

7th May Sunday.

Spent Sunday preparing Mahina for the 400Nm trip to Trinidad. Got 20lts of fuel and topped up my water tanks, went round to Falmouth Harbour for food provisioning and email, then back to English harbour by 1600hrs.

It's so awesome that every time I go to the docks for fuel or water, people are always complimenting Mahina on her looks. This guy from another boat also fueling up came round and showed much interest in her, asking me a lot of questions, questions that I always answer with pride.

The beginning of my trip started as I hiked half a mile to the top of the hill overlooking the bay, known as Shirley's Height. As I'm climbing the path I could always see Mahina, peacefully anchored in this amazing harbour. I was back down just after sunset.

8th May Monday.

Left Antigua at 0700hrs. Motor sailed the first 20nm then sailed another 35nm before the wind dropped and sun was setting. So I decided to anchor in Guadeloupe and enjoy this Bay, Anse de la Barque, and get some rest. By dawn the following morning, Mahina and me were on the way again. Right before the channel I hooked a small Barracuda, which I reeled in without too much hesitation. Now I need to fillet it and put it in my fridge, because chicken is on the menu today.

9th May Tuesday, 15Nm westward of the south Dominica Point.

After a 3 hr motor in a light breeze the wind finally pick up at 1500hrs. Now is Sunset and Mahina is on a close haul on course to Grenada with 10Knts of ESE. The feeling, which I just felt a few minutes ago on deck, was superb, so much so that for the first time I would have enjoyed sharing it with somebody else apart from Mahina. To my left I could see Dominica's beautiful mountains while Mahina is sailing comfortable through the waves at 5knts. Night is on the way soon. Can't wait for that Moon and hope that the conditions or rather wind stays.

10th May Wednesday 1800hrs, 30Nm west of the north of St. Vincent.

That was a big negative on the wind. At about Midnight the wind almost died. So I furled the Jib and put my 35 horses to work. That gave me time to sleep anyways. It was around 0300hrs that the breeze picked up again and under full sail I was doing 4 to 5knts with ESE10knts. It didn't last long and since 10 this morning I had no wind

at all and have been motor sailing since.

Lunch was my Barracuda, roasted with onion, tomatoes, garlic, salt, pepper butter, olive oil and mash potatoes. How is that!!!

By now it's almost dark. I have been reading on the Port side rail because that's the only shade I could find. Inside was pretty hot due to the engine running and outside, well normal Caribbean sun.

While sipping a glass of wine for sunset, this 2-engine propeller airplane, like World War II looking, came right from my left mid-ship, over my masthead and headed to the west. The sound was incredible and I would have loved for a period of 30 seconds to be on that plane watching Mahina on the move alone in this vast sea around me. Pause... Sorry had to go on deck. The wind has picked up slightly, so I unfurled my Jib and increased my speed to 6,3Knts. That's more like it. I am thinking of stopping in Grenada for the evening, most probably Prickly Bay, just to enjoy another anchorage at my own freedom. But I really want to be in Trinidad by Sat Morning to organize stuff for the following Monday. That's 85Nm to Trinidad from Grenada's south end point.

11th May Thursday, Grenada lee. 0700hrs.

Well Mahina had a wicked sail last night. From 7pm the wind picked up to 15knts from the SE. With full main and reefed headsail I was on close haul doing 6,8Knts over the ground. Just an hour later I reefed the main too as I do not want to overpower the boat at night. At present, 12 hrs and 75Nm later, I am in the lee of Grenada. Wind dropped again and put away the headsail. As soon as I turned the engine on and put my autopilot on, a Dolphin came by Mahina. After a few seconds it disappeared, then showed with another dozen dolphins. They spent 15 minutes playing and swimming on the bow. Myself, I was screaming with enjoyment and the thought of this morning welcome being overwhelming. I believed that it was a tap on my shoulder that I made so far.

Guess what? Ran out off fuel just off St. George's. Luckily I had turned one of the tanks off, knowing I am low on fuel. I did not want to carry a lot of fuel since the boat is to be on the hard for 6 months. Had planned to motor for less than 20hours. I changed tanks and bled the engine. Since I was not to sure how much fuel is left, I tacked all the way to Prickly bay and was that great fun, sailing hard on the wind between main land and this other island in 5m of water.

By noon I was in the bay. Took 20 liters of fuel (had to clear customs because of

that), send an email to Dad regarding my progress, bought bacon for my following morning English breakfast, had a beer at the bar and slept for 2 hours on the pick. Since there was a moderate breeze I decided to leave that evening rather than staying the night. Might as well take advantage of it.

1700hrs Prickly Bay.

After a refreshing swim and made myself a pasta dish with clams, I was soon under way to Trinidad 80Nm to go. Wind is a SE 13knts. Perfect, under full sail I am sailing in the right direction, close reaching and the pleasant sun setting to my right.

The whole night scenario was that the moon, almost full, is already up to my left, east, while the sun is setting to the west. I am heading always due south. So you see this big white ball on one side then a big orange one on the other. As the hours go by the moon moves on top of me before starts going down to the west. At 3am it disappears and everything turns pitch black until dawn at 5.

Tonight was special again. Whilst sailing beautifully under this amazing night of perfect conditions, two dolphins welcomed me again. This time they were jumping off my Starboard beam right in the Moon's Twilight. It was one of those sceanes that you only see on painting or postcards except this was real. One of them was quite big and named him Big Daddy.

12th May Friday.

At 1000Hrs I dropped anchor in Chaguaramas, Trinidad, Mahina's final voyage of the season came to an end. I already miss my freedom and Mahina. After all that work I did on her, she gave it back to me in full satisfaction. Everything worked as I planned and also learned what to modify to make it better.

After clearing customs and a phone call to my parents, I started preparing Mahina to be laid ashore alone for at least 6 months. Had a three page to do list in which basically consisted of getting everything that I had done in the previous months cleaned and serviced and most of the stuff on deck removed to avoid unnecessary exposure to the sun and rain. On Monday after lunch, I got hauled out in Peake's yard. That was it. She looked said coming out of the water but she knows that I will be back, this time for the big trip, back to Europe in April.

18th May Thursday.

1030hrs got a flight to Antigua to join a 122ft Sailing vessel, Ghost, with whom I will be leaving tomorrow, Sunday, morning to Palma De Majorca. Our estimated time of

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arrival is on the 11 of June. From there I will be looking for my next job.

Can't wait to go sailing across the Atlantic Ocean.

Have a great Day,
Eleandro
Antigua