

## Report: Charleston to Antwerp Nov. 9 to 20, 2015 on board M/V *Amalthea*

Flag: Portugal  
Port of Registry: Madeira  
Manufacturer: CSBC Corp., Taiwan  
Call Sign: CQDE  
Net Tonnage: 37696t  
L.O.A.: 268.8m

Breadth: 32.2m  
Draught: 12.5m  
Engine Power: 54460HP  
Container Intake 4178 TEU  
Speed/Consumption/Day: 24.25kt  
at 11m draught 155.0mt

### Route



### Crew

Kaminski, Robert	Master	Rana, Agerio Caga	A/B
Czarnowski, Michal	Ch Off	Arado, Julius Tangpos	O/S
Barbec, Alexandru	2/Off	Castillon, Michael John Lingaya	O/S
Narvasa, Melchor Jr.Polacas	3/Off	Sahagun, Rodolfo Jr. Ortiz	FTR
Komissarov, Oleg	Ch Eng	Balawang, Willi Montopar	Oiler
Kurnosov, Sergei	2/Eng	Mondejar, Ramon Esposa	Cook
Bourca, Daniel Gabriel	3/Eng	Pinor, John Paul Yee	Messman
Sayanny, Olexandr	Electrician	Lungu, Catalin Cristian	Jr.D/Cdt
Jocson, Rafael Cornel	Bosun	Mishra, Sanjay	Sr.Eng/Cdt
Comendador, Ryan Gatilogo	A/B		

On Monday, November 9, after a few changes in departure date and location owing to bad weather, a traffic jam at the Panama Canal and fog in Savannah, the *Amalthea* reached Charleston and we finally climb the ladder and arrive on the upper deck of the largest vessel we had ever traveled on. In pelting rain crew members carry our luggage and we are relieved to find that the ship has an elevator (no other vessels of our previous passages had such luxury) and feel less embarrassed about the numerous very heavy bags we have with us.

The Owner's Cabin is very comfortable and we immediately feel at home here.



At lunchtime we meet the cook and the mess man and experience their competence: excellent food and service.

The galley is spotless, well equipped, a nice work place and the mess room, where the meals are served sports two cleverly constructed tables, each with a rotating tray in the middle with the regularly served ingredients and spices in a slide-proof enclosure.



The large windows allow a great view; and there are even geraniums on the window sills.

The afternoon passes quickly with unpacking essentials, writing last e-mails. Thick fog has developed and we cannot leave as planned around 1900.



By 0400 the next morning, the fog has lifted, but *Amalthea* is too tall to pass under the bridge at high water, so there is another delay. We watch the last preparations before departure . . .

. . . and the maneuver of another vessel on its way out to sea.



At 1130 one of the pilots is on the bridge. . .

. . . and they are ready to depart.



Two tug boats are at work turning the vessel 180° between a number of markers in the narrow turning basin.

Full concentration on the bridge!



Passing the bridge calls for accurate measurement of the vertical clearance with a special device: according to the estimate of the Chief Officer there is one meter space between the top of *Amalthea* and the steel rafters of the bridge.



The current is strong and passing an oncoming ship in a bend of the river takes impressive expertise. The commands are given, repeated by the helmsman and acknowledged by him when executed.

We are very happy to be allowed to be on the bridge and may discretely talk to the crew even during maneuvers.

Soon we will be out of the river. The pilot will leave the ship and we will be on our way to Antwerp, the first port of call in Europe.



The weather is good and we take a stroll around the ship. There are so many things to marvel at. Everything is unspeakable huge, the anchor chain, . . .



. . . the lines and the winches and the anchor suspended above the enormous bow bulb.



On our way, the Chief Engineer invites us to a visit to the engine room. The control room is full of instruments, hundreds of displays and buttons and switches. When the door to the actual engine room opens, I'm glad to wear hear mufflers, the noise is deafening and the heat pretty aggressive.

We circle around the engine on metal walks, descend steep stairs a few stories down to the propeller shaft that turns and turns and turns.

The Sulzer Engine has seven cylinders.  
One spare piston ...



... and a spare cylinder are always ready in case a replacement is needed.

It was a full day and we turn in early.

In the morning we caught the beautiful sunrise, always a enchanting display of colors and shapes.



The 3rd Mate gives us a tour around the ship explaining the most important places and rules.

An emergency drill is announced for 1030.

We are to bring the life vests and the immersion suits to the muster station on the starboard side of the B deck.

Exactly on the appointed hour the terribly shrill signal of a general alarm sounds throughout the ship: seven short blasts and a long one.

The mess man appears to escort us to the muster station and we meet with the crew, except the master, who remains on the bridge in charge of all decisions.

The Chief Mate explains how to put on the life vests and helps to adjust it.



I have been taking pictures all along and am watched with interest.



Since there is no emergency, only a drill, the Chief Mate offers to take a group portrait. About half the crew arrange themselves in a semicircle and smile!



The demonstration of the lifeboat is next. We take off the life vests, listen to the instructions about the launching mechanisms and climb into the life boat.

Each place is marked by a black spot on the bench and seatbelts of alternating red and green color behind it. So, every occupant entering in single file knows immediately where to sit and which belts to grab.



The 3rd Mate explains how to start the engine. He has one of the crew sit in the raised seat and push the buttons: immediately a rumble comes on, the engine is running.

Everything on this ship is in perfect working order. a very good feeling.

Back on deck we follow the instructions of the 3rd Mate how to don the immersion suit.

Don't try to stand up to put it on, lay it on the floor, take your shoes off and slide your legs into it . . .



. . . get up and wiggle inside it, zip up all the way, fasten the face flap. . .



... until all of you is well covered, just a bit of your face remains exposed.

You should be able to be inside in two minutes!

Only two people put it on. I have no idea how fast I would get that thing on in an emergency.

Hope I will not ever have to find out!



In the night, the ship pitched and rolled, it was not easy to sleep. Waves of about four meters affect even a large ship like *Amalthea* is.

In the morning *Amalthea* is still rolling gently, the water she displaces with each dip is nevertheless impressive.



Next day, the weather is overcast. *Amalthea's* wake reaches way back and disappears in the haze.

Our stay on *Amalthea* has become routine, three meals a day with interesting conversations, excellent food and attentive service, the clock advanced one hour at 1300 and leisure time for whatever we like to do:

taking pictures, especially of a  
sun rise . . .



. . . or a sun set . . .

. . .or taking a stroll and marveling again at the size of everything on board.





While we just enjoy the trip and take care of our personal chores, the crew is hard at work to get *Amalthea* in her best shape before we reach Europe. Cleaning, scrubbing, painting and repairing are going on everywhere.

Crew and computers are busy on the bridge doing all kinds of chores, administration, weather report, etc. Master and officers relentlessly check the working of the vessel.



Even the passengers are permitted to assist looking on!



In the galley and the officer's mess room, the cook and mess man are also very busy to get everything spick and span, in addition to their daily jobs.



And since the weather allows for outside work . . .



. . . painting and welding jobs  
are done . . .



and the twist locks have to be sorted  
for the inventory.



Of course we only see a  
tiny part of all the  
activities, but we  
understand that every crew  
member is doing his best to  
cooperate in the general  
task of getting *Amalthea* in  
ship-shape order for  
eventual inspection in  
European ports.

We will soon arrive in Antwerp and leave the ship. *Amalthea's* crew made our crossing  
the Atlantic a memorable experience!

Heart-felt thanks and warmest wishes for your future voyages to all of you.



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