

MSC Virtuosa



Virtuosa at La Coruña



Southampton
La Rochelle, France
Getxo, Bilbao, Spain
La Coruña, Spain
Le Havre, France
Southampton,

a voyage of 1,661 nautical miles

"A virtuoso is an individual who possesses outstanding talent and technical ability in a particular art or field such as fine arts, music, singing, playing a musical instrument, or composition" all of the ship's areas, corridors, restaurants etc are names with musical themes



whilst composing this album, extreme hot weather affected the UK and parts of Europe on Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th July, 2022

then 80 degrees the following week





MSC stock photo



Horizon cruise terminal seen from our stateroom 9253. But as this was a long way from the lifts we were offered 11164 (*) on Puccini deck 11 - which we accepted.

Usually, cruise ships have even numbers on the port side but MSC choose the starboard side.



small "outside panoramic" lift close to our stateroom on the starboard side





dinner in the Opera Restaurant, on deck 6,
with our waiter Budiasa



the Champagne Bar
on deck 7





the ceiling is a huge mirror - the image below has the reflection removed



Sunday 19th June
a day at sea sailing to La Rochelle



breakfast in the Minuetto Restaurant on deck 6



Galleria Virtuosa, decks 6 and 7





the mirrored ceiling is reflecting the upper deck



the Atrium and Galleria lighting in the morning then in the evening



Monday 20th June La Rochelle, capital of the
Charente-Maritime department of France



a walk around La Rochelle









Café de la Paix in Rue Chaudrier & Place Verdun

The café was refurbished around 1900 to become the Café de la Paix then coffee room, with its intact Belle Époque decor, restored in 1931.

We visited the cafe in April, 2018, whilst on Cunard Queen Victoria.







departing from La Rochelle



In the panoramic lift with the Pont de l'île de Ré about half a mile away.
In April, on Sky Princess, we crossed the bridge to visit the île de Ré.

dinner in The Opera Restaurant on the post side of Virtuosa, with the restaurant on the staboard side being the Symphony Restaurant



Harrogate Spring water was always served



press the destination deck and the display says which lift is coming, A, B, C, D or E - usually within a few seconds and on most journeys the lifts go non-stop to your deck



a lift foyer



heading for our stateroom 11164 on the Puccini corridor, we are close if the Turandot poster is seen but still some way to go if La Bohème is there





Tuesday 21st June

Basque, Autonomous Community of Spain



Arrival in Getxo, the major port for
Bilbao, on a wet morning

Doreen stays on Virtuosa - with the
weather getting better - but Tony
takes the shuttle bus into Bilbao

Iberdrola Dorreal
(Iberdrola Tower)





Plaza
Moyúa



Moyúa metro station on Federico Moyúa Plaza
The contract for the underground metro system in Bilbao was awarded to the architects Sir Norman Foster and partners in 1988



the Gran Vía de Don Diego López de Haro is the main avenue of Bilbao





Gran Vía de Don Diego López de Haro

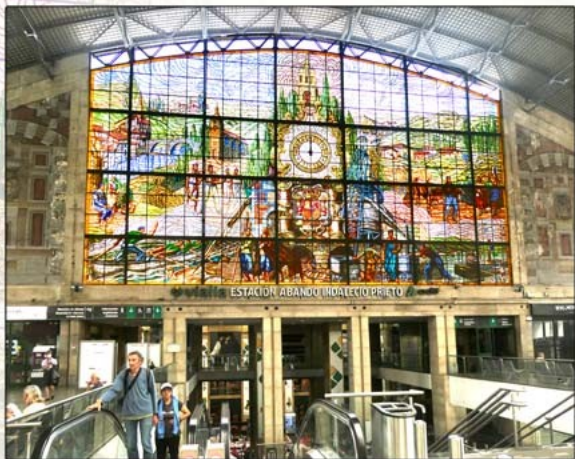


Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria, the Spanish multinational financial services company. Appears to be a former Post Office building as it has the statue of Mercury at the top.



Plaza Circular, Gran Vía de Don Diego López de Haro and statue of Don Diego López de Haro





Estación de Abando Indalecio Prietom - Bilbao-Abando Railway Station. The stained glass panel was made in 1948 by Jesús Arrechubieta, depicting diverse activities typical of Biscayan society.





an expensive €9 lunch in Burger King at the railway station





River Nervion





River Nervion and the 1997 Puente del Campo Volantin, the Campo Volantin or "white bridge" footbridge



Maman by Louise Bourgeois, 2001
bronze, marble, and stainless steel



"Las Sirgueras", by artist Dora Salazar, recognizes the importance of women's work and the path to equality. The work pays tribute to the figure of the sirgueras (the rope girls), women who towed vessels along the estuary using only a rope and their own strength.





Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa



"Tall tree and the eye" by Anish Kapoor,
seventy-three reflective spheres in stainless steel

Iberdrola Dorrea

Iberdrola Tower, 40 storeys, 2012





Enchanted Princess, a sister ship to Sky Princess, left at 4pm and we left an hour later. About a mile off-shore Enchanted Princess stopped and a tender came ashore, presumably with a passenger or crew member needing emergency treatment.



Leaving Getxo, Bilbao





Wednesday 22nd June

La Coruña, the capital of the province of La Coruña in Galicia



La Coruña



a tour to Betanzos, Galicia



Rio Mandeo





Praza de Irmáns García Naveira, Betanzos



Garcia Navaira Brothers Statue



Diana the Huntress Fountain



A hórreo (grain house) in Rua Nova. Raised from the ground, to keep rodents, out by stone pillars. It is believed to date from 1219.



Torre de Reloxo







the Church of Santiago





the yellow areas are of polyurethane foam used to waterproof the wall which is exposed to the weather during renovation







two coffees for under €3
(no wonder Tony is smiling)





back in La Coruña

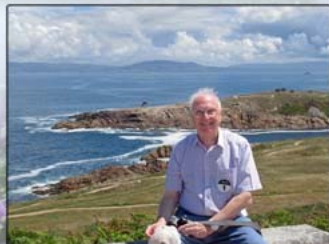
as always when
photographing from a
moving coach, it is difficult
to get the best scene







Breogán; a character in the Lebor Gabála Érenn, a medieval Christian history of Ireland and the Irish or Gaels



Built by the Romans in the 1st century, and competently renovated in 1791, the Torre de Hércules (Tower of Hercules) is the oldest extant lighthouse known.







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After leaving La Coruña, the next day, Thursday 23rd June, was a day at sea heading for Le Havre



Friday 24th June **Le Havre, in the
Seine-Maritime department of Normandie**

A tour to Honfleur in the department of Calvados, in northern France's Normandy region. It is on the estuary where the River Seine flows into the English Channel.

We crossed the Pont de Normandie which opened in January 1995 linking the north and south banks of the River Seine.



bases for wind turbines awaiting transport to sea





An overnight crossing on 19 June, 1996, from Portsmouth to Le Havre on P&O Ferries with our Toyota Corolla and returning the next day.
Photo taken with 35mm Samsung 35mm ECX1



Honfleur







The Vieux-Bassin (old harbor), lined with 16th- to 18th-century townhouses, has been a subject for artists including Claude Monet and Eugène Boudin.

photos of today and in 1996. By chance the 2022 photo was taken from exactly the same spot. The tree has grown a lot in those 26 years. 1996 camera was a 35mm Samsung 35mm ECX1.



Tony felt very disorientated and dizzy so we sat in a small cafe until the tour was due to return to the ship. The cafe was just through the narrow archway in the photo below.



Saturday, 25th June, arriving at the Horizon Cruise Terminal in Southampton