

RICE AUSTRALIA DOG SAILING FOREIGN TOURISTS

Bernie, the ship's dog, decides where "Away" will sail



COME FROM GOTHENBURG: The Australian couple Adrian and Fi have been on a mushroom trip in Risør and are in no hurry to get on. The boss on board is Bernie the dog.

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The idea was that Risør should only be a short stop on their sailing trip to the north. Now Fi and Adrian have, and not to forget; Bernie, their nine-year-old springer spaniel, was in town for just under a week.

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Many have wondered. It is not often that an ocean sailor, with an Australian flag, lies alongside by the stone pier and tugs at the moorings. At least not while the calendar shows October!

- But this is a pleasant place to be, says Adrian and gets full support from his girlfriend Fi.

- We have been on trips every day, picked mushrooms, looked at the city and ate mussels at a restaurant. We are in no rush to sail on.

She adds, as the dog runs back and forth on the boat aptly named "Away":

- Bernie also thinks it's great.

That the ship's dog is an important crew member becomes clear a little later in the conversation. Not only that. Bernie is important for how future voyages are to be planned. While the two are keen to experience what the Risør area has to offer, they can also talk about observations that have surprised them.

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- We saw boats come in where they had obviously caught a lot of crab. But we were shocked when we saw that the claws were torn off and that the crab was then crushed to be thrown into the sea, says Adrian.

- Do you not eat the crab, asks Fi, and it is necessary to emphasize that we absolutely do. However, there are some exceptions...





DREAM JOURNEY: The couple took over the 15-metre-long and 4.5-metre-wide sailing yacht Away in Cherbourg in France. Photo: Steinar Ryvind

- They can, so surely we can too?

Fi and Adrian both come from Sydney and they tell the familiar story. Day after day at work. For them, the journey to work took place by ferry.

- We occasionally saw sailboats from Europe and especially remember some boats with the German flag. Did they really sail all the way to Australia? This became a topic we talked about a lot. Can they, maybe so can we? was the question we asked ourselves.

The answer was that Fi and Adrian bought themselves a boat to learn to sail. However, after sailing the entire length of the east coast of Australia in a 30-footer, the desire to experience Europe under sail grew, and that in a boat with somewhat greater comfort.

When truth be told; they have not sailed from Sydney. The boat that is now their home was taken over as new in Cherbourg on the French Atlantic coast a year and a half ago. The Garcia Exploration boat type is, as the name suggests, designed and built to function in all weather conditions. The barely 15-metre-long and 4.5-metre-wide aluminum seasailer has, among other things, a reinforced bow, two waterproof collision bulkheads, is insulated for stays in Arctic and tropical waters, and equipped with a draft keel that reduces draft from 2.9 to 1.14 meters.

During the 18 months they have now been en route, certain selected locations have spent many days underground.

For example in Risør. The last time they stayed as long somewhere was in Copenhagen. The desire to discover the two Australians is great. Everything that is experienced is posted on Facebook or in [one's own blog](#).

Depends on the weather

When asked about the ultimate goal, the answer is elusive. Primarily the Norwegian coast with the Hardangerfjord and Norheimsund. The place names also require a lot of the tongue ties of the two. In order to find out that it is Norheimsund to be visited, a map must be found. It is not impossible that at one point or another the two will once again find longshore in Risør. In a sense, Bernie decides. The idea is to sail in Europe until Bernie the ship dog's days are over. When that happens, the Atlantic will be crossed and America will be visited.

- We always take the weather into account. That is how we ended up in Risør. We were at Gothenburg and saw that the weather and wind direction were ideal for sailing to Risør. And here we are! We like each other very much, but we probably throw loose as soon as the weather conditions allow