

January - June 2013



New year - new destinations!

2013-01-02 San Miguel, Tenerife

Now we will sail to new sailing areas. We have stocked up with food - will not be able to fit in any more tins and the fridge and freezer are full. We have ticked off all on the to-do-list. Now it is time to leave!

We have enjoyed our year here in the Canary islands. We can recommend this sailing area independent of if it is a year here before you continue your journey, a charter trip or as a one-year sailing from the north of Europe/North America. We have found good climate, nice people, cheap food and restaurants and many nice marinas. And you can sail during the whole year.



Arrived

2013-01-09 Sal, Cabo Verde

We have arrived at the island Sal in Cabo Verde. The sailing went well, it took us 5 and a half day. The wind came from the north east most of the time so it was a good angle for sailing. The boat sailed well and there was nothing broken on boat or crew. We did not get any fish from the fishing line, but one morning we found quite a large flying fish on deck. After a photo session it went back into the sea, we did not want to eat it as it had been on deck for quite some time.

We anchored in the Palmeira bay on Sal early one morning and it took Sven almost the whole day to clear in. And then we also had to go to the airport to get the stamps in the passports. This we did the next day.

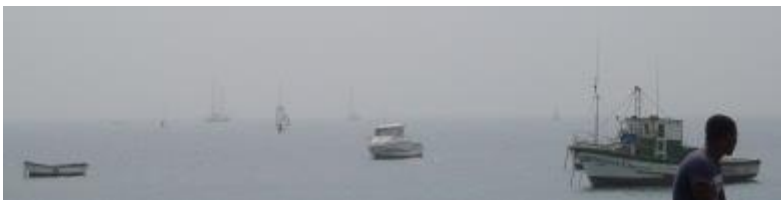


Guided tour in Palmeira

2013-01-11 Sal, Cabo Verde

One day we went to look for "Carlos", the contact person for "Transocean", one of the cruising clubs we are members of. The first person we asked showed us in one direction. The next in another. The third told a boy to guide us to Carlos house, we did not meet him there, but we got the information where to see him.

Carlos showed us the village, we went in to almost all "supermarkets" (all also had a bar). On each place we had to try the local "Ponche", rum together with honey. Every place had its own mixture. After some hours we said goodbye to Carlos and took a "Aluguer", a open car with a bench in the open for passengers, to the closest town to buy internet. That took the biggest part of the day...



A small part of Sahara in the Atlantic

2013-01-16 Boavista, Cabo Verde

Now we are on another of the Cape Verde islands, Boavista. This island is the closest to Africa and it is a real sand-island. Here you find many yellow beaches, sand dunes and date palm trees. They say that the island is a small part of Sahara drifting in the Atlantic! Here lives approx. 7.000 persons and many tourists in hotels behind high walls.

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One day we woke up and the whole world was sand coloured. Harmattan! Sand from Sahara is blowing out in the Atlantic and makes the sight almost to nil. It is a bit funny we get this phenomenon when we are at the island with the name "good sight". Windsurfers and Kaiters do not care weather they see anything or not, they are all around the boat the whole day. We are on board reading and relaxing.



Much to see under the surface

2013-01-20 Sao Nicolau, Cabo Verde

The third Cabo Verde island we visit is called Sao Nicolau. This is a high island with mountains. This means that instead of giving shelter for anchoring yachts there are williwaves coming from the mountain. It is good to have large anchors!

The small boys on this island are running for incoming dingies and will "help" to take the dingie ashore, watch it and like to have money for their job. They do not really help, and you are afraid of hurting the small ones in the water trying to take in the dingie to the shore. When walking the streets in the village, no one cares. Not even the taxis or "alugues" are trying to take us on. We tried to get some one to take us up on the island, but when no one liked to, took the dingie to a reef and went snorkling. Here we found many nice fish, turtles and urshins!



Mingel in the big city

2013-01-25 Mindelo, Sao Vicente, Cabo Verde

Now we have reached the big city of Mindelo on the island of Sao Vicente. This is the second largest city in Cabo Verde, the biggest is on the island of Santiago in the south. Here is a marina (where we are) with electricity and water at the pontoon and internet from the marina office!

In the city (with 70.000 inhabitants) you can find almost every thing you are looking for (but not what we would like to have, a hinge for the seat on the toilet!). Here all boats stop, coming and going from south, north, east and west. The boat beside us will leave for Senegal, others will sail to Martinique in the Caribbean or Salvador in Brasil. Some boats stay for a while as they have problems with the boat. Some have lost their mast, one is missing the rudder and there are others with smaller problems.

We will stay for some time, taking care of what is broken (the toilet seat for example) look at the city and the island as well as the neighbouring island of Sao Antao. There we go with the ferry.



A partly green island

2013-01-31 Sao Antao, Cabo Verde

Now we have seen (part of) an island that is green! We have been wondering about the name Cabo Verde, all islands we have seen so far have been brown/sand coloured. Sao Antao, the big island close to Sao Vicente, has some green valleys. One day we took the ferry from Mindelo to Porto Novo on Sao Antao, an "aluguer" up to the summit on the northern part of the island, and then walked all the way down to Paul, a small village by the sea. We walked through thickly wooded "forrests" of coffee, sugar cane and banana. Here we found cows, goats, horses, donkeys and pigs. The plantations were growing on terraces (as on Madeira, Azores and Canary islands) and all was very well managed with water coming from the mountains. The next day we rented a car and went around the island and we learned that the valley we walked was the greenest on the island. Large parts of the island were as brown/beige as the other islands.

The name Cabo Verde says coming from the closest part in Africa, Cape Verde, but also because there was more rain before and then the islands were greener. To day the islands are more "Cabo Castanho".



Carnaval in Mindelo

2013-02-13 Mindelo, Sao Vicente, Cabo Verde

Now the carnival is over in Mindelo. It has been hectic five days with many different carnival processions, the finest the last two days. On Tuesday night it was a samba carnival and on Wednesday it was the main procession. And what a carnival! Music, dans, singing, pleasure, colourfull dresses, different shows, drums and many participants! We think that if you did not participate in the processions you were audience. All the 70.000 inhabitants of Mindelo participated in some way. Now when the carnival is over we will start our sailing over the Atlantic. We aim for Fernando do Norhona (islands outside the Brazilian cost) and Salvador in Brazilia. The trip will be apr. 14 + 7 days and with a stop at Fernando we will come to Brazil in the middle of March.



The North and South Atlantic

2013-03-03 Jacaré, Brazil

On the 22 February at 17.15, we passed the Equator at 28 degrees West after 1070 nm from Cape Verde. We had just got some wind, and we were making speed again after having had weak winds, rain and thunderstorms during some days. We toasted in champagne and sacrificed a little to Neptune, and just after we got a fish! A bonito at just over 2 kg was our first meeting with the South Atlantic. It was our third fish during the trip, the first was a horse mackerel, the other a bonito. Atlantic horse mackerel was not good but the bonito we like. The Equator passage was almost directly south of Cape Verde, then we turned left towards Brazil. South of the equator, it is southeastern winds and it meant that the last two days, we had halfwind with good daily distances. We anchored up off the island of Fernando de Noronha in the middle of the night, 10 days after the start of Mindelo on the 24 of February.



A National park with nice beaches

2013-03-03 Jacaré, Brazil

The island of Fernando de Noronha is today known for its crystal clear waters and lots of fish, since 1988 the island and surrounding waters is a national park. But it has not always been the case, it has been prison for political prisoners and a military base during World War II. Today it is a charming tourist island, though a bit on the expensive side. One can even say that it is a little "greedy" expensive, everything cost furious much money and we had to pay for everything we wanted to do. You must pay to use the anchorage and you have to buy a so-called national park pass at about 35 € to be able to visit the beaches! We rented a car and drove around the island, swam, looked at the fish and birds and enjoyed the nice island for four days.

The anchorage is known to have a big swell, and so was the case when we were there. The last day the swell had increased to troublesome size. The boat rolled sideways so the water came in through an open porthole. The waves were probably 6 meters at the shore and they broke at the top which made it very difficult to cross them with the dingy. The Harbor Master said the swell would increase and change direction so it would be even more uncomfortable at the anchorage. The swell were already at 5 on a 6-point scale, and when the swell came up to 6 it was recommended to leave the anchorage. We chose to leave at 5, we paid and at dusk we left.



Brazil!!!

2013-03-03 Jacaré, Brazil

After one and a half day sailing in an upset sea, we arrived to the Brazilian mainland! The feeling was wonderful

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when we went up the River Paraíba, saw the boys who competed against each other in sailboats with lateen sail, mangrove swamps along the river and low wooden boats with outboard motors with a shaft that goes right aft, as we previously only seen on film. Then we felt we had come to South America! We went for an hour up the river to Marina Jacaré Village, a marina that is more like a yacht club. Here we found some boats we met at La Palma and Gomera in the Canary Islands and Mindelo in Cape Verde but also many new acquaintances. The night we arrived was a party night, the Chef celebrated his 60th anniversary and the yachties came with the food. There was both entrees, salads, potatoes, grilled meat of various kinds and cakes. The Chef accounted for the drinks – caipirinha and beer. It was a happy evening, and for us a great opportunity to meet everyone in the Marina. There are two Swedish yachts, many French yachts but also English, South Africans, Dutch etc. We will stay some weeks before we continue.



Cachaça on a row

2013-03-11 Jacaré, Brazil

We are now used to the hot climat (35 degrees during the day and 28 in the night), well, at least a little... We have visited the village Cabadelo and the city Joao Pessoa, been to the supermarket, listened to local music and tried caipirinha, the famous drink from Brazil. The caipirinha includes cachaça (the spirit made of sugar cane), lime, sugar and ice. It is OK. But to drink cachaça without the lime, sugar and ice is nothing for us. We tried one day when we visited a bar with cachaça in different flavours. You could find coco, lime, cinnamon, ginger, kiwi, pear, anise, pineapple etc. Well, to say the flavour was different, I am not sure, they seemed to have the same taste, it was only the content of the bottle that was different...

Now we are planning the next part of our trip. From here we will sail south, towards Salvador. It is 480 nautical miles to Salvador, approx 3.5 days. It depends on the weather and wind if we stop or go directly. There are some good anchorages and some marinas on the way. The weather will decide if we will stop or not.



The big city Salvador

2013-03-22 Salvador, Brazil

We are now in the marina in Salvador, in the middle of the city. We can see the elevator that takes us from the "lower" city to the "upper" city.

Salvador has 4 million inhabitants and the city has been growing fast. It is today the fourth biggest city in Brazil and it was here the first capital was - long time ago. Much of the old city is still to be found in the "upper" city. Here you can walk and you are not alone as a tourist. There are many paintings for sale together with other tourist items. But the old city is not only touristic, it is also filled with history and a nice place for a walk. There are unfortunately some criminality in the city, but not in the old town, there are too many police men.



Itaparica - a nice island close to Salvador

2013-03-30 Salvador, Brazil

Itaparica is the biggest island in the bay "Todos os Santos" (All saints bay) and the one with the most population and many weekend houses. The island is close to Salvador, it takes approx. 30 minutes with the ferry. Itaparica is a quiet and calm island and there are more than one place to anchor. The nice anchor place you find outside the village with the same name as the island. Here is also a small marina where you can leave the dingy when you go ashore, for instance to fill "mineral water" in cans and take it out to the yacht. Close to the marina there is a well that gives fine drinking water, not only appreciated by the sailors, but also the inhabitants come here to fill their cans and bottles. In the village you find small restaurants, the owner of Amigo is a former blue water sailor that has stayed on the island. His neighbours are from all over the world and many of them have nice houses with a view over the anchorage. Maybe they miss their sailing life?

At the anchorage the sandbank is over the surface at low water. On the reef you see little egret, people from Itaparica collecting shells and tourist bathing and looking for sand dollars (white, flat shells from a sea urchin). We all can be there at the same time and we look into each others baskets to see what the other has collected (not the little egrets though, they are too shy to show us their catch).



Fantastic market

2013-04-06 Salvador, Brazil

We took Randivag up the river Paraguacy one Friday to visit the market at Maragogipe on the Saturday. Maragogipe is a small town (appr 20.000 inhabitants) where the farmers come on Saturday mornings to sell their products. On the market you find fruit and vegetables, but also meat, clothes and other things you find on a market. The market starts at 6 in the morning (good temperature at this time of the day) and continues some hours, until most of the items are sold. When we were there it was a constant raining and we spent most of the time in the part of the market under the roof. We found everything we wanted: bananas, mango, sallat, tomatoes, oranges, avocado, potatoes and much more. Everything comes with a nice quality to a good price (at least if we compare with the prices in Europe). The only thing that is more expensive here is potatoes, but as this is important food on Randivag, we buy it indepentent of the price. And the potatoes have a good quality. It was a bit funny when we wanted to buy avocado. We cheched the prices and when we got the lowest price (appr 1 €) we said okay. The salesman than started to put avocado in a bag, he thought we wanted a kilo avocado. He was a bit concerned whan I only whanted one avocado, he did not know how much to charge... But even if we think the prices are low, the papers say it is high inflation in Brazil. The price of potatoes has gone up 100% in one year, tomatoes 133%, bananas 75% and beens 300%.



Bahia de Camamu

2013-04-06 Bahia de Camamu, Brazil

We are now at anchor in a big bay appr 200 km south of Salvador, Bahia de Camamu. This is one of the biggest bays in Brazil and here are many islands and bays. Unfortunately the area is not surveyed (no charts) so we need to stick to the parts where we know the depths. Our anchorage is well protected, has clean water and nice restaurants ashore. We can take a ferry to the nearest town for shopping and check internet. This is a nice place!

The area is called the "Dendê coast" because there are so many palm trees on the beaches (Dendê is a palm tree). Here you also find "old Atlantic rainforest" that previously you found on all coasts in Brasil. Today you finns this forest only in special places. This area is not destroyed by tourist buildings and has still its natural charm. Most of the tourist visiting the area go with one of the "tour boats": they play loud music, stopp at some of the villages to have something to eat and drink and also stop at the nicest beaches for a swim. There are not many sailors (maybe because we have autumn here) and we mostly meet foreign cruisers. Here are tree sailing boats going south (like we) and one going north. We meet on our yachts or ashore at one of the restaurants.



Bahia de Camamu

2013-04-27 Bahia de Camamu, Brazil

We are still in Camamu waiting for good winds for sailing south. We are OK where we are, between two islands with palms and nice beches. We also have some sailing friends at the anchorage, so we also have Company. If we get tiered of eating on board we can go to one of the restaurangs on one of the islands and have "siri", a crab they take in the mangroves around the anchorage.



Marine Nature Reserve

2013-05-02 Abrolhos, Brazil

We sailed from Bahia de Camamu on the 30 of April and two days later were at Abrolhos. The five islands of

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Abrolhos and the surrounding water formed a national park 1983. The area is known for its coral formations, here are lots of fish and birds and between June and October there are lots of humpback whales. The whales come here to breed. Now in May there was "only" fish and birds, but lots of them! We snorkled one whole day and saw thousands of fish in all size and colours. There was also plenty of birds, mostly gannet, boobies and frigate birds. The gannets were living on one of the islands, the frigate birds on another. We enjoyed the sunset and the next day we continued towards Vitoria. The weather should deteriorate with strong winds from the south and we wanted to be in a safe harbour by then.



Big city with a large chocolate factory!

2013-05-11 Vitoria, Brazil

When we left Abrolhos we sailed to Vitoria on the mainland. This is a big city in the south west of Brazil. The city has a "club" where visiting yachts can stay and as temporary members we can use the showers, swimming pools, buy diesel cheap, eat at the restaurants and have a safe mooring in the marina. To be in a safe marina was good when the bad weather came with much wind, lots of things fell down from trees, roofs and other places high up.

Vitoria is a nice city with a calm atmosphere. The city is on a number of islands by the water and it looks a bit like the photos we have seen from Rio. We enjoy our selves and have been walking in the old city, seen the convent up on the hill, visited the largest chocolate factory in Latin America - Garoto - and been to nice supermarkets. We have also bought internet and a sim card for the phone, it may sound strange, but this is not easy in Brazil!



The Kings bay

2013-05-20 Angra dos Reis, Brazil

23° 00,18'S 044° 18,10'W

After a fine sailing around the eastern "corner" of Brazil (Cabo Frio) we past Rio de Janeiro early in the morning. Impressive to see the Sugarloaf mountain and the Statue of Christ at the Corcovado mountain from the sea. We did not stop, but continued to Angra dos Reis, a town about 60 miles farther west. The city is located in an archipelago which is very popular with both Brazilians and tourists and here we renewed our visas for three more months in Brazil.

The city of Angra dos Reis (The King's bay) was named after the day when the Portuguese first landed in the area. They came here on January 6 (the day when the three kings visited the baby Jesus). The three kings statue stands in the town.

When all the paperwork was in order, the boat filled with food and drink, we continued out into the archipelago. Here we will stay for some time, look at the islands and do some maintenance on the yacht.



Brazil's archipelago

2013-06-11 Ilha Grande, Brazil

23° 08,33'S 044° 09,95'W

The archipelago consists of numerous Islands (365 says the pilot book) and has many more anchorage. The archipelago is approximately 60 nm x 20 nm and here you can sail around forever and discover new places all the time. It looks a bit like Bohuslän in Sweden - besides some "details". All the Islands, down to the smallest island, has a thick Atlantic rain forest. The mainland around the Islands consists of high mountains, also with the dense Atlantic rainforest. It looks a bit like the fjords in Norway, but temperature is a little better, here it is around 30 degrees during the day and down to 20 nights, now in the middle of winter. It rains sometimes and then it is as grey and dull as in northern Europe, but the temperature is about the same.

We have explored some of the anchorages, watching turtles, giant starfish, beautiful birds, monkeys and walked in the rain forest.



Rio de Janeiro

2013-06-20 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

22° 56,93' S 43° 10,31'W

Now we are in Rio de Janeiro! This is a big, big city but beautifully situated on the Bay of Guanabara. When the Portuguese came here the first time on January 1, 1502, it was believed that the bay was the outlet of a river. The bay was therefore called the "January river" and the town was later also this name. But when it turned out that the bay is not a river, the bay got its indian name back.

Rio is a big city and as many residents live in Rio as in the whole of Sweden!

In Rio, we have taken the cable car up the Sugar loaf, bus up to the Christ the Redeemer Statue, bathed on Copacabana and looked for the girl from Ipanema. We have also seen the demonstrations in Rio when we happened to end up in the outskirts of the riots on the first evening. When it became too much violence, we took the Metro to a safer part of town.

It is the Sugar Loaf (Pau de Acucar) in the middle of the picture above with the Atlantic Ocean to the right and Guanabara bay to the left.



Midsummer or Midwinter

2013-06-21 Ilha Cunhambebe, Brazil

23° 08,33'S 44° 09,95'W

Coming back to the archipelago at Ilha Grande-Angra dos Reis, it was time to celebrate the Swedish midsummer and Brazilian Midwinter. Three Swedish yachts and one New Zealand yacht gathered at the beach and had sill, janzons temptation, meatballs, sausages and grilled meat later in the evening. The Maypole was a small short rod that we had with us and around it we had the typical Swedish Midsummer songs and dances - after some schnapps. Very nice evening that ended early in the morning ...

We have a varied weather here in the archipelago. A few weeks of overcast and sometimes rain and then some weeks with sun and warm weather. Right now we have a period of overcast weather and we are trying to fix things that are broken on the boat, we have a long list of things that need to be taken care of.