

“Gardner’s Basin... Part Deux!!”

You may or may not recall an article I wrote back in the beginning of April entitled “Historic Gardner’s Basin...” and how it’s an oasis and oh em gee there’s so much to see and do and taste and imbibe and somewhere in there I may have mentioned an incredibly embarrassing scenario where I was physically rolled out of Kelsey and Kim’s Café on Melrose Avenue, crying hysterically whilst reaching like a desperate babe for the red velvet cake in the front case... Well... um... thankfully I am going to spare the epic foodscapade regaling this time around however I am going to “circle back” to the Atlantic City Aquarium and Atlantic City Cruises.

Last Wednesday, our association had the humbled privilege of embarking on our Annual July GACCA Event, touring the Atlantic City Aquarium and then setting sail at sunset on Cruisin’ 1 (that’s the name of the vessel) with Atlantic City Cruises. If you’re late in the game, Cliff’s Notes version, Historic Gardner’s Basin is located at New Hampshire Avenue and the Bay. Gardner’s Basin sits on the hub of Absecon Inlet, commanding magnificent vistas of the Atlantic Ocean. Sitting right smack in the heart of the Basin is the Atlantic City Aquarium. The Aquarium, which opened in May 1999, is the most dynamic addition to the basin. The Aquarium provides a first class experience for shore visitors. It also offers a unique educational field trip for students, offering super cool live animal shows throughout the late mornings and afternoons, where students will learn about the various sea creatures found in the region, exploring over 2,000 gallons of hands-on Touch Tanks. And ((super cute baby stingray alert)) the second floor has an exhibit dedicated to the different subspecies of stingrays. Bottom line, the aquarium is a fantastic way to introduce visitors, classes or community groups to New Jersey’s Coastal Marine Environment. And the cherry on top of this delicious venue-sundae is they host private events. Can you imagine? Hosting a corporate cocktail party, networking and schmoozing amongst colleagues, tequila and ginger with lime in hand ((or if it’s before 10 am, perhaps a nice lemonade)), watching Sam the Sea Turtle swim to and fro? “I say, good man, push forward with the merger, what have you got to lose, and oh my that Loggerhead Sea Turtle is simply marvelous...” See? All the elements of magical success, just under one roof.

Speaking of magic... There’s a somewhat whimsical spot when you exit the aquarium and head over to the dock for the cruise where the sun hits in just the right angle and the wind blows east ((not west... never west... west brings the green head flies and well... let’s just say I have some very chaste and unchristian-like words for them)) and if you close your eyes you can almost hear the smooth stylings of Seals and Croft whispering “summer breeeeze, makes me feel fine...” on the winds along with the faintest scent of jasmine chasing after. ((see what I did there?)). There is a name for this magical spot... Fish Heads Food Truck. STAHHP! I know what you’re thinking. It’s a food truck so she’s going to go on and on and on and on about it in some super long run-on overly melodramatic sentence ((breathe here)) where if you’re reading it aloud you lose your breath just before you finish the sentence and you push out the last words in a painful wheeze and guttural stop, punishing yourself on the inside because you totally knew you could have held your breath support just a little longer if you made better choices earlier on in the sentence... Man ((psssh)) were you wrong. Bottom line, this spot is very very cool. They offer traditional dock-side comfort food fare like fried fish and chips, and even alligator, while listening to live music like the ultra smooth Eddie Morgan Trio, with relaxing-beachy-sandy-style bistro seating. Check it out. I triple fish head dare you.

And continuing with the magical theme, let me tell you, there is NOTHING like experiencing a setting sun, glistening ((glistening I tell you!)) on the bay. Atlantic City Cruises offers unsurpassed experiences, exploring Absecon Bay and Inlet. They have a very diverse offering from sightseeing adventures and dolphin tours, to even private events. It’s a totally unique and memorable idea, be it a corporate meeting, a bachelor/ette party, birthday bash or even your wedding, ((and um, hi, you can plan a magic show?!)). How many times have you gone to a wedding, and although the venue was gorgeous,

you think back on so-and-so and their big day, it blurs together with 8 other weddings you attended because almost all of them had the same marble columns and that “first dance” on clouds, and you couldn’t quite decide between the Chicken Francaise, Filet or the Stuffed Sole? Atlantic City Cruises eliminates that confusion. No one would remember what they were wearing when they opted for the Chicken Francaise but I bet you all the money in Atlantic City you’ll remember every second of the event on Cruisin’ 1. So, give Jeff George a call if you want to add AWESOME to your list of life accomplishments.

You’re probably starting to get the distinct impression I’m having a bit of a love affair with Gardner’s Basin and the Marina area of Atlantic City. And Sam the Sea Turtle. I mean. He’s just... wow. But! Here’s what we can take away from what we’ve learned today. Gardner’s Basin offers some of the most fantastic spots for unique experiences, offering a ton of fun in the sun ((and set... creating lasting and unforgettable memories)), fabulously delicious bites, mouthwatering beverages, and there is nothing like experiencing the sunset on a boat. You are now wiser beyond words, and have something super surprising and impressive in your back pocket when someone texts you tomorrow asking what you want to do this weekend. You’re welcome.

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