

PRESS RELEASE



Guide book authors band together to do Atlantic cruise-in-company

Mike Westin and Oliver Solanas Heinrichs wrote the 'Cruising Guide to the Canary Islands' together and now arrange the friendly rally Viking Explorers for the second year to land in Saint Vincent & The Grenadines. Now they will stay in the Grenadines a month to make articles for European boating press about the islands.

The rally Viking Explorers has so far been a tremendous success and the participants got along and became fast friends and immensely enjoyed their time together.

— We do this for the fun of it and to meet new friends, says founder Mike Westin.

The participants are keen cruisers that agree to the rally's ethos of helping each other as much as possible — from first aid lectures to lending special tools. If they want to be served everything there are commercial alternatives that may suit better...

Participating boats are in the 34-44+ foot range and a significant group of the skippers/crew are in their late twenties that are out on a gap year before getting kids, a house and a Volvo. Said that, the oldest skipper is 73, and the crew is even older, but Richard Fellows on "Elemiah del Mar" agree to being "young at heart".

— This is such a lovely bunch of cruisers, says Oliver, and anticipate impromptu beach parties and get-togethers long after the end of the rally.

The crews landed in Saint Vincent & The Grenadines and the Blue Lagoon Marina first week in February, where they had a few rum punches and winded down to island time apart from rich social life with the other participants.

The third Viking Explorers will start January 5, 2020 in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. There will be a maximum of about 20 boats to make the experience the best for the participants. Some 13 boats have already preliminary signed up and there are queries for 2021 already — the concept of Viking Explorers seems to be liked by real cruisers wanting to cross the social way.

SOME STATISTICS

The second edition of the friendly rally Viking Explorers started in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria with 6 boats ranging from 36 to 44 foot. With a stop-over in Mindelo, Cape Verde, the crossing took 14 days for the fastest boats up to 3 weeks for the British steel boat Elemiah del Mar that started one day later from Mindelo to go sightseeing, and caught flukey winds for six days and then got a rope in the propeller after a violent squall that broke the booms to the foresails. Elemiah also had the oldest skipper and crew; 73 and 78 years, where the young couple on the smallest boat in the fleet, a Sweden Yacht 34 Hakuna Matata, are in their late twenties. Any boat where the whole crew is 25 years or younger will go with Viking Explorers for free - the organizers want to see more young people out sailing!

The original end for the first Viking Explorers where Barbados, that was enjoyed by all the 60+ participants. But for this year the organizers some problems finding the right responsible person in the new government and a change of last stop was made to Saint Vincent & The Grenadines. The main island (and especially the Blue Lagoon marina) want to see more cruisers after a few years with bad reputation and with many cruisers going directly from Martinique or Saint Lucia to Bequia or the other smaller islands. Viking Explorers organizers found main island Saint Vincent to be very friendly indeed and will make their best efforts to spread the word of a great place to visit.

For the start next winter (5 January 2020) there was already a waiting list of 17 boats before this year's participant were even halfway across the Atlantic. They had heard from happy former participating crew members about the alternative friendly rally. The core organizers Mike Westin and Oliver Solanas Heinrichs says they are looking forward to meet new cruising friends!

More info can be found on www.vikingexplorers.eu or www.facebook.com/vikingexplorers

Link to invitation poster:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1cH5AcJ9rVGwWHxdPIDNKaSK74jwQyUwT>

Link to cover of Canary guide:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Y5NGtTckYdXDIm8hDIY604OmlwvSddSE>

Link to FAQ on Viking Explorers:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1f9mfCct2u0-8u9CvO50UHhwqODrEhGNW>

Link to images:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ltxpoZ6_vqWjITVGwSXFfNAUjcRcWiO5