

Friday, December 4. 2009

Mistral!

Clear night sky above the Rhone valley seen from Condrieu. A clear (and freezing cold) night had promised it already, and the morning brought it: Mistral, the famous wind which blows from the north-west along the Rhone valley. It pushed me with up to 17km/h (instead of my usual 13km/h) down the river. Which was great fun, especially with the newly mounted and configured autopilot doing most of the steering. Until I came to the first lock. With the wind blowing up to 24kn (not a very strong mistral) from behind, and the Rhone pushing with 3-4kn, everything had to happen a little faster and more precise than usual. Good that I had have enough practice in the last 154 locks! Now I'm in Valence in a, uhm, McDonalds. Free wifi exerts a strong gravitational pull on ex IT people. The Marina here is by far the most expensive I've encountered. 19.50 EUR per night. So far I have never payed more than 10.00, mostly 6.50 in France. But usually I'm staying for free at some suitable quay along the way. I came here for the gas station, because I wanted to refill my diesel tank in time. Unfortunately the machine's data connection to the bank was broken, and it doesn't provide fuel for cash. So no fuel for Vespina this time - again. I'm not very lucky in this regard. All of the gas stations I have encountered in France were either dismantled or shut down for the winter. Luckily Vespina has a mighty huge diesel tank for a sailing yacht her size, 500 liters, which I had filled up in Worms.

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 12:39