

My Vacation In Newfoundland

I have a very dear friend, Doreen, who lives in Newfoundland. I love her so much, usually visit her every year. And I just recently got back from my latest rendezvous.

The weather was so lousy I was at first disappointed that I didn't get an opportunity to wear my shorts or any of the other cute little summer outfits I brought.

But the Universe has a way of showing you what's important anyway, doesn't it? If the weather had been nicer, I likely wouldn't be telling you this story.

We took a short car ride to a place called Hare Bay. Now, you may have heard of it because one of the Canadian Idol top 10 comes from there.

In spite of the fact that there were "Vote for Tara" signs everywhere, we did happen to see an Iceberg. It was very, very, very far away and hard to see, (really just a tiny spec on the horizon) but exciting none the less. Now, I'd call that a sight you couldn't pay for. The Universe lined everything up just so that I could say I'd seen an Iceberg.

I thought, gee, wouldn't it be fantastic to see one up close!

Because the weather wasn't overly co-operative, it took us a few days to get around to deciding it would be an ok day to take a 2 hour discovery boat tour (I think that's what it was called). They also had a 3-hour tour, but something about that whole idea reminded me of something scary from the 70's (could it have been Gilligan's Island?).

We went to Tera Nova national park:

Where the captain explained what we were about to experience. There was the possibility of whales. There were several mated pair of eagles, and he even pointed out on the map, which specific eagles we would be seeing in the different parts of the park. He also explained that we would NOT be seeing any icebergs as they are very far away and one could only hope to see them on the 3 hour tour.





As soon as we reached the territory of the first pair, sure enough, high up in a tree, as majestic as could be, sat this eagle. And I KNEW he was watching our every move. The captain threw a frozen herring overboard, approximately 20 feet or so from the boat. Within seconds, the eagle left his perch and headed straight for us. One fell swoop and

both the herring and the eagle were gone!! I hardly had a chance to see it happen, never mind capture it on my camera.

We traveled a little further into the park when someone yelled “Whales!” Sure enough, there were 2 minke whales. They are quite large animals and seemed curious about us enough that they stuck around the surface for a few minutes before disappearing forever on one of their dives. We encountered another set of minke whales only a few short minutes later. Now, have you ever tried to photograph a whale?? It’s just about impossible. It’s WAY more fun to put down the camera and just use your eyes.

We arrived at another of the eagles’ territories. Here was a mated pair with a baby in the nest.

We learned a lot about eagles and that the babies are “evicted” from the nest before they can fly. The poor babies just fall all the way from the nest to the ground. (These nest are really high up too.) The babies live on the ground for about 3 weeks before they learn to fly. In this family, the baby is still in the nest and when the captain threw the herring into the water, the eagle (I’m not sure if it was Mom or Dad, as they were both there) immediately took it to the nest to feed the youngster.





This time, I anticipated and actually snapped my photo about a second before I saw the eagle grab the fish; amazingly enough, I caught the shot. I'm sorry you can't see his head, just wrong direction. However, you can see where the water is disturbed behind him. It all happened within a fraction of a second.

The driver of the boat was a young school kid (around 18 or so). He was the one who normally yelled "Whales" because, being the driver, he saw them first. He beamed at me that day and said "That's 6 whales I've seen in 2 days!" (We saw three.) I asked him how

long he had been working there and he answered "2 weeks". I guess you don't get to see them everyday. We were lucky.

My friends in Newfoundland all live on the water and experience these things all the time. One year, I watched a mother seal teach her young right outside my friend's kitchen window.

The fellow across the river complained that one of the local eagles tried to fly off with his goat. My friend Doreen cried when she saw an eagle carry off a baby duck. I tried to console her because, after all, it's just nature. Even in the sad times, it's wonderful.

Well, wouldn't you know it; we were out driving another day when I spotted something big and blue between the trees. We drove around a corner and got a full view of this enormous (well, in my eyes), beautiful piece of thousand-year-old ice, just sitting there. We stopped at our first opportunity for this shot:

Isn't she beautiful? Can you just imagine how much the Universe had to influence, plan and manoeuvre things from around the world for ages just so that we could have seen this? That ice took thousands, if not millions of years to



form. The temperature had to be just right for this piece to break free of the arctic ice cap and stay frozen long enough to get here. And look around, we're surrounded by islands. How did that iceberg (and don't forget that 90% is underwater) make its way between all those islands so that I could see it from the road? This is the beauty of the Universe at its best!!!!

Here's a closer shot:



One more photo, this one of the town of Gambo, where my friend lives and I stayed.



The town of Gambo is comprised of approximately 2000 of the kindest, loving, thoughtful and generous people you'll ever meet. The whole world should be made up of people like that. We'd have a ball!!

If you ever visit Gambo, mention my name. I bet at least a few of them will remember me. I'll remember them all.

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