

Fast Ocean Sailing with RM 1200 Schnufao Corfu (Greece) to Kravica (Croatia)

From Domingo Zaengerle

On the flights back from Corfu to Switzerland I always have seen from the air the beautiful islands from Croatia, for this reason I decided to visit in 2011 this nice area of islands.

Over the winter Schnufao received a Code Zero (big light Genua 88m², attached on the bow sprit similar to the Gennaker) and a bigger Gennaker 155m².

The voyage had the following steps;

- 1) Gouvia (Corfu) to Vlora (Albania)**
- 2) Vlora , Marina Urikom to Durres (Albania)**
- 3) Durres to Bar (Montenegro)**
- 4) Bar to Kotor (Montenegro)**
- 5) Kotor to Cavtat (Croatia)**
- 6) Cavtat to Mljet (Croatia)**
- 7) Polace , Mljet to Kravica**

In 9 days we sailed through 4 countries.

Greece, Corfu I described in the report from 2010, lovely country shapes, mild clima, a lot of small bays for anchoring, but desafortunately every where litter and dirty streets, the Greeks should stop to claim over EU and to strike and should start to work to put her extraordinary country in order.

Albania was against all the perspectives uncomplicated, but still very poor, every where are old bunkers and ruins from new buildings, the country side is very nice, very pure and rough. The friendly Albanies have a lot to do to put up her country.

Montenegros sea side is less rough and greener in comparison with Albania. Small nice houses and buildings and only a few ruins of buildings ruins the the coast. The bay of Kotor is fantastic, like a fjord, high mountains, a lot of impressive cultur. The streets are clean and the people friendly.

Croatia, what a surprise, clean like Switzerland, white lovely villages change with intact ruins in a green land shape. The Croates always are working and in the meantime are friendly. Much advertising for the tourists to the walking and biking treks. In opposite to the Spain's the Croats kept her country in the old nice shape.

Due to the spring trip we sailed still with the winter southerly wind conditions (Grecale), so we sailed ca. 50 % had 25 % motor sailing and only 25 % with the engine.

Now to the several steps, illustrated with photos;

1) Gouvia to Vlora

On 30th of April 2011 we started at 0700, Rolf (old sailing chap), Theo (old mountain climber chap) and me. Winds from SE 3 to 4 and on the end F 6 and more in the guests gave us a fast ride along the rough coast of Albania to the north. Genua, code zero and gennaker we used according to the wind condition. Due to the lee danger of the harbour of Vlore we preferred Marina Urikom. Entering the great bay we had to fight with F 8 blows coming down from the mountains. No answer for the VHF calls to the Marina, but apparently they heard us and were waiting on the pier. Little Marina not yet finished, Euro 22.-, WIFI, shower, water and electricity all included. Rolf and Theo went for an inspection of the many one man bunkers. Speaking Italian we had a very easy harbour check in.



Albanian fisherman



Gennaker repair



Genua on the boom up to 10 kn speed



Entry to the bay of Vlora plenty of bunkers



Some times nice surfs



Marina Urikom

At ca. 1600 we entered the bay of Vlora, and ca. 1800 we stopped on the Marina. There were some Italian sloops and a cataraman from Kanada. The daily log was 66 sm.

2) Vlora to Durres

According to the meteo we should have had today S-SE 3-4, but after leaving the marina at 0730 strong winds came down the hills, main with 3 reefs and genua were enough to blow us speedy forwards. Out of the bay we boomed out the genua, super sailing with very good music without interruptions due to marketing.

Now we entered in the old mine fields from the Second World War and the communistic regime. Apparently they took all the mines mines out, safe we arrived at 16 15 on the concrete pier in Durres where Ilir Gjergji was waiting. Per VHF 15 we received the entry instructions and we towed Schnufao side to an Italian sailboat. After 10 minutes the paperwork was done, less Euro 70.- (with invoice!!!) and we entered to the town. The boat was safe in the custom area. The town was poor, but a lot of Mercedes, attention several steel taps were missing in the street, apparently stolen. The Internet Cafe was very cheap Euro 0.20 for an hour. Many painful beggars in the street, they exchanged the crutch among themselves. The dinner in the luxury restaurant was expensive, for us three Euro 35.-. In the restaurant we observed that the time was one hour back again. The town has nothing special for sightseeing.



Fast sailing in direction of Durres



In the harbour of Durres



1. Mai pleasure trip with a lot of dancing Exit of Durres harbour

Today we logged 57 sm in total now 123 sm. For a perfect check in to Durres we recommend Ilir Gjergji + 355 68 20 36 329, ilirgj@albmail.com

3) Durres to Bar

0715 we left the concrete pier in Durres, for the check out a phone call to Ilir was enough. 3 ferrys in arrival, the harbour outlet channel was coming very narrow. Following Weatheronline, Grib and Windfinder the weather should be rainy and cloudy with winds 2-3 from S. With main and code zero closed to the wind we sailed to the North. Later with Wind from the side we mounted the gennaker for changing in the afternoon once again to the code zero. Far from the coast through the bay of Shengjin we headed to Montenegro. At 1600 the order of the Kapitaneria of Bar on VHF 12 to come directly to the custom pier for the check in. At the custom 2 men and 2 women, all were watching TV meanwhile they checked and stamped the passports. After in the Kapitaneria we received for Euro 50.-a one week tourist pass for Montenegro. Without help we took the first free place at the closed by marina Bar Marina, apparently the holiday 1. Mai from Sunday the people of Montenegro repeat on Monday. On Tuesday we had to pay Euro 45.-for the night. The whole day was raining so we decided to stay one day more in Bar. Nice place for tourists with a long beach, quite proper and well maintain, friendly citizens. All the old warships from Titos epoque are now joint together in Bar, now only little space for yachts in the main harbour. The food cevapcici was really good, just near by the internet cafe. For this leg we logged 55 sm in total now 178 sm.



With code 0 faster as the wind



With gennaker amazing



Montenegro Flag not forgotten



At the pontoon of Marina Bar



Very interesting these old war ships

4) Bar to Kotor

According the forecast only little winds, so we started very early. At 0600 under blue sky, happy motor sailing. Closed to the wonderful coastline with plenty of bays and little villages we headed North. Finally came wind for the code zero. The entry to the bay of Kotor is magnificent; three big perfect maintained castles are watching the sea. After one hour corner sailing, passing submarine bunker, we arrived to the legend monastery Sta. Maria of the rock. We landed alongside and in perfect German a lovely women explained and illustrated us the incredible history of the monastery for only one Euro entry fee. Fantastic the stories of the lost seafarers and captains, plenty of gifts from the happy rescued seamen were shown. After that impressive visit we went under engine to the castle town Kotor just on the very end of the fjord. 7000 citicens hold the town in the past against the 70000 Otomen, very powerful guys. In the harbour a side of big cruising ship we went at 1500 alongside. Immediately we climb up the thousand steps to the highest point of the castle. A good but expensive dinner rounded this perfect day. Under the illuminated castle we had our last drink on deck from Schnufao. Today we sailed 41 sm i total 219 sm.



Beautiful coastline



Where is the entry



Castles on the entry



A labyrinth



Submarine bunker



The narrow entry to the monastery



Alongside the monastery



Monastery Sta. Maria of the rock



Sta Maria the guardian of the seamen



What a cristal lamp



Rolf in wonder



Compass rose on the floor



Picture sailboat in stormy sea



Kotor view from Fort John



On the top of Fort John



Schnufao alongside in Kotor



Illuminated Castle of Kotor

5) Kotor to Cavtat

0630 moorings off. With gusty winds F 5 we sailed fast through the bay. Passing the castles and on the open sea comfortable in direction Cavtat. Cavtat is the first check in harbour of Croatia, our fourth country. In Cavtat we entered first in the wrong bay so we had to go back to the custom bay. The check in was very fast and professional, for one year in Croatia with fee for 19 tourists, Euro 345.-. Cavtat is a very nice place, but in the afternoon and evening very shaky due to the incoming waves, uncomfortable. Today we logged 34 sm in total 253 sm.



Three countries behind us



Nice but shaky place

6) Cavtat to Mljet

NE winds on the forecast and we wanted to sail NW, and good weather, what we want more? Under main and genua with F 5 we speeded in direction Dubronik, passing the huge castle and entering the splendid island from Croatia. Soon the code zero was up in the mast and at midday we arrived to the entry of Polace. Nature pure, blue sea, blue sky, green coastline, light Wind.... perfect.

After passing through the magnificent fjord we tied up french wise our boat in front of a restaurant. The owner was calling our attention shaking strongly his arms.

**Beside a charter yacht with Russians. After a walk to the monastery of the island we eat salmon and pig.
Today we made 39 sm in total 294 sm**



Dubronik with cruising ship



Impressive the castle town Dubronik



Super sailing with Code Zero



The skipper is tired



Entry to Polace



Direct in front of the restaurant



Smoked fish, mhmh



Rolfs dream car



Monastery of Mljet



After the Russians, French charter boat

7) Mljet Polace to Kravica

At 0700 again moorings off, NW to W 1-3 weather fore cast, today we have our last leg of this trip. Between the island Korcula and the peninsula Peljesac we sailed and powered in direction Marska. We passed nice islands, very well main taint castles and harbours, great job from the Croats, they kept her country in a super shape for us tourists.

1400 a call to Tina from Marina Ramova, an insider tip from sailing chap Ernst, he has his boat Parati since years here. We could tow up on the central pontoon in the middle of the harbour was the order of Tina. Very narrow and tricky entry, a lot of moorings, safe place, good restaurant, the whole infrastructure for a marina, small but smart, a family business.

After a day off with walks to Makarska and Baska Voda we are very surprised of the cleanness and organisation of Croatia, walking-, biker treks, clean beaches, all is in a perfect shape.

But also this paradise has a problem, the whole Sunday the Bora is blowing, I measured F 9 the forecast was 55kn in the guests. The sea is white from the furies wind. Schnufao shaking but safe in Marina Ramovar.

After this last leg of 49 sm we logged in total 343 sm.



Korcula a castle town



Schnufao in Marina Ramova



Makarska



What kind of beaches



Walking treks



Biker treks



Bora 55kn



Safe in the harbour but shaky



Theo is happy



Vine, Water or Bier 7 Kunas, 1 Euro !!!!

In addition some details to Schnufao



Code Zero Bartels furling system



Fastening device on bow sprit



Gennaker up, Code Zero on deck



both headsails on furling

Marina Ramovar, small but smart, all what you need is here, it is a family company. The boss is 24 hours availed, during the Bora permanent checking of the moorings through the mariners.



Marina Ramovar outer pier



Schnufao on the central pontoon



Marina view from Bask



Excellent mountain biking