

Makkum – Bay of Biscay – Spain

Rias Bajas

After 8 days at sea *Lady Ann* has reached the Iberian peninsula. She will be exploring the northwest part of Spain, the area of the beautiful 'Rias Bajas', sheltered bays penetrating deep inland. The Rias are Spain's prime sailing grounds and promise some very unspoilt and picturesque sailing. *Lady Ann* will cruise these idyllic waters for two weeks, after which she will head further south. Next stop will be at the Algarve, the south coast of Portugal. From there *Lady Ann* will head out to Madeira, as a stopover on the leg towards the Canary Islands. We expect to arrive at Las Palmas for the start of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers early November.



Casting off

Wasn't it blue water cruising guru Steve Dashew who remarked 'The hardest part of sailing is actually getting away from the dock'? And right he was. Before we could actually cast off *Lady Ann's* lines from the K&M Yachtbuilders docks, an endless list of small and bigger jobs needed to be ticked off. All in all *Lady Ann* was turned into the comfortable performance cruiser she was before being laid up for one and a half years. All technical systems have been checked, her interior was amended and upgraded in places, on board communication was re-installed, galley was fitted out, safety gear replaced, and spares were checked, listed or bought. Finally, after provisioning for a month, on September 19, 2011, we left Makkum for a sea trail via the Waddenzee to IJmuiden marina. Conditions proved boisterous so the shakedown cruise resulted in yet another list of things to improve. These being dealt with, we set out for the nonstop trip to Spain.

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Crossing the Bay of Biscay

Conditions for the crossing could hardly have been better. Initially the winds were light and against us, which meant beating down the North Sea toward Dover, dodging wind farms and gas platforms, and steering clear of the Traffic Separation Scheme. Once past Dover, the wind backed to the south, enabling us to sail parallel to the south English coast, with the steep white cliffs continually in sight. A veering wind and with southeasterly winds forecast, we crossed over to the Channel Islands where we ended up in fog as thick as



pea soup. After being becalmed off Guernsey on a northeasterly 4 knot current for a full tide, winds backed to the southeast and we shot off towards the tip of Brittany, to Ile d'Ouessant. An 8 knot southwesterly current made our passage in between the island and the mainland exhilarating and very speedy. One does not regularly reach speeds over ground of up to 16 knots. Apart from two short intervals with light southwesterly winds, the south easterlies prevailed during the full leg from Brittany to the northwesterly tip of Spain. Sailing was easy, days were spent on a 4 hour watch system, at night we alternated on a 3 hour basis. Dolphins called on Lady Ann regularly, even at night, when only their irregular green phosphorescent trail showed us they were still escorting us. Early morning of day 8, we raised the Spanish main. A couple of hours later, we motored past Cape Finesterre

(known for its boisterous winds and choppy seas) in a dead calm with terns, gulls, boobies directing us to the next deep inland bay, Ria de Muros.

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Lady Ann Yacht Charters

Spirit of Tradition sailing sloop Lady Ann offers sailing with a capital 'S' of Style: a classic yacht, all modern day creature comforts, and competitive sailing due to a modern underwater design and high performance rig. She is available for charters throughout the year, alternatively in the Med and in the Caribbean.

Please refer to our website for pictures, an up to date itinerary, and for detailed info regarding the yacht. Bookings are handled by our booking agencies. Contact your charter agent to discuss possibilities and prices. Should you fail to have a charter agent, please contact us and we will direct you to the most suitable charter agent.

