

Friday, February 4, 2011

Ready and set

Ok, this is a little embarrassing. Half-way through yesterday I realized that the huge hang-over I had from the bon-voyage-party the night before wouldn't leave me quickly, and that there was no going sailing that day. Head throbbing and dead-tired I dragged myself through the day, and a few times I thought that maybe sailing with crew isn't such a bad idea after. Especially as I carried tons (at least!) of fruit and vegetables back from the market. So no sailing today.

With the extra time that this day gave I managed to do some of the lower-priority works, like changing the cushions of the cockpit seats. Not vital for sailing, but for sure some welcome extra comfort. Then I washed my clothes, filled the tank and two jerry cans with diesel, cleaned the head, galley, and bilge one more time, and fell into bed at nine. Now everything is as ready as it gets, and I'm waiting for Guillermo to come around with his boat in the morning and Marianna, Krasimir and Madonna to see me off. They insisted, and how could I decline. It's a so much nicer start into a voyage. I only hope Marianne wakes up early.

There are six questions everybody is asking me: Where are you going? How long will it take? How much fuel do you carry? How much water? How do you sleep? What are you going to do all that time?

I am heading for St. Martin via the Cap Verde Islands. I don't plan to stop on the way, but will of course do if necessary. The distance is about 3000nm (5400km) and it should take about three weeks. That is an average of 6kn or 10km/h. Though I have a friend who was underway for 38 days last year. I have 60 liters of diesel in my tank, and 60 more liters in three jerry cans, in case something happens to the diesel in the tank. At approx. 3 liter/h that gives me a maximum range of 40 hours or 200nm (which is 7% of the distance). So I'm not planning to rely on the engine to get me there. The engine is for taking me in and out of ports, and to charge the battery should the solar panels fail.

I have 300 liters of water in the tank, plus 60 liters of water as a backup in 5 liter bottles. At calculated 5 liters/day that means I can live comfortably for 70 days. I also carry a little desalinator (Katadyn Survivor 06) which produces about a liter of fresh water per hour with lots of work. I usually sleep from midnight to noon, half an hour at a time. Most of the time I spent in the cockpit, unless the weather is not agreeable. For that case I have a little sprayhood over the companionway with a flap at the back. I can sit in there and sleep or have a look around while being nicely protected. When I'm not sleeping I'm either reading, writing, cooking, taking pictures, recording video, playing the tin whistle, working out, and of course "sailory things" and keeping the boat shipshape. Bored? Never. Lonely? Sometimes. Scared? Certainly. But honestly, I've never been as scared on a boat as I am every time I drive with the Motorbike on the street.

So many crazy people on the road, and always distracted by other things - phones, iPods, eating, smoking, makeup, squeezing spots. Therefor my thoughts go out to you my friends that have to drive to work every day, and I wish you safe commuting and no traffic jams. The cockpit, where I will spend most of my time for the next few weeks. Awesome bbq, ey?

Posted by Axel Busch in Gudrun V at 23:05

thanks for the "no traffic jams" wish! just with 5Million cars in one city and people who cannot drive it is seldome reality. Enjoy the space and emptiness around you, it is an asset..

Anonymous on Feb 18 2011, 01:54