

Sunny Spray's travels, episode 21

Porto Lajes das Flores, Azores (Portugal)

12th -15th July 2017. Translated and edited July 18-19th

Dear all,

The previous episode of *Sunny Spray's travels* covered our last few weeks in the Eastern Caribbean, with visits to Antigua, St. Barthelemy, St Maarten/St Martin and the British Virgin Islands (BVI). The BVIs looked like a very good starting point to cross the Atlantic Ocean: one leaves a bit more Westerly compared to leaving from St. Martin, so the voyage will be a bit longer, but the advantage is that one passes West of the Sargasso Sea, with its attendant mats of seaweed and its frequent calms. Anyway, that was the theory. Reality would prove to be quite different!



We left from the BVIs to avoid the calms of the Sargasso Sea as much as possible. Nevertheless, we experienced a lot of calms like the one pictured above.

As already mentioned in Episode 20, crossing the Atlantic is quite a trip: more than 2,400 nautical miles (nm) to the Azores, and from there another 800 plus nm to Southern Spain. Since we make on average 100-120 nm per day, we calculated that our trip until the Azores would take some 3-4 weeks, to be followed later by another 8-10 day trip to South Portugal or South Spain.

We had already been busy preparing for the crossing for weeks, in particular with the provisioning. Our goal was to have sufficient food and water for some 5-6 weeks. We bought most of the needed foodstuffs in St.

Martin, where one can really buy anything at near European prices! But fresh vegetables, fruits, meats and eggs would have to be bought in the BVIs.

Upon arrival in the BVIs we soon found out that the foreseen fresh produce sold for ridiculous prices. Some examples: 1,70 US\$ for one apple; 5 US\$ for 1 kilo potatoes; 4 US\$ for 4 tomatoes etc., etc.. But even worse than the price, was the quality! All so-called fresh produce came from abroad (mostly from Dominica) and had been kept in some cooling, and as witnessed by the bad spots on the fruits, had been kept cooled for too long or the cooling had been too cold. Everything rotted at an alarming rate. I bought 4 courgettes, but did not manage to eat a single one. Green beans the same. Carrot stayed OK for only 3 weeks. Tomatoes were inspected daily and eaten the moment they started to show rotten spots. By day 16 they were all gone. I had also bought 42 eggs and rubbed half of them with vaseline, while I boiled the other half for 8 seconds in boiling water. Both methods are very good to keep your eggs for a long time. When we left Senegal for South America I had some 30 eggs, and after 35 days they were still edible. Not so in the BVIs, after two weeks I had to throw out all the remaining 24 eggs.

The only things that stayed well was the meat, which I had bought frozen and put immediately into my own small freezer compartment. And I was lucky with two white cabbages, 4 small pumpkins, 8 granny smith apples, 16 Spanish oranges, 8 grapefruits and, incredibly, a head of iceberg lettuce! These all survived the many days of the crossing, and remained fresh until the day of consumption; some were kept in the cooling, most were kept outside a refrigerator.

We were also extremely lucky to have found, in the Carrefour in St. Maarten, so-called fresh tuna and fresh mackerel. They are not really fresh, but freshly preserved in some kind of gas and hermetically sealed in a sturdy plastic bag. One can keep the so-preserved fish outside any form of cooling, although I took the precaution of keeping them in the dark. Some years ago, I had encountered similar products in Lidl, so I knew they were really worth buying. I bought enough for some six meals, and still have some left. They were a real treat at sea, and very enjoyable.



A delicious meal at sea: winter carrot wrapped in bacon with soft goat's cheese, a boiled egg and some roast potatoes. For a full menu list, see annex 1 at the back of this episode.

Despite the fact that I had to throw out a lot of vegetables, we ate very well, with a varied menu. I always make a special effort regarding our hot meal, because I am convinced that healthy and tasty food gives an enormous psychological boost during a trip at sea. In addition, eating is one of the few things you do together during a long crossing, because you do not see that much of each other during the day and night. When you are awake, and up and about, that is mostly because it is your watch, and then the rest of the time is either spent sleeping or resting (for a detailed account how we normally spend our days at sea, see Episode 12, dealing with our crossing from Senegal to South America).

We arrived from Peter's Island (in the BVIs) in Soper's Hole, a very tiny settlement only visited by charter boats, motor boats and some private sailing yachts, on Saturday June 3rd. There is a small marina, a very good anchorage with moorings (30 US\$ per night), a quay with a pump for gasoline and a pump for diesel oil, and a very well supplied supermarket. We picked up a mooring and did our last shopping on Saturday afternoon. Bob went ashore a couple of times with the dinghy and jerrycans to buy enough fuel to fill up our fuel tank, and have 50 liters as reserve in jerrycans on deck.



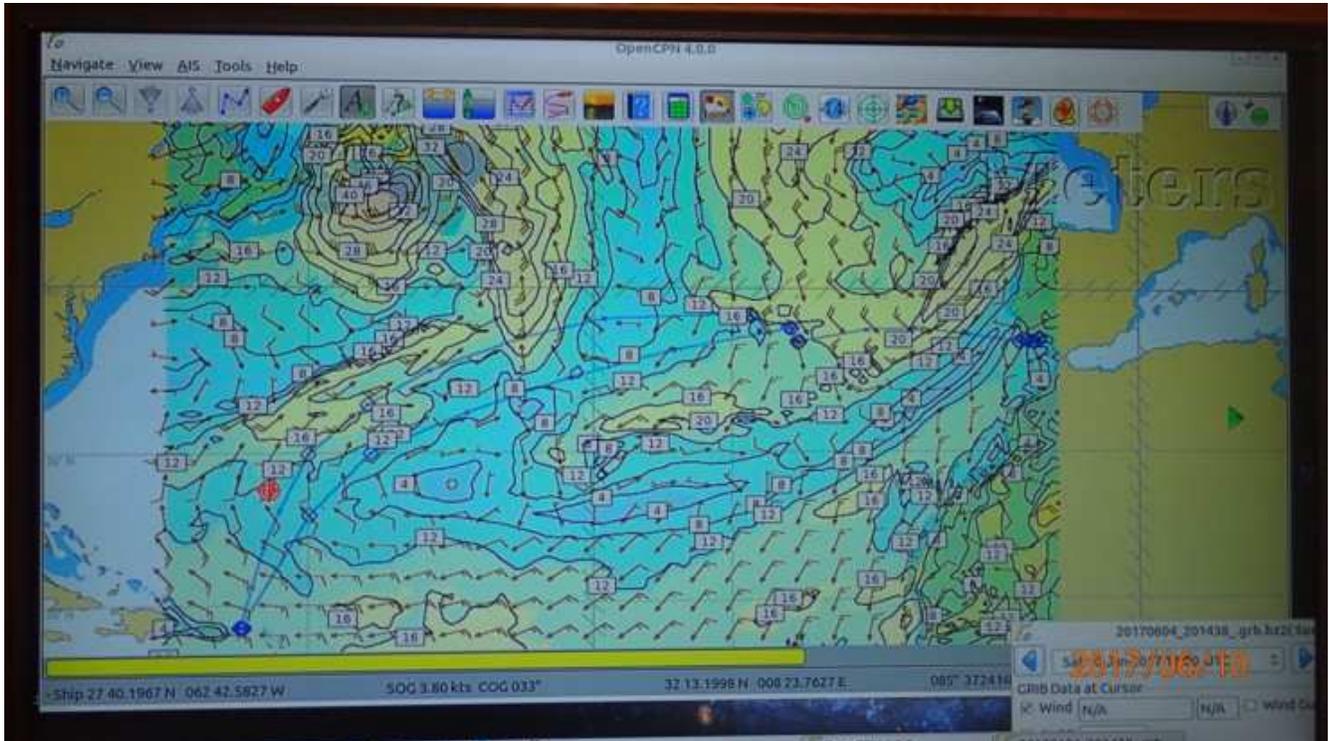
Soper's Hole turned out to be an excellent starting point for a Transatlantic crossing.

In total, we carried 669 liters of fuel. We also had 731 liters of water in our two midship water tanks; at sea, we do not fill the foremost water tank to reduce the weight in the bow. In addition, we carried 60 liters of good drinking water in cans as reserve, bringing our fresh water stock to 791 liters.

On Sunday morning June 4th, we made *Sunny Spray* ocean ready: the last of the garbage was brought ashore. The rubber dinghy was hoisted on deck, deflated, folded and lashed down. The rim of our forward hatch was filled with silicone kit, since the hatch is prone to getting flooded by seawater and will leak some. We detached the anchor from the anchor chain and brought all the chain down below. That way the anchor winch could be sealed off, so that we eliminated another potential source of leaking. The swimming platform and boarding ladder was stored vertically, and the rather big gap between the top of the platform and the railing was made safer by crisscrossing a 10 mm rope over the gap. Bob checked the engine one more time: oil level, any leakages, V-belt all ok?

We were ready at 14.45h, pulled ourselves free from the mooring, and headed North. The wind was perfect, from the East and we could sail half wind. With a very comfortable 5-6 knots speed we glided along Tortola's Western coast.

Our fourth East-West-West-East Atlantic crossing had started.



Prior to leaving we had downloaded gribfiles for the first 10 days. Afterwards we had to do without. Gribfiles are graphic depictions of wind strength and wind direction. The picture above gives the gribfiles for Saturday June 10th. The position of Sunny Spray is the red dot in the lower left-hand corner of the screen. If you look carefully, you see close to the red dot two blue lines from the BVIs towards the Azores and Southern Spain. Those were two possible sailing routes, drawn by Bob into the electronic map prior to leaving. After 6 days sailing we are quite near the top most sailing route, a little bit too far to the West. With more than 2,000 miles still to go, a negligible deviation.

The first 11 days went like a dream, and completely according to plan. The wind was mostly from the Southeast, which is excellent if you are heading towards 30-60. That means, our first waypoint was latitude 30 degrees North and longitude 60 degrees West. Since we had left the BVIs from position latitude 18 degrees North and longitude 64,5 West, we were steering just a bit Easterly from North. The only problem was that the wind gradually became weaker, and our daily distances started to drop below 100 nm per day. On day 8 (June 12th) we reached the position of the waypoint as close as we would get: I clocked 30 degrees North exactly on 61 degrees 46.5 minutes West. At that moment, our speed was an embarrassingly-low 2,5 knots. Still according to plan, we started our slow turn towards the East.



Distance per 24 hours:

<i>Day 1: 79 nm</i>	<i>Day 2: 110 nm</i>
<i>Day 3: 100 nm</i>	<i>Day 4: 95 nm</i>
<i>Day 5: 106 nm</i>	<i>Day 6: 89 nm</i>
<i>Day 7: 78 nm</i>	<i>Day 8: 96 nm</i>
<i>Day 9: 85 nm</i>	<i>Day 10: 87 nm</i>
<i>Day 11: 92 nm</i>	

The sailing was very relaxed, and soon we had reached a comfortable rhythm, whereby we tried to enjoy our hot meal before 6 pm. The evening and night were divided into the following watches: me from 19.00 h to 22 h, Bob from 22 h to 01.00 h, me again from 01.00 h to 04.00 h, Bob from 04.00 h to 08.00 h (sometimes even to 08.30 h), and me from 08-08.30 h until Bob would wake up, mostly somewhere between 09.00 and 11.00 h. After that we divided the watches as it suited us best.



Living at sea. The seating area in the deck house is converted into a comfortable bed, making watchkeeping much easier. To the right, the galley at night: everything scrupulously clean and stowed away, because nothing can cause that much irritation as dishes or food items flying through the galley.

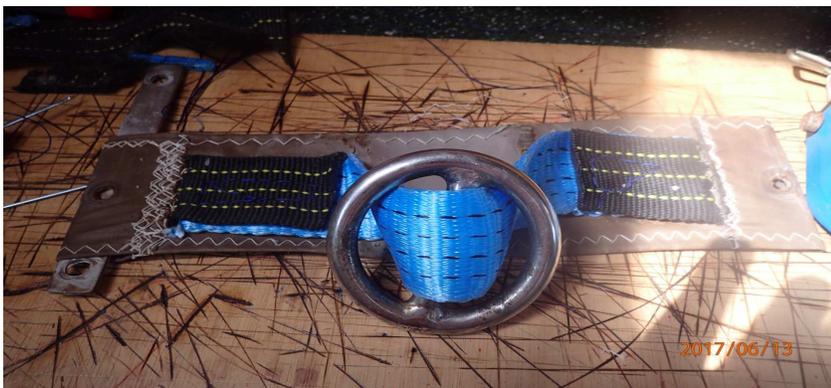
A very pleasant way to spend a morning watch was with my tablet, and an application with a language course in Portuguese. This turned out to be a great idea, and daily I tried to get through at least three lessons. In total, the course has 100 lessons, accompanied by an audio file with spoken text, and a host of files to test one's progress. And if you have enough of that, you can play educational games. During the crossing, I managed to get through 80 lessons, but got stuck as soon as I reached the various past tenses (comparable to the Spanish tenses). Now that we are here in the Azores and have good internet, I should download and pay for the accompanying booklet, so that I can get some explanations about the grammar. I am planning to do the remaining 20 lessons once we are on the last leg, from the Azores towards Southern Spain.

And does it help? Certainly, reading a Portuguese text goes reasonably well, but understanding the Portuguese-spoken language is still very difficult. Sometimes it sounds like Russian, with loads of "zjje" and "sssje" and "ss" and "es" sounds, and they are even worse than the Spaniards in so far as eating words. Nevertheless, my still very limited knowledge of Portuguese does not stop me in trying to speak it, and those efforts are highly appreciated.

At the beginning of this trip we tried some fishing with a trailing line, but the fish were not very eager to bite. The ones that did bite turned out to be birds that were flying behind the boat, attracted by the bright red fish lure. Sadly, one got caught by the hook, so inadvertently we had caught a bird, and by the time we had it on board it had of course drowned. After catching the bird, we had no more pleasure in fishing, a decision helped by the fact that with the bird we also lost a major part of our fishing line, and we didn't have a spare one.

We kept a tight watch on our V-belt if we had to use the engine. We found that after approximately 20 hours motoring we needed to take the V-belt off and clean the grooves of the pullies, since they would be full of caked rubber dust coming off the belt. In other words: V-belts were still deteriorating very fast, but fortunately we now carry sufficient spares. In addition, we are getting quite handy taking the belt off every 20 engine hours, and even getting it back on again goes smoothly most of the time (this is a tricky procedure, requiring both strength and dexterity).

Various things break down on such a long trip. The first thing to break was the hoisting band of the gaff, which had completely sheared off due to chafing. Because of this, the entire sail, with all battens and the gaff, came crashing down on day 9, fortunately falling neatly into the lazy jack configuration. I sewed on a new hoisting band, with the strongest thread that I could find (photo below), but two days later the entire band came off. The stitching had worked loose. So, we changed the system and used loops of 8 mm rope, instead of sailcloth and the hoisting band. That solution was better, and the gaff is still hoisted and kept in place with this emergency repair.



Top: the first repair to the hoisting band of the gaff. This new band only survived one day. Below: the top of the wind vane, chafed through when occasionally touching the sheets. The repair with duct tape did not hold.



Chafing was THE big problem on this trip. Not only the gaff hoisting band chafed through, but also the rope holding the gaff to the mast. Fortunately, that happened near the end of the rope, so we could burn off the damaged part.

Also, the top part of Olivia's red wind vane chafed through, this time due to occasionally touching the sheets (which only happens when the sheet starts to flap when the wind is very feeble, which of course occurred quite a lot this trip). In addition, a bolt on the clamp of Olivia's steering construction had worked itself loose, so one day we noticed that the vane and all worked diligently, but the rudder was not responding. Fortunately, this could be easily rectified.

On day 11 we experienced a West-South-Westerly wind, for the first time. We congratulated each other, as that was what we were waiting for! During the night the wind turned North, and the next day, day 12 (June 16th) we had the wind smack on the nose, coming from East-North-East. And the barometer was falling rapidly, that did not look good.

And it was not good, because that same night the wind became very strong, still coming from East-North-East. We put many reefs in the main sail, many reefs in the mizzen sail, and while our sail surface became smaller and smaller, the waves became higher and noisier. In the end, we had only two panels from the mainsail still standing, and still we blew onwards with more than 5 knots speed. In the wrong direction, towards Bermuda.



On June 16th (see red arrow) the very strong East-North-Easterly wind forced us to sail to the Northwest, direction Bermuda. We had to deviate from our perfect course line and were forced to head North the following days. A bit above the arrow you see from left to right, starting in Bermuda, three blue lines. The one closest to our position on the 16th is the Southern route; above it you can make out the Middle route and the Northern route. Eventually we would end up halfway between the Middle and the Northern route.

On day 13, the strong wind had died down and it became nearly calm with a very agitated sea. So, we motored for a couple of hours. We also did that on the following days, whilst heading North, due to the persistently Eastern winds. In itself heading North was not such a bad option, because from Bermuda one can choose to follow the Southern, the Middle or the Northern route. According to the various cruising guides the Southern route gives variable winds; the Middle route has a good chance to get Southwesterly winds, and on the

Northern route you are nearly guaranteed to get Southwesterly winds. Despite this, the Northern route is not often chosen because it is a cold one, bringing you very close to the Southern Ice limit (see map below). We stumbled upon the Northern route, not because we wanted it that way, but because the wind stubbornly kept coming from the East!



The Northern route, which we eventually followed, brought us very close to the June-July Ice limit. Look at Sunny Spray's positions between June 21st and June 29th, and above that, given as a red broken line, the Ice limit. And indeed, twice we saw a small iceberg, at first not recognizing what it was, and afterwards too surprised to think of getting the camera! The worn-down icebergs we saw looked grey-streaked, not pretty at all, a bit like snow fringing a busy road.

On day 17, with the barometer still quite high, we finally found the long awaited Southwesterly wind. This turned into a stormy breeze the next day, day 18 (June 22nd). It brought us a record day of 139 nm! In the afternoon, we lowered the mizzen completely, and reefed the mainsail to two only panels. We were still doing more than 6 knots! This became a bit crazy, so we lowered the mainsail as well. Bare rigged (meaning without any sail) we ran before the wind and were still doing 5 knots. We decided, for the first time ever, to launch the Jordan multi-drogue (the sea anchor with 139 tiny parachutes). This brought our speed down to a comfortable 3,5 knots, and that is how we spent this stormy night.

The storm did not last long, and had disappeared completely by the morning of day 19. In the ensuing calm, we easily managed to bring the multi-drogue back on board, we could even do it by hand, the winch was not necessary.

Distances sailed per 24 hours:

<i>Day 12: 61 nm;</i>	<i>Day 13: 91 nm;</i>	<i>Day 14: 74 nm;</i>	<i>Day 15: 107 nm</i>
<i>Day 16: 82 nm;</i>	<i>Day 17: 121 nm;</i>	<i>Day 18: 139 nm;</i>	<i>Day 19: 62 nm</i>
<i>Day 20: 88 nm;</i>	<i>Day 21: 98 nm;</i>	<i>Day 22: 93 nm;</i>	<i>Day 23: 80 nm;</i>
<i>Day 24: 57 nm;</i>	<i>Day 25: 64 nm;</i>	<i>Day 26: 85 nm;</i>	<i>Day 27: 100 nm;</i>
<i>Day 28: 112 nm;</i>	<i>Day 29: 106 nm;</i>	<i>Day 30: 115 nm;</i>	<i>rest: 76 nm</i>



The Jordan multi-drogue, the sea anchor. The light green spots in between the tangled ropes are the parachutes, made of spinnaker cloth. After the storm, the sea was so quiet that we could haul it in hand over hand. This was unique, because other sailors report that the recovery of this type of sea anchor can be a nightmarish affair, because each tiny chute gives a lot of resistance and a lot of weight to haul up. On Sunny Spray, the multi-drogue was hanging vertically down, reducing weight and resistance. Afterwards I needed half an hour to coil up the drogue in the exact position it needs to be. It is like folding a parachute, you need to do that with care so that the ropes and the chute do not tangle up when being launched. With the multi-drogue, it is the same.

The next four days (day 20-23) it remained as good as dead calm. My log shows that the wind did come from the right direction (Southwest), but that the strength varied between Beaufort 1-3. We did not know it at that moment, but for the entire remainder of the trip, wind would never be more than Beaufort 3.

We had now travelled some 2,000 miles, and still had some 700 miles to go to the Azores. And the tiny breeze we had was, once more, starting to come from the East, so again, dead on the nose! Motoring the remainder of the distance was no option, because we had already used quite some of the diesel taken on board in Soper's

Hole. We did not know exactly how much we had left, since our acoustic tank sensor, which measures how much diesel there is still in the tank, was broken since Antigua.

So, we decided upon the following strategy: every day we would motor some 8 hours, bringing us 40 miles further on. The remaining hours of the day we would more or less float around and go with the current. That way we still hoped to do some 60-80 miles a day.



One of the many windless days, here day 23, at sunrise.

And so, it was done. The strategy worked out fine, and with great satisfaction every morning at 10 am I wrote down our position in the chart. Life became even nicer when, from around day 26 onwards, the dolphins returned. They continued to follow us, day in day out, sometimes just three, other times, dozens.

That same day the dolphins returned, Bob decided to completely open the manhole on the diesel tank and manually measure the volume above the liquid level using a simple measuring tape. Half an hour of calculations later (the diesel tank is oddly shaped, so you have to calculate the total volume mentally dividing the tank in several different sections) we knew how much diesel we had used so far, and how many litres remained. Since we had left Soper's Hole with a full tank, and since we had diligently recorded how many hours the engine had run, it was also possible to calculate our hourly use. We found that we used 4 litres per hour on engine, and that we had enough diesel left for 82 hours motoring. Since we do 5 miles per hour on the engine, we did not have sufficient fuel to reach Horta on Faial. But 82 hours could bring us to Flores island, 130 miles more Northerly than Faial. We happily started the engine and set course to Flores.



On all nearly windless days we used our Raymarine ST 1000 autopilot. When there is no, or hardly any, wind, Olivia will not work, so then we uncouple Olivia from her rudder and attach the small autopilot to Olivia's helm. This autopilot uses very little electricity, and hardly makes a noise. It works only when there is not too much swell, because it steers the small rudder of Olivia. When the waves get higher and stronger, we shift to use the noisy but very strong hydraulic autopilot, which works on the ship's main rudder. And when there is some wind again, Olivia will silently resume her task.



Whilst motoring, we set all the sail we could to boost the ship's speed as much as possible, even when it was sometimes only a 0,5 knots gain.

We started our last leg of the trip under sail and engine, course and eyes set for Flores. The wind remained extremely feeble, and from day 27 to 29 we clocked 70 hours motoring. When the wind came from the right direction, the sails helped a bit. The last two days, once more, the wind started coming from the East, but we did not care anymore, Flores was in sight, and we knew we could reach it on the engine.



On day 30 (July 4th) we sighted Flores. We did not know exactly what time it was, since the BVIs we had crossed several time zones. We knew we had to go from GMT minus 4 hours (BVI time) to GMT (Azores time), but when we arrived we had only twice put the clock forward. In fact, we only changed time when we thought that 3 am is too early for the sun to rise! All in all, we did not do too badly clockwise, the only mistake we had was with the Azores summer time. Actually, nearly every boat that arrives after a crossing asks first, what time is it!!



On July 4th, we approached porto das Lajes, the only viable port on the island of Flores. The photo on the right shows, through tracking mode, how we circled the anchorage a bit, before deciding to enter the port. We would find a spot on the small breakwater (see red arrow).

Flores was, and is, a beautiful island, with very steep cliffs, intense green vegetation and, as its name suggests, an abundance of flowers, in particular blue hydrangeas. The only port suitable for yachts is Porto das Lajes, in the Southeast. There is a very tiny marina, able to host some 10-12 yachts, with very short finger piers. Unsuitable for boats longer than 10 meters, but still, 12 meter plus boats are trying to cram into the marina. There is an ample anchorage, but since it can be uncomfortable outside, most boats prefer the shelter of the marina. Not a single charter boat to be found!

When we arrived, we were only the second yacht moored alongside the breakwater. When we left, the marina was chockfull, we were moored three rows thick alongside the breakwater.

The marina is very quiet, and for the first time in more than a year, completely devoid of boom-boom music – although we did hear the music up on the cliff coming from town, oh well, it happened to be the annual *Fiesta dos Emigrantes*! We slept well and completely recovered from our days at sea.

Flores reminded us of Ireland, the same type of landscape, and as intensely green. But its climate is much better, during daytime temperatures are around 26 degrees Celsius, at night around 16. So, we dug out the duvet covers, nice for a change to sleep under a cover!

Culturally the Azores are Portuguese, so very similar to Spain, another reason to make us feel at home. Hurray, we are back in Europe, after 30 days at sea!

This weekend the weather forecast predicts favourable wind to cover the 130 miles towards Horta, on the island of Faial. There we will start looking for a *mecanico*, it should be possible to find in Europe a *mechanico* who knows Mercedes engines! And we will place several orders by internet, for many of the parts that broke down the past year, and it will also be a good idea to have some extra spare V-belts. After all, we still have to cover 800-900 miles to arrive in Southern Portugal or Spain!

Covered in total: 2,710 nautical miles in 30 days, making a daily average of 90,3 nm. Not much, but on the other hand, we arrived safe and sound!



The entire trip. The red arrows indicate days when we had adverse winds and had to deviate from our planned route: the first time (June 16) we were blown to the North by a severe Northeasterly wind. At the second arrow (June 23rd) you see we hardly make any progress, caused by the fact we were riding behind the sea anchor. The third arrow gives our arrival in Flores on July 4.

The chart looks different to what most sailors are used to. Its projection is not “Mercator” but “Oblique Normal”, which is a conical projection. The higher you come in latitude, the shorter becomes an East-West sea mile!

Animal of the month: the dolphin

Well, we did not see that many animals, apart from the poor bird we caught. Also, we saw a lot of jellyfish, in particular the purple “Portuguese Man of War”. But from Day 26 onwards we daily saw many dolphins, and therefore it is **The Animal of the Month**.

Our cruising guide gives a long list of the various dolphin and whale types you can see in the Azores, but apart from text, it does not give any pictures to help identification! So, I cannot put a name to these beautiful dolphins pictured here.

Many of the towns in the Azores have a whaling museum. Maybe I can find some information there, or pick up a book.



Before I forget: friend Rasa of the "Grain de Sable" sent me a link following election of the turtle as "Animal of the Month" in Episode 20. It is a link to a movie they made themselves in the BVIs, in which you see Rasa snorkeling with turtles and rays. With thanks to Egoi, for making the pictures and the movie. Just follow the link: www.sailongrain.com

Until next time! Hasta la próxima!

With love and greetings,

Helma and Bob
o/b *Sunny Spray*

You can (still) follow us on www.marinetraffic.com, boat name Sunny Spray, MMSI: 244780434

Annex I. *Sunny Spray*'s daily menu

Below the complete menu on board *Sunny Spray* during its Atlantic crossing from the BVIs to the Azores between June 4 and July 4, 2017.

Since a lot of my friends have either a sailing boat or a camper, I thought it might be inspiring to give the entire menu list, with hot meals that you can prepare anywhere. I do not give any recipes, since most dishes are well known. It is about the combinations.

This list complements the one given in Episode 12; some meals are the same, but differences are caused by the lack of certain vegetables.

I can cook a hot meal on my cooker (with two working hobs) and in the microwave oven. I am a great fan of using the microwave oven for cooking, it is quick and you do not use your precious gas; in our case we have to start the engine prior to using the microwave oven, so you do not use it for a 10 second heating job, it must be worthwhile the effort! I also have a gas oven, but I use it only for baking bread or pastries, otherwise the gas bottle will be used up too quickly. It is always a chore trying to get your gas bottles refilled, nearly every country uses different connections!. I also have an induction plate, but I use that only when in a marina. At sea my pots and pans would slide off the glass surface.

Day 1. Cauliflower with onion from the wok. Put the cut up cauliflower into a plastic bag and shake together with some oil and spices, then fry. Served with cooked potatoes and cordon blue (pork with hard goat cheese).

Day 2. Moussaka (prepared in the microwave) with basmati rice.

Day 3. Green salad with lettuce, cucumber and pips of a pomegranate, with left over moussaka.

Day 4. Toemis beans: green beans with onion and sambal oelek (spicy red pepper) from the wok. Rice and fried pork (in cubes).

Day 5. Couscous with stuffed green pepper. Stuffing of minced meat, tomato and corn. Cooked in the microwave.

Day 6. Did not feel like cooking, we snacked with crackers, toast and olives.

Day 7. Halve an eggplant, cover the two halves with pesto, heat in the microwave. Together with fried tomato, chipolata sausages and ble (grain).

Day 8. Chicken leg, put together with potato in an oven bag, heat bag in the microwave. Together with a green salad with tomato and onion.

Day 9. Precook carrot parts, wrap into slightly fried slices of bacon. Serve with tomato and roast potato (from the microwave) with sour cream.

Day 10. Beetroot from the microwave: precooked red beets, sliced, a layer of fried mince meat with onion, then a layer of potato puree, serve with sour cream.

Day 11. Lasagne made with tomato sauce, slices of eggplant, sour cream and long strips of porc.

Finally the sour cream is all used up. We continue, and use some more left overs.

Day 12. Dried white beans cooked in the pressure cooker: in the morning put water and beans in the pressure cooker. Heat until vent blows. Turn off gas. When lukewarm, turn gas on again, until vent blows, turn gas off. Repeat at least 5-6 times during the day. Result: perfectly cooked dried beans using a minimum of fuel. Beans were used in a one pot dish with sauerkraut, chorizo sausage (in chunks) and a banana. Everything in the microwave.

Day 13. Home-made minestrone soup (of course with yesterday's left over white beans) and freshly baked French bread (from a precooked loaf in a plastic bag).

Day 14. Rice cookies (rice mixed with various different kinds of grains, fried in a frying pan) with red beetroot (diced), crumbled goat cheese and fried bacon slices.

Day 15. Sauerkraut (leftover from day 12) with fried mince meat, cooked potatoes and fried apple.

Day 16. Spaghetti with fried red onion and artichoke (from a can) and strips of fried beefsteak.

Day 17. Leftover from the beefsteak strips with rice and celery from the wok. When ready (4 min frying is enough), toss the celery with spicy soy sauce.

Day 18. Macaroni with sauce from minced meat, onion, pepper and tomato sauce.

Day 19. Macaroni with mackerel (from those plastic bags), favas (thick green beans, a can), lettuce and the last to one tomato.

Day 20. Macaroni with cooked carrot and fried strips of pork. Toss the pork in a sauce of cream and Philadelphia cheese (resembling "geschnetzeltes").

Day 21. French fried potatoes (peel and dice the potato, fry the cubes in olive oil, add a lot of garlic). Green salad tossed with calamares (can), red onion, tomato (my last one), goat cheese, olives and fried bacon.

Day 22. Rice cookies of rice and grain (made in the frying pan), fried pork, slightly fried white cabbage (finely shredded). Toss the white cabbage with Philadelphia cheese.

Day 23. Bob's 73e birthday, so his favorite meal: French fried potatoes with garlic (see above), celery chunks from the wok, and fresh tuna (from those plastic bags from Carrefour).

Day 24. Lasagna with pumpkin slices, fried onion, fried mince meat. Heat dish in microwave.

Day 25. Red beans similarly prepared as the white beans, ratatouille (from a can) (Corinne, was delicious!). With ¼ left over green pepper. Heat in microwave.

Day 26. Macaroni with leftover ratatouille. Heat in the microwave.

Day 27. Fried beefsteak with cooked potatoes and fava beans (from a can, heat in microwave). Delicious and simple!

Day 29. Red cabbage (from a jar), potato puree, chipolata sausages and fried apple. (again).

Day 30. Macaroni with artichoke (from a can) with fried onion and tuna (from the plastic bag).