

## **BLUES CRUISE REVIEW**

Whew! Linda and I just made it back from the Blues Cruise, a 7 day cruise thru the Caribbean with 4 daytime stops and non stop blues in the afternoon and nights. Actually, the music ran from about 4:00 PM to at least 4:00 AM every night (often 3 to 5 venues at any given time). Of all of the blues festivals I have been to this one was easily the best for talent, intensity, and closeness with the musicians. Class musicians were jamming with each other constantly, amateurs/lesser pros were given jamming opportunities, and there were always surprises in the announced acts where someone of stature just dropped in. I talked to Kenny Neal, Billy Branch, John Hammond, Slick Ballanger ( a 21 year old who is just an amazing blues man out of the Delta) and several band side players. We ate, drank and rode elevators with Rod and Honey Piazza, Taj Mahal, Deborah Coleman, and others. James Cotton, Rod Piazza, Billy Branch, Pat Ramsey, and Kenny Neal were some of the Harping highlights but there were many of them from other artists. I videoed about 4 hours of stuff and will try to edit out some of the big moments for me that Mark can post.

**Big cost but worth it!**

Dewey