

Wednesday 9th May 2007

On SY Mahina

Simpson Bay Lagoon

St. Martin

It's 5pm and finally arrived home on Mahina after a delivery trip of a 112ft Swan, Highland Breeze from St. Martin to Newport RI, USA. Nothing feels better than returning home, finding the boat as it was left, watching sunset and drinking a beer. Home Sweet Home I guess!

Well since the last block email things have been going well for me or surviving at least. My website at www.mahinacharters.com is frequently updated but for those that are wondering what I have been up to the last couple of months and what I am about to do, here is the complete update;

Well in the beginning of the year I launch Mahina in the water in Trinidad and sailed to Grenada, where I complete or rather say started my varnish work. Then I sailed straight to St. Martin as Heineken Regatta was starting in a couple of weeks. There I day worked on Maltese Falcon and Aquarius and sailed the regatta on NoonMark VI, a Swan 56, winning our class. In the meantime and till present I have been still working on Mahina getting my never ever decreasing work list to a minimum.

Sick of St. Martin I decided to sail to Antigua and see what is happening there. But after a 28hour sail solo, I was rejected by costumes (gave me on 24hours in the country) as I refused to pay a cricket world cup visa costing over US\$100. I was there purely to chill, maybe day work and catch up with friends. Cricket is not a sport I follow so why should I pay a dam Visa when some nationalities are exempted from it too. All bullshit politics and am so against spending my little money on them blood suckers!

Anyways, I stayed there for another 3 days (even helped Aria for a day) before I headed back to St. Martin. Again I day worked on the classic Nord Wind and the Wally Indio. Then down wind sail to Tortola, BVI to meet up with NoonMark again to participate in the BVI Spring Regatta. That was all great with nice racing breeze again and great crew. In fact we won our class again! Just before the racing finished, my only friend that came to visit and stay on Mahina for 2 week was Margaret, which I must add ... She's Irish!!! Together, we had a wicked time sailing around the BVI's, chilling, eating loads of in house cooking and of course, the odd beers and wine/s. We even made to Puerto Rico as I wanted to visit a new island and it was all worth it. Unfortunately the stay was short, 3days, but was fabulous. No big boats around, just a handful of cruisers on small yacht, great crystal clear water/beaches/reefs and Culture. Although Americans have control, all the people have Latin Spanish mentality. I guess my biggest fear there was when, after a 15minutes walk to the airport to customs, the friendly officer asked me if my yacht was the first time in American waters... I stop briefly to think and I say " Yes, good lord ".... I am in the computer now!

After a slow sail back to St. Martin, Margaret left the following afternoon. Now I was determined to get Mahina at the top for my single handed voyage across the Atlantic to Europe. I had already set a departure date before I received an email from a captain saying if I'd be interest in a big boat delivery to the States. I taugt a lot about it and decided to postpone my trip and do the delivery

instead, mainly for the cash issue and another, the wind was blowing from the direction I wanted to go that week.

The trip on Highland Breeze was great with nice sailing and awesome crew on board. Due to weather up north we stopped in Bermuda delaying my trip longer than I thought. But we made it and here I am in St. Martin leaving this Sunday 13th May to the Azores, single handed on Mahina.

Spend Thursday tuning stuff and an afternoon trip to Phillisburg to buy a camcorder which is about to become my friend for the next month. Friday I moved from the Lagoon and had a nice sail beat in 8-17kts, round to Phillisburg. I wanted to do this so I could sail Mahina for a few hours, making sure everything is working as it should and, apart from the new scene, I am on the dock, actually in a yard, with a smelling fishing boat next door, got shore power, charging up my batteries and all electronics/tools. Will spend Saturday doing a washdown, interior cleaning and organization, tender up, self steering on, customs and a trip to the supermarket, 100m walking distance, for my fresh produce and final stock. Ian, a Maltese buddy on Mari Cha III will come round and help me move Mahina in the bay to clean the prop. Then return for my power.

This is it; So my guess is that the next news from me, fingers crossed and touch wood (plenty on this yacht), will be from the Azores in hopefully around 3 weeks.

I would like at this point to thank everybody and in any smallest way, helped me achieve this dream that I am about to sail into. I really appreciate it and will never forget it especially knowing that I will be doing what I want to do thanks to your kindness to me.

I was reading a borrowed Atlantic cruise guide book and came across this paragraph which I am quoting to answer the question from many: " Why am I doing This.. ?"

" To live aboard a well found boat and cruise in her over long distances is to experience a sense of independence and freedom that is almost beyond description. The petty annoyances of the land fall away, you live by the look of the sky, the feel of the wind, and the run of the sea. As time goes on and the experience is gained, both you and the craft become increasingly efficient, able to deal with any eventuality, and that sense of affection and empathy felt by nearly all long distance sailors towards their vessel makes itself felt. Putting to sea, while in a busy full time anticipation, loses some of its overtones in anxiety, and prospect of an ocean passage is no longer quite daunting as it once was. However, to reach this happy state you must observe the rules, which are simple but exacting: careful planning, good seamanship and vigilance. " - from THE ATLANTIC CROSSING GUIDE BY ANNE HAMMICK AND GAVIN MCLAREN.

Together with this email, please find attached the latest photo of Mahina in the ready to cross the Atlantic beauty.

All I can say right now is .. Living the dream !!!

Until next updated

Keep Smiling and Happy Days

Eleandro

SY Mahina

Philisburg

St. Martin