

WINTER IN THE SPRING

And how to motivate ones wife to love cruising.

“Don’t launch too early” Sound advice from Alfredo whose family yard in Bouzas (now a suburb of Vigo) had taken care of WINTER. We had laid up there last September – hauled out on railway tracks and chocked with pit props just like ‘Sparkes’ 40 years ago.

But we are 42 degrees south I thought. Boats wintered at HISC had been launched - 20th May did not seem too soon.

Descriptive English seems to lack a single word for ‘simultaneous driving rain (horizontal stair rods), cold howling wind, zero visibility and slate grey sky’, so I asked a Scot ‘Dreek’ he volunteered.



Not a promising start for our three-week early cruise among the Rias of Galicia.

The first week time dragged on in port - tinkering, heating on. Now on Christian name terms with Jesus the local Chandler. A couple of day trips to Vineyard, El Corte Ingles shopping, and a Sunday lunch out in the hire car helped - but it was wearing thin with my bored wife Patsy now on two books a day - not a good sign. We handed the car back and the rain continued, there were mutterings of returning home - so I bought an umbrella.

At last a glimmer of sunshine and a moderating breeze.

A short trip brought us to a sheltered anchorage and beautiful beach we had discovered last August - not a nude in sight. In fact no boats either. Overnight the wind changed and found us rocking around on an unfriendly cold early morning leeward shore in drizzle. We made it to Pobra di Carimimal sailing to windward in an Atlantic swell and tied up in the marina. The anchorage, sheltered or no was not an option I was told. As we drew near I sensed Patsy's mind began thinking of lashings of hot water, thick warm towels, shampoo - courage, it won't be long now. Sod it! Water in the showers was cold !



The wind was rising again – more ‘dreek’ and extra warps needed. A restless night with the boat snatching and ropes creaking. Howling in the rigging. What’s new. What the hell has happened to the Azores High. Disappeared. You would think in this day and age someone would invent a bomb or a bloody great pump to control the pressure zones.



**Derby and Joan
frozen stiff**

And so it dragged on. After ten days – halfway point before returning home – Patsy’s mental calendar started ticking off the days, and the highlights became very simple -

Good news ! We can get Times on Line in the local Café – download the crossword and the “Sod U Too” (sudoku).

Sherry tasting with the FPLU’s (French people like us) next boat along. We really like the Manzanillas – incredible inexpensive - very good ones from 4 Euros (Herederos de Argueso). Tio Pepe 6 euros. The 15% gives a great kick. Nice with local almonds.



The day before we returned to the UK in mid June, the weather broke and we left in sunshine and cloudless blue sky and 28 degrees

APPENDIX

ON 4TH AUGUST WE RETURNED TO THE BOAT AGAIN AND ENJOYED A WONDERFUL FIVE WEEK CRUISE VISITING ALL THE RIAS AS FAR NORTH AS MUROS AS PARTICIPANTS IN A RALLY ORGANISED BY THE OCC.

WE CRUISED ON OUR OWN AFTER THE TEN DAY RALLY AND WERE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN A CLASSIC REGATTA AT ST VINCENTE DEL MAR – FOLLOWING WHICH WE SAILED DOWN TO OPORTO VIA BAIONA.



BAD MEMORIES ARE DULLED BY MUCH MORE MEMORABLE



ONES OR AM I KIDDING MYSELF