

Sunday, December 13. 2009

Making friends in Port-Saint-Louis-Du-Rhône

Attaching the Tricolor lantern to the masthead. My favorite pastime these days: connecting wires. André, Arthur, Birgit having tea on board Vespina. After the mast was stepped on Thursday morning it became very windy, 7-8 Bft, and stayed like this until this morning. During this time I could work only little on the rigging, because I did not want to go up the mast in the cold & wind. Strong wind is typical for the season, and one really has to adjust his plans according to the weather. But I didn't get bored during this time, because the electrical installation kept me very busy. Now everything except the radar is connected and working. For the radar I will need probably another 4 hours. I am becoming very proficient with my Digital Multimeter, at interpreting cable layouts and at connecting wires. Today it was finally ok to climb the mast, although with 3°C it was still pretty cold. It was the first time I've ever climbed a mast, and to be honest, when I was up I was pretty scared for a few minutes. It is something very different to climb up a thin 12m mast alone with the boat moving underneath you, than to climb a solid rock when your best friend is securing you from the ground. The difficult part is not so much the climbing itself. But once you're up, you have to let go with both hands to do the work you climbed up for. But after the second time it was already routine, and by the fourth time I felt as comfortable as in my sleeping bag. Well, almost. Now all the halyards are in, the VHF antenna is connected and my new tricolor led sailing lantern with anchor-light is installed. This is a very cool piece of equipment with very low energy consumption and a good range. A must-have, really. Tomorrow I want to whip up the sails and set up the wind vane. On Tuesday I hope to finish the radar and stow away everything nicely for the sea. Fortunately the weather forecast predicts good weather for Wednesday, when I can make the first sea trials. I plan to sail to an anchorage near Carro. From there, provided the rigging is ok and the weather is good, I want to cross the Golfe Du Lion on Thursday to Cadaques in Spain. It is a little over 100nm, and so I will need 20 to 30 hours. Thinking about that trip, I feel very excited and a little anxious at the same time. It will be the first time that I will be sailing alone throughout the night. I don't expect everything to go well, and it will be surely a very cold and very long night. But I trust Vespina and myself enough to get there without too much trouble. My neighbors here at the shipyard are André and Arthur. André is equipping his boat to sail to the Galapagos with his family after Christmas. Arthur is another single handed sailor (and very gifted musician), who installed a wind vane and new rigging here and is now waiting for better weather to test it. He is sailing in the Med since Mai, when he bought his boat, and is now heading for the Canaries as well. Maybe we will see each other a few more times on the way. We became quite good friends over the last week and meet every day on each other's boat for tea or dinner, or to help each other out with the various tasks that are a lot easier done with another pair of hands.

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 13:02

yes, it is fun connecting multiple wires and playing with that tiny multimeter and then like magic things work:-) didn't do it during the last years but still remember:-)
Und den mast rauf, uff, ist wackelig, war aus "spass" schon mal halb oben, aber weils eig. nicht nötig war, hab ich gebeten mich bitte jetzt sofort wieder runter zu lassen...
Anonymous on Dec 14 2009, 02:00

Very exiting! Sailing alone during the night schuettel Aber Du machst das schon. Und wenn Du in der Karibik angekommen bist, komme ich Dich besuchen
Anonymous on Dec 14 2009, 10:25

Du hast mir ja tatsächlich die selbe Mütze geschenkt!
Anonymous on Dec 14 2009, 13:34