

Saorsa II — 2010 Cruise

Part 007

2010-06-012 19:07 EDT (23:07 Z)

We ran the engine five hours yesterday to run down the Saguenay from l'Anse Saint-Jean to Tadoussac. Saw the Belugas again. Docked at Tadoussac Marina so that we could more easily attend the music festival in town. The “Festival de la Chanson de Tadoussac” has been running for several years. This year, it had over thirty musicians in attendance. Performances were scheduled at several venues throughout town at varying times. The quality of musicianship is excellent.

Early this afternoon, I passed an agreeable few hours listening to an open air performance by a trio called “bon débarras”. Wonderful stuff. And then sat in a nearby café for a performance by Josianne Paradis.

In the café, as I sat alone at a table in the small crowded room, I invited two charming ladies to join me at the table. They had just ordered Café au Lait and had nowhere to sit. What followed was an enchanting conversation in French and English with these two delightful souls. Enchanté!

I sit alone now, but not alone. For I am with my Mistress safe in Her embrace. Like me, She too is feeling the urge to let go the dock lines and be underway again. Tomorrow, we will sail to Rimouski. There is a Strong Wind Warning in the forecast (insert broadening smile here), so sail we will.

Oh, my God, but I long to feel the ocean's swell again, feel her heel to the breeze and gather way, be as one with the wind, wave, and my Mistress... to sail on, forever.

2010-06-17 12:01 EDT (16:01 Z)

It's been a while since I last put pencil to paper. Not sure why that is, but the urge to record my thoughts just wasn't with me. There is no point in forcing such things.

We've had a good time the past few days. After leaving Tadoussac, we continued down river and crossed to the south shore. Our destination was Rimouski, but we didn't get that far and instead anchored for the night in Anse à l'Original.

The latter was a splendid anchorage. Deserted, well protected, good holding, and beautiful scenery. Turns out we had unknowingly anchored in the middle of the conservation zone of Bic National Park, one of the jewels in the Québec network of National Parks.

The next morning, we departed the anchorage the “right” way. While at anchor, we shortened up the scope and then hoist the main. With the mainsail set, we brought in the remainder of the cable and broke out the anchor under sail. Then, as Myra secured the anchor on the bow, I sailed us out of the anchorage under main alone. As soon as the anchor was stowed securely, we hoist the headsail and set our course for Rimouski.

The wind vane was engaged and we sailed away on a broad reach. All accomplished without any use of the engine. A very nice exercise in seamanship and sail handling. I like to think Mike would have approved.

About two or three hours later, we gybed (wear ship) and headed for the entrance channel to Rimouski.

Then, somewhat reluctantly, we lowered sail.

The headsail was down and furled first so as to slow us. We sailed on under main alone before starting the engine and lowering the main.

Shortly thereafter, we entered the yacht basin and tied up at Marina de Rimouski-Est.

Yesterday, we finally (one hopes) dealt with the damnable engine oil leak. As the engine had run about 100 hours since the start of the cruise, we also did a complete lubricating oil and oil filter change.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to Charles and the team at E&C Marine in Toronto. About ten days ago. A lengthy phone conversation with Charles while he examined two engines of the same make and model, one assembled, one disassembled, led to the diagnosis. A leaking seal on the camshaft in the timing gear housing was the culprit.

Accordingly, two new seals (one to be a spare) were ordered and couriered to me here in Rimouski. With that support, the new parts, and Myra's able assistance as "Instrument Nurse", I was able to complete the repair.

Of course, that also entailed sitting in the engine room contorted into a foetal like ball, while delicately removing fasteners and a cover on the camshaft, extracting the old seal with the aid of a corkscrew (thank you, Charles, for the suggestion), and slipping the new seal into position. The latter task was accomplished with a gentle nudge from the rounded end of the spare Spurtle from the galley.

No greater love hath any man for his Mistress than that he sacrifices his Spurtle for Her engine's well being. All was re-assembled in good order. Later this afternoon, after the cover sealant had had 24 hours to cure, we will start the engine.

Today has been mostly a down day. Time to sit and think. Myra has gone for a walk ashore and I have some alone time.

2010-06-17 17:09 EDT (21:09 Z)

Pot of chili simmering on the stove, a Great Big Sea CD playing, and a *Dark and Stormy* in my glass. Perfect!

Clear blue sky and gentle SW breeze (3 or 4 on the Beaufort Scale). Tomorrow, we catch the first of the ebb tide and head down river. High tide is at 07:23 EDT. We will cast off at 08:30.

Earlier today, we bunkered ship and took on 66 litres of diesel fuel to fill our tank. Tonight, we will fill the water tanks to brimming.

Again, soon, we will be underway.

Even as I sit here writing, the restless urge is rising. My Mistress sits quietly, waiting for Her dock lines to be cast off so She can again feel free. The freedom of a boundless horizon.

When we ran up Her engine earlier to move to the fuel dock, She purred with satisfaction at the caring touch of my ministrations. Clean fresh oil in Her sump, Shell Rotella T, only the best; a new oil filter, and a carefully replaced seal. Fresh fuel passes through three filters before it reaches the engine. Her heart is strong.

Soon, my Beauty, we will go forth together on the water. Your sails will fill and curve, seductive and beautiful; the sheets will harden; the water will flow smoothly along your hull, licking along that curvaceous form. We will be as one on the water. Our fate inseparably intertwined.

Time to stir the chili and refill the glass.

End of Part 007.