



LEGUAN
REISEN

Tromsø-Vesterålen-Lofoten-Bodø

Triplog - October 31-November 07, 2015

SV Antigua



The SV *Antigua* was built in 1957 in Thorne (UK) and served for many years as a fishing vessel, until it was completely re-built in the early 1990s in the Netherlands as a barkentine and equipped as a passenger ship. A barkentine has three masts with square sails on the foremast.

With

Captain – Joachim Schiel

First Mate – Moritz

Second Mate/Engineer – Uta

Deck – Nils

Deck – Theres

Service management – Nadine

Chef – Sascha

Service – Silvi

Service – Christl

and

Tourleader – Rolf Stange

Saturday, October 31 – Tromsø

16.00 hours: 69°38.7'N/018°57.3'E, port of Tromsø. Calm, mostly cloudy, 6°C, 1006 hPa. Sunrise 07.57 hours, sunset 14.58 hours.

Day of departure! Most of us had actually arrived in Tromsø already yesterday, so we have had ample time to explore the various attractions of this north-Norwegian metropolis that is also known as “Paris of the north”, including Polaria, the modern polar experience center, and the old-style, but very interesting and charming, polar museum.

In the late afternoon, we gathered on board Antigua, where Captain Joachim welcomed us all. He introduced his crew, safety regulations and some bits and pieces about life on board, before it was time for our first dinner.

At 22.00, we departed. It had started to rain, and we expected a lot of wind during the night and tomorrow. So Joachim and Rolf had decided not to start sailing southwards, but rather to head the opposite way, to the northeast and then into Lyngenfjord, hoping for less wind and some shelter there.



Sunday, November 01 – Lyngenfjord: Manndalbukta.

08.00 hours: 69°35'N/020°31'E, Lyngenfjord. Partly clouds, decreasing wind, 10°C, 991 hPa. Sunrise 07.55 hours, sunset 14.47 hours.

Indeed, in the middle of the night the wind had picked up and we could feel and hear the waves as we went down into Lyngenfjord, but it calmed down considerably as we entered Kåfjord, a branch on the eastern side of Lyngenfjord, cutting deep inland. We even had the nice colours of a sunrise.



During breakfast, Rolf gave us some information regarding our plans. Soon, we went alongside a little jetty at the small settlement of Manndalen, where we walked around to explore a little bit.

At 10.00, the local centre for Sami handicraft opened for us; the visit had been arranged by Joachim and Rolf before, normally they would be closed on an early November Sunday morning. We were welcomed by Ingrid, the voluntary manager of Sami origin, who told us about the history of the Sami culture and language, which had been strongly suppressed earlier in the 20th century. Today, there are language courses again and even younger people discover their interest in this northern European indigenous language, but it is probably too late to revive it again as an everyday language, a position that has been taken over by the Norwegian language for decades now.

We enjoyed the local handicrafts including textiles and wooden cups and other artefacts and we even treated with waffles and coffee, where pleasant aspects of Norwegian rather than Sami culture came through, something we were perfectly happy with, being faced with fresh waffles.

The timing turned out to be good: the wind picked up in the later morning and rainshowers made it rather uncomfortable outside, so most decided to return to enjoy the comfort of the ship until it was lunchtime.

The weather did not turn better after lunch, but some hardy adventurers nevertheless ventured on something that was, according to local information, announced as a history trail. It turned out to be a walk around the valley, following small roads, with several information signs telling stories of suppression throughout the 20th century, from poor locals who fought for their possessions against the authorities to a local festival of Sami culture that by now has gained remarkable international recognition.

The last part of the way turned out to be rather adventurous, as the road had given way to a construction site, so it was quite challenging to get down to the road for the last bit of the walk back to the ship. Meanwhile, the rain had picked up and darkness had settled, so it was good to get back anyway.

Back on board, Rolf summarized the stories from the history signs along the track, and then we enjoyed a relaxed afternoon on board, including some music by one of the most famous Sami artists, Mari Boine, until it was dinnertime.

Around midnight, we left the pier and sailed out into Lyngenfjord, heading for Tromsø and further south.

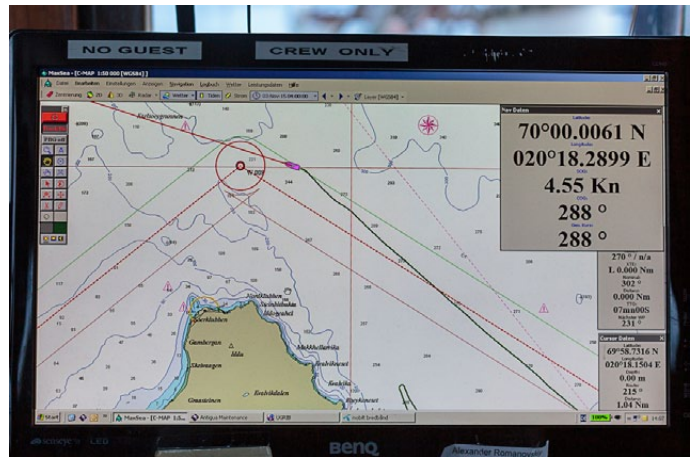


Monday, November 02 – Sailing to Harstad

08.00 hours: 69°55.3'N/020°42.2'E, at anchor north of Uløya. Mostly overcast, strong southwesterly wind, 6°C, 993 hPa. Sunrise 08.02 hours, sunset 14.38 hours.

To our own surprise, we found ourselves at anchor when we woke up in the morning. The winds had been so strong at the mouth of Lyngenfjord that it was decided to seek shelter behind some smaller islands and to wait until the weather would calm down.

So we awoke in locally calm conditions, enjoyed a peaceful breakfast and the quickly changing light conditions created by the combination of wind, clouds, rain and the sun, which provided quite a visual spectacle.



Around noon, it had calmed down sufficiently to lift the anchor and continue the voyage. As we had lost quite a couple of hours, we would spend the rest of the day sailing, making distance southwards, passing Tromsø in the evening and heading to Harstad from there. Rolf explained the mechanics of polar night and day, including the reason why polar night and day do not have the same duration and why there is actually a difference between the northern and the southern hemisphere.

Tuesday, November 03 – Hinnøya: Harstad

08.00 hours: 68°39'N/015°22'E, alongside in Harstad. Mostly overcast, no wind, 7°C, 1004 hPa. Sunrise 08.12 hours, sunset 15.01 hours.





We had been making good speed during the night, so we could go alongside in Harstad already after breakfast, so we had time during the morning to explore the various excitements of this metropolis, the largest one in this area south of Tromsø with 25,000 inhabitants. During its earlier history, Harstad was an important trading and fishing place, but in the 20th century it benefitted from the oil and gas industry and the military presence.

Situated about three kilometres from the modern centre, Trondenes used to be the historical core of the settlement for centuries. Many of us took the walk or the bus there to enjoy the church, one of Norway's oldest, during daylight.

In the afternoon, we focussed our attention again on Trondenes during a guided trip that had been arranged. The first stop was the historical museum at Trondenes, where our local guide Sigrid gave us an introduction to the history of the area, before we walked through the exhibitions. Next was the church, which was now open for us, probably something like 750 years old.

Much more recent, and with a very dramatic background, was the next and last stop, a German battery from the Second World War known by the rather bizarre name Adolf gun. It is still situated inside a military area, so bus transport is mandatory and so was the military guard who accompanied us there. Four huge guns were installed in 1943 as part of the coastal fortification all the way from northern Norway to western France. We were shown around in the basement with the huge 40.6 cm shells and the fire control technique. Then we went up to the actual gun, an impressive steel monster with a 20.3 m long barrel. The sad history of its aggressive purpose was obvious. Less obvious was the large number of Russian prisoners-of-war who died during the construction. The only positive aspect was the fact that these guns were never actually fired in anger, but only for testing and practicing purposes.

Then, we went back on the bus, said goodbye and thanks to our local guide Sigrid and went back to the ship, where we enjoyed a calm evening on board in the harbour of Harstad before we departed at midnight.



Wednesday, November 04 – Raftsund, Trollfjord, Skrova

08.00 hours: 68°48.24'N/016°33'E, sailing south in Hadsselfjord. Overcast, southwesterly breeze, rainshowers. 8°C, 1005 hPa. Sunrise 08.20 hours, sunset 15.03 hours.

At breakfast time, we were heading south in Hadsselfjord, aiming for Raftsund where we arrived near 10.00, passing some lovely little islands with white sand beaches. We passed through under a bridge and had then the jagged mountains of the surrounding islands on both sides. Clouds were hanging low and rain was falling, but the scenery was spectacular anyway.

After a while, Joachim discovered a Sea eagle on an old moraine ridge with large, overgrown boulders. It was a bit hard to see, but then we went into a small cove around the corner to drop anchor. After a while, we saw a total of three eagles and they came reasonably close to us, so we could secure some good views and photos both of the eagles and of



the accompanying gulls, of which there were several species (Herring, Black-backed gull and Kittywake).

We then continued to Trollfjord, which we reached just before lunch. The weather was still not exactly great, it was actually raining quite heavily, but after lunch it cleared up a little bit and the light and view towards the entrance (actually the exit, from our inside perspective) was really nice.

During the onward journey to the south, we relaxed a little bit as the rain came down quite hard again and the swell picked up, but the low sun kept through under the clouds behind the mountainous island of Store Molla and cast some quite spectacular evening light (although it was actually just early afternoon) over the scenery, at least for moments.



The approach to the small island and harbour of Skrova was through a skærgården, as the Norwegians call a coast that is hidden behind many small rocks and skerries and it was a challenging bit of navigation to get into port, but soon we were alongside and enjoyed the quietness.

Rolf called us together to give us a quick outline of our plans and options here on Skrova as well as a quick introduction to northern light photography; some hints might certainly help to capture this fascinating phenomenon, just in case.

Soon we went out for a stroll around the harbour, through the charming little village which has a long fishing history. A tunnel through a rocky hill on the east side of the harbour now served as a semi-natural gallery for a photo exhibition, an interesting idea and some fascinating shots of local people and their life here on Skrova.

As we were walking in darkness, a beautiful sky of stars became visible while our eyes were getting used to it, and hopes were of course high for the northern light to appear. And indeed, a faint, grey stripe across the sky turned out to be the first one, which indeed displayed beautiful red and purple colours with a little bit of amplification in the camera! The visible colours remained, however, faint.



After dinner, there was soon more activity. The aurora came and went quickly, displaying various degrees of intensity mostly within the lower half of the spectrum and with green colour. We were impressed and delighted to have seen the famous northern light now; considering the weather of the last days and the forecast, we had been afraid of missing it altogether. Indeed, it was almost an irony that, after several days of strong sun storms, there was not much going on in terms of magnetic activity exactly tonight as the sky was clear. But anyway, it was there, we had seen it and it was without any question beautiful!

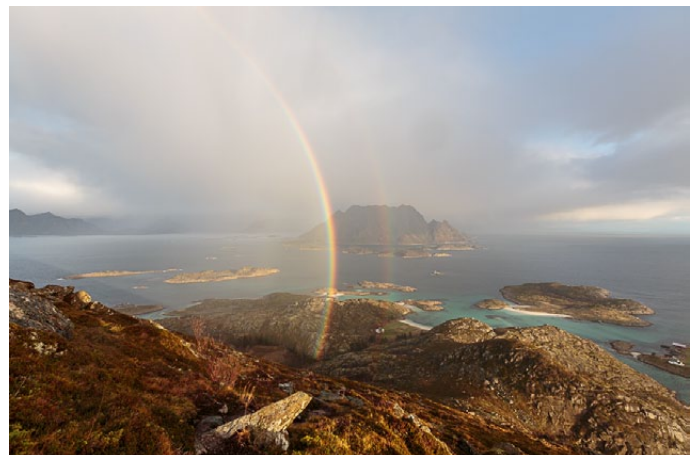


Thursday, November 05 – Skrova, Svolvær, Polar light center

08.00 hours: 68°09.9'N/014°39.5'E, alongside in the harbour of Skrova. Overcast, southerly breeze. 9°C, 1017 hPa. Sunrise 08.23 hours, sunset 15.06 hours.

After a delightfully calm night, we awoke to a lovely combination of sunshine and some clouds here and there, promising exciting and changing light conditions for the morning. Soon after breakfast, we ventured out to explore the island of Skrova.

Most of us went around the harbour, where we had two options. An easy walk on a small gravel road led us to the northeastern side of the island with several small, lovely bays with white sand beaches. Many actually opted to follow a smaller path towards the mountain Skrovafjellet. After a walk through open birch forests and mires, we had reached the slope, which was quite steep, but manageable with the help of a fixed rope that had been installed by the local hiking club. The ascent was a bit of work, but the view was absolutely worth every step. Once on top, we had a stunning 360



degree panorama over the wide Vestfjord and the mountainous islands of Store Molla, Little Molla and Austvågøy to the north and west, the full splendor of the famous Lofotveggen. The small bays and sand beaches just on the northeastern corner of Skrova were lovely from this elevated perspective, but most impressive were probably the quickly changing light conditions with some rainshowers and associated rainbows over Svolvær on Austvågøy.

Back on board, the final excitement of the morning was the recovering of a camera that had miraculously taken a bath last night, jumping off a tripod during late night northern light photography and directly falling into water to spend the night at depth of 6-7 metres. Captain Joachim donned his diving equipment and found the camera quickly, a fine Nikon DSLR with an even finer wide angle lens. The only thing still useful were the memory cards with the images of the last days.



During lunch we left the harbour and set courses for Svolvær, a passage of a few miles only, so soon we were entering another nice little harbour. It was near 15.00, near sunset in other words, and the light was stunning, a glowing, golden yellow over the town and the surrounding mountains.

Soon we were alongside, and before long we went out to board a bus that was to take us to the Northern Light Centre in Laukvik, on the northern side of the island (Austvågøy). It was established as a private northern light institution by Rob and Therese from the Netherlands, who welcomed us after a nice bus ride over the mountainous interior of the island. A presentation of various aspects of the northern lights followed, including many beautiful pictures and we were amazed by the passion of our hosts for this phenomenon of the polar skies and their wealth of knowledge and technology which they used to follow the sun, magnetic activity and aurora, or, as Rob put it, to have “direct contact with the sun”.

The aurora itself finally came up, but remained more or less hidden behind the clouds. Only on the bus ride back, it came in full splendor over the mountain ridges, a fantastic view and many probably considered hijacking the bus and forcing the driver to stop just in the middle of the road to get cameras and tripods out.

Back at the ship, we realized that the service crew had put a lot of effort into making this evening an unforgettable one for us: Captain's dinner! Some fears that only the captain would get something to eat were soon put at ease, when we saw the menu. Sascha was showing off, and we were not to be disappointed. Nadine had created northern night cocktails, so we toasted to a slightly weather-beaten but nevertheless good trip. Captain Joachim highlighted the events of the last days in a short speech, and then we enjoyed the various goodies that appeared from the galley. Speeches from the group(s) to the crew and a crew photo rounded the evening off.

But the highlight was still to come. A beautiful aurora was dancing on the sky, mainly over the mountains on the northern horizon. As usual, it was coming and going, and many spent a long evening outside, enjoying and taking photos. An especially impressive display came before midnight, with a strong blast of swiftly moving green and pink curtains of stunning intensity.





Friday, November 06 – Svolvær, Vestfjord, Bodø

08.00 hours: $68^{\circ}13.9'N/14^{\circ}34'E$, alongside in the harbour of Svolvær. Overcast, calm. $6^{\circ}C$, 1017 hPa. Sunrise 08.28 hours, sunset 15.02 hours.

Today was to be the day for the sailors amongst us. For the first time should we have some wind useful for sailing rather than motoring, so after breakfast the crew prepared for departure and Moritz gave us a little introduction to the art of sailing, showing us how we were to do various things with this amazing array of ropes.

Soon after we had left the harbour of Svolvær, the sails went up. The wind was even stronger than predicted, it was an enjoyable force five from the north, so soon we made up to 7-8 knots, with an apparent movement of the ship on the waves, not unpleasant, but giving us for the first time the feeling that we were really on a sailing ship. It was a distance of over 60 nautical miles to Bodø, so we were looking forward to a relaxed day crossing Vestfjord from north to south. More and more sails went up, and most were finally wind-filled, a beautiful view. During mid-day, however, the wind calmed down and we were slowed down to less than 4 knots, so after lunch it was decided to take the sails down and put the engine into use again.



Saturday, November 07 – Bodø.

08.00: $67^{\circ}17.1'N/14^{\circ}22.8'E$, alongside in Bodø. Overcast, easterly breeze, $6^{\circ}C$, 1010 hPa. Sunrise 08.24 hours, sunset 15.08 hours.

After a final *Antigua*-breakfast, it was time to get ready for disembarkation. It was hard to believe that our sub-arctic adventure was over. Most of us had some hours or even a full day to explore Bodø before we went home.

Many of us knew already now that this was not to be our last visit to the far north.

Total distance sailed (from Tromsø to Bodø): 381 nautical miles = 706 kilometres

**The crew of *SV Antigua* thank you for joining us
during an exciting week in north Norway!**

We wish you all the best and hope to see you again, somewhere between the poles!

Triplog written by Rolf. Layout, map, photos & final mistakes by Rolf.

Informationen zu weiteren Reisen von **Leguan Reisen** in der **Arktis**, der **Antarktis** und sonstwo auf diesem schönen Planeten:

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The SV *Antigua* will continue to sail in Spitsbergen's waters in the years to come; the other sailing ships of the Tallship Company fleet *Artemis*, *Elisabeth* and *Atlantis*, sail the North Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Ijsselmeer and the Canary Islands.

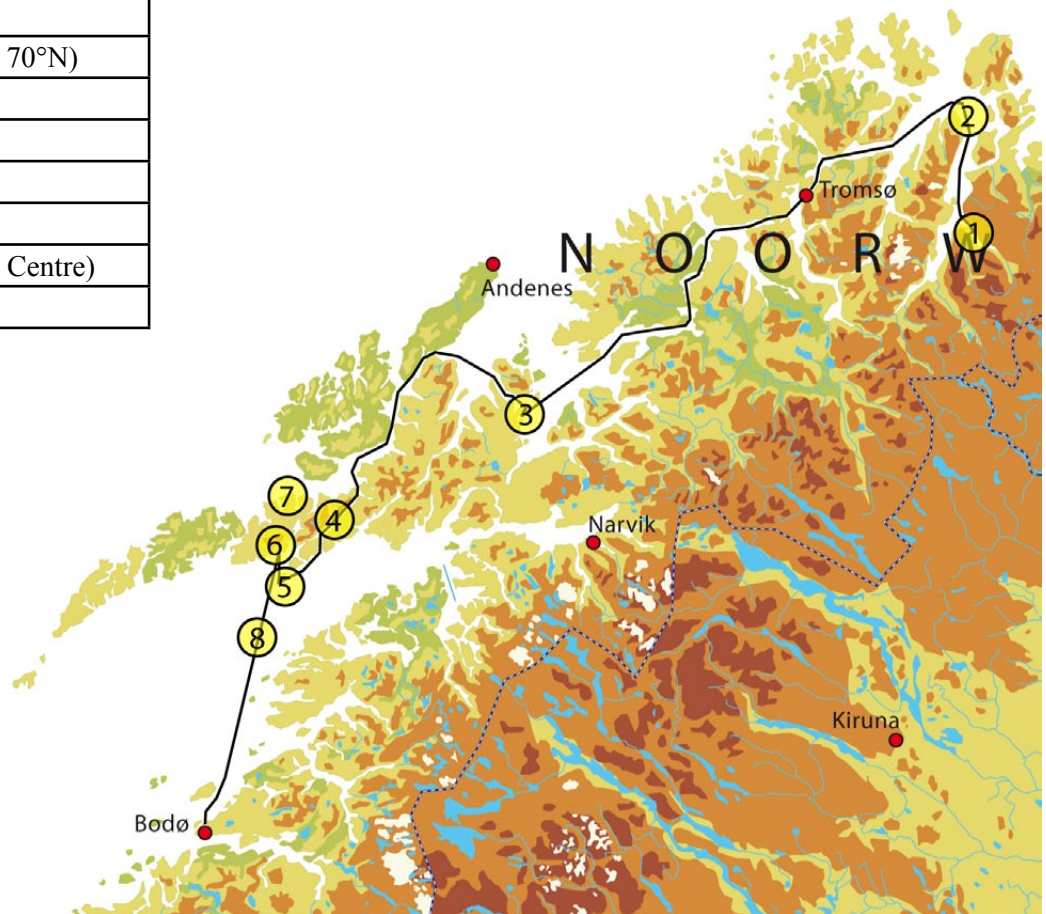
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Lectures and presentations:

02 November	Polar night, polar day: celestial mechanics	Rolf
04 November	Aurora photography: a short introduction	Rolf
06 November	Sailing introduction	Moritz
06 November	Jan Mayen	Rolf



1	Manndalen
2	Lyngenfjord (anchorage; 70°N)
3	Harstad, Trondenes
4	Raftsund, Trollfjord
5	Skrova
6	Svolvær
7	Laukvik (Northern Light Centre)
8	Vestfjord (Sailing)



Links related to northern lights, recommended by the Northern Lights Centre in Laukvik:

- www.polarlightcenter.com/news.html
- www.spaceweather.com
- www.storm.no
- SAT24.com
- poollicht.info
- www.polarlightcenter.com

