beautiful beaches, and delicious Mexican food, wine, and spirits as a stop on the 11-day *Classic Panama Canal Passage* or the 15-day *Panama Canal*

& Central America itinerary with Viking. Reach out today to learn more!

*Carol Shaddy*

**Your purpose is not the thing you do; it is the thing that happens in others when you do what you do.**

DR. CAROLINE LEAF

## Kenny Rogers' Mayonnaise Carrot Cake

We attended a funeral recently, and near the entrance were recipe cards - this one caught my eye. The fitting quote read, "Just like your favorite recipes, a life well remembered is meant to be shared." I took it to a potluck where everyone enjoyed it!

### Ingredients

- 1 can (20 oz) crushed pineapple, drained very well
- 1 cup real mayonnaise (full fat, no substitutions)
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 4 cups shredded carrots
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon salt

### Directions

Butter and flour a 9x13 glass cake pan. Drain pineapple well, pressing out excess juice. In a large bowl, mix the pineapple, mayonnaise, brown sugar, granulated sugar, eggs, carrots, raisins, nuts, and vanilla. In a separate bowl, mix the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, and salt. Pour dry ingredients into wet ingredients. Mix until well blended. Pour batter into prepared baking pan. Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 45-55 minutes, or just until a wooden toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out with a few moist crumbs on it. Cool completely, and spread with frosting.

### Silky Lemon Cream Cheese Frosting

- 8 oz full fat plain cream cheese, softened to room temp (no substitutions)
- ½ cup butter, softened to room temp
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1-½ cup powdered sugar

Beat cream cheese and butter, lemon juice, and lemon peel until well blended, stir in powdered sugar and beat until fluffy. Spread over cooled cake.



# Tales from our Sails

## Atlantic Crossing plus Barcelona with Friends

The Atlantic Crossing repositioning cruise departs from Fort Lauderdale at the end of March, where Anne and Tom met their longtime friends Gibby and Randy before their two-week ocean adventure. They arrived on board at noon and had plenty of time to eat and familiarize themselves with the layout of the ship, the Viking Mars, before they met their cabin attendants who escorted them to their staterooms, answered all of their questions, and were incredibly helpful for the duration of the cruise.

The first of the two 5 to 6 hour stops was on St. Martin, where the couples chose the included "Snapshots of St. Martin" by bus, which navigated both the French and Dutch sides of this multicultural island. They stopped at a small beach where the friends could dip their toes in the sand and the beautiful waters of the Caribbean, enjoyed an impressive panoramic view from the Harold Jack Lookout, and even had time to visit a local market and relax for a snack in an outdoor cafe.



The second and final stop was days later at the lovely Portuguese island of Madeira. This time they opted for the "Monte & Toboggan Ride" excursion. First, they rode cable cars up to the picturesque village of Monte. They weren't sure what to expect for their toboggan descent, but it was a fun, unique, 10-12 minute ride in a wicker sled pushed

and pulled by two men running and steering with ropes on a speedy trip down the steep hills of a closed-off paved narrow and winding road. In former days this was how residents would descend down to the city of Funchal - not sure how they got home again!

The theme of the trip, though, was relaxation. Although Anne and Tom have travelled on Viking river cruises and thoroughly enjoyed them, this repositioning cruise was their first Viking ocean cruise. They loved that most days there was none of the get-up-and-out-the-door-early to be on time for an excursion.

On board the ship, they took in live music in the lounges, varied lectures during the day in the Star Theatre, and entertaining presentations there each evening. Cruise Director Aaron kept everyone informed about the many activities available. Anne took a fun 4-hour cooking class, the group toured the bridge, and they enjoyed a walking lecture tour around the ship centered around the Bayeux Tapestry reproductions. And there were also many, many comfortable places onboard the ship where one could read,

nap, stare at the vast ocean, or visit with others.

The couples made reservations

together at the Chef's table and Manfredi's a few times, and enjoyed eating at a variety of walk-in options from casual poolside to white table cloth. One of their favorite things to do on Viking cruises is to ask other guests to share their table as it inevitably leads to interesting conversations. It

was a treat to have afternoon tea in the relaxing Winter Garden, as well as taking advantage of the 24-hour included room service.

Rough seas are a concern for many considering ocean crossings. Anne noted that the first two days out from Lauderdale

they did have some fairly choppy waters. Viking provided dramamine, and one of those with a nap took care of it for her. For the most part it was smooth sailing! The weather was generally delightful, with only couple of days when it was too blustery to walk on the ship's outside tracks.

The friends extended their trip with three nights in Barcelona. One highlight was a paella cooking class at Barcelona Cooking on Las Ramblas. It started with a walk to the nearby famous Boqueria Market where the class stopped at several vendors' stands to sample their wares and purchase fresh ingredients, followed by step-by-step preparation of a full meal with sides while enjoying a delicious wine. Tom highly recommends hiring a private tour guide for this and other tours of the city. They booked a few through Tours by Locals and were able to skip lines and go somewhat at their own pace with their private group.



While they booked their own hotel, driver, and tours, Viking does offer the option of a 2- or 3-night extension in Barcelona where a Viking host will provide transfers to and from your hotel, along with recommendations on how to spend your time. The 3-night "Best of Barcelona" includes guided tours to key sights, including the Santa Maria de Montserrat Abbey, the Gothic Quarter, and Gaudi's La Sagrada Familia.



The group called their trip FABULOUS and thanked Imagine Going There for making it so easy. This itinerary will happen in reverse in December of this year, and there are still a few spots available. Call us quickly if you're interested in cruising from Barcelona to Fort Lauderdale! Anne and Tom are excited to head to France on their next Viking cruise to Lyon & Provence next spring where Anne can practice her French!



# IMAGINE GOING THERE

## Travel

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## Referral Contest

Refer a new Viking guest to Imagine Going There and be entered into a drawing for **two \$200 Viking gift cards and a special travel gift** (approximate value \$500!). The prize can be applied to any Viking sailing booked through Imagine Going There Travel, provided the cruise balance is unpaid. A new drawing will be held each month in 2025. Scan the QR code above or email [Carol@ImagineGoingThere.com](mailto:Carol@ImagineGoingThere.com) with the subject line **REFERRAL**.

So, who do you know who wants to explore the world in comfort?

*No purchase necessary to win.*



**Referral Entry Form**

**Congratulations to Lou Ann and Kurt Geiselhart who are the June referral contest winners!**

## Travel Tested - Carol Approved MONTHLY GIVEAWAY!

Because I travel so much, there are a lot of "travel gadgets" that intrigue me. Of course, the algorithms note this, so I get even more ads! Some seem too good to be true, and others are creative ideas that really work.

Space constraints in the print edition make it difficult to showcase these, so our online *Compass* will have a new feature called **Travel Tested – Carol Approved!** to highlight those that are worth the hype. Plus, we'll be doing a giveaway each month as well!

The online *Compass* is sent the first Saturday evening of each month. It's also where we roll out the newest Viking promotions, keep you up to date on the latest travel requirements, share fun client stories, and other IGT info such as upcoming webinars or events we're hosting each month.

*Note:* If you're not opening the email when it comes to your inbox, the system will automatically suppress future issues. So, if you're not receiving it, email [Rachel@ImagineGoingThere.com](mailto:Rachel@ImagineGoingThere.com), and she will reactivate the link for you.

Be sure to watch out for the August online *Compass* in your inbox for how you could be a winner of something fun to make your travel life easier!



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