
Dee's Journal – Japan – 4/11/09

... It is shortly before 2 a.m. on Friday night. You have 12 hours more before your Saturday run. I won't be there, even if they do give us an extra day for crossing the date line (tomorrow.) So we get tomorrow, Easter Sunday, twice. And both of them are teaching days.

Yesterday, we sailed out of Yokohama on a crystal clear night at the end of a week of absolutely peachy (actually, make that cherry) weather. 70 degrees and sunny every day, and the cherry blossoms! There isn't really a way to describe them. Think of all the traditional Japanese paintings you have seen (and thought must be a figment of someone's imagination) with a snow-topped mountain, a Japanese building, and cherry trees thick with blossoms – that is Japan in April. It is exceptionally beautiful. Even my photos haven't done justice to the scenes – they look washed out now, on the computer, away from the bright blue sky and the magical pink and white flowers.

We so enjoyed our time – Kobe to Osaka, to Kyoto and Yokohama, traveling with our nephew Chris who lives in Japan and could be our personal guide (communication can be difficult, especially away from the beaten path where even signposts are unreadable to someone trapped in the Latin alphabet.) And how comfortable and “civilized” it all seemed after the grimy chaos of China. It rained most days in China and again we were in a traditional painting – this time of the pointy gum-drop hills shrouded in mist with bamboo stands and little rafts along the twisty river. Guilin, defying description, looking like a painting.

Now for the next ten days we will be at sea. I will miss running on the land, dodging the smoky traffic and potholed roads in China and the wide clean sidewalks and cherry-blossom scented mornings in Japan. I will lurch back and forth on our little deck, trying to keep my miles up so I can be half-way decent for The Bettys True when I return. However, even giving me an extra day this week to increase my mileage, I will still have only

accomplished about 35 miles. Ah well... none of you will have practiced maintaining your equilibrium aboard a rolling ship – so if there are any occasions like this in Vermont, I'm your woman!!

Lots of love – Dee