

Down Home: The best 25 cents spent on spring vacation

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If an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, as the old saying goes, then what's a couple of tablets of Meclizine worth?


Joanna and I each paid 25 cents for a two-tablet package of the popular anti-nausea medicine. But we agreed it's worth much, much more.

This happened during our vacation to the Pacific Northwest. We spent several days in Seattle and took an overnight trip to Victoria, British Columbia.

Jo never had traveled to that part of the world. And I'd only been up there on business, which really doesn't count. When you don't have time to see the sights, eat the local food and soak up the natural ambience, it's hard to say you've "been" someplace.

That reminds me of another traveling conundrum. I've breathed the air in Frankfurt, Chicago and Tokyo. But if you asked me if I've ever been to Germany, northern Illinois or Japan, I'd say no. If you don't get out of the airport, you haven't really visited the place.

So, back to Seattle: We talked about visiting the region for years, but we always opted for someplace else. Finally, we cashed in some frequent-flyer miles and high-tailed it up there.

If you love trees, mountains, seafood and cool temperatures, we'd  highly recommend the Northwest. But we realize we enjoyed a surreal Seattle sojourn. It's known for gray skies and drizzle, but we soaked up seven days of sunshine. We're looking for our contract from the Seattle

Chamber of Commerce. They should hire us to import sunshine. We could get used to it.

But not on windy mornings when you travel from Seattle to Victoria. To make the trip, you board a ferry, which navigates up Puget Sound, crosses the Strait of Juan de Fuca and lands in Victoria Harbor. Normally, it's a smooth, three-hour trip. Except on windy days, when it's a hellish, eternal voyage.

Before we departed, one of the ferry crew members predicted a bumpy ride and offered Meclizine for a quarter. Jo and I looked at each other and said, "Yes."

We wished the college kid across the aisle and the woman in the business suit two rows back had coughed up a quarter each. Then they might not have, well, brought up other things.

Jo and I coped in our own ways. She closed her eyes and turned up her music. I focused my gaze on the steady shoreline. We survived.

That afternoon, the wind increased, and we were glad when our whale-watching tour got canceled. We've always wanted to behold those beautiful behemoths. But we figured you can't find a whale when you're looking at the bottom of a paper bag.

On our trip, we enjoyed wonderful meals, glimpsed gorgeous scenery and marveled at God's creation. But the best money we spent was two quarters for Meclizine.