



**MAJA'S VOYAGE**

**2014-2017**

**Book 5**

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August-November 2016

Valletta (Malta) - Roses (Spain)

Cover picture taken by Fritz on 17 th of June 2015 between Messina (Sicilia) and Argostoli (Greece)

## **Saturday, August 27, 2016. Valletta. Malta**

We arrived last night by a direct flight Copenhagen-Malta. The last day in Denmark was very nice and warm, 28 °, but when we come out of the aircraft here, we feel a wall of humid heat, and it is 8 pm. We take a cab and I don't understand when the driver sits on the right to drive, I forgot they drive on the left here. Maja is in place but inside it is 34 °. We open everything and go out to dine. The nearest restaurant, on Manoel Island, is full and we go to a little cafe in town. When we come back the temperature has dropped to 28 °, it's better. We had a very good stay in the north, but we are also happy to return to the boat. This morning, Jens buys, tradition requires, fresh bread and two Maltese newspapers in English, but he forgets to buy fruit to resume his daily fruit salad. After reading newspapers, where corruption and lawlessness to build new constructions are much discussed, Jens began to tinker, he installs a new depth sounder.



Jens installs a new deep sounder

We ride to swim at the “ducks” platform where a duck mom had her 12 ducklings in June. But the ducklings grew up and left. And now I must speak of an old gentleman of 93 years from Bergen, Markvard Sellevoll. He was a professor of seismology when we arrived in Norway in 1982. He and Jens worked together and have always had a good relationship. We went to visit him in July when we were at home, and he told us about a former student, Erik, who is retired and lives on Malta. Jens phoned this morning to Erik, and he and his wife, Yvonne, come to see us at 2 pm. We sympathize quickly and after taking a drink, they take us home in the north of the island, in Mellieħa. They have been living on Malta 8 years, after Erik has spent most of his professional life abroad, first working for Shell and Statoil, in Cambodia, in Nigeria and in Libya, accompanied of course by Yvonne. We spend a nice afternoon together in their beautiful house, then Erik drives us back to the boat.

And, coincidentally, Markvard phones Jens when we're together. The four of us agree to thank the old gentleman in Bergen, who allowed us to get acquainted. Then we walk a little on the promenade along the sea, it's Saturday night and everyone is outside, the crowd and the noise are impressive.



Maja on the ground. Malta



Erik, Jens, Yvonne and Jeannette



Martial arts demonstration

There is an article in the newspaper here about quiet and solitude as being the new luxury ... but not for the Maltese, for them it is hell. Malta has the highest population density in Europe, perhaps this explains it. We stop to watch a martial arts demonstration and applaud their achievements.

**Sunday, August 28, 2016. Valletta. Malta**



A sign in the Maltese language

Calm day, it's hot, 30 °, sun and blue sky without a cloud. We ride, late in the morning, to the platform fitted to swim the farther from here, the one that is more open to the sea. There are more waves but the water is cleaner. The rocks form a sort of pool for the kids.



Natural basin for the children

Lunch at the boat, rest during the hottest part of the afternoon, then we ride to the Msida Marina where we were just before putting Maja ashore. The pier where the berths for visitors are has several free places. We go to swim again, this time to the “ducks” platform and we see them, but they are only four young ones now and the mother duck. They were twelve in June ... they are almost adults now. They swim among the swimmers and some children throw bread to them. The mother duck stays a little back and leaves all the bread for her children, a good mom.



The mum duck with four of her children



Valletta

And I saw with my own eyes, a dog which was swimming and then climbed up the ladder! We return to the boat. It's funny, now we are used to living in Maja on land, although it's rather primitive, especially for the use of water. We throw all our used water (a minimum) in the toilet tank. But we take showers and we're using the toilets on land. Jens washes Maja, she is very dusty. We dine in a Turkish restaurant and share a large plate of semolina, corn, salad, fries and a little meat with yogurt, good and cheap. No coffee at this place but the waitress goes to the nearest café and brings some for us. Tomorrow, Maja will be put in the water again.

**Monday, August 29, 2016. Valletta. Malta**



## Maja is put in her element



Maja, back at Msida Marina

Maja is put in the water at 10 am; all goes well, no problem. We motor around Manoel Island and go to the Msida Marina, a long journey of 2 miles (3.6 km). We are almost at the same place as in June, just behind the pier, and, by chance, a yacht with "blue" in her name is close by. I add it to my collection ([www.havskov.net](http://www.havskov.net)). Jens fixes the Norwegian flag and I re-hoist the Maltese courtesy flag. It is very hot but there is a little bit of wind and we are very close to a platform for bathing. Jens phones Erik and they'll come for lunch on Maja. Jens goes shopping while I do the cleaning. They arrive, I made a Greek salad and ham, cheese ... and we spend, again a great time together. It's funny, we speak Norwegian together but there is only one Norwegian, Erik; Yvonne is Dutch, Jens is Danish and I am French!





## Yvonne and Erik



### Our “cruise” today

Then we wash the dishes, we now have running water, no problem, swimming and shower with the hose on the pontoon. Even the cold water is not cold here. Jens helps me with a map of Europe with our trace from Bergen to Finike (Turkey) and the beginning of the return to Malta. I send many mail: "The blog starts again". Jens puts back the jib and washes Maja one more time, he wasn't happy with the first wash. Our dinner tonight: three biscottes and a cup of tea.

Manoel Island-Msida Marina: 2 nm (3,6 km)

Florvåg-Msida Marina:  $6\ 088 + 2 = 6\ 090$  nm (10 962 km)

### **Tuesday, August 30, 2016. Valletta. Malta**

We slept well, glad to be on the water again and lulled by the waves (5 cm!). Jens resumes his good habit to make a fruit salad for breakfast. Then he prints the photo of the four of us, Erik, Yvonne, Jens and I, and I ride in town, to send it to Markvard Sellevoll. I take pictures and, along a marina, see a boat with "blue" in her name. Workers are repairing the pontoon gate which is open. I go and take a picture and get out. I am lucky because here everything is closed, guarded and private.



A street



People live her. A little apartment back each gate

I also go back to a dock where I had seen a "blue" Friday night, the night we arrived, but Saturday and Sunday, she was gone. But today, she is back, so two new "blue". I do some shopping, a large supermarket is well stocked, but everything is imported mainly from Italy and Great Britain. I also buy a book (another one) on flowers. Jens works during that time, DIY and Seismology. We swim, it's 5 minutes from here and take a shower on the dock, I even wash my hair. Lunch, rest and blog. And there, I have problems. I catch up with the Sunday and Monday blogs, but put the dates wrong. I see that I have two with the same date, Saturday 27, and erase one. But in fact this is Monday and I have only one Monday, of course. Back to work, I must do it again. I have the text in Word, I just take copy, but I have to get every photo, it's not the end of the world, but it takes time. At 6 pm, we go swimming, rocks and pool are in the shade, but that's fine, it's cooler. On returning, we look at an angler who is pulling hard on his line. It must be a big fish ... but the poor guy, he hung his hook into a thick rope used to moor boats. Finally, the line breaks, he doesn't look happy and goes home. Dinner, the last one on Malta, at a restaurant just behind the platform where we swim, 5 minutes from here. A salad and a pasta dish (we begin to acclimate ourselves to Italy, we leave tomorrow), and it's enough for us. At a long table, a group of local pensioners have a huge pizza each, what a waste. Walk along the quay, we see a Fisher 37 and to bed, tomorrow the alarm clock rings at 5: 30 am.



Last meal in Malta

**Wednesday, August 31, 2016. Malta-Marina di Ragusa. Sicily**



Malta, contrast island

Up at 5:30 am, it's still dark. We get ready, have breakfast and leave when the sun rises. I take the last photos of Malta, island of contrasts: fortified city on one side and modern buildings on the other side that make it look like Miami. The sun rises, the weather is beautiful and calm, not a breath. We head north to Marina di Ragusa in Sicily. Quiet navigation, a dolphin comes to see us and another yacht, motoring too, passes us, she is called "Susu". I do the blog, no problem. It's so hot that we are wearing only swimsuit and we refresh ourselves several times with buckets of sea water. But we have refined the system, we have fresh water in bottles and we can rinse ourselves, idea borrowed from Fritz and Margret.



Straight north



Calm



Dolphin

The day passes quickly and we get to Marina di Ragusa at 4:30 pm. Marina di Ragusa is the name of the city and was called that long before the construction of the marina, which is called in Italian, Porto Turistico.



I take down the Maltese flag and put up the Italian one  
(The red id faded, but it is the Italian one, not the Irish one)



A mariner takes Jens to the office



The beach

A Marinero welcomes us and then takes Jens to the office in his Zodiac. The marina is huge and many foreign yachts spend the winter here. But now many berths are empty. I must say that it's quite expensive ... until tomorrow when the low-season prices start. We pay a high night rate today and it will be much cheaper tomorrow. Ankerdram then we walk in the city. We are surprised to see the crowd! Marina di Ragusa is a seaside town and apparently the Italians are still on vacation. The beach is beautiful, long, with fine sand, equipped with showers and so very popular. We swim and another surprise, the water is at 29 °, even warmer than in Malta. People stay long at the beach and when we go up at 7 pm and start looking for a restaurant, it is clearly too early for dinner. We walk a little and we have to be careful, many vacationers are riding bikes and on the same street, everything is mixed, pedestrians, bicycles, motorcycles and cars. At 8 pm we are ready for dinner but we are the first clients in the pizzeria.

Malta-Marina di Ragusa (Sicily): 53 nm (95 km)

Florvåg-Marina di Ragusa: 6 090 + 53 = 6 143 nm (11 057 km)

**Thursday, September first, 2016. Marina di Ragusa (Sicily)**



Bike path



The marina is big and there is a shuttle

A little cooler last night, we need a light cover from 5 am. Jens puts the bikes on land and sees that mine is flat at the back. And I wanted to ride on the pontoons to look for boat names with "blue / blue". Jens proposes to lend me his bike. Okay. And I find four names with blue! I also see "Susu", the yacht which passed us yesterday. They are Maltese who spend two days here and leave after tomorrow. Jens during that time fixes my puncture and works on the boat: he strengthens the corner of the opening under the cockpit where we have the bikes, he saw a crack at this corner. Then we go by bike towards west. And on this side of town, a nice new bike path runs along the sea. After a small beach at the marina corner, the landscape looks more like Malta, the coast has no beaches but plates of rock. There are some people who swim there and there are showers. We reach the village of Casuzze, 2 km from here, and a little boatyard has about ten small boats ashore. And among these ten boats, what do I see? A "Blue Fish". We're back and we swim from the rock plates, but it is not so easy to go down into the water, no ladder here. The advantage is that there are fewer people and that we don't take back kg of sand in the boat. But between us, I prefer a beach. Lunch at the boat, rest, blog and Jens works a bit with seismology, then we ride towards east, on the other side.



No beach, but flat rocks



A 420, the dinghy we had in our youth, Catherine and me

Jens spotted a regional park a little further. We find it but the tracks are hard and stony. We try a little but it's really hard. The landscape is dry, grilled and there are no more flowers. At one point, the trail runs parallel to the road and is separated from it only by a few bushes and a small fence. So we pass on the road and take the way back.



The track



We pass the fence

But Jens rolls on a thumbtack (!) and gets a flat tire. Second puncture repair of the day. Fortunately, he carries always a repair kit and it's done in 5 minutes. We swim from the beach and are back in town at 7 pm, the night begins to fall. We go shopping at a large supermarket and dine at the boat under the stars.



Second puncture of the day



The square in the evening

### **Friday, September 2, 2016. Marina di Ragusa (Sicily)**

We go for a swim before breakfast, at 8 am, at the small beach nearby which is deserted. It's very nice. We then look for polished pieces of glass but it is quite difficult here. The gravels where we find them are under water when the wave arrives and discovered only when the wave recedes, so we have to be quick, it's a sport. At 10 am, we ride towards west on the beautiful bike path to the village of Casuzze. There, Jens visits a bike shop to buy a new repair kit for punctures. It's funny, the merchant doesn't speak a word of English and Jens not a word of Italian, but between cyclists, they understand each other.





Jens in the bike shop

From there we turn to the interior, to the north. The landscape is not very pretty, plastic greenhouses, abandoned buildings, but old and beautiful small stone walls. It's warm, 30 °, but we're on the side of the shade when there is some. We arrive at Santa Croce Camerina, a quiet little town. The old men sit on benches in the shade or at the café and the discussion is lively. A policeman, apparently effective and whistling (and his whistle has a sharp sound that pierces the ears), approaches the badly parked cars and the drivers are rushing to move them.



On the square. Santa Croce Camerina



The whistling policeman

We sit in the shade, sipping orange juice during half an hour. It is nice and it's a little hard to leave. But now the road goes down to the sea and the next swim serves as a carrot. We reached the sea at Punta Secca where a lighthouse is practically on the beach. Swimming, water at 27.5 °. Return to the boat along the coast and swimming again at "our" small beach. It is 1: 30 pm and the few who were there are leaving to have lunch. We have the beach for us. It appears rocky when you go down, but the bottom is sand. The first time we came here, we didn't see the shower which is hidden in oleanders. We did 19 km, not bad in this heat. Lunch, rest, blog and fourth swim of the day. Dinner at the boat.



Grapes



The lighthouse. Punta Seca



The shower in the oleanders

**Saturday, September 3, 2016. Marina di Ragusa. Sicily**



Hard life

Not very nervous today. Swimming in the morning wakes us up a bit and after breakfast we ride to the city. I buy postcards in a shop and stamps at the next door tobacco shop. We drink orange juice and I write the cards. A drama is played at the next table: a boy of 9-10 years is riding an (electric!) patinette while his mother is drinking coffee. He is riding around the square but at one moment when he returns, his mother is no longer here. He starts to cry and the waiters console him, tell him to sit on a chair. They are nice with him and I hope his mother comes back later. Poor kid. I know where the post office is, on top of a street. So we go and there is a long queue. I just need a mailbox, but there is none. In a post office? A woman shows me to take a queue ticket, but I show her that my cards are already stamped. A man joins us and shows me, through the window a letter box at the next intersection. I thank them and push the door to exit. It is a mistake. This triggers an alarm! We must go through the same door to go in and go out, the door to leave seems to be the emergency exit, I guess. Oh, la, la, it's complicated. We go shopping at the supermarket, we want to buy fish. The choice is limited for a seaside town, but there are nice filets



The fish



The modern part of the town

We ride back to the boat, swimming, lunch and rest. Our neighbors invite us for coffee at 9 o'clock. We dine, our fish is good, and at 9 pm we go to visit them. They seem surprised to see us. They meant 9 am tomorrow morning! But they receive us very nicely. David and Annie, from England and their yacht "Serenity" have sailed for several years in the Mediterranean and will spend the winter here. A French couple, a little further, will also spend the winter here. This is apparently a popular marina for winter, but already to stop in September, it's a little early. One can still sail several months here. We talk about our different experiences and got back to Maja at 11:30 pm, we leave early tomorrow.

### **Sunday, September 4, 2016. Marina di Ragusa-Licata. Sicily**

Jens asked at what time the service station for boats in the marina opens. No problem, at 7 am. We go there at 7 am and the only living being is a friendly dog.



The friendly dog

Jens phone, yes, yes, he is coming. We take diesel, the pump is slow and we leave at 7:30 am. No wind at all but a small swell that makes Maja dance. We are three yachts leaving at almost the same time and we will be with one of them all along. It is rare that we are going at the

same speed as other yachts; they are always faster than us, sailing or motoring. But we can pass her, she is even slower than us.



We pass her!

Little appetite for breakfast and we can do nothing. I try a sudoku but after 30 seconds I feel that it is better to stop. We motor along the coast towards west, it seems dry. Light lunch and I take a nap. I sleep a long time: we pass a small platform marking the crossing of two underwater pipelines and after 7 miles, a second one, and I slept all the way, about an hour and half. When I wake up, the wind has picked up and we combine motoring with the jib, it's too close to the wind to go only sailing.

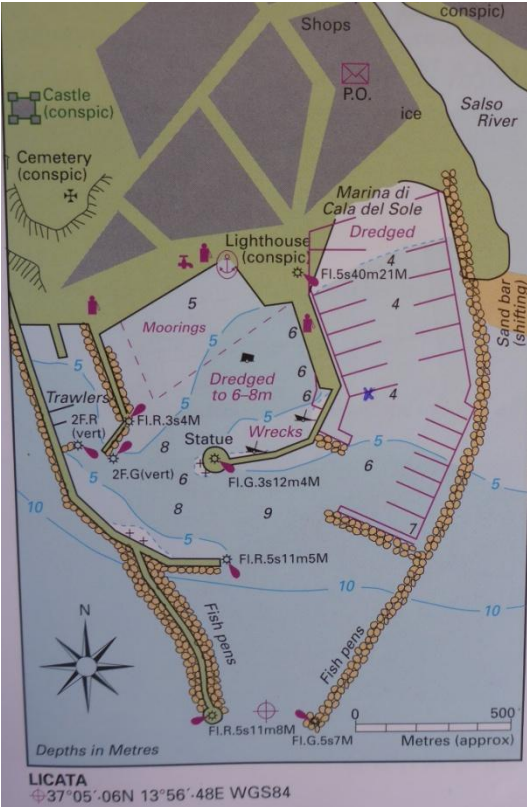


More wind now

The wind is F 3-4, beautiful sea and it's much nicer now. We see the lighthouse of the port where we go, Licata, and I don't understand why Jens goes much to the left and not directly to the lighthouse. But he's right, we must bypass a long pier that goes out to sea before turning into the port. This port is huge, divided into a fishing port and a marina and the lighthouse is at the harbor bottom.



We are in Licata harbor which is huge



Harbor plan. Licata

A marinero comes to help us, it is 2:30 pm and we did 36 miles. Taking our ankerdram, a Schweppes, I notice a "blue", two boats from us and I take a picture from Maja. I also notice

many yachts carrying the French flag, but our neighbor across is from Quebec. We swim at a small beach just outside the marina, near the estuary of the river. Then ride into town. First impression of Licata, it's not beautiful, grey buildings and not very well maintained, streets in bad conditions, weeds everywhere. But the old center compensates this: narrow streets decorated with ... umbrellas hung in the air, beautiful old palace, nice squares, tree lined streets.



Street decorated with umbrellas

It is now 6:30 pm and the birds make a real racket in the trees before falling asleep. We dine at a restaurant where we are the only guests, but it's Sunday night, and it's good and Italian: antipasti, pasta, meat and salad. The waiters, 3 for us 2, don't speak a word of English, but are friendly. And after coffee (excellent but very small) the restaurant offers us a small lemon sorbet. When we return to the port, the streets are full of people, everyone is walking. Rod Heikell, the author of the guide "Italian Waters Pilot" says of Licata, "In the summer, it seems as if the entire population takes its *passaggiata* along the yacht mole parading new clothes and eligible girls for all to see".

Distance Marina di Garusa-Licata: 36 nm (65 km)

Florvåg-Licata:  $6\ 143 + 36 = 6\ 179$  nm (11 122 km)

### **Monday, September 5, 2016. Licata. Sicily**

Quite windy today and gray at times, it seems good, a little cooler. We're not going to swim early, it's not so tempting today. After breakfast we read the newspaper. We don't find newspapers in English here, so we read old "Guardian Weekly" that we brought from home. The March news are a little bit "passé" but feature articles are always interesting. Then Jens works on Maja (again!): the wood edge cracked for staying so long in the sun in July-August in Malta. He puts Sikaflex and clamps. We ride into town, from streets without character to small picturesque streets. We want to take our daily fresh orange juice but the café owner doesn't have it. And he makes us understand that he won't make juice with oranges from Spain or Turkey, he is waiting for the Sicilian oranges, much better according to him.



Not much room for bikes

So we take homemade lemonade. We ride along the fishing port, quite active, and take the track between the beach and the eroded cliff. Few people on the beach, the weather is gray. A line of rocks (natural or not, I don't know) protects the beach so there are no waves despite the wind. We swim, we took up again our habit of 200 fathoms every time we swim.



Back from the beach, the sea is on the right

Lunch, work for both of us, seismology for Jens and blog / photo ranking for me. We are so absorbed we don't see the time pass and when we are finished, it is 6 pm. Swimming at the



small beach, deserted, and when we get out of the water Jens finds only one sandal. Mystery. There is nobody. But this is a dog who took it to play. Thankfully it quickly abandons its toy and Jens recovers his sandal. Diner and we look at the light beam of the lighthouse. It illuminates, very strongly and every four seconds, the two upper floors of a building.



The lighthouse beam is towards the sea



The lighthouse beam is on the building

## **Tuesday, September 6, 2016. Licata. Sicily**

We go swimming at 8 am, we have the small beach just for ourselves. Little movement in the marina, many boats are already parked for the winter. Funny idea, the weather is nice and man can still navigate a while. This marina is recent, a brochure says it will have 1,500 places, but for the moment there are only 500 or so, and it is far from full. We do a laundry and Jens repair my bike, the gears keep jumping, and we start our exploration of Licata. We want to climb to the castle, but first along the river and making a loop.



We follow the river

It's hot, the sun is shining but it's a little windy. Jens visits a DIY store in a shopping center and we cool us there, air conditioning is appreciated. And then it goes up but we get there and are rewarded with a beautiful view of the harbor. Castle San Angelo, from the XVII th century is open to the public. We look at an exhibition of objects of old, plows, tools, old furniture and especially an old crib. But it should not be that old, our daughter Nina slept the first months of her life in a similar cradle.



The cemetery with mausoleums



View over the harbor



The castle



The crib ... Nina had the same

We go down, but the nice looking pavement of the steep street is very dangerous for cyclists, it's slippery, so I walk down. Back to Maja, swimming and lunch. Studios afternoon inside, third swim and dinner of a pizza in the city. We take coffee at the same café as yesterday where the man didn't like Spanish or Turkish oranges to make juice and he serves us a very good cappuccino, along with an almond biscuit made by his father. We walk on the dike and see two yachts anchored in the bay where we swim. We leave tomorrow.



The Sicilian flag with three legs  
(like the Isle of Man flag)

**Wednesday, September 7, 2016. Licata-Sciacca (Sicily)**



Big change today: I put my cloth pins down!  
(They were at the top before)

We leave at 6:30 am. You may be wondering why we start so early? It's because the wind picks up in the late morning normally and often from the west or northwest, so against us, who are going towards northwest. This also means that the return to Norway will be more problematic than the descent, westerly winds against us now and north wind against us along the coast of Portugal. We will closely monitor the weather forecast and take advantage of good "windows". Starting so early we try to have a few hours of quiet. This is what happens today. We planned to stop in San Leone, a port 20 miles from Licata, but when we are in front of it, at around 11 am, it's still quiet so we continue. The wind rises around 1:30 pm, F3-4 well in the nose. The waves take some time to form, but by 2:30 pm Maja capers like a drunk goat, it's not yet the crazy camel but she is really moving!



Wind and waves against us

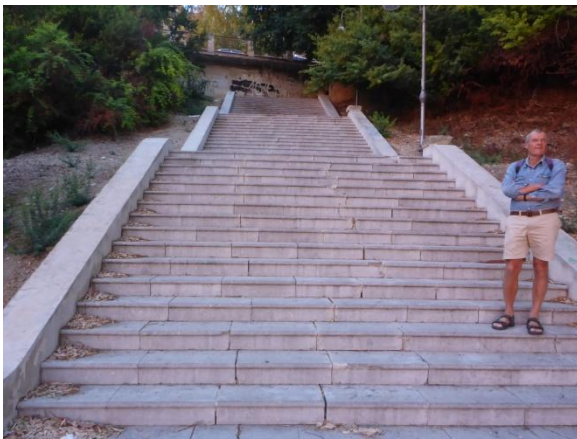
We advance more slowly too, the waves slow down the boat and even with more engine power, our speed is only 4 knots. And as the waves splash Maja we notice that a window is leaking, more work ahead for Jens. We arrive in Sciacca, a fishing port where a small marina is nestled in a corner. In the guide, Rod Heikell speaks of three organizations that manage this

marina. But I didn't quite understand, the little marina is actually divided into three parts, one administered by the "Lega Navale", one by the "Circulo Nautico Corallo" and the third one by "Circomare". And each part has its own entrance and is separated from the others by a fence.



We arrive at Sciacca

We dock at the first pontoon next to a French sailboat, take our ankerdram, the day was long and we deserve it, from 6:30 am to 5:30 pm then we walk into town. The lower part of the city is narrow and a wide staircase leads us to the upper town.



The stairs



The esplanade

And then, surprise, beautiful old town, nice esplanade with beautiful sea view and many ceramic shops, apparently a specialty of the city. Sciacca is also known for its thermal waters since antiquity.

Licata-Sciacca: 52 nm (94 km)

Florvåg-Sciacca:  $6\,179 + 52 = 6\,231$  nm (11 216 km)



Our trace, south Sicily: Marina di Ragusa, Licata and Sciacca

#### Thursday, September 8, 2016. Sciacca. Sicily

We greet our French neighbors and start talking. Joëlle and Jacky are from Saint-Bréan, across from Saint-Nazaire. We sympathize quickly, but unfortunately they go eastward and we go westward. Brief Encounter. We exchange cards, maybe we'll see each other another day, who knows? They leave and I am sorry but I forgot to take a picture. We mount our bikes and ride along the sea to the west. On the map, the lady in the tourist office yesterday showed us that we have to make a detour, the cars can't drive along the sea at a certain place. But we're not driving a car, so we try. But, soon, we find ourselves in a cul de sac. Never mind, Jens climbs a slope pushing his bike. But up, he comes to a disused railway line.



The slope ...



here, it's between a building and a railway ...



... and we arrive at a beautiful beach

He goes down and we take a small path behind a building and we come to a beautiful beach. It is too early to swim, but we'll come back later. We continue west, it's a mix of beautiful villas, small houses and unfinished buildings. Back at the beach, swimming and orange juice at a refreshment bar on the beach.



Jens is going to swim (notice the thermometer)

Lunch at the boat, work and walk into town, it's too steep to ride. We go and rent a car to make a little trip inland. We have it tomorrow and after tomorrow. We buy fish and green beans, it will be our dinner. On returning, we see that we have a new neighbor, also French. The guy calls me. I know I have seen him before but where? On the Island of Ustica, north of Sicily, in May 2015! Bernard and Genevieve, on their "Quatuor". We remember that we gave

laundry together to a lady to wash and that it was very expensive. They invite us for a drink, and we talk of our respective trips. Two friendly encounters today, that's a good day.



Ceramic shops



Marina La Liga Navale



But ours is Il Corallo

**Friday, September 9, 2016. Sciacca. Sicily**



Cultivated plain and dry mountains



We leave by car at 10 am. We say to Genevieve that she can borrow my bike, Bernard is not interested. We drive along the coast then turn north to the interior by small roads. Our goal today is a small town called Cianciana where two Danish friends of Jens, two brothers, own each a house. Anders, the eldest, gave very precise instructions by phone to Jens and we find his house without problem, a little outside Cianciana. But of course the gate is closed. Some neighbors are watching us and Jens goes to explain, in Anglo-Italiano (and more Anglo than Italiano) that we are looking at this house because we know the owner. The man replies ... in French.



Anders' neighbors ... who speak French

It's an old couple from Cianciana who emigrated to France 50 years ago and spent three months every summer in a house that they had built. We discuss, they have children and grandchildren in France. Near their home, an old car with French plates (77, Seine et Marne) is still here. When they were young they came by car but now they come by plane. Nice people. Jens would like go in the garden, and finds a hole in the fence, but we have to crawl between barbed wire and cactus.



I'm coming out of the garden

We get there. The house is small but the piece of land, planted with olive trees, is big. We leave and drink an orange juice at a café in town. Cianciana gives a good impression, it's clean, well organized, the streets have names and the house numbers. And they have a system so dogs and cats don't rummage through garbage bags: they hang them. After the juice, we search Christian (the second brother) and Lene's house, we know them from Kas in Turkey. It's only 200 m from the café.



The café



Christian and Lene's house, high and narrow

It's a narrow and high house, 3-4 m wide, 5 floors and with two doors. And we see many of the same type. Maybe the taxes were once based on the width of the houses? Jens looked on internet and a house here can be bought for 15 000 euros. I make pictures, we walk a little lunch and return to the same café to have sandwiches. The owner, hearing us speak French, comes to us.



The café owner



The melon seller

She was born in Grenoble to Sicilian parents from Cianciana, often came on holiday here to see her grandparents and met her husband here. We discuss, she is very friendly. Then we leave and drive up by a beautiful road in the mountain, 700 meters above sea level. Pine trees line the road, it's cool, it's another world. Unfortunately, this beautiful road stops suddenly, we need to turn around. We pass Bivone and a melon merchant on the side of the road tempts us. He also speaks French. It's funny this French presence in Sicily. We return, the sky is black and we get a few drops of rain. The campaign is very cultivated, wheat, grapes, olives, oranges ... and there seems to be enough water.



Bernard and Geneviève (we met them in Ustica in May 2015)

At the boat, Bernard closed our window to the front, it rained a lot here. Genevieve is delighted with her bike ride. We invite them to dinner, Jens does the shopping and cooking while I am doing the blog, and we spend a nice evening. A new yacht arrives and comes next to us, a boat of 50 feet (17 m) registered in Croatia. The captain compliments Maja: "She is a beauty," so I say to him that we can exchange boats! But he will not, and neither I, for that matter. "Blue Magic of Hamble" is here too, but I have her already in my "Blue / Bleu" collection.

### **Saturday, September 10, 2016. Sciacca. Sicily**

We are going to drive today also, Jens looked at the map and put his finger on a village, Partanna, at about 30 km from here and we will go there. We drive first to Porto Palo, a small port and nice long beach. We swim and then, as there are two showers, we use one to shower and the other one to change.



Two showers, just for ourselves



*Pancretium maritimum*

I am delighted to see *Pancratium Maritimum*, the first I had seen were in Arousa in Galicia (northern Spain). We drive on small deserted roads, 50 km per hour, that's perfect. But sometimes Børge, our GPS in Danish, takes us back on a highway. There, no more 50! Even when we're driving fast, the cars behind us are almost pushing us. We arrive in Partanna and ask for a "ristorante" at a fruit shop.



The good restaurant

The lady and all the customers discuss and agree to propose one, Nerocento via R. Elena. And we can also recommend it, very good and cheap (32 € for two). Good antipasti, excellent pasta and tender meat. The wine (we took a small carafe for both of us) is so good that Jens asks if he can buy 6 bottles. No problem. A client, Emmanuela, who speaks English, helps us and even her seven year old daughter speaks it a little too. A good experience. Back to Sciacca by a highway and at a place where a double white stripe and signs prohibit passing, a bus passes us. Jens drives to buy diesel with a jerry-can and then return the car. Quiet evening on the boat.



This bus goes too fast and passes us with a double white line

## Sunday, September 11, 2016. Sciacca. Sicily

We say goodbye to Bernard and Genevieve who leave at 10 am, they go south, to Tunisia. Jens goes shopping while I correct the blog from yesterday. Then we ride to swim at the beach, 3 km from here. It's pretty but the water is shallow. Here too, a line of rocks protect the beach. Lunch at the boat. In the afternoon, the French neighbor comes to see us, a young nice guy whose boat is called "Miss Roukette".



Miss Roukette's captain

He bought two pieces to protect the spreaders, he can't use them, so he asks if Jens is interested. We invite him to drink a cup of coffee. He is sailing full time on his boat with a buddy and takes a paying guest from time to time to help with the finances. He visited Norway and dream to return there, beautiful nature and few people. But before that he wants to cross the Atlantic. A true adventurer. Blog, then number 2 swimming at the nearest beach at 5:30 pm, beautiful light, few people and lots of polished pieces of glass. The Italians seem to love to talk, this is not new, but the feet in the water, that's new to me.



They are talking and talking ...

We take a shower on deck with the garden hose and I wash my hair. Jens pays the marina, nice dinner at the boat, we leave tomorrow for Sardinia. At the last moment, Jens checks the lanterns, sees that the white one at the back doesn't work and repairs it.

### **Monday 12 th of September 2016. Sciacca-?**

It's 6:15 am, we are going to leave soon, directly to Sardinia, about 190 nautical miles. Planned arrival Wednesday morning. Good weather forecast.

See you soon



### **Monday, September 12, Wednesday, September 14, 2016. Sciacca (Sicily)-Baya Carbonera (Sardinia)**

The weather forecast is good, very quiet the first few hours, and then the rest of the day a little wind against us, but not strong. Then the wind should turn north, so more on our side, we are going northwest, F 3-4. And the rest of the time, little wind. We must take advantage of this window; the prevailing winds are from west or northwest. We get up at 6 am, the sun has not risen yet. I see shapes on the water in the harbor and I think they are ducks, but in fact it's trash. We leave at 7:10 am, no wind and very calm so motoring. At 7:30 am, an alarm begins to beep and is flashing red, it's the engine cooling.



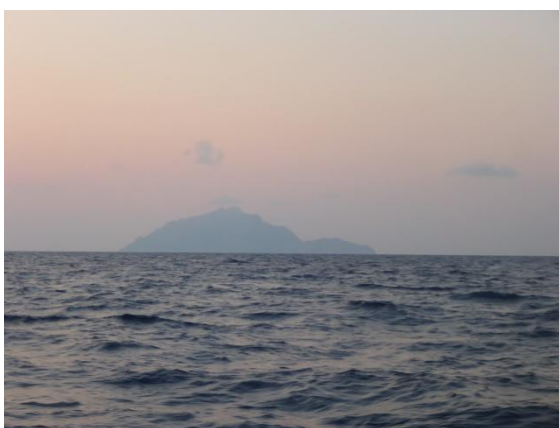
An alarm beeps and a red light blinks

We put in neutral, Jens checks, it's a false alarm. Soon after, the log stops. Jens checks (again) the thing that turns into water, it's turning. So it must be an electronic problem. And after a few hours, it will start to work again.



Cape Granitola

At 11:20 am, we pass the Cape Granitola and put a waypoint in the plotter, a little east of Cagliari in Sardinia, 174 miles and we have done about 15 miles. At 11:30 am, the wind picks up, F 3, right in the nose. And for 5 hours, we are going against the wind and the waves, very bearable but we are not moving fast, 3 knots (5.5 km / h), even down to 2.5 knots (4.5 km / h), it will take a long time to arrive at that speed. We see, on the screen, the "Lampedusa" ferry that goes surely to the island of the same name. Jens takes a nap and I am "in charge". I notice that the autopilot makes us do long zigzags, and as we already advance as a snail speed, we don't need to make the distance longer. I stop it and take the wheel, it's better this way. At 5 pm, we pass south of the Egadi Islands, a group of islands at the southwest corner of Sicily.



Egadi Islands



Egadi Islands on the chart

We see the city of Marsala and it seems we're stuck there for hours. Jens makes the autopilot less sensitive and it works. At 5:45 pm, the wind turns to the north, F 2.5-3, we hoist the mainsail and the jib. Combining sails and motor, we go faster and it's more stable. There is



not enough wind to sail only. Diner of a beans and barley soup, probably very healthy, but not so good.



Beans and barley



I wash the dishes

We dine out, the table is set, very nice. Then we start our watches: 9 pm-11 pm (Jens), 11 pm-1 am (me), 1 am-3 am (Jens), 3 am-5 am (me) and 5 am-7 am (Jens).



First night

The night is beautiful, almost full moon, wind F 3, very starry sky, music in the ears, it is a magical experience. I can even do Sudoku with a flashlight. At 7 am, Tuesday, September 13, we have breakfast and then Jens sleeps and I take a nap later. By late morning, Jens hoists the gennaker, white and blue, but we can't keep it long, the wind drops. We are in bathing suit all day and we take a sea water shower followed by a rinse with fresh water. At 3 pm, we pass a large cargo ship, motionless in the middle of nowhere. She is not anchored just staying there. At 5 pm we are motoring, no wind, and we slow down a bit.

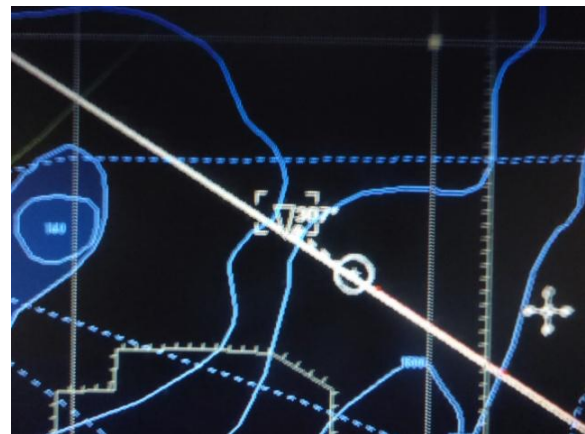


Second day. All around us: the sea

If we continue at 5 knots, we'll arrive Wednesday at 4 am, a little early and dark to reach an unknown coast. Jens makes us spaghetti for dinner and we start our watches again. The second night, September 13 to 14, is quiet and beautiful. Jens found me a French radio, it's an Algerian radio station.



A ship is going to cross us



How we see her on the chart

### Second night

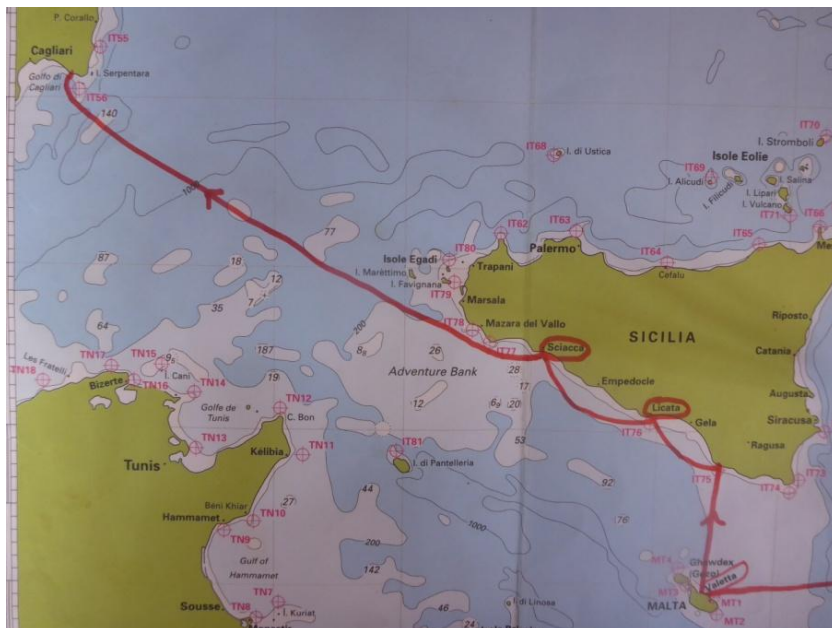
At 4:30 am, I see Cape Carbonara lighthouse, south-east corner of Sardinia and I think we are approaching it too "quickly," I slow again, to 3 knots. When Jens gets up at 5 am, he stops the engine and we are sailing at 2.5 knots. I sleep and wake up at 7 am. We are near the lighthouse, go around it and enter a large bay, Baya Carbonera. There are three possibilities in the bay: Villasimius marina, anchorage or mooring. It's a little gray but calm, so we choose a mooring buoy. Other yachts are anchored in this beautiful bay, but our "friend" Rod Heikell, the author of our guide, advises taking a mooring as it does not damage the seabed. We do that and since then nobody came to ask for money, we'll see. The sun comes out and we take an appreciated breakfast with fruit salad. This crossing was very nice, relaxed, calm, beautiful nights and no seasickness, the dream.



Carbornera lighthouse and the rising sun

Sciaccia (Sicily)-Baya Carbonera (Sardinia): 190 nm (342 km)  
Florvåg-Baya Carbonera: 6 231 + 190 = 6 421 nm (11 557 km)

**Wednesday, September 14, 2016. Baya Carbonera. Sardinia**



Our trace from Malta

After breakfast, we go to land with the tender. The coast is pretty, not damaged, discreet hotels, camping under pine trees and beautiful beaches. While we are in the water we hear an old couple speaking Spanish. We talk to them, the lady is from El Salvador and the gentleman is French. They travel in a motor home. We sympathize and we give them a card with the blog address.



The beach



The Franco-Salvadorian couple



The bay. Maja over there

We walk to the marina and drink our orange juice at a cafe there. We walk back and row to Maja, new swimming, the water is at 25 ° and lunch. Jens takes a nap but not me. I do the long blog for the crossing. I hear, at around 4 pm, children's voices, quite near. This is a group of

kids who trains in dinghies. A trainer, in a zodiac, is very loud, he shouts, screams and do the countdown to give a start shouting. The kids, all boys, have a good time with their little dinghy, very handy. During a pause, a kid capsizes on purpose and I take a photo. Then two others do the same to have their picture taken, I suppose, so I take another one.



The kids

We are ten yachts in the bay, 9 anchored and us at a mooring buoy. At 5:30 pm, 7 leave, some going to sea and others going into the marina which is in the hollow of the bay, 5 minutes from here. We are only three left. We wonder if a gale is expected. Jens looks at the weather forecast again, but nothing. For precaution, Jens takes the tender on Maja, if we have to leave quickly, we won't have to do it. We dine on Maja, read a little and go to bed, all is calm.

#### **Thursday, September 15, 2016. Villasimius Marina. Sardinia**

But the rest of the night was not quiet. No wind but the mooring buoy started to knock against Maja's hull with the small waves, at midnight.



The hard buoy



The solution

And it's a hard buoy with iron rings that could damage our small round windows. Jens tries to tie it tighter, to lift it a little. This works for half an hour but it starts banging again. He therefore puts a fender between the buoy and Maja and it's OK. We are ready to fall asleep when a big thunderstorm breaks, thunder, lightning and heavy rain, but fortunately no wind.

The sky is illuminated constantly by lightning. We finally fall asleep at 4 am. This morning is gray and a light wind enters the bay. We have breakfast, read a little the newspaper (the old Guardian, still) but the wind increases, F 3 , then F 4 and the waves too. At 11 am, we decide to leave and to go to the marina which is 5 minutes from here. And right after us, the two other yachts also leave. In the marina, it's quiet and it seems good.



Maja in the marina

We bike in recognition, go to see a lagoon with flamingos, but we only see the lagoon. Then a huge beach, facing east, therefore sheltered from the (western) wind. It's gray but there are still a lot of people.



The beach. A swim suits “shop” on the beach

We return to swim at a small beach near the marina, we are alone. Lunch at the boat, then rest, and again bike ride this time to the town of Villasimius, 3 km inland. Touristy town, very lively and all in length. We go shopping and come back to dine on Maja. I hope the next night will be calmer ...

Baya Carbonera- Villasimius Marina : 1 nm (1,8 km)  
Florvåg-Villasimius : 6 421 + 1 = 6 422 nm (11 560 km)



Villasimius

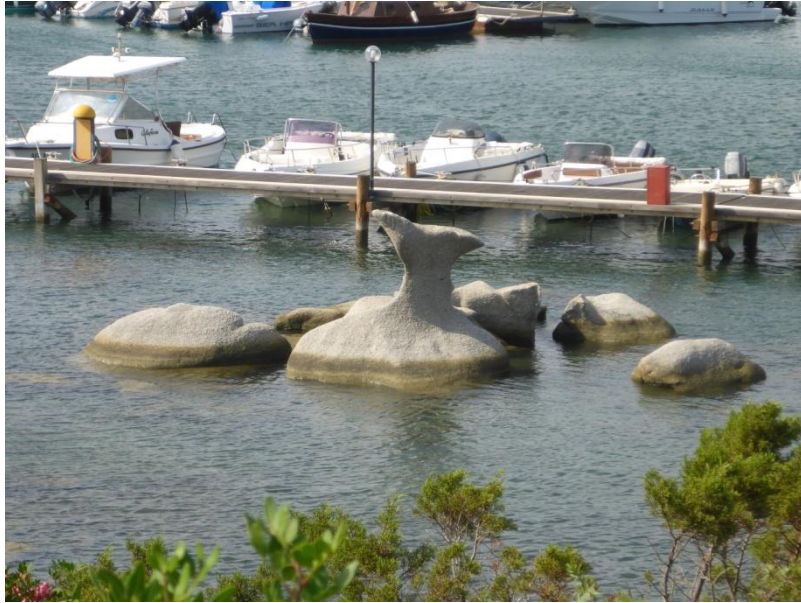
**Friday, September 16, 2016. Villasimius Marina. Sardinia**

Quiet night ... until 5am. At that time a big thunderstorm starts, thunder, lightning, torrential rain and violent wind blow. The anemometer shows 20 m/s (40 knots), the top of Force 8!



20 m/s. (40 kn)

We get it in front and depend on the two mooring lines to the pontoon, and, as Jens reminds me, it is I who made the knots. We have to close all the windows, so it's hot and it's quite uncomfortable just to wait, hoping that everything will hold, we can do nothing. We receive a deluge of rain, nearly horizontal and the wind made a terrible racket. It started in 5 minutes and after half an hour, everything becomes calm in 5 minutes too. At 6 h 45, it's over. What a relief. The weather had predicted thunderstorms and heavy rain but not the wind, it must be too local, I think. But now we know that heavy rains often mean gale. In the morning, we make a super-laundry washing. The marina has washing machines which take 17 kg, so we can put everything in one machine and with the wind and the sun, it dries in two hours.



A rock which looks like a fish tail



It dries quickly

We go, talk and compare our impressions of last that night with a German couple moored on the opposite pontoon. They combine camper and boat. Very friendly, and we have a lot in common, her and me: she doesn't like big waves, strong wind and prefers F 3-4. We invite them to take a drink tonight. We put on our swimming suits and bike to the beach where we went the first day. After lunch, I'll do the pontoons to find "" blues ". I found 3 and assist at a violent argument between two men on a boat that takes divers. A fat man in blue T-shirt screams, grabs his opponent by his clothing, gestures, is very red in the face, I fear for his health. The Italians are not especially quiet. I do the blog and Jens bikes to Villasimius to rent a car (for Monday) and goes shopping.





A group of retired people



Beate and Hans Jürgen

We share the work to make the beds, Jens makes the bottom sheets and I do the duvets. At 6:30 pm, Beate and Hans-Jürgen (the Germans couple) arrive. We are immediately on the same wavelength, they had a VW bus converted as a camper (home-made like us) and a small boat. They leave tomorrow and sail up Sardinia east coast. We spend a good time together and then they leave. Our dinner is bread and cheese, but good chocolate profiteroles for dessert.

### **Saturday, September 17, 2016. Villasimius. Sardinia**

Good night, calm at last. Beate and Hans Jürgen left early. It's nice weather today, a little wind, not so hot. We start cycling towards northeast, good road, and we come to a track that descends to the sea. Ample parking, large sandy beach, a lot of people. But shortly before, a small pebble beach is very quiet. We bathe there, it's very nice. In this small bay, Porto Luna, mooring buoys are available for yachts. To return, Jens, always adventurous, wants to take a small road. First, it's alright, but a bit further, the trail becomes steep and very rocky. We turn around and take again the main road. We arrive at Maja at 1 pm, we drove 20 km, swam and had our ration of fresh air.



The quiet little beach



Sea balls



Here it's difficult to bike

A cold beer seems good with lunch. In the afternoon, a large motor yacht has problem coming to the pontoon, she must try 4 or 5 time, it's quite entertaining. Soon after, a yacht arrives,

then another one, then another one, it's because the marina of Villasimius is the first stop of a regatta around Sardinia. At least 25 boats arrive and the marina becomes lively. And most of them come to our pontoon, Maja is in good company.



La régate

A French couple, a little older than us, tie their yacht just in front of Maja. I ask the gentleman if they participate in the regatta. No, they just stop here en route to Corsica and France. We go, before dinner, to visit a large Danish yacht that we spotted in the harbor. This is a young couple with two young children, 4 years and 8 months, who lives in this big boat; they are blocked here, their engine has broken down. Then dinner at the boat and beautiful moonrise.



They are here every evening

**Sunday, September 18, 2016. Villasimius. Sardinia**



Jeannette and Ebbe

Gray, windy. The yachts participating in the regatta leave. I talk with our neighbors opposite and they invite us to have a drink at half past twelve. We also have the visit of the young Danish dad, Mats with his baby, Ebbe, 8 months old. He and Jens talk about boat while I play with Ebbe, happy and smiling. Before lunch, we go on "Txori Txuri III" (which means White Bird in Basque) to have a drink. At the same time they invited the crew of a Spanish yacht, sorry, a Catalan yacht, which is moored on the same pontoon.



Christian and the “apéroles”



Jens and the Catalan sailors



Cecilia (Catalan) and Michou (French)

Christian and Michou, who receive us, prepared appetizers and we enjoy also an "aperole ", a very good Italian drink with a nice color. The conversation switches from French to Spanish and is very friendly. We stay a while and this is our lunch. A swim at the nearby beach helps us digest. Blog, then we are invited to dine good lasagna by the young Danes. Again and in a different way, good time with sailors, nice evening. The kids are cute and are used to live in a boat. A very social day today.



Mats, Anna, Ebbe and Lilian (DK)

### **Monday, September 19, 2016. Villasimius. Sardinia**

My sister Catherine comes today. We have rented a car and a guy delivers it at the marina, but we must go to the office in Villasimius to sign the contract. We take the opportunity to shop there and fill our stocks. We return to Maja to drop our shopping and then off again to explore Sardinia by car. First we follow the coast and notice a bay where we can anchor later on, when the wind calms down, it's still strong. Then we drive inland.



Sea and mountains



The abandoned jail

Unlike Sicily, the landscape is wild, uninhabited and uncultivated. We take a small road, pass near a large abandoned prison in Castiadas and follow a small deep valley in spectacular gorges. But no village, nobody, we start to be hungry and doubt to find a little restaurant. But at a crossing of two small roads, a restaurant appears, seems friendly and the parking is full, which is a good sign. We lunch fine, antipasti and pasta and that's enough. We don't want dessert, but a lady at the next table insists that the dessert is very good, so we share one that indeed is excellent, a kind of empanada with fresh cheese drizzled with honey. We leave and head to Cagliari airport where Catherine, my sister will arrive at 3 pm. We're right on schedule and we are happy to meet again. Back at the marina of Villasimius by the road along the sea. After a bend, we see a motorcycle accident, which fortunately does not look too serious. We go slowly, people have already stopped and one of them is making a call. We arrive at Maja at 4:30 pm, take a drink, and go swimming at the nearby beach. The wind is still strong so we dine inside of a good Greek salad.



Jeannette, Catherine, Jens

### **Tuesday, September 20, 2016. Villasimius-Punta Molentis. Sardinia**

Windy night but everything is quiet this morning. Jens returns the rented car then we have visitors, the young Danish couple and their two children. We drink tea together, Mats, the dad, walks 5 minutes with Ebbe in the stroller, he falls asleep and keeps sleeping on the pontoon (not dad, the baby).



Bye, bye Mats, Lilian, Anna and Ebbe

Then we say bye bye to them and wish them good luck with the repair or change of their engine. Jens pays the marina and we leave by a light wind, Force 4, nice.



Catherine, the new crew member

We're not going far, we pass Carbonara Cape and sail up on the east coast of Sardinia, just a tiny bit, and we moors Maja at a mooring buoy in the bay where we had bathed on Saturday. We made 5 nautical miles in one hour. Swimming, lunch, and Jens and Catherine go to the beach in the tender while I do the blog.



Catherine and Jens, rowing to the beach

By late afternoon, the few boats leave and the swimmers too, and we have this beautiful bay to ourselves. Jens puts an anchor in the back that pulls a little on Maja to prevent the mooring buoy to bang on her. We swim one more time and Jens prepares us a good stew of veal with green peppers. Dinner early, outside, under the sunset, readings and in bed.



The two sisters



Swimming and dinner

Villasimius-Punta Molentis: 5 nm (9 km)

Florvåg-Punta Molentis:  $6\ 421 + 5 = 6\ 426$  nm (11 567 km)

### **Wednesday, September 21, 2016. Punta Molentis-Arbatax. Sardinia**

We slept well last night, lulled by the little swell in this beautiful bay. Jens had put an anchor at the back and goes to pull it up with the tender. After a bath and breakfast, we leave at 9:30 am, towards north with westerly wind Force 4. But at 11:30 am, the wind suddenly becomes much stronger, a good Force 5, a little more north west so we combine the jib and the engine. And the wind increases further, Force 6 with peaks at 7. Luckily, we follow the coast and the sea is protected from the wind by the land and the waves are small but the sea is white. Maja goes well but is heeling too much, with only the jib, and Jens must reduce it. And for a long time, we are going at 6 knots, which is a good speed for Maja.





It's really blowing

We pass Porto Corallo, where we had thought to stop but we decide to continue to Arbatax, further north. Jens is fishing and catches a nice green fish, a "dolphin fish", if we believe our fish book. Around 5 pm the wind calms down but is now right against us, so we motor the last two hours. And we come to Cape Bellavista that bears its name well. It is a rocky promontory with a lighthouse on top, and with the setting sun, the rocks look red, it's very beautiful.



Capo Bellavista

Just behind is the great port of Arbatax which has a marina at the bottom. We arrive at dusk just before night-fall, it is 7:30 pm. A marinero on bicycle welcomes us on the pontoon, helps us moor Maja and presents at once the recycling system they are using, it's a good sign. Well deserved ankerdram, the day was long and quite hectic and dinner of the fish which is very good. Walk on land after dinner, the port is big and a huge crane is visible from far away. A cappuccino ends well this good day.

Punta Molentis-Arbatax: 52 nm (94 km)

Florvåg-Arbatax:  $6\,426 + 52 = 6\,478$  nm (11 660 km)

Thursday, September 22, 2016. Arbatax. Sardinia



The huge crane in Arbatax harbor

Arbatax marina is quiet, friendly and well protected, it is next to a boatyard. An Italian from here comes to admire Maja. He tells us that the port is huge because large ships came for the paper because there was a large paper mill which is now closed. The big industry today is the construction of platforms.



The rocks are red

We start to walk up to the lighthouse, nice walk but the path passes through a military base. We ask if we can go and a military man says yes, but we aren't allowed to take pictures. Nice view from the top, on the sea and on the land.



Nice walk



View on the mountains and on the sea

Going down, Jens plucks a fruit on a tree and we taste it, it is, I believe, a "sharon" but still green. It's terrible, very acrid and a sharpness that remains behind the teeth and on the gums. We rinse our mouths with our bottle of water. We swim in a bay of red rocks. There is nobody and we undress without hiding. And just at that moment, sharp whistles can be heard. Catherine and I have the same reaction: "This is the police!" (The French police whistle a lot). No, nobody comes to arrest us and put us in jail. Good swimming, orange juice (very red) and lunch on the boat. Catherine is a good example and I also start to take a nap. It is, in fact, very nice. Then I make the blog, while Jens and Catherine ride to Tortoli (4 km) to rent a car. They come back by car with our two bikes folded in the trunk. Tomorrow we'll explore a little Sardinia inland. It is now almost 6 pm and we go to the beach north of the port, by car. We get lost, we have to drive around a huge industrial area, but we get there. The beach is deserted obviously at this late hour, quick swim, back to Maja, and dinner at a restaurant, quite expensive and not so good.



Catherine and Jens ride to Tortoli

**Friday, September 23, 2016. Arbatax. Sardinia**

Showers and shampoos for Catherine and I, our hairs are salty and then we leave by car. We looked at the map and decided to go to a small village, Baunei.



Baunei

This is actually a village high in the mountains and quite touristy. We walk a little, admire the view of the plain and on the coast, have a coffee and leave again. From there we go up again to a village still higher, 700 m, Urzulei. It's funny these names in -ei. There, no tourists at all. We buy fruit and green beans at the market (this outdoor market is composed of two trucks) and then look for a place for lunch. We see three coffee bars, but no restaurant. A gentleman tells us there is a restaurant-pizzeria in a street going up. And there we felt like royalty: salad of tomatoes and small peppers a little picante, homemade ravioli and good coffee. It's good and served with a stream of Italian and smiles.



Urzulei



In the restaurant. Urzulei



The “picturesque” road



More than picturesque!



But now it's better

We continue on a small mountain road up again and that is marked on the map as picturesque, lined with a green line. And picturesque, it is! But it is also in very poor condition, boulders on the road, road swept away by landslides, safety rails gone in the hole. We pass, just, and fear that it could be impracticable further on and that we could be forced to turn around. But no, we get to the next village, Villagrande. Jens wants to get gas and there we meet Beate and Hans Jörgen, the German couple with whom we sympathized in Villasimius marina!



Hans-Jörgen and Beate

They have also rented a car, the same as us, and are taking gas exactly at the same time as us. What a coincidence. We return to Arbatax, swim and dine at the boat of a good plateful of fresh green beans.

### **Saturday, September 24, 2016. Arbatax-La Caletta. Sardinia**

A ferry arrived at 4:30 am and left at 5:30 am. We leave at 7:45 am and take breakfast on the way. The wind is weak but right against us, so we're motoring. We follow Sardinia east coast towards north. Beautiful mountain landscape, sparsely populated and relatively green. At 11:30 am, the wind has turned a little east and we combine jib and engine.



Relaxed crossing



Capo Comino

Very calm crossing, relaxed, we can read, Catherine discovers Sudoku, we take turns to nap and we arrive at La Caletta, a seaside town with a large harbor and marina. It is 4:30 pm.



Maja outside the pontoon ...



and now inside

We are at the outside of a large pontoon, and apparently it's free because there is no water or electricity. We go for a swim at a nearby beach, go shopping and move Maja. We go inside, but still on a pontoon without service. We dine on the boat of green salad, lamb chops and fried zucchini, goat cheese and small puddings. This is much better than at a restaurant and much cheaper. We drink a wine paid one euro per liter! And it is quite drinkable.

Arbatax-La Caletta: 42 nm (76 km)

Florvåg-La Caletta:  $6\,478 + 42 = 6\,520$  nm (11 736 km)

### **Sunday, September 25, 2016. La Caletta-Porto Brandinchi. Sardinia**

Two Germans we had met in Arbatax and who are about to leave give us their showers keys, that's nice. Catherine goes to run and I walk on the pontoons to look for "blue" and I find several. Then we make a long walk along the sea, first along the road, then on sand dunes and finally under the pines.



Walk under pine trees



The Swiss couple and their Caravelle

There, we met a young Swiss couple who travel in a VW Caravelle like ours, home fitted too. We talk a little, they are very friendly. We swim, the sand is white and fine, it's like the Caribbean. Then we walk home along the sea on the beach. And we meet again the young Swiss couple who have boards, not sailing boards, but where they paddle, standing. We invite them to come and see Maja, his dream is having a boat later.





On our way back, on the beach



We see a guy on a water jet (like in Nazaré in 2014)



The Sardinian flag shows four Moors heads

We are at Maja at 12: 45 pm, lunch and we wait for them. At 2 pm, we think they won't come and we decide to leave. Good weather, calm, we pass near a village built on a promontory, perhaps also here to see the pirates coming. An island in the distance looks like a sleeping duck.



The sleeping duck

Jens and Catherine take a nap (not together!), and I am the only one awake on board. We arrive at Porto Brandinchi, which despite its name is not a port but a bay. Some boats are already anchored but there is still a lot of room. We anchor without problems, go swimming, take a good ankerdram like the "antipasti" Italian: meats, olives, cheeses. I finish the blog started under way, then we dine early to enjoy the sunset light. Beautiful and calm evening.



Porto Brandinchi

La Caletta-Porto Brandinchi: 15 nm (27 km)

Florvåg-Porto Brandinchi:  $6\,520 + 15 = 6\,535$  nm (11 763 km)

**Monday, September 26, 2016. Porto Brandinchi-Isola di Porri. Sardinia**



Maja. Porto Brandinchi



Porto Brandinchi. Streets and houses



The beach



Sand sculpture

We slept well, it's quiet. We swim and the water is warmer (24°) than the air (19 °). Then we put the tender on the water and Jens rows us to land, the three of us. Three is okay, we even went four, do you remember, Knut and Margrethe? Holiday village, large villas, large gardens well "gardened", walls and fences ... and nobody. The place is not very welcoming, but the beach is nice. We return to Maja and leave at 10:40 am. Catherine is steering, puts waypoints, she is captain.



An island

The landscape is beautiful, mountains, islands, kinds of fjords between islands. We have lunch en route and arrive at Isola di Porri, a beautiful bay where we anchor at 1:30 pm.



Arriving at Isola di Porri

Swimming from Maja (without swimsuits!) and our ankerdram is a cup of coffee and then, exhausted by this long voyage, we take a nap. I do the blog and Catherine discovers Karl, Assad and Rose, heroes of detective novels by Jussi Adler-Olsen, a Danish author we enjoy reading. We stay on the boat and Jens and Catherine make us spaghetti with chicken sauce (leftovers from yesterday) and I make the salad. We remain long, talking, after dinner under

the stars and listening to the planes taking off and landing, we are close to Olbia Airport. We would like to follow the Clinton-Trump debate, but it's really too late, we go to bed.

Porto Brandinchi-Isola di Porri: 13 nm (23 km)

Florvåg-Isola di Porri :  $6\,535 + 13 = 6\,548$  nm (11 786 km)

## **Tuesday, September 27, 2016. Isola di Porri- Isola di Caprera**

Quiet night, the bay is quite closed and an island in front protects it, so there must not be big waves here, and in addition the wind drops at night, it's quiet. Swim before breakfast, breakfast and the tender is put in the water. Jens rows to the beach, Catherine is in front and me at the back. We start our walk with a cappuccino on the beach and then walk on a narrow path along the sea.



Cappucino

Again, we see the sea to the left and a lagoon on the right. And the path stops at the edge of the lagoon, but it is shallow and can be crossed on foot.



We walk across the laguna. Isola di porri

We find a bakery in a village, which seems less chic and more open than yesterday. Back at the beach, orange juice and return to Maja. We leave at 1 pm towards the National Park of

Maddalena Islands. The wind is light and we combine jib and motor. Jens applied for permission on internet, paid 17 € and we can go. We now pass along the Emerald Coast, the most classy and most exclusive part of Sardinia. A place of marina here costs 100 € per night, exactly what we need. The landscape is beautiful, steep cliffs, mountains and turquoise sea.



“Small” summer cottages. Emerald Coast

We arrive at the Island of Caprera, a neighboring island of Maddalena Island and also part of the park. Pretty bay, well protected and, unexpected, full of dinghies who are training. We expected to find moorings, in a park it's not recommended to anchor, but there is none. Maybe they were removed at the end of the summer season. Several yachts are anchored and we do the same. It is 5:30 pm. Ankerdram, swimming and light dinner of an omelet.



Dinghies. Isola di Caprera

Isola di Porri-Isola di Caprera: 23 nm (41 km)

Florvåg-Isola di Caprera:  $6\ 548 + 23 = 6\ 571$  nm (11 828 km)

**Wednesday, September 28, 2016. Isola di Caprera)-Bonifacio (Corsica. France)**

We swim from the boat, naked, the other yachts are not so closed, breakfast and we put the tender in the water. We go to land, but parts of the island of Caprera are prohibited, so Jens rows a little further on, on a small beach. From there we go up in prickly bushes to the road. Our legs are all scratched, and when we reach the road we realize that there was a good path, 50 m further on, from the beach to the road.



Maja. Isola di Caprera

The island of Caprera is inhabited, has roads and is not wild over its entire surface, but is still part of the the national park. Lovely view of the water and the dinghies which are training. We come to a beach but do not swim. Back to Maja and we leave at 11:45 am. We have to be careful when we get out of the bay with all the dinghies. A motorboat goes first and the sailing dinghies all follow him in a single file. It twists and turns and the dinghies must do the same twists and turns. Good training. We leave the bay and set sail, good wind, Force 4 on the side.



We must pass outside a mark

We take advantage of this good weather to cross the Strait of Bonifacio and go to Corsica today. Very nice crossing, Maja behaves like a true sailing yacht, heeling and goes with good speed, the waves are small, 80 cm or so. We see many yachts sailing to Corsica or returning.



We are not alone on Bonifacio Strait



I hoist “my” courtesy flag

We cross the border, a green line on the chart and hoist the French courtesy flag. We are approaching the southern coast of Corsica and are surprised to see high white cliffs. To enter the port of Bonifacio, we pass a very narrow entrance, a hole between two cliffs. On the top of the cliff, the old walled city is clearly seen against the sky, it’s spectacular. For us, this is a surprise, we didn’t know at all what to expect.





The white cliffs of Bonifacio

The port is at the bottom of a “calanque”, a kind of small fjord. As we are in France, Jens says that I must call the marina, so I do it. Yes, they have place, at the harbor bottom. And like in Bergen, the port is in the middle of the city.



Arrival in Bonifacio

And, as in Malta, the old city is surrounded by ramparts. It is 4:30 pm. We dock Maja at the pontoon by ourselves, no problem. Then we climb stairs to reach the top of the cliff and descend another staircase in front to go to a small sandy beach. But the sand stops at the water's edge, after that they are flat stones, like in Malta. Jens goes first on this sort of submarine plateau which stops suddenly. There we must swim, it's deep. But what is special here is the number of pieces of polished glass !!! Hundreds, small, pretty and polished. It's

heaven. What a good day: good crossing under sail, pretty town in a spectacular site and, finally, many many pieces of glass!



Incredible!

Isola di Caprera-Bonifacio: 23 nm (41 km)

Florvåg-Bonifacio:  $6\,571 + 23 = 6\,594$  nm (11 869 km)

#### **Thursday, September 29, 2016. Bonifacio. Corsica**

Still nice and quiet weather but cooler at night, 14 ° this morning. Jens goes to the Chandler to see if they have the book of our friend Rod Heikell on the French Mediterranean coast and Corsica. We had no thought at all to come here on our way back and we don't have this book. They have it, in English, and we're very happy. He also buys the Corsican courtesy flag that I put under the tricolor one. We go up to see the old city enclosed within its walls, narrow streets, tall tight houses and half the old houses now a restaurant.



Narrow street

We then walk east, on a good path along the cliff. Gorgeous views, high white cliffs, blue sea and blue sky and the citadel that dominates everything. We walk well, it's hot, and we go down a narrow valley, we see a beach down with a few people. But it's not sand, it looks like sand but it's hard.



It looks like sand, but it is hard



The platform ends and we must swim



Walk back

And here too, a rock platform goes into the sea and then a hole, we have to swim. You get used to it ... Back on Maja at 2 pm, hungry, we walked 7 km. Rest in the afternoon, swimming and collecting pieces of glass on the small beach near the boat, and dinner outside on Maja, it's nice but we have to put on a sweater. I finish the blog after dinner while Jens and Catherine are reading.

**Friday, September 30, 2016. Bonifacio-Anse de Porigliolo. Corsica**



Bye, bye Bonifacio

Catherine goes jogging early and brings back three pains au chocolat, yum, yum. We leave at 8 am, the diesel pump opens at that hour. We fill up, 99, 6 l (the tank is 140 l) and get out of the calanque (fjord). The weather is nice and quiet. We see the three marks that form a triangle around the rocks called "les Moines", (The Monks), and pass well outside.



The crew working hard ...

Relaxed day, reading, sudoku, Norwegian courses for Catherine and blog for me. We arrive in an "anse", a large bay, "L'Anse de Portigliolo " at 4:30 pm, it's calm, idyllic, two yachts are anchored and suddenly we hear loud noises. First I think they are motorcycles, but no, they are racing cars! We read in the newspaper, "Corse Matin" (bought in Bonifacio along with fresh bread this morning), that a Tour of Corsica was happening now, and we hear it here.

Swimming, ankerdram and rowing to land, pretty little beach, we walk on a small road where we see the racing cars.



Tour de Corse



Maja, anchored

We go up, we go up, nothing, just vacation homes, mostly closed, but it's green, flowery and diverse. Back to Maja, we dine outside on the boat, beautiful evening, but at 10 pm, everyone starts to yawn. We are tired ... of what? Catherine goes to bed at 10:30 pm and we follow soon after, but the tender whines and bangs a bit on the hull of Maja despite the fender we put, so Jens and I, respectively in pajamas and nightgown, take it back on board.

Bonifacio-Anse de Portigliolo: 40 nm (72 km)

Florvåg-Anse de Portigliolo:  $6\,594 + 40 = 6\,634$  nm (11 941 km)

## Saturday, October first, 2016. Anse de Portigliolo-Cargèse (Corsica)

We slept well. The other two anchored yachts have not turned on their mooring light last night, strange. We swim, eat breakfast and leave to go north. It's very quiet and we are motoring. We cut the Gulf of Ajaccio, see the city of Ajaccio at the bottom of it, then pass the "Iles Sanguinaires" (Blood Thirsty Islands!), but it is so quiet that they are not bloodthirsty today. The coast is indented, alternating bays and rocky headlands. We arrive at the port of Cargèse at 3:30 pm. This port is described in our guide (by our friend Rod) as very popular and full in summer. From a distance, we see only one mast behind the pier. We are puzzled, what's happening? Is this port silted, is it closed? We approach slowly, ready to turn around, but everything is fine, it's just that we are in October and few yachts are still sailing. We notice immediately two large churches high on the hill. The port is down, of course, and the village high up. There are two churches because this village hosted, in the 18th century, a colony of Greek refugees who built their own Orthodox church, opposite the Catholic Church.



Cargèse. The two churches

And even now, some signs in the village are in Greek. It starts to rain just as we arrive and our ankerdram is a cappuccino at the café on the port, under parasols-umbrellas. The harbor master's office is still open and he is very friendly, he speaks well of Maja, so ... Besides the café, a craftsman makes honey.



The beekeepers

We go there, discuss with him and buy some. In the port, I find a blue name! We walk up, it's steep. Nice little town, still a lot of tourists, mostly pensioners like us. We go shopping at a supermarket and we are tempted by a free-range chicken, with a ratatouille, it will be good. Good dinner, good evening and in bed early.



Cargèse. The harbor seen from the village

Anse de Portogliolo-Cargèse: 25 nm (45 km)  
Florvåg-Cargèse:  $6\ 634 + 25 = 6\ 659$  nm (11 986 km)

### **Sunday, October 2, 2016. Cargèse-Calvi (Corsica)**

We leave at 8:10 am and eat breakfast on the way. It's quiet but the radio issues a gale warning for Cap Corse (at the top of Corsica, to the east), repeated several times. Jens has studied the weather forecast and for us it will be force 5 but almost from behind, we would not go if the waves had been scheduled against us.



Wild coast

The coast is magnificent, rocky, mountainous and red. We see no dwelling, no road, this is very wild. We make a small detour to see a bay, the bay of Girolata, hidden behind a rocky promontory where a Genoese fort defended it. This bay is beautiful and without communication by land, everything arrives by boat, it is very busy in summer but calm now.



Girolata



Maja. Girolata

We see an empty pontoon and we dock there, along. A young woman in a zodiac comes immediately and tells us to leave, to go to a mooring buoy. We insist a bit, there is room, if a boat with passengers arrives we can leave. But she stands firm. At the end, she calls a superior who is much more relaxed. I hear him saying: "Leave them, it's OK". So we can stay, she doesn't look very happy and tells us to go to the harbor master. There we go, the friendly guy



says there is no problem and in addition he says that Maja is a good small boat. We go to drink coffee, the most expensive coffee in the whole trip! 12 € for three coffees! We swim, collect pieces of glass and leave. A little further we pass between the island of Gargalu and the land, the passage is narrow, it's beautiful.



It's narrow

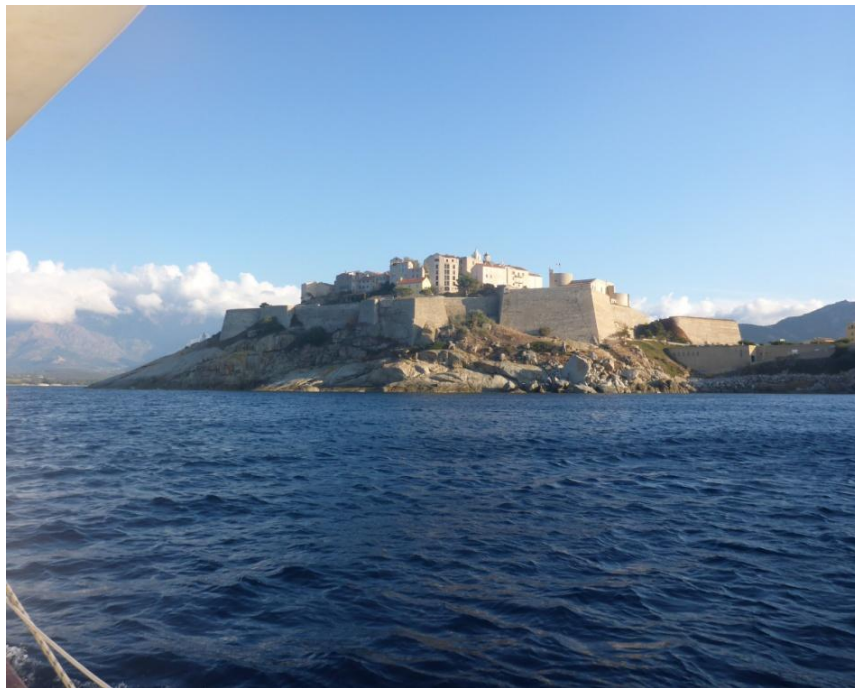
And just after, the wind picks up, as expected, from the southwest, and rising rapidly. Maja goes fast, under jib alone, and starts rolling. The wind reaches Force 4 then Force 5 gusting to Force 6.



It's really blowing

Jens would go to a port after Calvi but I would rather stop in Calvi, and that's what we do. Maja rolls sometimes violently and I go down to secure dishes, glasses and bottles. We arrive at Calvi at 5: 45 pm. I called the marina, but no answer, so we go to the waiting pontoon, nose on the pontoon and a mooring back. Glad to be in port, especially me, Catherine and Jens like

strong wind, me less. I do the blog while they go for a walk and then dinner of leftover chicken, a good salad and pastries for dessert. We remain long outside, the wind is strong but we are sheltered in the cockpit and it is mild.



Arrival in Calvi



Maja. Calvi

Cargèse-Calvi: 40 nm (72 km)

Florvåg-Calvi:  $6\,659 + 40 = 6\,699$  nm (12 058 km)

## Monday, October 3, 2016. Calvi (Corsica)

It's still blowing so we're happy to be in port. Jens goes to the harbor master office and they tell him that we must move, we must go in the old fishing port, just below the citadel. And good surprise this marina which is known as posh and expensive, has an autumn fare much reduced: 20 € per day and if we pay for 5 days, we can stay one week. So we do that, Nina and Theo will arrive Wednesday at the airport and Catherine will leave Thursday from the same airport. We move without problem into the fishing port, smaller and at the foot of a big tower.



We are now in the old fishing harbor

We do a washing machine at a laundromat and go for a swim at the beach which is 10 minutes from the boat.



The beach

The laundry is finished when come back and dries quickly with the wind. Quiet afternoon, nap for some and blog for me. I enter a pontoon to look for "blue" but can't go out again, the gate has been locked. By chance a man opens it and I can go out. Good dinner on Maja and then we go to a Corsican music concert in a church in the citadel. The Alba group, six men, sing traditional Corsican songs. It's very beautiful, those man's voices singing in a polyphonic way, that is to say that everyone has a different tone, but the whole is harmonic.



The Alba group

**Tuesday, October 4, 2016. Calvi (Corsica)**

Today we'll take a trip by train. We take it at 10 am towards Ile Rousse but we stop at Sant Ambroggio, 20 minutes east of Calvi.



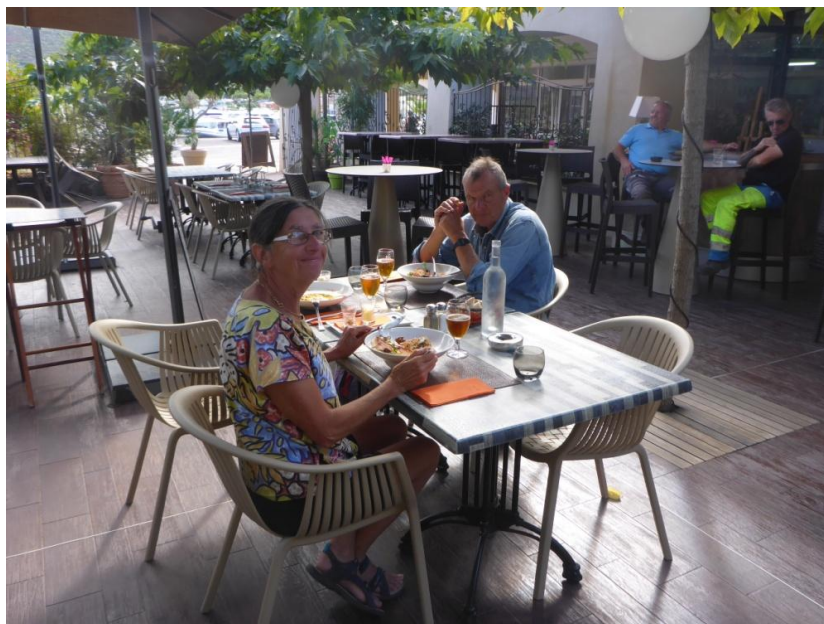
Happy retired people in the train (Photo taken by Catherine)

The train runs along the sea and stops very often. Most of the passengers are tourists but I also hear an old man who speaks Corsican with the driver. We are the only passengers to get out in Sant Ambroggio, a holiday village. We walk, the station is a little outside of the village and the road is shaded. The houses are small, surrounded by lots of greenery and no walls. We come here to see the marina, maybe we can come here with Nina and Theo.



Sant Ambroggio. The marina

Pretty little marina well protected, not very active at this time of the year, almost all the shops around are closed, but with a nice beach nearby. We swim at the beach, walk a little and then go to eat at the "Mille Sabords", a restaurant near the marina. Shady and pleasant terrace, a few people, and meals well presented, good and cheap.



Lunch at the "Mille Sabords"

We walk a little, several passages without cars wind between houses. As holiday villages go, this one is one of the best we've seen. We take the train to 2:20 pm and are in Calvi at 2:40 pm. We swim directly on our way back from the station and quiet afternoon on Maja. We dine of only a beetroot salad, that's enough, we ate well at noon, but this light dinner is accompanied by good drinks and we remain long enough outside to solve the world's problems. Tomorrow, Nina, our eldest daughter and Theo, our 5 years old grandson arrive. We will be five in the boat for one night and then Catherine will leave the day after tomorrow, Thursday. We are all happy to meet on Maja.



The old harbor. Calvi

### **Wednesday, October 5, 2016. Calvi (Corsica)**

We have the visit, this morning, of two custom officers who ask Maja's papers and how long we have been in Europe. As a Norwegian boat, Maja can't be in Europe for more than 18 months. No problem, we have a paper that shows that we left Turkey on March 31, 2016. We swim, eat lunch, and then I go to the taxi station to go to the airport to fetch Nina and Theo, they arrive at 1:30 pm from Nice. No taxis and no answer when I phone. So I come back and warn Nina, she takes a taxi from the airport to here. We are very happy to see each others, they are tired and hungry. They eat and then we try to convince Theo to take a nap, but he doesn't want to. We eat an ice on the way to the beach, everyone bathes, early dinner and Theo goes to bed. We stay outside a bit and we'll all go to bed.



Jens and Theo



Theo is tired

**Thursday, October 6, 2016. Calvi (Corsica)**

Everyone slept well, Catherine in the "hole", Nina and Theo on the big bed and we in front. Nice breakfast together and then I go with Theo to do a laundry.



Breakfast together



Max and Theo

A little Dutch boy from a neighboring boat makes contact with Theo. His Mom invites Theo on their boat and I go with him. Max is almost 4 years, he and Theo have no common language, but they play well, somewhat parallel, especially as Max has a lot of Lego. We take the last lunch together and then accompany Catherine at the war memorial where a taxi booked yesterday should take her. We wait, wait, nothing. She phones, the lady knows nothing about that and has no free taxis. Catherine then stops a car coming out of a parking lot and asks the driver if he could take her to the airport and the man says yes. We say goodbye, thank her for this good time together and she goes. We go to the beach, but it's gray and cool, only Jens bathes. Theo makes beautiful sandcastles decorated with seashells.



Sandcastle decorated with shells



We do the shopping on the way back at the Super U then, on Maja get a visitor, Max, and this time they are playing better together. They go in the hole, which is dark, and "read" a book with a flashlight.



Theo and Max are "reading" in the hole

It's funny, they both know the same cartoon characters, the young dogs of "Paw Patrol," which gives "Pat' Patrouille" in French. Diner of minced meat, pommes de terre noisettes, salad, cheese and rice pudding, but it is cool and it starts to rain just when we are finished, and then Theo goes to bed. Very quiet evening for the adults; Theo is sleeping 60 cm from us, in the hole.

#### **Friday, October 7, 2016. Calvi (Corsica)**

It rained all night and it blew a strong wind, real autumn weather. Maja was really moving, it's not really waves, rather the sea entering and withdrawing from the port, the water goes up and down, finally the night was a bit hectic but Nina and Theo slept well. I closed the window when it was raining and opened it when the rain stopped, from 4 to 7 am, and Jens went to fix the moorings which were squeaking at 5 am.



The harbor seen from the citadel

The weather is gray this morning and Jens puts on a little bit of heating before breakfast, then we take a walk in the citadel, Theo is interested in the history of the people who had to defend themselves against pirates. Max and his mom come on Maja and the children play well together. And after lunch, we go to the beach together, Max and his dad and us. It's sunny now.



Max and Theo on the beach

We stay there long enough, swimming, sand play, the children will sleep well tonight. We go out to eat tonight and our dinner is galettes (salted pancakes) and sweet pancakes, one of Theo's favorite meals. Back to Maja, Theo goes to bed, falls asleep in 5 minutes and we, the adults spend a good and quiet evening.

### **Saturday, October 8, 2016. Calvi-San Ambroggio (Corsica)**

Quiet night. Jens goes with Theo to buy bread, breakfast and then we decide to leave, the weather forecast is good.



Captain Theo

In the Bay of Calvi, it's okay but when we come out of it, the southwest wind is strong, in the nose, and there are quite big waves.



Waves

Not quite what the weather forecast has predicted. We go to see the two bays west of Calvi that we had identified when we arrived, but it is not quiet at all. We make an U-turn, going back towards the Bay of Calvi which we cross and go to Sant Ambroggio, where we went by train with Catherine. So we're going eastwards and have the wind  $\frac{3}{4}$  rear, Force 5 and waves of one meter. We have just the jib and are sailing at 5 knots, Maja is rolling a lot. Theo finds it funny and is not afraid at all. We arrive at Sant Ambroggio marina at half past twelve and we find a free berth. It's all quiet in the harbor. We take our ankerdram, an iced tea, eat lunch and go to the beautiful beach nearby.



The beach. Sant Ambroggio

Theo is a real fish, plays and puts his head under the water, likes to be rolled by the waves, but with his arm floats. He then built a beautiful sand castle, helped by Mamie. We go back and he wants to play with my glass pieces, they are not dangerous because they are polished and don't cut anymore. He writes his name in pieces of glass, with only a slight help from Mamie and we glue them.



Theo writes his name with pieces of glass

Nina and I take a shower. Jens makes a pizza, Theo goes to bed and calm evening.

Calvi-Sant Ambroggio: 8 nm (14 km)

Florvåg-Sant Ambroggio:  $6\,699 + 8 = 6\,707$  nm (12 073 km)

**Sunday, October 9, 2016. San Ambroggio-Calvi (Corsica)**

We had a regular attack of mosquitoes last night! We are all bitten, especially poor Theo, but he slept well. Jens and he go for a walk, but here it's not to buy bread, all the shops are closed. We go to the beach and stay there long. Theo "swims" and digs a big hole in the sand, helped first by Mamie then by Jens.



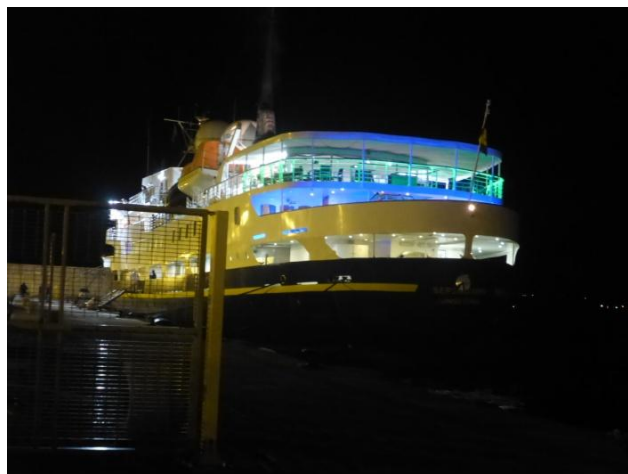
Theo, helped by Mamie then Jens, digs a hole

We lunch at the "Mille Sabords ", very good, like the other day with Catherine. We go again to the beach, and then we leave to go back to Calvi.



We sail back to Calvi

Little wind (force 4) but big enough "old" waves of one meter from the front, but they are quite long and Maja takes them well. She goes up, down and rolls a bit. We see, in the distance, two mini-tornadoes, two waterspouts that start under a big black cloud and go down to the sea. When we are in Calvi Bay, the waves become smaller. We reach Calvi after a little over one hour of navigation. We take the same place and Eveline and Tim, Max's parents, help us. They catch the ropes and gives us the mooring. Theo, accompanied by Jens, visits Max to play, returns and we dine light, we ate well at noon. I read the book "Paw Patrol" in French,(for the fourth or fifth time) and Theo goes to bed into the hole and behind a towel so long as the lights are on in the room. An old and small cruise ship, but modernized, is behind us, the "Serenissima". Nina found by googling it, that she is an old boat from "hurtigruten", the Norwegian Coastal Express. She was called "Harald Jarl" before. I take a picture of her at 9:45 pm and she leaves at 10 pm. I was lucky I did not wait tomorrow to take it.



Serenissima ex herald-Jarl

Sant Ambroggio-Calvi: 6 nm (11 km)

Florvåg-Calvi:  $6\ 707 + 6 = 6\ 713$  nm (12 083 km)

**Monday, October 10, 2016. Calvi (Corsica)**



Max and Theo

The weather is quite changing, sunny and then grey. Max comes to eat breakfast with us and then we go to the beach all together, but it's gray and cold now, so we change our plans and go to a playground instead.



The children play well but the adults are cold

The children play well but the adults are cold. Theo and Max make a "nest" with pine needles and sand. Strong wind and big waves, good that we came back from Sant Ambroggio yesterday. Lunch, nap for Nina and Theo. Jens goes shopping for dinner and Nina and Theo will buy souvenirs for dad and Kian. Theo finds a small basket with seashells and buy one for Kian, one for Max and one for himself. A good boy, our Theo. Jens puts a chicken and vegetable in the oven. Tim, Eveline and Max come to dinner. We hesitate, outside or inside? Outside, but with more cloths on. We are five adults and two children in the cockpit. Very good meal and very friendly evening.



Tim, Max, Eveline, Nina, Theo and Mamie

The children eat well and then go down to watch a "Paw Patrol" (Pat'patrouille) movie. They leave, Theo goes to bed after being covered with mosquito repellent, then we wash the dishes and quiet evening.

### **Tuesday, October 11, 2016. Calvi (Corsica)**

Grey and cool this morning. Jens and Theo go to buy bread and watch a super-yacht that changes place in the marina. We take breakfast inside then walk to the train station. We take the same train that we took with Catherine at 10 am but we are going all the way to the last stop at L'Ile Rousse (40 min). This train is popular among tourists, especially when it's gray and the beach is not so tempting, it is full today.



Nina and Theo in the train

We pass Sant Ambroggio where we were Saturday and Sunday. Arrival at Ile Rousse at 10:40 am, it's a little sunny but still cool, no beach today. We walk a little in this particular city. It was created in the 18th century by General Pasquale Paoli to compete with Calvi who wanted to remain faithful to Genoa.



The square. L'Ile Rousse



Theo can play while we are waiting for lunch

He had great plans and the city has a large square, avenues lined with plane trees, a port, defensive walls but it did not grow and prosper as he had hoped. We eat then lunch at a restaurant that borders a playground. Theo can play while waiting for the meal, we pass him above the fence and we can watch him, it's perfect. Good lunch, walk to the harbor and



we take the train back at 2 pm. Most passengers are the same as this morning. In Calvi, it's raining and it will rain quite strongly until dinner.



It has been raining in Calvi

Then the sun comes out again just before sunset. The landscape is very pretty, the sea and behind the mountains which are snowy on the tops.



Beautiful

Jens puts on the heating, Max comes to play a bit with Theo, and then Nina and Theo go for a walk and the last purchases, they leave tomorrow. Theo still wants to buy two small baskets with shells for two friends in the "barnehage" (kindergarten), Markus and Isak. Light dinner, bread, ham, rilletes, paté and "petits-suisse", a kind of creamy yoghurts, Nina is happy to have found small white petits –suisse that she ate as a child at Mamie's house (my mother). I read for the umpteenth time the "Paw Patrol" book for Theo and he goes to bed. It's amazing

how easy he goes to bed, he is asleep after 5 minutes. Yet he is close to us, we are talking, the light is on ... but he likes to be behind his towell, with Mou and Outi-Mouti (his two favorite animals, a cow and a dog).

### **Wednesday, October 12, 2016. Calvi (Corsica)**

It's cold this morning, 12 ° Jens puts on the heating and we put on pants. Jens and Theo go to buy bread, Theo is OK, but soon after, he doesn't feel well, doesn't eat, is red and has probably a little fever. He lies down and rests, bad timing, just the day he will travel. Nina packs and Jens prints the boarding passes. He carries also a big bag of cloths to the laundry and the weather being uncertain, they will be dried too there. Then it's time to go, a taxi, ordered yesterday by the Tourist Board should pick them at noon near the Tour du Sel, the big tower behind us. Nina and Theo say goodbye to Max, Tim and Eveline, the children played well together.



Theo says good bye to Max



Nina and Theo are leaving

At noon we are at the tower, and wait ... nothing. This is the third time in a week that we didn't get a taxi, when there was none at the station, when Catherine had booked one that never came and now. That makes a lot. I try to call but no answer. We walk to the taxi station,

10 minutes, and there are two free taxis. We say goodbye, this good week is finished, it went fast. We were so happy to be together. I will miss my little man, but we'll meet again in November. We want to go to the tourist office to complain but it is closed from noon to two pm. We go back to the boat, we tidy a bit, redo our beds with thicker duvets and eat lunch. Short nap and then a long walk along the beach, it's gray but we swim anyway. I take a walk on the dock, where we were the first day and that is not closed. No luck, I find a name with white and one with green, but no blue. Jens takes out his toolbox, he fixes the clogged sink, an unscrewed shelf and the broken handle of the coffee maker.



Like new

I do the blog and we go for a short walk before dinner. We climb old stairs outside the citadel walls.



The stairs outside of the citadel



The tunnel and the stairs (picture taken with flash)

At the top, a door is open in a wall, then we come into a kind of dark tunnel . Jens, courageous, goes in and sees a staircase, dark too, which goes up. We take it and arrive on a street in the citadel. Nice view from up there on the bay, all quiet. However, the weather forecast is not good, bad weather tomorrow, so we stay here. Nina sends a sms at 11pm, they arrived safely in Bergen, Theo slept on the plane.

#### **Thursday, October 13, 2016. Calvi (Corsica)**

Jens goes to buy bread alone. Breakfast inside, it's 14 °, with a little bit of heating. Jens mounted the small electric heater on the wall under the table, the one we bought in Ayamonte, at the border between Portugal and Spain, two years ago. And he has connected us to land, the solar panels, without sun, don't give enough power. I'll buy two newspapers, Corse Matin and the Canard Enchaîné. Calvi at 8:30 am in October is very quiet. Then we take out the bikes and go for a ride, near the airport.



Main road and little road

Not much fun on the main road, so we try paths but they don't go far and stop, and it starts to rain, so we ride home. Lunch inside, then I write a letter to complain about the taxi service,

three negative episodes in a week, it's too much. I wish I finished my letter with a compliment for their flowers, Calvi is flowery, but I think of it too late. We go to the beach and I give my letter to the Office of tourism. A ver ...

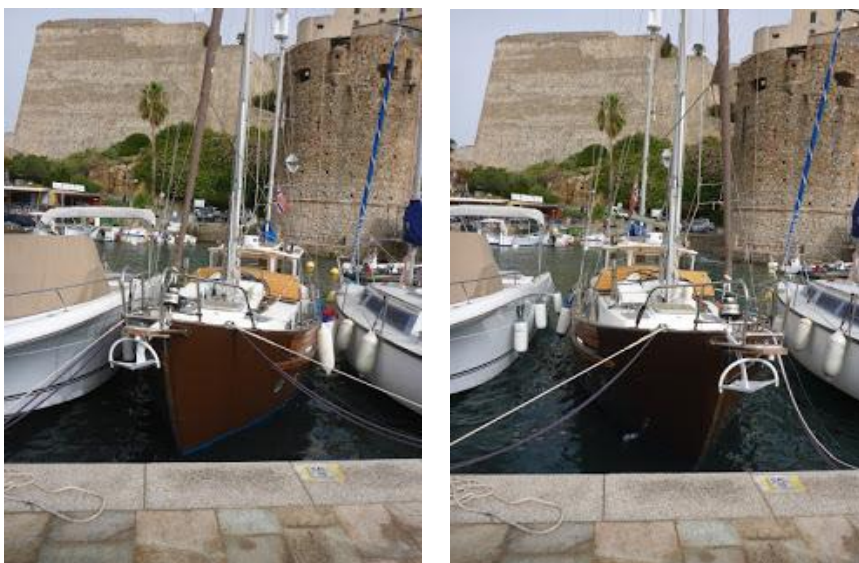


Empty terraces

On the beach, we are the only ones to swim, but we are not cold, there is no wind. And that's strange, the weather forecast is bad with strong winds a little offshore, but here it is gray but calm. Coming home, I look on the pontoon for a blue but find only a green and a white. I do the blog; Jens goes shopping and buys mussels for dinner. By late afternoon, the waves are increasing in the bay and the boats start moving in the port. The waves don't enter, but the water rises and falls, enters and withdraws.

### Friday, October 14, 2016. Calvi

That night, all the boats in the harbor and marina have moved a lot. They advance, retreat, rotate, roll. We slept well but not Tim and Eveline, Max's parents. After breakfast we ride to see the big rolling waves at the end of the beach. It's gray and windy.



Maja wiggles

The waves are huge, no way to go swimming. And when we're on the beach, it starts to rain a downpour. We take shelter under a canopy and a couple joins us. We talk together, they are very friendly and are from Brittany. We invite them to come and have a drink on Maja but they don't have the time, they leave this afternoon by train. In return, they invite us to their home near Morlaix if we go back this way. Another nice and brief encounter. While we are under our awning, an extremely violent gale rises. It is very short, maybe five minutes, but of great violence. A young woman walking her dogs comes with us and she was afraid in the pine forest, branches fell, trees were cracking ... She goes and when we finally emerge from under our awning, we see the damage: broken trees, large branches torn by the wind, flooded road.



The rain and the damages



We return, soaked, and we must change completely. Lunch inside. Jens then tinkers the VHF radio (the radio which allows us to communicate at sea). It is not receiving GPS signals. It's annoying because, if something happens to us, the radio can automatically communicate our position (provided it receives the GPS signals). Jens looks at it, the GPS does not work anymore. He changes (he has a spare) but the radio still doesn't receive the signals, even with the new GPS. He then phone the radio dealer in Bergen. The guy, very friendly, explains to Jens what to do so that the GPS can send its signals to the radio. Jens does it and everything works, the radio again receives the GPS signals. Very smart, my Jens. Blog for me during this

time and I am so concentrated in my work that I forget to take pictures when Jens works. The neighbor, the owner of a motorboat, invites us to lunch tomorrow, it's nice. Stroll in town, we want to see the waves, still big, and Jens speaks of leaving tomorrow. I know one who is not enthusiastic ... Good dinner of fish (caught in the North Atlantic! Perhaps in Norway?) with cream sauce. It's moving much less in the harbor. We look at a weather forecast, or rather, at several ones, and all confirm that the storm has passed and the waves are going down. I am almost convinced ... but we'll see tomorrow.

### **October, Saturday 15, 2016**

It's 10 o'clock am, the weather is nice, we leave soon towards France. It will take us about 24 hours.

See you soon.



### **Sunday, October 16, 2016. Porquerolles**

Arrived safely here, after a very nice crossing of almost 24 hours and 118 nautical miles. Everything OK. More details tomorrow.

Porquerolles is an island on the south coast of France, between Saint-Tropez and Toulon.

### **Saturday 15 / Sunday 16, October, 2016. Calvi-Porquerolles**



Bye, bye Tim, Max and Eveline



### Bye, bye Calvi

We look again at the weather forecast, maximum wave height 1m and little wind. Let's go, it's 10:40 am. We say goodbye to Eveline, Tim and Max, we were really happy to meet them. They think of leaving tomorrow or after tomorrow. We'll keep fond memories of Calvi where we were with Catherine, then with Nina and Theo. We leave the bay and Maja starts rolling.



### Maja is rolling

These are old waves coming from far away, they are long and rounded, rather like a swell, not tall (60-80 cm) but this is enough to make Maja roll. The first two hours, it moves a lot and then it calms down a bit. I am a little seasick despite a pill taken before leaving, I lie down and sleep for almost two hours and then I'm OK. In fact the first two hours are the worst and I was sleeping, that's fine, after that we have a very good crossing. We hear a radio exchange between Calvi port and Lady Luck, the mega-yacht that was in Calvi. The guy from the port asks their destination: Gibraltar. Then the number of passengers: zero and the number of crew: thirteen. It must be said that Lady Luck is rented by the week and it costs € 300,000, I googled it.





Lady Luck

The first wave arrives to the north, from the right to us, then it changes and they come from the south, from the left. But the sea is sometimes smooth and with a swell at the same time.

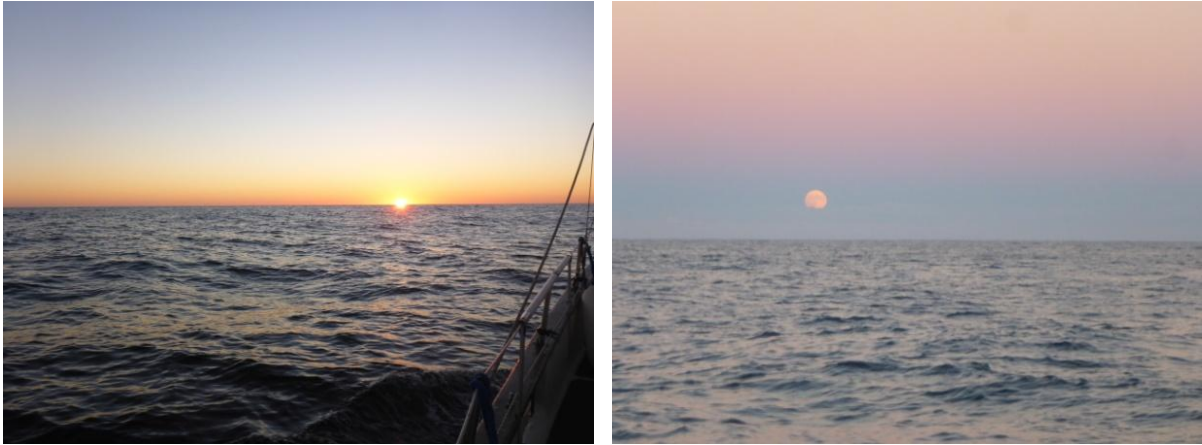


The sea is smooth but there is swell

We're making good progress, engine and mainsail to stabilize, there is very little wind, almost in front. Jens takes a nap, we dine of an Andalusian soup extended with a can of peas.

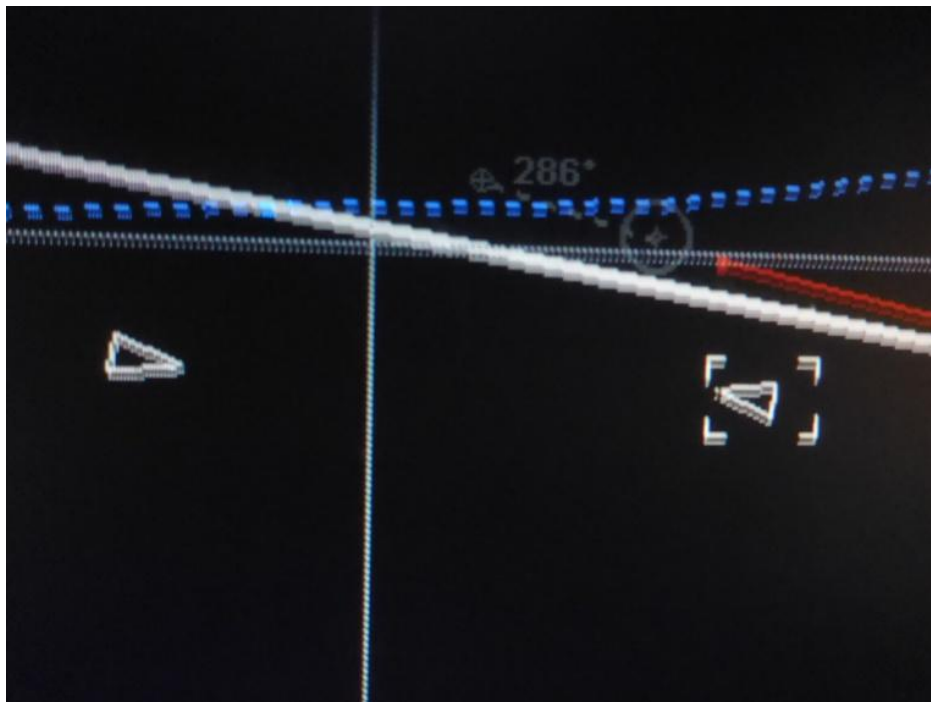


Jens makes dinner



Sunset and moon rise

Beautiful sunset and moonrise. Then we start our watches at 8 pm, I lie down and Jens is steering bar. At 10 pm we change.



We are the circle. I “see” two boats which are going to cross each other

The night is beautiful, full moon, pretty quiet and we sleep well. At one point, Jens does not understand what is happening. He sees "boats" far away, with red and green lights, that appear and disappear. And nothing on the AIS. In fact the "boats" are planes landing at Nice airport! During my shift from 2 to 4 am, the speed drops to 2 knots, small waves coming in front slow us, then I accelerate a bit. I see the lights of France when I take my watch at 6 am. And during this watch, we're making 6.5 knots, with the same engine speed, there must be a current that helps us. The sun rises and we are approaching the islands of Hyères. It is Sunday and many boats are on the water, many people are diving.



Moonshine



Just before sunrise



A funny islet



I take down the Corsican flag

We take a good breakfast at 9 am and get in Porquerolles at 11 am. I call the marina, but no answer, so we dock in an empty place on a pontoon. I take down the Corsican flag and we

take a good Ankerdram, an iced tea, and we go to land. Many people, many bicycles. We buy a good map at the tourist office, with hiking trails for walkers and cyclists.



Bike rental is big business here

Porquerolles is 7.5 km long and 3 wide, is forested, has beautiful beaches and is a natural park. Few car, 350 inhabitants in winter and thousands in summer. We go for a swim on a long deserted beach and four persons arrive while we're in the water, the beach is at least 100 m long but they choose to sit 4 m from us!



Jens tidies the trunk

Good lunch at the boat, the bread is good here, walk and dinner in a pizzeria that has a beautiful view of Hyères, the city opposite on the north. Good pizza, good dessert (tarte tatin, a kind of apple pie) but the bill is rather high. The island is quiet now, many visitors left.

Calvi-Porquerolles: 118 nm (212 km)

Florvåg-Porquerolles: 6 713+ 118 = 6 831 nm (12 296 km)

## Monday, October 17, 2016. Porquerolles

We start a biking tour to the west, it is well marked and the track is nice. Porquerolles is renowned for its hiking trails on foot and by bicycle.



Young people learning to paddle standing on a board



It is nice to bike here

We see few cars, only residents have the right to have one. Nice ride to the Fort du Grand Langoustier. On our way back, we swim at a beach that we have to ourselves. Lunch at the boat, short rest and second bike ride, shorter this one, only to cross the island from north to south. We see a lighthouse but we can't get close, a gate is closed.



Main square in the village



Fort du Grand langoustier

We have done 12 km this morning and 8 km this afternoon. At around 6 pm, the sky becomes dark, it rains and a strong wind starts to blow. A Swedish yacht arrives just at this moment, they wait before going to a dock but the wind is blowing too hard. They wait, wait and then leave again. Night is falling, the wind is strong, I would not want to leave. The gale is finished after half an hour. Blog, and Jens makes us a good omelet with ham and mushrooms. The pontoon where we are is probably not finished, there is no water or electricity and, in addition, is not lit at night. Jens and me, we take our bikes on Maja, if they remain on the dock, they could make someone fall, in the dark.



It's raining

**Tuesday, October 18, 2016. Porquerolles-Cassis**



We are leaving

Jens goes to buy bread then goes to pay the marina when it opens at 8:30 am. We leave at 8:40 am towards west, the weather is quite calm but the wind will get up in the afternoon, N-W, so we want to leave early. We take breakfast on the way, in the doghouse. Maja is rolling a bit, a small swell from the southwest lifts her and takes her down again. The VHF radio is active here, between the Cross Med's Communications (the Coastal Guards) and private communications between ships. The Cross Med makes three announcements: a fishing net that is drifting (but it is far from us), a shell from WW2 found in the bay of Gien and a yellow mark, which is detached and also drifting. We pass Toulon and Cape Sicié. And then the wind picks up and as it's blowing along land, we have it the right in the nose, Force 5 and even more in the gusts. We don't tack with Maja, if we did, we would arrive tomorrow. Our Maja

is a good boat but tacking is not her forte. So we're going against the wind and waves with the engine. Maja and Jens are well but I don't appreciate being tossed about like that. I go into my hole and wish me elsewhere. In addition, we advance slowly, we have about thirty miles to do and normally it would take us six hours. We'll do it in eight hours. Two observations at sea distract me: a helicopter that goes down on a boat and goes up again with a net and a military boat, Pluto, which seems to tow a small yacht, but in fact the Pluto is anchored. We hear the radio exchanges between Pluto and a boat from the gendarmerie who will tow the sailboat.



The helicopter



The Pluto and the yacht

And we continue moving much, at the beginning we were rolling (side movement) and now we go up and down (front and back movements). We arrive at Cassis at 4:40 pm, exactly eight hours to make 32 nautical miles. We dock at the visitors' pontoon and the head of the port comes to see us. We ask if he has a place. His response: "Have you booked?" No. Ai, ai, the



port is full, but he finds a small place for us at the end of the dock. Phew! "Rough day for the Queen."



It's moving



It looks like a dog head

Ankerdram, then walk into town. The port is a true port, not a marina and Cassis seems a pretty and flowered town. Beautiful sunset on the cliff, dinner inside and to bed early.



Arrival in Cassis

Finally, some good news: our friends Fritz and Margret on their Fisher 25 "Longway" are back home in Switzerland. What a trip: they left Switzerland in the spring of 2014, the canals, the river Seine, Paris, Le Havre, the Bay of Biscay, Galicia, Portugal, Spain, Gibraltar, the Mediterranean coast of Spain, the Balearic Islands, Sardinia, our rough crossing from Messina to Argostoli, the Corinth canal, the Greek islands and Turkey ... and back! Turkey, Greece, the Italian coast, Corsica, Rhone, Saone, and arrival in Basel. We are happy for them.



Back in time: Longway between Messina and Greece (June 2015)



Our friends, Margret and Fritz

Porquerolles-Cassis: 32 nm (58 km)

Florvåg-Cassis:  $6\,831 + 32 = 6\,863$  nm (12 353 km)

**Wednesday, October 19, 2016. Cassis**



Maja. Cassis



The harbor



The market

Beautiful weather and cool this morning, 13 °, Jens puts on the heating. We take breakfast outside but with sweater and anorak. Jens goes to buy a baguette at the bakery and is again disappointed; he finds that they are no better than industrial ones. He also buys two newspapers, "La Provence" and "The New York Time." He goes to the market and I go on the pontoons to look for "blue", I find one, and then go to the market too. Real Provençal market, noisy, a lot of people, beautiful fruit and vegetable stalls, cheeses, meats, olives ... Then we want to walk up to the castle overlooking the town but arrived before the wall, we understand why there is no sign to show the way: it is a hotel, probably very expensive and very exclusive. And around, the beautiful properties are surrounded by high walls; one can hardly see the sea. We go down and to the beach in town, but the wind is cold and the bath is short. Lunch at the boat, coffee and newspaper and second expedition, walking, this time to see the Port-Miou Calanque.



The castle



The calanque (fjord) Port-Miou

This is actually a narrow and long fjord, measuring 1.5 km, which makes a bend and is therefore well protected. Rod, our guide's author, says that in summer it's very popular and full. We did not think there would be so many boats in October. But in fact it is a boat parking for the people of Marseilles and it is full, full. There are places at the opening for visitors, but more inside, not a free spot. We walk back and stop at the "Plage Bleue" (Blue Beach), a small beach west of the port. It is well sheltered from the wind, we swim and stay there long enough, especially because there are pieces of glass. And for once, I get competitors; a young American couple (two men) is picking them too. We compare our crops and they have more than me.



Good harvest

Back to Maja, blog and dinner inside, the wind blows in gusts and is cold. After dinner, we hear a little “bang” on Maja. Jens goes out to see: A fisherman, opposite the harbor entrance, threw his line a little too hard and his hook came around the cable that holds the mizaine mast, in the cockpit. Fortunately, we were inside. Jens untwists it, illuminated by a flashlight and throws it back. The guy thanks him and wishes us a good evening.

#### **Thursday, October 20, 2016. Cassis**

Cold this morning, only 11,5 °. Jens connects a cable on land and starts the small electric heater. He's happy, he found good bread. After breakfast, we go on the Internet for news of the Hillary-Trump debate. What an idiot. Then we ride to try to go into the back country.



It's steep

We go up a street so steep that we must walk up, and long, long. Once at the top, Jens consults Google map and realizes that it's not the good one. So we go down by another street and see the road that we need to take, it goes under our own road through a tunnel. But we do not see how to go down to the tunnel. We have to make a detour, retrace our steps and finally finds it and go under the tunnel. Pretty little road that winds between vineyards.



Vineyards



Vignerons (winegrowers) and félibres (poets who wrote in the Provençal language)

The properties are quite small but appear rich, big houses, big walls and large gates, it is very private. We arrive in a forest and we finally feel outside the city. Back to Maja, lunch, short rest and I leave alone to go back to the calanque of Port Miou to look for "blue". I see many signs "Access Forbidden" "Reserved to boat owners" but I don't "understand". I have a little lie ready: someone told us there was a Fisher in the calanque and I'd like to see it. I must go down a steep slope on this side, I think it's easier on the other side of the cove.



Down in the calanque (fjord)

I go down and come down to the pontoon. No one asks me what I do here, I walk on the pontoon, quite narrow, and I don't like the feeling of being at the bottom of a hole between two high cliffs. The boats all have the nose to the pontoon and most have the name on the back. So, I see the names of the boats on the other side, it's sometimes hard to read. I walk about half the calanque, cross at the end, there is a sort of small beach and walk on the pontoon on the other side. And for all these efforts, my reward is thin, I find only one blue. I go up on the other side and go around the bottom of the cove via a path up the cliff, I don't want to return by the pontoon. Back to Maja, Jens tinkered; he repaired a pump that did not work.



La Plage Bleue (the Blue Beach)

We'll swim at the Blue Beach and meet again the two young Americans, they have many pieces of glass. We go back, it's getting cold when the sun goes down. Late blog, Jens is cooking, and nice and cosy evening.



**Friday, October 21, 2016. Cassis**

It's market day again today, Wednesday and Friday, so I go back, with Jens, to take pictures. Many people and yet it's a weekday.



At the market: sausages, olives and cheese

We'll make a bike ride in the back country today also. We begin with a main road, then a middle road, then a small road and a path to finish ... in front of a gate.



Main road



Medium road



Little road



Dirt road ... which finishes like this



A “mas”, a traditional house in Provence

Jens sees on Google map that the path continues but it's blocked by a gate. We turn around, back on the main road for a few hundred meters and sudden stop outside a small restaurant that offers a menu for € 9.50. One can't resist, especially when it's 1:30 pm. The main course is a tuna tartare and at first I think the little red cubes are red beets, but no, it's raw tuna. It's "interesting", but the fries and the salad are good. Gourmet coffee ends well this meal and we leave.



At the restaurant "Ok6"

The first km after lunch is hard, I feel like napping more than cycling, but then the form returns. In one steep hill, when we are pushing hard on our pedals a lady on a bike passes us effortlessly: she is riding an electric bike! Not fair. We turn in a forest and that is nice, quiet, no cars, singing birds and even more, I find a pretty plant, it looks like heather (Erica), but giant, 1.5m. We make a loop, unintentionally, and come back at the same spot. It's late, we are tired, so we return by the same route as yesterday, Avenue Emile Bodin. Just outside the forest, a man asks Jens for an address, we don't know, of course.



Jens helps a guy to find an adress

But Jens takes out his pad and finds it on Google map. Return to the boat, short rest and then swim at the Plage Bleue, we don't see the pieces of glass pickers. Light dinner of beet salad (real ones this time, not raw tuna) and quiet evening.



A beautiful 2 CV

**Saturday, October 22, 2016. Cassis-Vieux Port. Marseilles**



Bye, bye Cassis

Beautiful weather but cold, 9.8 ° this morning. I take a shower and wash my hair and the hot water warms me up. After breakfast, we take diesel and leave at 10:40 am. The weather is good today until late afternoon, after that it will be several days of strong winds and gray weather with rain. We want to be in a good harbor so we're going to Marseille. Good crossing, motoring, we pass the in front of the calanques but it is difficult to see them from the sea.



A cliff with a hole

Many boats are on the water and the VHF traffic busy. Many yachts captains call the Cross Med to test their radio. The answer, if it works well is "I read you loud and clear."



It will make a big wave for us

It is sunny on the shore side and gray on the sea side. We pass along the cliffs, see the Riou island, the Frioul islands and the If island with its famous prison where Edmond Dantes,

Count of Monte Cristo was imprisoned (main character in the novel of the same name by Alexandre Dumas).



If Castle, a jail in the old days



Regatta

A regatta is held in the bay of Marseille. The big church Notre Dame de la Garde dominates the city. We enter the Old Port, the former main port of Marseille, which, too small, is now a marina. We dock at the waiting pontoon at the SNM (Société Nautique de Marseille) and go to the Harbor office, but it is closed. We call the phone number given in the guide and a guard comes to welcome us, very friendly. He gives us a place just behind the waiting pontoon until Monday, we'll see after that.



Notre dame de la Garde

Lunch on the boat and first walk around the Vieux Port. It's Saturday, a lot of people are walking. We admire two jugglers, pass a political meeting and then go to get a city map at the Tourist Office. Marseille has large streets and avenues, beautiful buildings and monuments, and is very lively. But it starts to rain and the crowd disappears quickly, we also hurry back to Maja. The bad weather has arrived, rain and wind the rest of the evening. We have two moorings behind from where the wind comes, they hold well. "Koselig" (nice) and warm evening.



A juggler



The Vieux Port under rain

Cassis-Marseille: 17 nm (31 km)

Florvåg-Marseille:  $6\,863 + 17 = 6\,880$  nm (12 384 km)

**Sunday, October 23, 2016. Marseilles**



Maja in the Vieux Port. Marseilles

Rain and wind all night, which means various noises: halyard (rope) that hit the mast, ropes creaking and a new sound, a bit like bells. Jens falls asleep in five minutes, but not me. I go out and put a cloth to prevent the rope creaking and I expect to see where the halyard is knocking. I wait ... but it no longer knocks. As for the sound of bells, it comes from another boat, I can't do anything. This morning, I see that it's a steel strip, on a yacht, which vibrates.



This morning it's gray but the rain stops. We start to walk up to Notre Dame de la Garde, on top of a hill. It goes well.



We walk up to Notre Dame de la Garde



Nice view from Notre Dame de la Garde

An old man advises us to take the stairs, we do that. A lot of people, we hear different languages, some totally unknown. Very nice view of Marseille from above. Going down, we follow the sign "Place Castellane".



Place Castellane

We have no idea where it is, but it is marked at each intersecting streets. We walk, we stop for a coffee in a Jewish tea room. We notice it when we see that the owner bears the Jewish skullcap and that the ads are written in Hebrew and French. We continue to Place Castellane and get there. To come back we follow a straight street, the Rue de Rome, which brings us back to the "Vieux Port". We walked 6 km. Lunch at the boat, short rest and we start again, this time by bike, along the sea to the south, on the Corniche. We swim at the Catalans' Beach, fairly quickly, the water is 18.5 °, and there are few people.



Catalans' Beach

We find a teaspoon from Ikea, the same as the one we found in the island of Dhiaporos (Greece) at the beginning of May!



We find a tea spoon



La Corniche

We continue on the Corniche and take the Prado Street to return, then the Rue Paradis, no problem with the city map. We arrive at Maja at 5:15 pm and I know one who is tired after 6 km walking this morning and 15 km riding this afternoon. I write the blog and Jens makes dinner.



Marseilles by night

### Monday 24 October 2016. Marseilles

I didn't sleep well, still tired and a little cranky. Jens, cautiously, goes for a walk into town. I do some sewing and go on the pontoons of the SNM to look for blue, and I find four, which helps for my bad mood. I go into town too and meet Jens, we have a drink together, and all is well. Then I go to the Galeries Lafayette, section gourmet, good well stocked grocery store and I buy ... a bouillabaisse in a glass jar and "rouille", the sauce that accompanies it. Bouillabaisse is a fish soup, Marseille specialty. We looked at the prices in restaurants and also looked at the reviews online. Prices are exorbitant, above € 50 a portion and some comments are negative. So we'll eat tonight our bouillabaisse in a jar at a reasonable price.



The square near the harbor is covered by a mirror

Lunch at the boat, newspaper, the New York Times for Jens and for me La Marseillaise, a communist local newspaper. And we leave by bike this time, first to swim at "our" beach, Plage des Catalans. Many people, on the beach and even in the water, it's hot and beautiful today, 26 °. Then we ride around the Vieux Port and along the sea to the north, from where ferries leave for Corsica and North Africa. Back by wide avenues, we could imagine being in Paris. And we see again the "Cesar", the ferry that crosses the harbor.



The Cesar, the ferry “bo-at” which crosses the harbor

This requires that I present Marcel Pagnol's trilogy, Marius, Fanny and César, three theater plays written in the twenties. They take place in Marseille and some scenes are part of the collective memory of France. Check Wikipedia if you want to know more. But one of the characters portrayed in these plays is the Captain of the "ferry bo-at" (thus pronounced in Marseille). Normally, in French, we say only "ferry", the ferry-boat, here, is a reference to Marcel Pagnol. We return, blog and our dinner of bouillabaisse which is good, but is it a true bouillabaisse ... I don't know.

## **Tuesday, October 25, 2016. Marseilles**

Gray and rainy but mild. We remain a moment at the boat after breakfast to read the newspaper and leave at around 11 am on foot. We take a street parallel to the Canebière and are quickly in a popular neighborhood.



The market

We could be in Algiers or Tunis, the shops sell Arabic products and Arabic food, a large market seems to offer much lower prices than on the Vieux Port and the people are very mixed. Jens buys dry fruits and we find even Turkish tea. We continue and come to a Triumph Arch and then take small streets in the old quarter of Marseille. La Charité, former asylum for the poor and the beggars is well restored and taking other small streets, at random, we discover La Boule Bleue, a kind of museum of boules game. Boules games are apparently quite common around the world but pétanque is the Provençal way of playing it.



La Boule Bleue

We take a pastis at a cafe and then return, it starts to rain. After lunch, the rain stops and we walk to the Catalans beach through the Palais du Pharo. Bathing, shower and back. We walked 5 km this morning and 5 km this afternoon, active retirees. Blog, Jens is working and we go to eat dinner at Le Palmier, a Tunisian restaurant. I take a couscous, very good and plentiful and Jens grilled merguez and mint tea and Arabic pastries.



The couscous

Back to Maja quite late, and 11: pm30 pm, we hear a cacophony of sirens, it is the police who manifests. I understand that they manifest but they could make it quietly and not prevent people from sleeping.



The blue lights are from police officers demonstrating

### **Wednesday, October 26, 2016. Marseilles**

Still gray this morning. We read the newspapers and Jens washes Maja outside, she is full of dust or fine sand and I go for a walk. I go to the Galeries Lafayette and FNAC, I remain long looking at the books and I must struggle to come home not too late. Lunch outside but that's just, it's raining a bit. We walk a little and enter a maritime book store on the quay.



The maritime book store

It's amazing what they have maps, guides ( we find the Shetland and Faroe Islands guide!), travel stories, pirate stories, books on fish, birds, plants, diving, fishing ... Then we go to the Saint-Victor neighborhood through narrow streets. An abbey-fortress, Saint-Victor, dominates the area.



Abbey-fortress Saint-Victor

It's here that Jens comes to buy bread in the morning. When he asked two different people, the first day, where he could find a good bakery, both, independently of each other, said, "The bakery Saint-Victor." He shows it to me and as they prepare food too, we buy stuffed tomatoes for dinner. Going down, I see a "santons" shop, they are small figures that originally were made to the Christmas crib, Mary, Joseph, baby Jesus ... But now there are figurines representatives of many characters and professions.



The "santons"



I go also to see a soap museum; Marseille has long been the capital of soap in France with the famous “savon de Marseille”. It says it is believed that soap was discovered by accident, when animal fat dripped on ashes one day when it was raining, several thousand years before J-C. It takes fat, ash and water to make soap.



Savon de Marseille

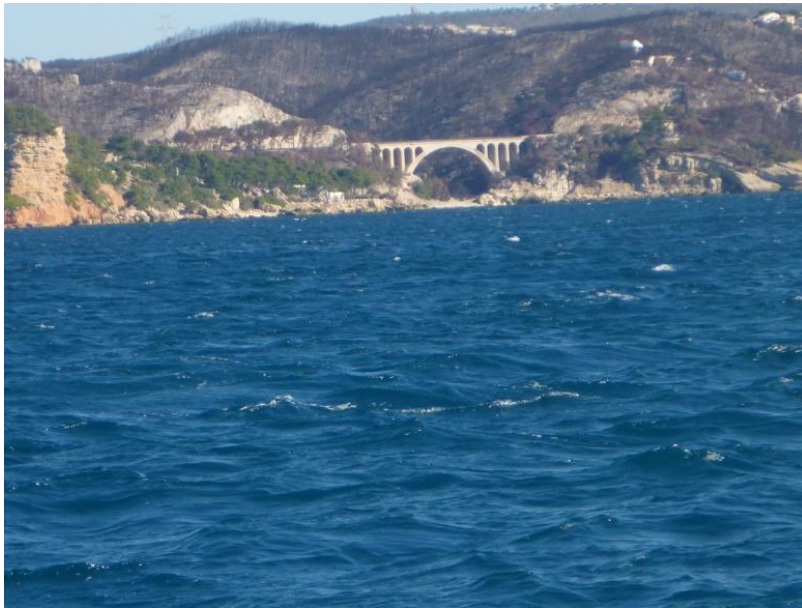
Back to Maja just when a Dutch yacht arrives. I'll say hello, at least another long distance traveler like us, but no, they have been sailing close to Marseille for 10 years. By late evening, a yacht dock at the reception pontoon, right next to us, she is called "L'oiseau Beligou" (the Beligou Bird), cute name but I don't know what it means.

**Thursday, October 27, 2016. Marseilles-Port Carro**



Bye, bye Marseilles

I ask the owner of "The bird Beligou" what does that mean. He said that it is a mythical bird which brought bad luck to sailors who saw him. I hope we we'll never see this bird! Jens pays, we are going to leave. The weather forecast is good, but I don't like it when it announces a strong mistral in the Rhone Valley, not far from here. Jens looks good and tells me that the mistral will not come here. OK, so we go. It is 10:10 am. It's all quiet in the harbor, but when we leave, it's blowing a good north wind Force 4-5 but as it comes from the land, there are no waves. We first combine jib and engine then just sail with mainsail and jib, Maja goes at 5 knots. We follow the coast, steep and desert, no road but a railway that goes over many viaducts.



Viaduct

The more we advance, the more the height of the mountains comes down. We pass several small ports and go to Port Carro, a fishing port, located at a cape, near a lighthouse.



The lighthouse at Cape Couronne



Port Carro

We enter the harbor at 1:10 pm, it took us just three hours. We see a free place at a pontoon and we dock there but it is an owner place, permanent strings are attached on the pontoon. We moor just in front with two ropes, the wind pushes us back and we could leave faster if the owner returns. We think of going ashore and leave a note on Maja with our phone number. But before we go I call the harbor master, no answer. Our friend Rod also provides another phone number in Martigues. I try this number and a woman answers me, and says we must go to the reception quay at the port entrance. We move, we moor at the quay and eat our lunch.



Maja. Port Carro

Then walk through the village, Jens finds the bakery for tomorrow. Apparently a fish market is held every morning on the dock, we'll see that tomorrow also. A piece of land is made available for campers at the seaside and there are about thirty of them. A nice little beach tempts Jens, but not me and while he bathes, I pick up pieces of glass.



The beach

We walk a little further east, and the carved cliffs there seem old stone quarries. We go back to Maja, blog and dinner early to enjoy the sunset. But the wind is cold and we go inside after the tomato salad.



Old quarries?

Marseille-Port Carro: 14 nm (25 km)

Florvåg-Port Carro:  $6\,880 + 14 = 6\,894$  nm (12 409 km)

**Friday, October 28, 2016. Port Carro-Saintes Maries de la Mer**



Fish market. Port Carro

Nice weather but cool. We go and buy fish at the fish market of Port Carro. We take two small sea bream. The customer before us takes a big one and the fishmonger explains how to make it in the oven, wrapped in a shell of coarse salt. Walk along the coast to the west, the light is so strong that I have to put on sunglasses. We are preparing to leave when I see a pretty little blue and white fishing boat coming in the harbor. And surprisingly, she has a name with blue! I put the picture here today, because I find this name so pretty.



Pretty name

Jens has not put the bikes in the hold, they are on the bridge since yesterday. We leave at 10:40 am motoring westwards along the coast that is now completely flat. We cut the Gulf of Fos, a highly polluted and industrial area and even so far from the coast it stinks.



Golf of Fos, industrial and polluted

The sea is calm, little wind, a crossing to my taste. We see dolphins jumping but they are far away and I can't take pictures. We arrive at Port Gardian at 4:40 pm. Port Guardian is the name of the harbor, the city is called Saintes-Maries de la Mer. We dock along the reception jetty, the harbor office is closed. And right after us two yachts arrive and dock at the same pontoon as us. Jens noticed the beach and goes for a swim. I walk on the beach, lots of shells but no pieces of glass. Short walk to town, it's very touristy, we go to the Tourist Board to ask for a city map and a map of bike rides in the Camargue, this huge marsh area in the Rhone delta. Diner of our sea bream, very good.

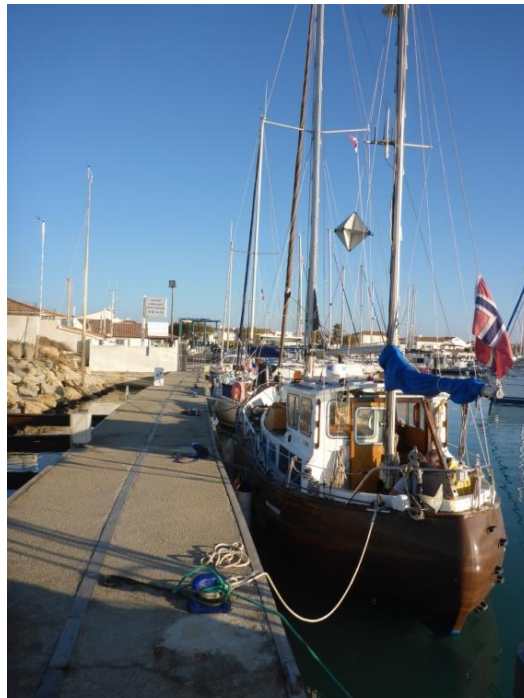


Church-fortress. Saintes Maries de la Mer

Port Carro-Saintes Maries de la Mer: 30 nm (54 km)

Florvåg-Saintes Maries de la Mer:  $6\,894 + 30 = 6\,924$  nm (12 463 km)

**Saturday, October 29, 2016. Saintes Maries de la Mer**



Maja

A guy with a small blue yacht at the same pontoon as us asks Jens if he has seen the weather forecast. Jens invites him to drink coffee and look at it on Maja. Henry is sailing alone, he has just bought this boat and brings it back from La Ciotat (east of Marseille) to Port Leucate, just north of the Spanish border. He is disabled (he has an artificial leg) doesn't know the boat well, has no map and almost no instruments. Yesterday we saw him navigate near the coast and Jens said that it was probably a local who knew the area well. But no, it was him, he hit the bottom and struggled to leave. A strange guy, a follower of conspiracy theories, he is convinced that everything is the fault of the Jews, so we quickly bring back the conversation to boat topics. He tried three times to buy diesel with his card but put the wrong code, so Jens pays 50 € with his card and Henri gives him € 50 in cash. Then Jens help him leave.



Jens helps Henri to leave

We wish him good luck. After that, we ride a small circuit of ten kilometers. We thought we could see the wild Camargue, but it's too close to the city. These are just large private estates, hotels, equestrian centers ... The Camargue is known for its wild horses, flamingos and bulls. To the north, rice is cultivated.

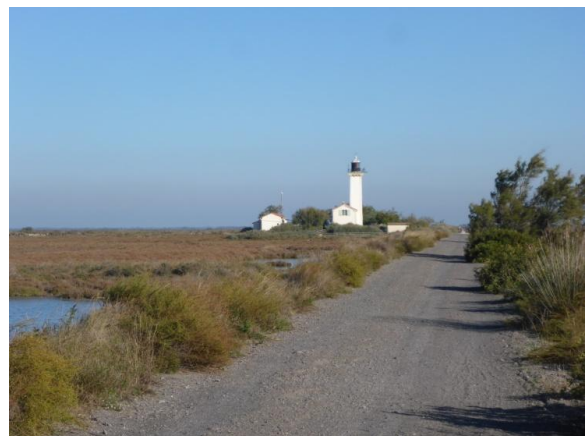


Camargue, horse riding and flamingos

We go back and I'll look for blue on the pontoons. I find none, but a boat with a name I like. Lunch, short rest and second bike ride to the east, on a dike, to the lighthouse of La Gacholle (13 km). At the beginning we see a lot of people, on bicycles and on foot, then less and less people on foot. It is flat and straight.



We are almost there



La Gacholle lighthouse

Nice ride, wilder than this morning. Back at 5 pm, a little tired, 36 km by bike today. I start the blog, Jens makes dinner, we eat and I finish it after dinner.

### **Sunday, October 30, 2016. Saintes Maries de la Mer-Sète**

I have not talked much about Saintes Maries de la Mer. A legend says that four Maries (Mary, Jesus' mother, Mary Magdalene, Mary Salome and Mary Jacobe) accompanied by a black servant, Sarah, were grounded here after the death of Jesus. The village became a center of pilgrimage. Much later, traveling people (Gypsies) began to worship Sarah, and even nowadays, in late May, they meet here at Saintes Maries de la Mer for a huge pilgrimage.



Cold this morning, just 10 °, the sun warms up but the wind is cold, breakfast outside but well wrapped with cloths and blanket. As the harbor office is closed we don't have the code of the toilet block, but I can sneak after a lady and come in. It's nice ! Nice showers, a washing machine ... Too bad it's a little late, we are about to leave, it is 9:25 am of the new time. North wind, force 3-4, calm sea, it's ideal. We have time and are sailing a long time, first with good speed and then the wind drops a bit and the speed too.



We pass La Grande Motte



The gennaker in the middle, like a spinnaker

Around 10 h 45, a pan-pan on the radio: a small blue yacht, length of 7m has engine problems and requires assistance near Frontignan. Jens and I think immediately of the guy of yesterday, Henry. There are not many blue sailboats of 7 meters at this time of the year. It's far from where we are, we can't help. We continue calmly, Jens puts the gennaker then when the wind

is a little more from the back, he puts in the middle like a spinnaker and it works well. I write the blog on the way. At 2 pm, Jens start the engine, we don't want to arrive in Sète in the dark. We get there at 5 pm. The port of Sète is huge, fishing boats, ferries and cruise ships.



We are arriving in Sète

We go to the Old Basin which is now the marina. There is room at the visitors' pontoon and we dock there. The harbor office is closed but the gate of our pontoon is not locked, we can go out. The ankerdram is a pastis, we are in the south where it is the national drink. Then walk into town. We came in Sète in September 2011, by car, and we had lunch at a nice little restaurant beside a canal. We walk, walk but don't find it. We return to Maja and have dinner at home. A surprising thing in this harbor, it's that we hear quite strong bird's calls but we don't see any bird. A mystery to solve tomorrow.

Saintes Maries de la Mer-Sète: 32 nm (58 km)  
Florvåg-Sète:  $6\,924 + 32 = 6\,956$  nm (12 521 km)

### **Monday, October 31, 2016. Sète**

We go together to the Harbor office which is installed on a barge at the marina entrance. The lady is very friendly, compliments Jens on his good French, gives us a map of the city of Sète and shows us things to see in town. She gives us two electronic key that can open all the pontoons and the toilet block. I ask her what are these bird calls heard in the port. She laughs and explains that these are cries of raptors recorded and broadcast by loudspeakers to scare the seagulls! Seagulls are very dirty and the municipality tries this way to drive them away. We walk into town, go to the covered market and I recognize the shop where I had bought, in 2011, a bib for Theo with "I am the heart of my Grandma" written on it. I remember we had talked with the lady on pink for girls and blue for boys. It's the same lady and I'll talk to her. She now refuses to sell pink and blue! She is very friendly, we discuss again, and then we hope to meet again in three years!



I had bought a bib for Theo here in 2011

The city is lively, the shops are open but most people don't work, they do "le pont" (the bridge) since Tuesday, November 1 is a holiday in France, it's la "Toussaint" Many people on the cafe terraces on this beautiful autumn day, and we do the same.



It's aperitif time

We go home and see that two large motor yachts has arrived and are very close to us. Maja sure looks small next to them.



Maja seems little between her big neighbors

Lunch at the boat, then coffee and rest. Jens goes swimming and then I go to look for blue on the pontoons and he goes shopping. I find only one but I also take a photo of a Fisher. Blog and dinner on Maja of lamb chops bought this morning at the market.

**Tuesday 1 November 2016. Sète**

Grey, a real Toussaint (All Saints Day) weather. We do two washing and drying and I take a shower. The bathrooms are in an underground dug in the dike, it feels like in the subway, this is not "koselig" (pleasant) at all, but the water is hot.



Lavatory entrance

Then we make a long bike tour, all around the city, taking a bike lane or side streets. We see the Etang de Thau, a large kind of salted lake behind Sète, which is 20 km long.



Etand de Thau



We pass under a bridge

The city is built at the intersection of several canals and there are several lifting bridges for roads and railway. We are back at Maja for a late lunch, remain a little on the boat and walk out again on the Corniche to see a fort that now houses a theater. We also look at the waves, they must become smaller before we leave. Blog for me and work for Jens. He is preparing a SEISAN workshop he will attend in Lisbon in late November.



A canal. Sète



We rise home

We spotted a restaurant that has a menu at 13 € and go there at 8 pm. I was looking forward to take a fish soup but it's finished. So we take squid first then red mullet accompanied by saffron rice and ratatouille. And we also have a dessert, Jens takes a gourmet coffee (served with four small desserts) and me a lemon meringue pie. It's very good, original, not the chips which are served everywhere, and cheap. Good dinner.

### **Wednesday, November 2, 2016. Sète**

Very nice and warm today. We take our time, breakfast, read the newspaper and we go on bike to visit the Espace Georges Brassens which is about 5 km from here. But we're too late, ticket sales stop at 11 am and it is 11:10 when we are there. OK. We decide to climb up the

Mont Saint Clair, the mountain behind Sète. It's steep ! We do more on foot than by bike, but up there, the view is panoramic, over the Etang de Thau and the city.

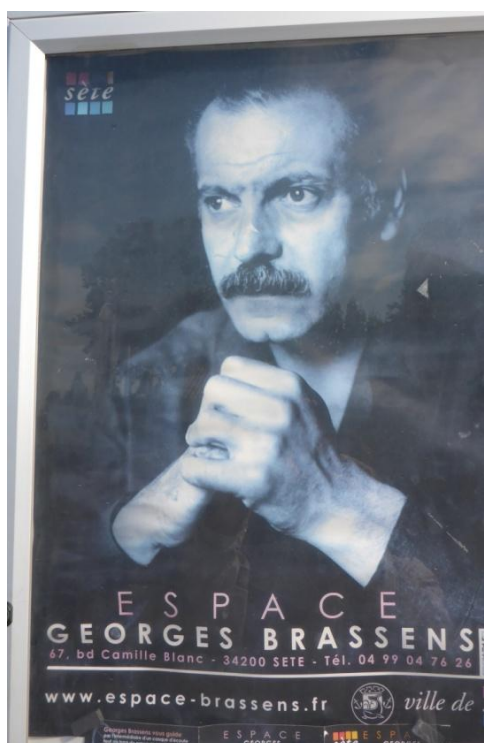


View over Etang de Thau



And over the town

And riding downhill is very nice. We have two new neighbors when we get home, a motor yacht from Jersey and a small French yacht. We eat lunch and I return, alone this time, at the Espace Georges Brassens. Interesting exhibition and I enjoy especially an old recital filmed in the 60s. Nostalgia, memories, he was quite a special man, this Georges.



Georges Brassens

Meanwhile, Jens went swimming and took a sun bath. And when I return, he gives the keys back and pays the marina, we leave tomorrow for Port-Vendres. We invite the young guys on the small yacht for dinner. While I do the blog, Jens simmers an excellent beef bourguignon. Aurélien arrives and we spend a great evening together. He left Le Havre, entered the Gironde

at Royan and took the Canal du Midi and the Etang de Thau.. His boat, called Heoliañ, is still dismasted but he'll put the mast up tomorrow and continue towards Barcelona.

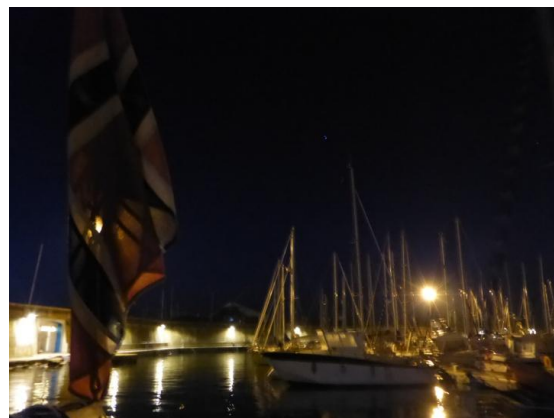


Aurélien



C'est essentiel, c'est evident. Ah, ah, ah

Thursday, November 3, 2016. Sète-Port Vendres



Bye, bye Sète





Sunrise

We get up at 6 am and leave at 6:30, it's still dark but it will be light soon. Beautiful sunrise while we take breakfast. Nice weather, a light wind from northwest, so back on our right, force 2-3 and a small swell. And bad luck, this swell makes me a little seasick. I'm not really sick but I don't feel well, and it will last all day. It's too bad because we have a very good crossing. We're making good progress, engine and jib. We see a Customs boat, far away, and a large ship. Jens sees her on AIS and says that we are in "kollisjonkurs"! I don't like that, but it's a joke, the ship is anchored and will not make "kollisjon" with anyone.



We see the Pyrenees

The day passes quietly, I lie down and Jens also. Then, around 4 pm, the wind completely falls and rises shortly after but from southeast this time, so a little in front and from the left, force 4-5. But we are almost there, we enter the port of Port-Vendres at 5:30 pm, the night begins to fall.



We arrive In Port Vendres when night is falling

We find a place along a finger pontoon, I like it because it's easier to get off the boat on the side. The gate of the pontoon opens from the inside without code, we can go out, but we need a code to go back on the pontoon. We go to the harbor office, which is still open. They are nice, welcome us and give us the pontoon code. I'm glad, I've already spotted a blue name. Short walk on the quay to stretch our legs. We see a Swiss yacht which was in Sète at the same time as us. Then blog, simple dinner of leftovers and bed early. Port-Vendres is our last stop in France, then we go to Roses, in Spain, not far from the border, where we'll leave Maja, on land, around November 11.

Sète-Port Vendres: 61 nm (110 km)

Florvåg-Port Vendres:  $6\,956 + 61 = 7\,017$  nm (12 631 km)

### **Friday, November 4, 2016. Port Vendres**



Maja. Port Vendres



What a funny name. Why not pest or cholera?

Gray, mild. I didn't sleep well, I thought a lot about the weather. Bad weather is expected from Saturday until the end of next week, with a calm Monday. But this pause on Monday, will it be calm enough for us to leave? If necessary, I would be ready to leave today. But Jens looks again carefully at the weather forecast this morning and convinces me that we can go Monday. OK . Jens goes to buy bread and talk with the owner of the Swiss yacht. He has problems with its AIS and Jens goes to help him after breakfast. I remain a little on Maja, go to the Tourism Office to have a town map and join them. Philippe is sailing alone for the moment, he put his boat on a truck from Switzerland to Lyon then descended by the Rhone and will continue to Barcelona. Then Jens and I go for a walk in town, it's quiet, the city seems to live in slow motion, except on the port where it's more animated.



The harbor. Port Vendres

We follow the coastal path to the Anse de la Mauresque (Cove of the Moorish Lady), a small rocky bay close to the town.



L'Anse de la Mauresque

We return, lunch at the boat and quiet afternoon, it's raining a little now. I watch the news on the internet and am really scared of Trump! We go out to dine and I get, finally, my fish soup, but in fact it is a fish broth, only liquid. It's good but a bit light. Jens, who took a Casolette du pêcheur (fisherman stew) shares his fish with me. But very good dessert, a chocolate fudge on a bed of strawberry cake with custard. Nam.

**Saturday, November 5, 2016. Port Vendres**



Ribbons and buttons

Changing weather, alternately gray and sunny, wind strong enough, the Tramontana. We go on bike to Collioure, a small town 4 km from here to the north. But we stop first at the market and do some shopping that Jens takes back to the boat. Then we take the road which is nice,

along the coast. Collioure is a very pretty town with a small fortified port and a beach in the middle of the town.



Collioure

Jens bathes, the water is at 17 °, I think the season is over for me. We go back, eat lunch and then go together shopping at Carrefour, here in Port Vendres. This is our last chance to buy French, if we leave Monday to Spain. When we return I start the blog and Jens starts cooking, he prepares a baked fish dish with onions, tomatoes and potatoes.



Philippe

We invited Philippe, the guy from Switzerland, to dinner. In the evening the wind become stronger, and it starts raining just when he is coming. He tells us that he saw a domestic dispute on the quai this morning. A man threw a beer bottle on the head of his wife, who began to bleed profusely. Philippe then intervened and comforted the child who witnessed all

this and he phoned the police. Coincidentally, he works with abused children in Switzerland. He who wanted to take a break from this difficult work is caught in a drama here. We spend a good and long evening together, then washing up and to bed.

### **Sunday, November 6, 2016. Port Vendres**

Beautiful weather but strong Tramontana. We start cycling and Jens stops on a pontoon to look at a white yacht which looks a little like Maja. The guy is there and we talk. He comes to see Maja and we go and visit his boat. Then we ride to Banyuls, a small town south of Port-Vendres. The road, wide and good, goes much up, good exercise.



Beautiful landscape

We climb, descend, climb again and descend again. Our poor legs! The landscape is beautiful, mountains, vineyards and the sea. Banyuls is known for its wines and especially a sweet wine type, kind or Porto or Muscat. Arrived in the city, we go to see the boats in the port, they move, the swell comes in there.



Banyuls

I find a blue, we take back our strength by eating dried fruits and drinking water on a bench and begin the return by a good climb. Back to Port-Vendres at 2 pm, we take our lunch inside, the wind is cold. We did 17 km, this doesn't seem much, but mostly uphill (and downhill!). A short walk in the afternoon and then we are invited for dinner on "Brasser", Philippe's yacht. He prepared us a couscous. I am impressed, to make a couscous by himself, on a boat!



The couscous

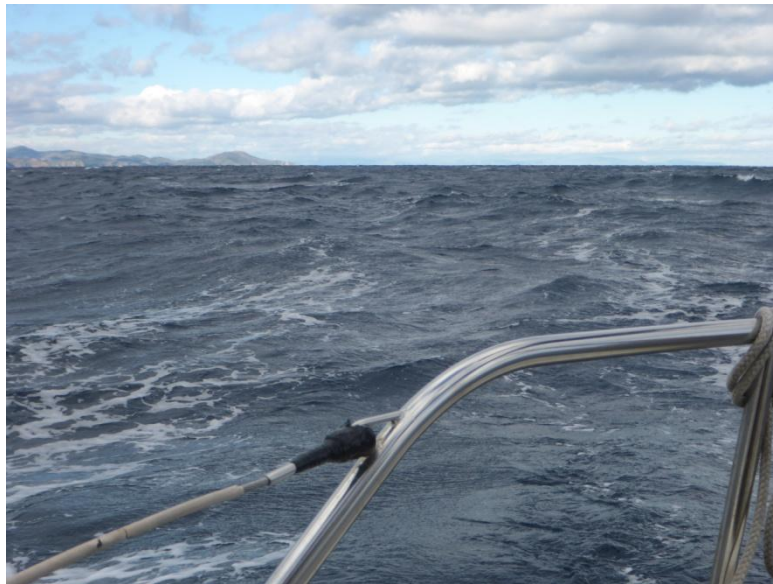


Jens and Philippe

And it's a couscous royal, that is to say with mutton, chicken and merguez, we enjoy it. Another good evening. We agree, after seeing the weather forecast, that we can leave tomorrow morning.

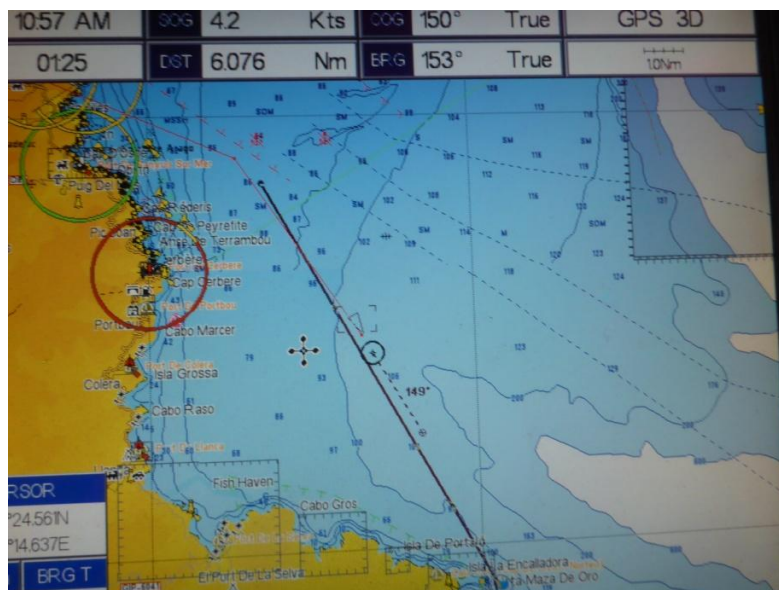
## Monday, November 7, 2016. Port Vendres (France)-Roses (Spain)

The weather forecast confirms the relative calm for today, but it's not totally calm: northwest wind (tramontana) force 4-5, waves of about 1m.



It's not really calm

We leave at 9:30 am and already to go out of the harbor we have to pass a few waves, in the front, which are well formed. But after that we turn south and we have the wind almost behind us and the waves too. We go only with the jib and the wind pushes us well. The wind force is 5, as expected, but with long periods at 6. So our dear Maja is rolling well. At one point, two close and bigger waves shake us well. But all is well fixed and the only thing that falls is the camera that jumps over the edge of the shelf and lands on the bottom couchette, my hole. Maja is moving a lot but takes it all with the utmost safety.



We are the circle, "Bresser" is back us



Phillipe leaves a little after us and it should not be easy, alone, leaving the dock, taking back the fenders, storing the ropes, and especially putting the sail up. It's easier when we are two.



Philippe's Bresser

We pass the Cap Creus with a bad reputation. Jens choses to pass between an island and the cape. The guide says that it's not a good idea to do that in bad weather, but today the wind is strong but it's not a storm. We pass, and it goes well, it is wide and the waves are not bigger there. Phillippe also passes here. And, pleasant surprise, after the cape we are protected by it and although the wind is still strong, the waves are much smaller. We follow the coast, pass a second cape and enter the Bay of Roses. We see that Phillippe continues more to the south.



I sew together the Catalan and the Spanish flags and hoist them

Arrival in the port of Roses at 3:30 pm, it took us exactly 6 hours. Jens phones the marina and the guy who answers is talking so fast, in Spanish, that we understood only that he we have to enter the marina. There we see a mariner makes us signs ... and gets into a car.



The “marineros” drive a car

We follow the car and it brings us to our place. First time we see marineros in a car! Ankerdram of Shandy (mix of beer and lemonade) and good olives. Short walk into town, it's freezing cold with the north wind. Dinner at the boat and first quiet evening in Spain. Here we are in Roses and that's where we'll leave Maja when we return home in mid-November. We talk with Phillipe in the evening, he is safely arrived in L'Escala, further south. Very good last crossing today, strong wind and quite big waves, but everything went well. And, to finish this good day on a happy note, I find again my little black kitchen knife lost two weeks ago.

Port Vendres-Roses: 29 nm (52 km)

Florvåg-Roses:  $7\ 017 + 29 = 7\ 046$  nm (12 683 km)



Our trace from South Sardinia to Roses

## Tuesday, November 8, 2016. Roses

They vote in the United States, I am scared.

Windy night. Jens slept but I woke up and went out to add a rope. This morning, good weather but with a very strong wind. We ride to the site where we will let Maja and to agree on a date. It's a bit outside the city on the edge of a canal. Luxurious reception offices, friendly and efficient lady. We agree to take Maja out of the water on Monday, November 14. On our way back, we ride through islands, bridges and canals.



Canal

This is not old; all the buildings that line the canals are holiday apartment's buildings. People can thus have their boat moored down their apartment. Almost everything is closed and it is a little like a ghost town. We stop at a small cafe and ask for "una clara y unas tapas". The guy has no clara (beer and lemonade shandy) or tapas. Jens takes a beer, I take a lemonade and we mix. Back to Maja, the wind increased further force 7. Lunch inside, it's too windy to eat outside and after lunch, first bike ride and then walk along a coastal path.



Walk along the coast

On the sea the wind raises foam and it looks like smoke, though the waves are not big, curious phenomenon.



The wind lifts the foam



Maja is heeling in the harbor, the wind is strong

Returning Jens asks the marina if we can move, where we are is really exposed. They find us a small place well inside. So we move, but with the wind it's not so easy, especially as there is

not much space between the pontoons. Jens comes between the pontoons and wants to turn into the place when a strong gust takes us on the side. Fortunately, Jens knows his Maja very well. He backs up and tries again and this time it's ok. A marinero catches our ropes and gives us the mooring lines and here it's much quieter. Dinner at the boat and last news on Internet before the vote in America.



In the newspaper: the windiest place yesterday was Cape Creus!

### Wednesday, November 9, 2016. Roses

I got up at 5 am to go to the bathroom and I listened to the radio (with earphones not to wake up Jens) and, horror, Trump's victory is virtually assured. The news at 8 am confirms it. It feels like a nightmare.



Cape Norfeo

We start at 10:10 am, we have a fairly ambitious plan to first make 5 km by bike and then walk 17 km to a lovely village called Cadaqués, in northeast direction. The 5 km by bike are ok except that we reach a dead end and that we must turn back a little bit. And we begin our long walk, we are well equipped and have drink and food. But the path is not flat, it goes up and down a lot. The scenery is beautiful, blue sea and sky, and a beautiful view of the Norfeo Cape that we passed the day before yesterday. We come to the Cala de Mountjoy, 4.5 km of our departure point, pretty tired and it's already 1 pm.



Picnic against a wall

Picnic on the beach against a wall to be protected from the wind and we decide to go back. Stop for a swim for Jens and glass pieces for me at a beach and back to the bikes.



It looks like a bear (it's a cut tree)

I'm tired and am not enthusiastic about these 5 km up and down by bike, but in fact it goes well. Back to Maja at 4:45 pm. We had our fill of fresh air and sun today. We did 10 km by

bike and 9 km walk. A cup of tea with buttered biscotti give us our strength back. Blog, dinner of tapas in a restaurant.

I feel a big black cloud over our heads with Trump as president of the United States.

### **Thursday 10 November 2016. Roses**

A little gray, quite mild. Jens carries laundry at a Laundromat and I'm going to take a shower. And there, I realize that there is a washing machine and a dryer in the sanitary block. It will be for next time. I then go for a ride on the pontoons to find blues and I only find one. We lunch outside at 1 pm and I am obliged to borrow a sweater from Jens, mine is drying on Maja.



I borrow Jens' sweater

Coffee, Sudoku, newspaper and we start our daily ride. Jens finds paths on his tablet with Google-map. We discover the back country.



Jens is looking at his tablet to find our way



Olive trees



Track

The built and tourist strip along the coast is thin and behind it it's immediately the countryside. Many fields are wasteland and the landscape is open, no wall or fence, except where there are animals. Today, no up and down, we are in a large flat valley. We make 14 km and go back. We have well deserved an ankerdram, a clara. And then quiet evening, blog for me and cooking for Jens, fish with a cream sauce.





Roses and the moon

**Friday, November 11, 2016. Roses**

Freedom of maneuver this morning, Jens wants to varnish some wooden parts on Maja, so I go to the fishing port to look for blues and find one, a boat for tourists, in Catalan. I then stop under a palm tree to look at the little green parrots that have made a nest up there.



Parrot's nest and a green parrot



The Citadel

This reminds me of Almuñecar, we had them in front of our windows. Then I go and visit the citadel, it's big and we can see remains from the Greek, the Romans etc. I ride along the beach, to the end. The promenade stops because a big canal arrives in the sea. It is through this canal that we will pass on Monday to go to the yard to take Maja out of the water. I take a picture and, beside me, a lady calls her dog. She asks me if I saw it, describes it to me, it is a white labrador and I answer yes, but quite far on the promenade. I wish her good luck and leave. Farther on, towards the town, I ask a couple of French who also have a dog if they saw a white labrador. Yes, but even further. I ride more and see him. He sits quietly beside a bench and is waiting for his mistress. I look at his medal and see his name, Block.



Block, lost and found

I try to make him come in the direction of his mistress but he does not want to go. I return a little by bike towards the canal and, when I see the lady, make signs to her with the arms that she must come. She comes, calls his dog and there he comes. So, I made my BA (bonne action) of the day. I then hurry back and arrive just for the lunch that Jens has already prepared, pretty and good. We do a little walk and go shopping together in the afternoon, then blog for me. Jens repairs the brakes on my bike and works. I finish the blog early enough to make dinner, pretty and good too.



Lunch



Dinner

## Saturday 12 November 2016. Roses

The weather is nice. We resume our project to go to Cadaqués (17 km) but this time by bike. So we leave at 10.30 am and after getting out of town we start our long climb. But it's ok, the road goes up steadily but not too much, we don't walk once, but it's long, a 9 km climb.



View over the valley



Cadaqués

The view is beautiful and we even see, in the distance, snow-capped peaks towards the Pyrenees and, after the pass (280 m), we see Cap Creus to the north. Long descent towards

Cadaqués, a white town by the sea where we arrive at 12.20 pm. We walk a little and pass a nice little stone bridge towards a small island.



The small islet with the stone bridge



On the beach



Then picnic in the sun, swimming, me too (it's because I want to pee) and glass pieces. We're fine. And return by the same road, 8km of climb and 9 km of descent. This is going very well and we arrive at Roses at 4:45 pm, not too tired, we did 39,5 km. Clara (mixture of beer and limonade), a short rest and blog, Jens is working. Our dinner this evening consists of "galettes bretonnes" ( kind of pancakes from Brittany) in a creperie, not very Catalan, but good.

### Sunday, November 13, 2016. Roses



Washing



Big cleaning

It is raining and it is ok, today is cleaning day. If the weather was fine, it might be harder to stay in all day. Two washes, two dryings, defrosting of the refrigerator, washing of many shelves and closets, cleaning of the "bathroom" (1.5 m<sup>2</sup>, not too big), vacuuming everything that can be vacuumed etc. That is for me. Jens checks, cleans, repairs, changes the engine oil, changes filters, washes the bilges by running water in and then pumping it out. He has a pump problem that he solves, of course. It stops raining and we can have lunch outside, short rest and we go back to work. We're busy all day. I just take a walk on the dyke where we were on

the first day, it's all quiet now. At 5 pm I do the blog and Jens goes shopping. He then worked on preparing the course he is going to give in Lisbon, then diner to the boat. No fancy cooking today. Fishsoup in a can and empanadas, but it's good and I make a salad. We go to bed early, we are tired. Last night on the water, tomorrow Maja is put on land.



Pretty sunset

### **Monday, November 14, 2016. Roses Marina-Nautic Center**

The tramontana is blowing very hard and it is today that we take Maja out of the water. If I were a captain, I would hesitate, but as Jens rightly says, it's up to the Nautic Center to decide, as long as they don't phone to cancel, we'll go. Jens goes to pay and return the key and at 10:15 am we leave. We have an appointment at the Nautic Center at 11am.



Strong wind



On the canal

The wind is terrible, force 7 with gusts to 8, but the waves are very small, it is a land wind and they don't have the distance to form. Fortunately we don't go far and only in the bay, Maja is heeling well and we have no sail. We go into the canal and there it is calmer. We go into the hold, take down the bikes and the guy lifts Maja and leads her to the ground with the crane.



Maja is taken out of the water

He works alone, slowly and we have to wait. I'm cold! I'm going to take refuge in the waiting room (yes, there is a waiting room) and, with Jens, we take a coffee at a vending machine. A guy washes Maja at high pressure then the guys are going to lunch but, before, put blocks under Maja and so we can also go to lunch, in the boat. This is the first time we climb in Maja when she is still suspended by the straps under the crane.



We eat lunch on Maja still in the straps

The guy comes back at 2 pm and passes Maja from the crane to a trolley which he drives by remote control.



Maja on the remote-control cart

It looks like a big toy. He takes her to another "parking lot" on the other side of the street, for boats that stay for a long time. And there are some who have remained for years, abandoned. It's sad to see. When Jens first phoned, they had initially refused to take Maja because of her age. The guy tells us that old boats tend to be "forgotten". Jens had responded by sending a



picture of Maja and saying she was upset to be considered forgettable. So they said yes. A yacht, not far from us, has a name I like very much. Jens wants to buy paint at the Nautic Center, but the price is double the normal price. The girl, nice, tells him of another shop, cheaper. I'm going to visit Empuriabrava. I spotted on the map this district made in arc of circle and with many canals. It is 4 km from here, we are much closer here than when we were at the marina. At first I thought it was an old fishing village. But Jens, more clever, had withdrawn my illusions, according to him, it was a holiday town. So I go by bike, it's flat since they are ancient swamps which have been dried up. But Empuriabrava!



Empuriabrava

Yes it is a holiday town but ugly! Especially because everything is private, closed, fenced. Each lot reaches the canal, which is not accessible to the public. The port is also surrounded by fences, you can't go to see the boats. It is private property to its extreme. I turn a little in the town and come back, it is cold. Blog, work for Jens and dinner in Maja, ashore. It's the fifth time now, we are getting used to it: Vila Real de Santo Antonio (Portugal-Spain border, December 2014), Lavrio (east of Athens, summer 2015), Finike (Turkey, December 2015), Malta (Summer 2016) and here. But I still don't like it very much.

Roses Marina-Nautic Center: 3 nm (5 km)

Florvåg-Nautic Center):  $7\ 046 + 3 = 7\ 049$  nm (12 688 km)

### **Tuesday 15 November 2016. Nautic Center. Roses**



Much less wind today than yesterday and beautiful sun. Jens paints Maja's hull in blue and I am sanding the propeller. Then I ride to town to make a last bike ride. I stop to talk with a lady who is sitting every day on a bench on the promenade, under a parasol, and knitting all the time. She sells what she is making.



The knitting lady

Then I go back to the little parrots and manage to take pictures of two small one standing at the edge of the hole that serves as entrance.



Babies parrot



### Lunch

We eat our lunch in the sun, sitting on a small boat upside down. Jens is still working on the boat in the afternoon and I finish washing Maja. Then I start the (long) blog of yesterday. Dinner in the boat, it's cold when the sun goes down and we pack our luggage after dinner. Jens phoned a taxi to pick us up at 8 am tomorrow morning. I hope it works better here than in Calvi.

This is the end of another part of the journey. We made 2609 miles from Finike or 4700 km. We'll come back at the end of February or beginning of March 2017. And then we still have a long way home, all the Mediterranean coast of Spain, with probably a detour by the Balearic Islands, Gibraltar, along the Atlantic coast of Portugal and Spain and up to Norway. And this is not so easy because the winds are mostly from the north and we go north, so it's against the wind. But we have time and we can wait for the "windows" that always come to those who have the patience to wait.

Thank you for following the blog, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year (well in advance). See you next year.

Jeannette

PS The taxi came at 8 o'clock.



Our trace until November 2016



