

The second travel letter of this year. Maybe not as many as we like to write but on the other hand the miles which passed Zeezwaluw' keel, are considerable. From Cagliari, Sardinia via Porto Santo, Madeira Archipelago to Vila do Porto at Santa Maria, the Azores most eastern island, was already 2027 Nm.



Not bad compared with the distances we sailed during the Mediterranean sailing seasons. So we are proud of ourselves not only to have sailed such a long distance but also to have arrived at the Azores far out into the Atlantic Ocean.

## Organisational talents in Gibraltar

At [La Linea, the Spanish anchorage](#) near Gibraltar we left you. We stopped here to have the life raft serviced before we set sail to the Atlantic Islands. Not only had the life raft had to be checked also Zeezwaluw was due for an insurance survey.

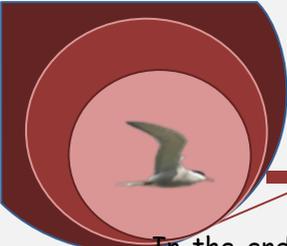
During our wintering in Cagliari we tried to find a local company to do the survey. Although the city has a major commercial and navel harbour and several marinas, no company could be found to do the survey and being able to write a survey report in English. We browsed through the relevant internet websites again. Gibraltar turned out to be the place. It has several marine surveyors who should be able to write the report in English. For us it's a very convenient stop on our way out of the Med. Also it's an advantage to organise the two checks in one place.



Very surprised we were to get quotes of the 4 contacted surveyors varying from €600 to €800 + €300 expenses (ex VAT), versus the €300 we could expect according our Dutch insurance agent.

Additional contact revealed that the one with the most interesting quote was very happy to do the survey but had no time until the end of August. We really appreciated this Span-English humour.

So when finished laughing we went back browsing the internet again to find surveyors along the coastline of Atlantic Spain.



In the end we found a Lloyds surveyor in Cadiz who met all the criteria and could do the survey for €450. So postponing the survey to Cadiz left us no other choice than playing tourist in Gibraltar until there was a nice weather window to leave westward, life can be tough.



### Enjoyment in Gibraltar

We visited Gibraltar from La Linea, crossing the border by foot. The town changed a lot since our stay 6 years ago. From the anchorage we could see lots of new apartment buildings in nice soft colours.



*Fancy new appartement buildings*

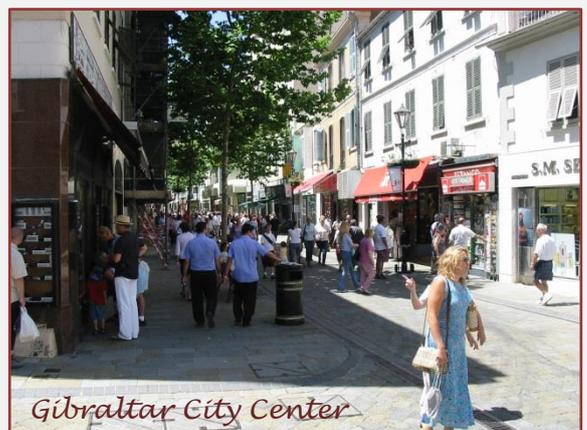


*A local of Gibraltar*

As we had heard from other sailors who had been there recently, Sheppard's marina and yard weren't anymore. Only Sheppard 's chandlery survived, but only just as we found out. Many empty spots at the shelves and hardly anything in stock. Although they are the only chandlery left out of three, who were there 6 years ago!

Sheppard's gone, but replaced by a total new waterfront with fancy restaurants, exclusive shops and a real casino. Only hugh motorboats and large sailing yachts are moored alongside the quay now. This new sophisticated place we didn't fancy, we loved the old shabby Sheppard yard and marina more (maybe we are getting old?)

Also the town has changed; many more apartment buildings are built along the hillside of "The Rock". The old town centre though is still the same, lots of little shops selling tax-free jewellery, alcoholic drinks and cigarettes. Many (pale or tomato red) tourists from a large cruising ship were queuing the centre so we were hardly able to walk main street. Still it's nice to have a walk around this special place Gibraltar is.



*Gibraltar City Center*

Even during the quick 2 day stay in "Marina Bay marina" to service the life raft, we absorbed the old town's atmosphere until completely saturated with cobbled streets and scalded tourists.



### La Linea-life at anchor and moving again

As was said in the pilot book about La Linea, don't leave your dinghy unattended ashore, it's not safe at all. Therefore we left it at the small marina for €5,- where it was completely safe.

#### La Linea Anchorage



At the anchorage were many ships with live-aboards but no one we knew, so we got acquainted with a few new ones, during our stay here.

### North Africa Pilot

Richard, one of them, we rescued from drifting with his dinghy away, due to a broken outboard and on top of that one oar broke while we were watching him rowing past!

So we quickly threw him a line, secured the line to Zeezwaluw while we put our dinghy back into the water to tow him back to his boat. Richard invited us on-board for "a cup of tea" and to have a look around his boat. The inside was amazingly well built with beautiful wood craftsmanship.

During our tea, we talked about all kind of things but especially about going to Morocco or not. He just acquired the new North African Pilot and showed us some places. We didn't have the pilot at that moment because we were only interested in the Atlantic coast of Morocco and just for those few pages, €50,- is a lot of money.

As a token of appreciation "rescuing" him, Richard lent us the North African pilot for a night so we could scan the relevant pages of Morocco. In addition, we swabbed English books and gave him our leaflets and info from the places we had acquired during our last few weeks in the Med. In the end everybody had gained something out of the dinghy disaster.



After a few days with lots of rain and heavy thunderstorms the weather calmed down once more. We thought it was time to heave anchor and sail to Cadiz, although the light wind was still coming from the west.

At 7am June the 14th we left La Linea and sailed across Gibraltar Bay zigzagging among the moored tanker fleet to Punta Carnero. Arriving at that spot as calculated at the appropriate time. According the pilot we had the current with us.

To be honest, our math was probably not what it should be, the book was too old or the tide was too early, consequently the tide was against us the entire Street of Gibraltar.

As soon as we cleared the breakwaters of Tarifa, we were able to sail out of the strong current and the speed increased from 2,5 to 3-4knots!



### Cádiz anchorage

Although the progress was slow, we enjoyed sailing along this part of the coast. The sun shone upon low sand dunes and coloured the shallow waters all kinds of blue and green. To complete this picture, lots of small boats were sailing in the light wind under a complete blue sky.

This wonderful day passed quickly but when the sun was almost down we still were 40nm from Cadiz. The tide turned again against us, therefore passing Cape Trafalgar took some hours due to the progress of only 2nm/hr.

Finally at 3 o'clock that night we dropped the anchor near the shipyards in the Bay of Cadiz.

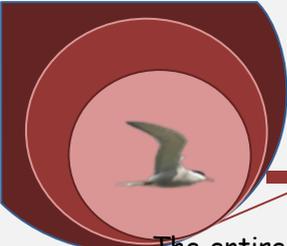
### Getting ready for inspection

After a short night we prepared the dinghy to go ashore to top-up the phone to be able to call McPherson & McPherson marine surveyors to make an appointment as soon as possible. Today it was our lucky day; the survey was possible Ship shape in marina at Cadiz at Friday morning the 18th. The next call was to our friends Petra & Dick at "SY Sally Lightfoot" we were going to meet. They stayed in a nearby marina and would come over to the anchorage the next day. Our agenda was fully booked now for the next few days, cleaning Zeezwaluw for inspection followed by shopping and socializing with our friends. Thursday we left the anchorage to go to the marina for the survey.



Everything was ship-shape when Jaime McPherson arrived to do the survey. He did some homework already and could tell us some of the history of our sailing yacht.

He googled "SY Zeezwaluw, ACL 46" and found our English website as well as the website of owners of LeComte sailing boats. So he already knew quit a lot about us and the boat before he started this survey.



The entire 2,5 hours of the survey took place in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and we were very pleased by it.

When Jaime left us, he promised to send the report in PDF format by email in a day or two so we could check it (typing failures) before he would print the proper/final one. In the end it took some days more to complete the report. In the mean time we rediscovered Cadiz again.

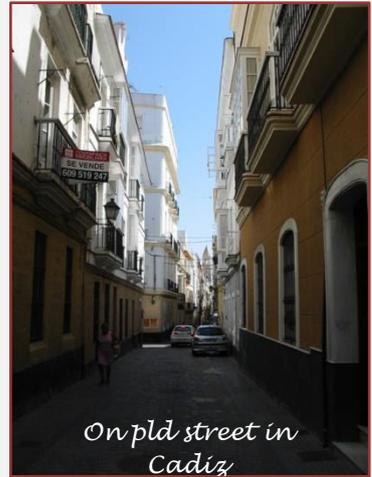
At the anchorage we are most of the time the only boat, twice we had company of SY Sally Lightfoot and enjoyed it very much.

The anchorage is not well known although it's the perfect place to escape the expensive marinas around Cadiz, in high season. To go



The little marina where we left the dinghy

ashore, we left the dinghy for free in the small harbour almost opposite the Il Cortez Ingles Shopping mall.



On old street in Cadiz

The mariner's are very friendly and the dinghy is safe. The walk to the old town centre of Cadiz is a pleasant half hour partly along the waterfront. Near the ferry harbour is the tourist information which provided us with all kind of leaflets and walks around the old historic town.

It's easy to follow since the different walks have different line colours on the street map as well as on

the street pavement so there is no way to get lost!

The old fortified city centre is surrounded by water due to the peninsula it is built on. The McPherson & McPherson Office is at the other side of the old town facing the entrance of the harbours and situated along one of the walks earlier meant. The day we collect the official survey report we follow this blue walk called: "Cargadores a Indias" ending at the office.



The inside of the very old building is a real gem. The cubicles, separated by glass are in the original and restored surrounding of 1863.



McPersons head office

As soon as Jaime observes our interest in the place he invites us in the office of the head of the company, still his 80+ years old father.

He opens all the shutters so the sun light fills the extreme beautiful office. It's like entering a museum but it's still a working headquarter (new telephones but no computers), all objects are old and rare even the paintings.



Mostly they are of ships and collected from the start of the company until today. Jaime gets really enthusiastic as soon as he explains the history behind several objects to us and even tells us the amazing legend which happened at the start of the Spanish Civil War.

We will share this special part of history with you.

In front of the office a grenade exploded and a piece of the shell burst through the wood beneath the window, went into the bookcase next to the window and was stopped by a thick book. The holes are still there, nowadays covered by Plexiglas as he shows us. Even the bookcase and the book are still there, also covered in Plexiglas. It's an amazing story and we are very honoured to have been showed this special place.

With the report in our backpack we walk back through the old town and Zeezwaluw.

### Leaving mainland Europe

The survey of Zeezwaluw finished, now the time has come to follow our original plans although with a little delay, to sail to the Azores. We prepared ourselves (cooked a few dinners for along the road) filled up the water- and diesel tanks, did some last shopping's and had a wonderful "see-you-again-evening" with our friends of "Sally".

June 29, 8 o'clock in the morning we heaved anchor, sailed out of the bay of Cadiz to begin the 900 nm to Santa Maria Island, the most eastern Island of the Azores. We head off mainland Europe after 9 years sailing around Europe.

Looking back at these years we realize that the time rushed through our fingers like thin air and it's a good moment to summarize the travels that made these years so wonderful and allowed us to meet so many new friends.



### In these 9 years "Zeezwaluw" brought us to:



Rotterdam (NL)

2002 from The Netherlands to Saint Petersburg (Russia) and visiting all the countries around the Baltic Sea and back to Holland to winter in City Marina in the middle of Rotterdam. The first wintering which was nice but very, very cold (- 15C for a few weeks) so we went south.

2003 in spring, we were coast hopping along Belgium, France, Spain and Portugal to spend our 2nd winter in Portimão marina, amongst lots of other just started live-aboards.



## The last part of Mainland Europe



*Fiumicino (It)*

Spring 2004 we entered the Mediterranean Sea and sailed along mainland Spain, The Balearic Islands, most of the Italian Islands and mainland Italy where we spent 2 winters in Fiumicino in the river Tiber.

In 2005 we continued our quest around Italy and the Italian islands.

Spring 2006 the sailing went further eastward to Greece and Turkey. In Greece and Turkey we spent 2 seasons sailing all the way up to Istanbul and down to Crete but wintered twice in Fethiye, Turkey.

2008 we visited the last beautiful parts of southern Turkey, Northern Cyprus and spent 3 month in Israel during the winter.



*Fethiye (Tr)*

Due to the Gaza problems at the end of 2008 we left in a hurry early January 2009 ending up for the rest of the winter in the old harbour of Rhodes, Rhodes Island. This harbour was an unexpected pleasure.



*Askelon (Is)*

Spring 2009 we sailed further westwards along the northern coast of Crete, around the Peloponnesus, the southern coast of Sicily to end up in October at Sardinia's south coast to winter in Cagliari, Sardinia.



*Rhodos (Gr)*



*Cagliari (It)*

April 2010 we left our beloved Sardinia to sail in long journeys to Mainland Spain, Gibraltar and ending up in Cadiz the last port of call in Europe mainland.

See for more details and pictures about our adventures and those wonderful places in the according travel letters.

To be continued in;

"Sailing to the Atlantic Islands, Part I"

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