



**I VIKING EXPLORERS Across the Atlantic 2018.
BARBADOS, the end of the start.**

In the "I Viking Explorers 2018 Crossing", 15 boats of various nationalities met at the Marina of Las Palmas de Grana Canaria, on the Canary Islands.

Gran Canaria and its capital, Las Palmas, offers the best option for the preparation of a great voyage, its location, a few hours flight from the Nordic countries, from where most of the participants come, the ease in equipping, repairing etc, is a factor of relevant importance and its infrastructures are recognized and highly valued internationally.

On January 8, a total of 13 boats departed, covering the distance of more than 800 miles which separates the Canary Islands from the archipelago of Cape Verde in just over a week, sailing with more than 25 knots of wind, that made these first miles more difficult than expected, but that they would solve with skill, like the Islander of Oliver Solanas and Carlota Texeira, who with their broken autopilot had to control the boat manually.



Foto: Viking Explorers - 8 Islas. Las Palmas Briefing.



Departure Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

Mindelo, on the island of Sao Vicente, received the fleet of "Viking explorers", who took advantage of their stay to recover strength and visiting the island, in addition to make the last repairs and provisioning, so to face the second stage, The great crossing towards the Caribbean island of Barbados.



Foto: Viking Explorers - 8 Islas. Marina Mindelo. Welcome party Marina Mindelo.



Foto: Viking Explorers - 8 Islas. Marina Mindelo.

Marina Mindelo", who received them wonderfully, facilitated the meeting of all the participants, who were able to enjoy some evenings, exchanging experiences, commenting on difficulties and breakdowns, which without doubt would help to prepare better the following journeys. They also met with other sailors in transit through the Cape Verde archipelago, who would join than the Viking Explorers Crossing. So some boats, would leave on day 20 and others, on day 21, to complete the number of 17 boats, with 54 crews on board.

A little over two weeks later, the first ship to arrive at Port St. Charles was the Sooshen boat by Jens Bang, a 37-foot Hans Christian model, who completed the trip in 14 days. After fulfilling the formalities, he would than head to Bridgetown, capital of the Caribbean island of Barbados.

The last ship to arrive was the Hafsorkestern, by Niklas Krantz, a Bavaria 30 feet that took 18 days to cross the Atlantic.

The rest of the participants continued arriving and mooring their boats in Bridgetown. Some remained anchored in the beautiful bay and others entered through the channel to the berths in the very center of the capital.



Foto: Viking Explorers - 8 Islas. Bridgetown - Barbados.

The sailors, at this time of the year where the trade winds are more constant, experienced winds of an average intensity of 22 knots of direction ENE (East-Northeast) which allowed to make the crossing at an average speed of 6.2 knots. Many ships will meet again in other Caribbean islands, some will return to Europe after exploring its warm waters and others will continue to the West, to continue their journey around the world.



Foto: Viking Explorers - 8 Islas. Port St Charles - Bridgetown. Barbados.

Barbados, is the first island that sailors find when crossing the Atlantic Ocean, after sailing between the different islands of the Caribbean, they usually go to the southern islands, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, to protect themselves from the hurricane season, though the Authorities of the island of Barbados, are already planning the construction of new marinas, to receive and serve more sailors.

The data of sightings and wildlife observation, obtained by the Viking Explorers crews, will be sent to the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and different organizations such as Sail & Whale, with which we have collaboration agreements, for their processing and analysis.

The organizers Oliver Solanas and Mike Westin, together with their team, are already working towards a second edition, driven by the good reception and appreciation of the experience of the participating sailors, as well as the number of people who could not participate this year. They have shown a big interest, following the participants and expressing their desire to be part of the next VIKING EXPLORERS 2019.



Foto: Viking Explorers - 8 Islas. Mike Westin – Oliver Solanas Heinrichs.

Viking Explorers, was born from the initiative of the Swedish nautical journalist, Mike Westin, along with Oliver Solanas Heinrichs, founder of "8Islas", as they saw the need to join sailors at an ocean crossing, in order to help each other.

Sharing knowledge and being a united group, which ensures the safety of all participants, is the pillar of the Viking Explorers.

In the Viking Explorer Crossing, in this first edition, all the participants, within a familiar environment helped each other, even organizing small seminars among them. Thus, during their stay in Las Palmas, Security Seminars were held, first aid, and ocean navigation. Also a daily VHF radio meeting was held where the incidents and / or planning of the day would be commented. Skippers briefing two days before departure, both in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and the Marina de Mindelo, were also organized.



Foto: Viking Explorers - 8 Islas. Las Palmas Briefing



Mindelo. Briefing departure Babados.

Several parties were organized in the different ports of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Mindelo and finally in Barbados. All the participants met, being able to fraternize and exchange concerns.



Foto: Viking Explorers - 8 Islas. Barbados.



Foto: Viking Explorers - 8 Islas. Welcome party in Barbados.

The participants are mainly families, some sailors without much experience. Sailors with a dream, where everyone helps and finds that support, to be able to fulfill that dream, to cross the Atlantic.

The main characteristics of this crossing are:

Although it has a departure date, it will only depart if the weather is good and there is a consensus among sailors.

There has been no registration fee, although the participation of a vessel has to be previously accepted by the organization.

The organizing team is made up of a group of nautical journalists and the "8 islands" Oceanic Support Platform of the Canary Islands

8Islas, is also aware of the great need to help the marine environment and in this journey, helped the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria through the Poseidon program, in obtaining data through the sighting of species. Also for Sail and Whale, which is another project that aims to compile sightings of cetaceans, using citizen science as a basis, fundamentally, in collaboration with seafarers. We know that in an ocean crossing, these data will be of great relevance for oceanographic professionals and researchers.

It will not only be used to obtain data, but also to raise awareness among navigators through the Platform 8Islas, informing all the nautical associations nationally and internationally with which it collaborates.

Viking Explores – 8 islas
Las Palmas de Gran Canaria a 18 Febrero de 2018.

