

## Tobago Trip 2020

We decided to use the flights and accommodation originally booked for Mum's birthday celebration even though the event was postponed for a second time. We were fortunate as the beaches were re-opened and in-house dining restarted in that same week. Having to wear a mask in the airport was not ideal but we complied. We waited over an hour in the security line because only passengers for the imminent flight were allowed in and we had checked in super early for our flight. When we were finally ushered to the gate, seating was in alternate chairs. Being masked during the flight was just about bearable but I would not want to do this for a longer haul flight. Mum was a trooper even though we knew she does not like having on the mask. As we neared Tobago the pilot, who sounded like he had just started shaving that morning, made the following announcement in a panicky voice "We will hit turbulence ahead in 4 minutes. It is in our flight path and there is nothing I can do!" As we braced ourselves, I thought back to the time I was on a plane that suddenly rotated 45 degrees and righted itself after which the American pilot came on and drawled in a bored voice "I guess you noticed that". In that instance we had passed close enough to another plane for both jet streams to interfere with each other. But I digress. We waited expectantly for the Tobago turbulence. The plane wobbled slightly before landing. We can only hope the captain was able to take it in stride.

We rented a car that cut off when Patti hit the brakes and would restart when she hit and gas. This was described as a "safety feature". Patti called it by an entirely different name. Our base of operations was Crown Point Beach hotel, and we had a pleasant first day chilling out, Mum and I hit the pool and we all had dinner at the hotel that night. Several hotels and restaurants were not up and running and our hotel had very few other guests. But the welcome side effect of being there at that time was that bars closed at 10:00 pm which meant we were able to sleep at night. Unlike our visit in January when the Jade Monkey pounded music so loud it rattled the glass sliding doors of our room until 4:00 am.

The next day we woke to the lovely sound of rain on the roof. Rain was forecasted to fall intermittently throughout the day. So, we abandoned beach plans and instead went to Store Bay for Creole lunches and Zib's homemade ice creams (soursop pumpkin, coconut and Creole chocolate). Mum is a traditionalist, so she happily purchased her crab and dumplings from Miss Esme. That area was quiet and only two other booths were operating. Elspeth joined us and we had a very enjoyable meal catching up with her and especially her work with animals. We played Scrabble that day and while Mum napped Pat and I watched "Pieces of Me" - a fascinating documentary on Toni Morrison. That evening we had dinner at the "Brown Cow", my choice based on favourable online reviews

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When we walked into the restaurant, Patti asked if it was named after the cocktail and the hostess said other people have asked but no, the chef had worked at a restaurant that was next to a field with a brown cow and he liked the cow. Personally, I prefer Patti's suggestion better. But there you have it, there was a literal brown cow. I eventually googled it and found that the hostess had given us an abbreviated version. The chef had seen a brown cow and pit bull existing harmoniously. The food was excellent and beautifully presented.

The next day dawned bright and sunny so we went to Pigeon Point after breakfast. It was only TT\$5.00 for Pat and me, Mum was free. We spent the money we saved on entry on chairs in which we lazed and took in the post card perfect beach. There was a smattering of people and no loud music. How wonderful to hear the waves and children laughing.

That night Sophie joined us for dinner at the Seahorse Inn restaurant and we caught up on the medical aspects of containing the COVID19 virus. Dinner was lovely. Returning from dinner we made a wrong turn, ended up stopping to ask directions of young men late at night and the car cut off. I was nervous, Mum was cool as a cucumber and Patti's view of the "safety feature" has already been mentioned. We eventually found our way back using WAZ.

We were glad we went when we did as we all needed a break and there were benefits to being there at that time.