

Tuesday, March 30. 2010

Friends come, friends go.

Aefnityr is leaving. Bye Lasse, Malene, Sebastian and Marie. Probably the best part of the voyage are all the people I get to meet, especially when their boat lies next to mine for a few days. When I came back from Germany the Danish Aefnityr was lying to my starboard side. Lasse and his family had just arrived a few hours ago in an almost biblical downpour from the west. Over the week we got to talk a lot, and his 5-year old son Sebastian tried to hammer some Danish into my skull. There's a persevering 5-year-old if I've ever met one. On Friday they left again, heading for Cartagena first, and then on towards Turkey. I wish you a safe journey! But the berth was not empty for long, for on Saturday Carlos (a ka "Giotto") arrived on his new boat, a beautiful Dutch steel cutter. He was all excited, because he had just bought his first own boat and it was his first trip on it. Reason enough to open a bottle of wine! Carlos is from somewhere in the mountains of Galicia, and as I found out yesterday night an enthusiastic player of the bagpipe! Carlos the piper. Galician rumba on the bagpipe.

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 03:03

Sunday, March 28. 2010

O wind, where art thou?

Yesterday around noon a light easterly breeze started up. But not enough to sail downwind with, and the three boats I saw passing Almerimar during the day did so under motor. By five in the afternoon the wind stopped, and didn't start up again since. Well, well. Fortunately the sun is out, and there is no urgent work to be done on Vespina. So today I'm looking forward to a sunny day reading in the hammock. The fever is gone since Friday, and I feel very well again. Only a slight cough remains.

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 04:12

Thursday, March 25, 2010

Surprises while painting the cockpit

Freshly painted cockpit On Ibiza I had sawed off a piece from a iron bar in the cockpit. Even though I scrubbed the cockpit afterward, some sawdust remained. It rusted, and soon the cockpit looked like the boat was centuries old and sick to the bone. Tiny yellow stains everywhere! But because it was raining pretty much all the time, I couldn't do anything about it. But this week the sun came out. So yesterday I took a can of regular white paint, and a different can of anti-slip white paint and went at it. First I painted the sides of the cockpit with the regular white paint. And since it was going so well, I painted all other parts of the boat that looked like they could use some paint too. Specifically around the windows. After the paint had dried I took the can with anti-slip white paint and went to work on the floor of the cockpit and the deck. But when I was done I realized that both cans had contained anti-slip paint. Doh! At least now the deck as well the window frames are totally slip proof! Only trouble with it is that the anti-slip paint collects dust and looks grey after a short time. So I'll have to repaint the windows rather sooner than later. Maybe I shouldn't have been painting my ship with 39°C fever. But today I'm feeling a lot better. The fever is down to 37,5°C. There's still a lot of coughing and nose blowing and a headache, but it's definitely going uphill. Probably the sense of achievement worked wonders. My plan was to leave here Saturday and sail to Gibraltar. But I probably should wait for a few more days until I'm fully recovered. At least from the weather forecast it looks like the wind is changing more frequently now.

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 07:36

Monday, March 22. 2010

Back on Vespina

Finally back on the ship. My first night wasn't too good, partially because of the cold that I brought with me, and partially because I have to get used again to the confined space. Banged my head and elbows a couple of times tonight . Apparently the weather was pretty foul here over the last weeks, with lots of rain. But today the sun is shining and the forecast for the next weeks is very good. At the moment I still have to wait for my life-raft to return from the service. At least the servicing part is done and so it should be here within the week. The wind is supposed to change more frequently between west ("Poniente") and east ("Levante"), so I really, really hope that I can make it to Gibraltar by Sunday. Which leaves me some time to get rid of the cold, practice with the third reef and the wind-vane, and do some more paint jobs on the boat. Steel is sturdy, but there are always rust spots.

Posted by Axel Busch at 08:48

Friday, March 19. 2010

Plans for the future

Only two days and I'll be back on Vespina again. This morning I wasn't sure whether I could get everything done here by Sunday. The whole week I felt like a juggler with too many balls in the air. But then this afternoon everything finally clicked into place, and now all that's left is to pay two bills, to post three letters, to pack my bag and to clean my flat. I've been only away for four months, but already a lot of things had added up and kept me busy throughout the last three weeks. I guess that's the price for not having burned all my bridges when I left in November. A price I pay gladly, because one of the things that was keeping me so busy was visits to and from friends. As a lesson from that experience I am already planing my next trip home, probably in August. Hopefully that is after I've crossed the Atlantic. Speaking of which, here's the new plan for the next stops on the way: Gibraltar, Marokko (Casablanca, Agadir), Canary Islands (Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Gran Canaria, Tenerife, La Gomera) and then to the Cape Verde Islands. And then, well, it looks like Brazil would be a good choice. Another lesson I've learned is that I need something "big" to think about and work on while I'm waiting for better weather. Now that the winter is over I hope that I won't have to wait anymore for weeks at a time like I had to in Port-Saint-Louis, on Ibiza, and in Almerimar. Also the bike-rentals should be open where I'm going, the water should be warm in enough to swim and dive, and there will be more people around. So overall more distraction and entertainment. But the thing that has bothered me most on the trip so far was not bad weather or loneliness, but the question of what I will be doing when the trip is over. I know, I still have a long way to go. But compared to what it took to start the voyage, the actual doing is quite easy: Wait and sail, wait and sail, wait and sail. So I can't help but ask myself what I will do after I've returned home, because I've learned one thing about myself on the trip already: there is still a lot that I want to do, and I can't do it from a sailing boat. And the thing I want to do most is ... start another company. A company with a good influence on the world. Oh yes, I can hear the laughter of you, my friends. Of course you knew this all along. Well, I didn't. After having started a new business from scratch three times (the first a failure, the other two very successful), I might as well have had enough of it. Time to take it slowly, enjoy life. Things like that. Well, I'm enjoying life. Tremendously! But I'll enjoy it even more when I work on a new business plan and do some research while I'm voyaging. This will give me something to look forward to for when the voyage is over. And having always something to look forward to is one of the most important ingredients for happiness.

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 16:47

Sunday, March 14. 2010

Obituary for Marta Werner

On Friday morning the voyage of my aunt Marta ended, following an illness of two years. Marta always inspired me with the ease with which she made everyone around her feel loved and accepted. She was of high moral character, but never distant and accepted others despite all their flaws. She was caring and understanding, and always found words of appreciation and encouragement. To me she was the best godmother I could have wished for, and a role model whose example I will forever struggle to live up to. The funeral will be on Wednesday in her home town, Pfullingen. Now I am glad that I am not halfway across the ocean and can be there to say goodbye to her. My flight back to Almeria is on the following Sunday.

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 15:21

Saturday, March 6. 2010

Home leave

I've arrived in Ulm last sunday just in time to see the start of the overtime of the hockey final - the only thing I've seen from this year's olympics. And then I fell into my wonderful and very comfortable big bed. What a change from the 50cm wide (and 1cm too short) bunk on Vespina! Throughout the week I was very busy with meeting friends and family. I also went shopping for new clothes, because my old jeans and t-shirts are two sizes too big now. Today we had 20cm of fresh snow, and I am thinking about going snowboarding tomorrow. But I am also looking very much forward to getting back to Vespina on Wednesday and continuing my voyage.

Posted by Axel Busch in Vespina at 09:40