

Sunday, November 27, 2011

Back on the boat

We arrive on the boat with our four heavy bags. We change into lighter clothes, then we head out for a welcome drink with Melissa and David, and dinner at their little Cafe. I eat one of David's fantastic arepa creations with chicken and a topping of fruits. Unlike the fruit in New York, it's ripe yet fresh and full of flavour. And quite unlike in New York the final bill for a delicious dinner for two with drinks is only \$12, not north of \$60. Welcome to Colombia! Then we return to the boat, and discover that we need to go to the bathroom. We should have stopped in the marina bathroom on the way to the boat. But we had walked past it chatting to each other because we're still in the apartment mindset, where everything is just one door away from the living room. Here in the marina the bathroom is 300m away, and it's raining heavily now. We decide to use the head, but I have to open the two seacocks first. I had lubricated and conserved them before we left, and number one turns smoothly. But number two is stuck, and I can't turn it. Of course it's the less accesible of the two, and I have to take the door off the closet, go on my knees, and stretch far to reach it. This seacock is cocky. 4 months alone on the boat must have convinced it that it's the master and commander, and it takes me 15 minutes to convince it otherwise. Finally the seacock is open. We can use the bathroom again. I'm drenched in sweat. Welcome to the boat. I look around, and the boat is already a mess. Just changing into different clothes and getting out the toolbox does that. The amount of effort necessary to keep a boat tidy grows exponentially with your desire to do fun or useful things. Everything is fine when all you have is the minimum clothes to keep you cool, warm, and dry. Only the absolutely necessary tools to keep the boat seaworthy, kitchen gear and food for simple meals, and some books for navigation and entertainment. It limits you in what you can do, and it takes more time to do it with simple tools. But everything is only a quick reach away. This changes dramatically when you add tools to make your life easier (e.g. for the kitchen and power tools), gear for your personal interests (like diving, photography, video, music), more clothes, and books and equipment for your business interests. The items for sailing and navigation are still only a reach away. But for everything else packing and unpacking becomes a necessary, frequent, and dreaded obligation. Not for us boaters the simple comforts of a 7 foot closet with big doors and plenty of shelf space. No, everything is stuffed in little boxes or bags and distributed all around the boat. Now that we're back on the boat, we have to divide our belongings into small parcels and distribute them among the many little lockers on the boat. My strongest advice for aspiring boaters: pack as light as possible. While I brush my teeth I wonder again why I'm doing this. Living in an apartment in a city is sooo comfortable. Why live on a boat and make live unnecessary hard? And an old racing boat with very little space at that, where I can't even stand upright. Then we go to bed. The first night on the boat after four months away. We crawl into the little forpeak triangle and lie down, our heads only a meter away from the ceiling. We talk about past experiences and remember the bad and the good times we had sailing and living together. How we watched the stars at night, how we helped each other, how we made it through bad weather and smaller emergencies, how we grew close and learned to trust and rely on each other. We talk and we agree that our small boat is an extraordinary environment. Not convenient or comfortable, quite the opposite. But absolutely wonderful in many other and unique ways. But we're not looking forward to catching up on four months worth of maintenance

Posted by Axel Busch in Gudrun V at 08:17

Tuesday, November 8, 2011

New York Update

Life couldn't be more different from the boat than it is here in New York city. After living on a boat for two years I had forgotten just how comfortable and convenient living in a big city is. Makes you wonder why people choose the boat. Ahh, right, the money. Living in Manhattan is insanely expensive. And nature of course, although there is plenty of nature just an hour's drive away. For example Bear Mountain State Park, which I visited two weeks ago to shoot photos of the leaves changing colors. And that is the theme for me in New York: shoot, shoot, shoot. So far I've taken five photography classes, visited the PhotoPlus conference and expo for three days, met up with photography groups, and spend a lot of time (and money) at B&H. On average photography occupies me for about eight hours every day, shooting and learning. Some days it's more than twelve hours, and then I feel almost like I'm back at work. The rest of the day I write my photography blog, do some programming, and walk or cycle around New York to visit its many tourist attractions or Liz' friends. Though it's getting dark early now, and with the city's streets full of homicidal taxi drivers the bicycle stays more often in the basement and I take the subway. Liz has signed up for the National Novel Writing Month and is very busy writing her first novel. I'm very excited about that, from the little she showed me this is going to be goood. Other than that we entertain the occasional visitor, cook a lot, and enjoy the comforts of our east village apartment: space, hot water, heating, washing machine, internet, nothing to fix, no worries about electricity, gas, or water, and a nice view of the city from our rooftop. This week Friday my brother and mum will come to visit, and that will surely take care of next week's activities. Here are the links to a few recent photo albums: • Bear Mountain State Park • New York City • New York Pizza School • George Washington Bridge • Lamborghini Gallardo • Halloween Blaze • Halloween Party • National Geographic Photo Workshop • Arlene's Grocery Punk Rock Karaoke • New York City Photo Safari • New York Central Park Softball

Posted by Axel Busch in Gudrun V at 10:01