

# TWO IF BY SEA

Long gone is the era of luxury cruising when steamer trunks and calling cards were de rigeur. Or is it? In a bid to revive the Golden Age of travel, creative duo **Andrew Andrew** board the **QM2**. By Andi Teran



ON A BLUSTERY WINTER'S EVE IN ONE OF THE pulsating caverns of nocturnal New York City, art power-duo Andrew Andrew, feeling pangs of wanderlust, posed a question: What ever happened to the Golden Age of luxury cruise travel? Several months later, with a tenacious appetite for the forgotten era and a packed-to-the-gills 1930s steamer trunk, Andrew Andrew vowed to answer this question the proper way: by taking a trip on the largest, most expensive cruise ship ever built, the Queen Mary 2.

Creative team Andrew Andrew have made a name for themselves—but only one name: they're addressed as a unit, though for clarity's sake, we'll call them Andrew and Andrew—as the first-ever iPod DJs, playing for hipster and art-patron crowds from San Francisco to Nashville. The identically dressed pair (they sport lab coats, pristine suits, military garb) transcend disciplines, working in art, design, fashion, and, for a brief stint, baking.

But it was as connoisseurs of a bygone era that they boarded the QM2, their dog-eared, 1956 copy of *Etiquette: The Complete Modern Guide to Day-to-Day Living the Correct Way* in hand, steamer trunk crammed with everything from custom skull-and-crossbones tuxedos to ankle boots for island spelunking. When the journey is the destination, says one Andrew, "it feels like prom all the time."

On deck, their curious appeal extended well beyond the cosmopolitan shores of Gotham, as cameras flashed conspicuously in their direction. "You can't give away too much at the beginning," says one. "Yes, it's kind of like dating," says the other. "Test the waters with your fellow passengers. You've got eight days to get to know people, so it's best to leave something to the imagination."

Champagne in hands, Andrew Andrew's infectious zeal for their high-seas adventure was in full swing. "You see,

people just love it!" they exclaimed as passengers gasped at the fading skyline. "It's hard not to get caught up in their enthusiasm!"

Indeed.

Strolling through the three-story Grand Lobby on the way to the Britannia Restaurant, a string quartet segued from Mozart to The Beatles. Andrew Andrew exchanged pleasantries with everyone they passed. One offered a "hello." The other, "good evening!" They locked eyes with a colorful woman whose blue dress matched her blue cocktail. "Fantastic!" they exclaimed in unison.

Gliding through the dining room past an infantry of buttoned-up waiters whose arms were draped with crisp white napkins, they reached their assigned table. Andrew Andrew warmly introduced themselves to a somewhat non-amused family from New Jersey, and immediately realized the urgency to break the ice. A magnum of champagne for the entire table! Perfect! Their tablemates responded in kind by ordering a round of Long Island Iced Teas... for themselves.

"According to etiquette," says one Andrew, "if you're unhappy with your table, you really shouldn't change tables until later in the week. Try to give them a chance." The other Andrew retorts, "But if they're guzzling Long Island Iced Teas and you're sipping champagne, the rules may officially be broken."

A chat with the cruise director, a "proper Margaret Thatcher type," brings about a new table where a family of British aristocrats and a colorful couple from New England appreciate not only champagne but Andrew Andrew's witticisms as well. It's kismet.

As for the former tablemates, Andrew Andrew bumped into them at the strobe-lit dance club, G32. "When something like this happens, you can say that you switched ta-

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bles because you wished to dine at another seating time," says Andrew, while the other chimes in, "Or that you were assigned to the wrong table in the first place but how lovely it was to meet them."

But why worry about dining arrangements when the Veuve Clicquot Champagne Bar is such a better way to take in calories? "It's much more intimate compared to the larger lounges, and you can people-watch," they say, adding, "plus, it's our favorite champagne." But too much bubbly, plus choppy waters, left them to convalesce in the infirmary alongside a nauseated gambling enthusiast from Alabama.

Feeling spritely again, Andrew Andrew browsed the luxury boutiques and checked out the largest library and only planetarium at sea. Of course, they also enjoyed simply sipping cocktails in the morning—"always luxurious" they ardently agree.

Clad in identical Bermuda shorts, field vests, and safari hats, they set out with a guide to see the Caribbean, later finally finding themselves at a rickety fish shack on a remote beach.

"I don't normally take people here," the tour guide told them without a trace of irony. Andrew Andrew responded with identical winks. They dined seaside with locals on "simple, fresh, delicious fish" far from the trappings of tourism. "It's always best to venture off the beaten path."

The QM2 prides itself on five-star features such as a

Canyon Ranch Spa, numerous bars, pools, and entertainment venues. Like on most cruise ships, however, dining is most rewarding.

While savoring cilantro-crust sea bass and caramelized bananas with passion fruit sorbet, a lively conversation considered the question, will a raisin bob up and down in a glass of champagne? To the utter delight of their tablemates, Andrew Andrew offered to demonstrate by requesting one raisin. Minutes later a silver bowl arrived overflowing with raisins. "Now that's luxury!" (And yes, it floated.)

Winding down their last night at sea, Andrew Andrew attended the Talent Show ("a must!"). It was here that they reunited with the Alabama gentleman from the infirmary who had just emerged from a discussion on gambling with a Holocaust lecturer at the craps table. He took to the stage to sing "Blue Moon." Even though he forgot the words halfway through the song, his delicate rendition harkened a forgotten era that brought a tear to every eye. "Again," they echo. "Priceless."

At dawn, the ship sliced through a blanket of fog and pulled into New York Harbor. The grit and frenetic urban energy that awaited them was a jolt. "It really felt like we'd never make it back," says one Andrew. "Yes, we completely lost track of time," says the other. It's somewhat different than the Golden Age, they agreed. "It's what you bring to the journey. It's one of those life clichés! But like they say on the ship... it's a voyage."

**TO PACK IN YOUR STEAMER TRUNK:**

- Appropriate attire. Research onboard events (i.e. Pirate's Ball) and pack accordingly. Or you can always fashion a pirate beard from found items in your state room.
- Introduction cards. Locate your stateroom number before setting sail and print it on cards to give to shipmates.
- An extra pair of glasses. In case yours get swept out to sea or lost in the casino on a late-night bet.
- Framed pictures of loved ones. A conversation starter when a new friend visits your state-room for a drink.
- A signature hat or scarf. Something unique so that people remember you.
- A handy etiquette book. Just in case you forget your manners.

ETIQUETTE BOOK: PHOTOGRAPH BY HAMISH ROBERTSON. ALL OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS: ANDREW ANDREW AND CUNARD STAFF AND PASSENGERS.