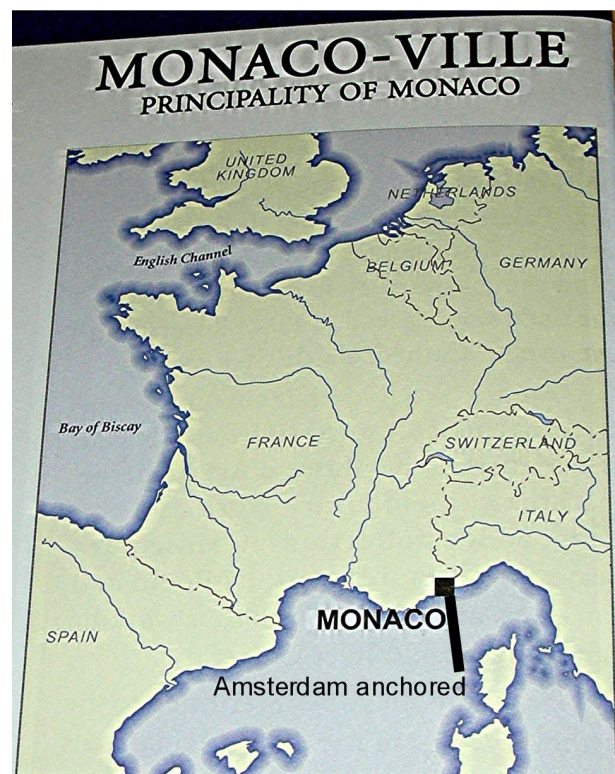
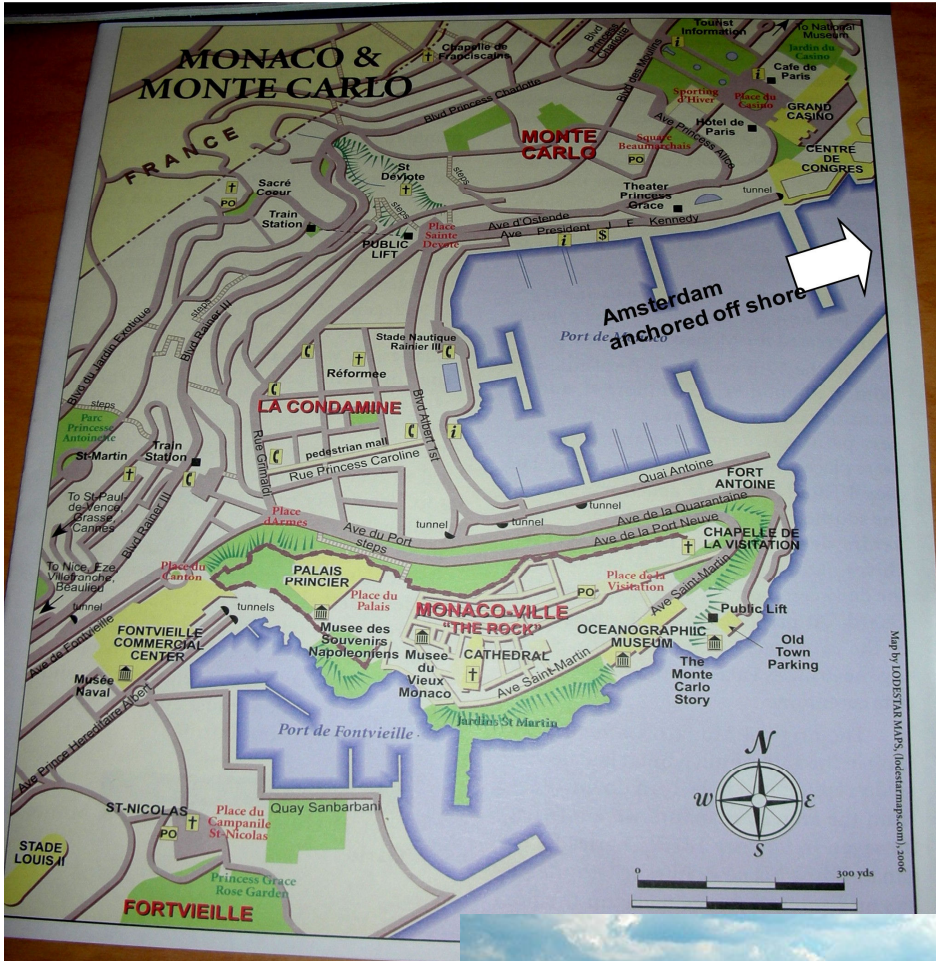


4/15/07 Day 90 – Monte Carlo Monaco - Sunday, 15 April, 2007: **Errata:** Bernie and Helen Davis along with Ben and Fran Foley are friends who have made much appreciated comments from time to time about what is written on this blog. We recently received an email from Ben and Fran with an observation that must be recognized for its depth of knowledge and concern for the truth. Fran had noticed that on Day 84 (4/9/07) the map we showed for Greece and Athens identifies the sea bordering the east coast of Greece as the "Adriatic Sea". In fact, as Ben and Fran point out, the body of water is actually the Aegean Sea and we shall never forget it now. They were concerned that we may have been suffering a "senior moment" when we made the mistake. We deny the senior moment but confess to lack of attention to detail. We use the Holland America Line map provided for each port of call and the mistake was embedded in that piece of paper. We had detected and fixed an earlier error in the map we used for Hong Kong. In that case the Pacific Ocean was identified as the Atlantic Ocean. Thank goodness the person putting out the port of call handouts isn't driving the Amsterdam. The blog will be corrected when we finish this Mediterranean Sea blitz of historic sites to visit.

We arrived in the harbor of Monte Carlo, Monaco about 8am and the Amsterdam dropped anchor. The weather was calm and sunny. Here is where we were located on the map





Here are some views of the harbor taken from the ship.
This was the view looking North.





This is the view looking west at Monte Carlo.

The Amsterdam was anchored in the harbor rather than tied up to a pier. It was necessary to put the ship's tender boats in the water to carry passengers ashore. This is an inconvenience relative to being tied up to a dock but the ship's crew handles the tenders very well so it is not a significant deterrent to going ashore.

We took an early morning bus tour of Monte Carlo to get an overview of the city. The bus took us up on a hill above the city so that we could see the whole city and the bay. Here are some photos taken from the hill.





In the photo on the left the Amsterdam is the ship on the left and another Holland America ship, Veendam, is the ship anchored near the center of the picture. The white cruise ship named the Seven Seas Voyager was tied up at a dock on the right. Monte Carlo is a prime destination for cruise ships and there were three in port while we were there.

The Palace and Monte Carlo Casino are visible in the view looking south as shown on the right.





Above the city the large apartment buildings and homes cling to the steep mountainside which is the only space available to build in the small Principality of Monaco.

The bus then took us to the Palace where Prince Albert of Monaco lives. Actually the bus parking area is in a large underground facility and it is necessary to take a series of escalators and elevators up to the level of the Palace. Here are some views of the Palace and the changing of the guard that took place while we were there.





While we were waiting for the changing of the guard, the Palace doors opened and Prince Albert in a black limousine came whipping out and down the street he went. It happened too fast to get a picture.

As palaces go this one was not very ostentatious. It had a nice plain vanilla formal look.

Here on the right is a scene from the changing of the guard.





Next we took a walk along a nice park-like street and saw the home where Princess Caroline lives as shown on the left.

Along the same walk we came to the Cathedral where Princess Grace is buried. The guide said the true story of the death of Princess Grace is that she let her daughter, Caroline, drive the car down a steep road. Caroline was too young to drive legally. She lost control and went off the road in an accident that killed Princess Grace. The illegal driving issue was hushed up and life goes on. At times the public may view the grave of Princess Grace but today was Sunday and church



services were in session so it was not possible. Here is a view of the front of the Cathedral.



We left the palace grounds and made our way back to the bus past the Museum for the Institut Oceanographique that was founded by Jacques Cousteau, the famous oceanographer. The Institute is within a few hundred yards of the Palace. There is an exhibit of an early underwater submarine out in front of the Museum.

We took the bus down the hill from the Palace and then to another underground parking garage below the site of the Monte Carlo Casino. Again we took a series of escalators and elevators to get up to the area where we could see the front of the Monte Carlo Casino.





Casino Monte-Carlo, Monaco
April, 2007

Like the Palace, the Monte Carlo Casino does not look very ostentatious. The front was covered with scaffolding and screening because it was having a face lift in preparation for the upcoming Grand Prix auto race in May. At ten o'clock they opened the door to visitors and we could go into the lobby in our plain tourist type clothes. More formal dress is required to enter and play in the casino. No photos are allowed in the lobby or casino.

Barbara got her Oak Ridge Library card out and we snapped a picture.

Next door to the Monte Carlo Casino is the famous luxury hotel by the name of Hotel De Paris.



The Grand Prix Auto Race is an annual social and commercial event in Monte Carlo that takes place in May. There were posters and preparation for the event obvious in what we saw around Monte Carlo. The race course consists of city streets that wind around the hillside through the town and makes a complete loop. The high powered race cars make the circuit at high speeds for more than 80 laps. It is famous among people who follow formula one racing. Along one of the streets that are used in the race is a monument to the event in the form of an old racing car, as shown on the left.



The flowers and landscaping of Monte Carlo was magnificent. The Bougainvillea was particularly pretty and we found this specimen near the Monte Carlo Casino.



In 1974 Prince Rainier III of Monaco created an annual event called the Festival of the Circus of Monte Carlo. It has become a very important festival in Monte Carlo. The "Gold Clown" award is regarded as the supreme distinction by the artists of this discipline. In recognition of the Monte Carlo interest in the circus and the art of the clown, the Amsterdam had a Circus Night in



the main dining room while we were anchored in Monte Carlo. It was a colorful and noisy event as the stewards dressed as clowns paraded around the dining room and created a festival atmosphere.

Roy and Orlin try to keep a straight face while Yudan takes their order.



Chaos reigned supreme!



The festivities came to an end and another sunset brought the day to a beautiful close.

The Amsterdam got underway about 6pm.

