



World ARC 2012-13: Circumnavigation Rally Starts Boats depart Saint Lucia for 26,000 mile voyage

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26 boats in the World ARC fleet departed Rodney Bay Marina in Saint Lucia on Sunday, at the start of an epic 26,000 mile adventure around the world in 15 months. World ARC is a circumnavigation rally for cruising boats, with a mix of organised stages and free cruising.

In 15-20 knots of classic Caribbean sailing conditions, Karsten and Sheila Witt's X-55 *Gunvør XL* (CAN) was the first boat away, followed by John O'Connor's *Discovery 67 Sapphire II* (USA) and Dmitry Maslov's *Jeanneau 57 Pilgrim*. The boats have 1100 miles ahead of them before exploring the San Blas islands of Panama, where another five boats will join World ARC.

World ARC Route: Classic Tradewind Sailing

The 31-strong fleet will then transit the Panama Canal before setting off across the Pacific for Australia, stopping at some of the most idyllic Pacific islands en route, including Galapagos, Hiva Oa, Tahiti, Bora Bora, Niue, Vava'u, Fiji and Vanuatu.

Some boats will leave the rally in Australia, with more joining for the restart of the second half of the adventure from Darwin in September 2012. Avoiding the troubled areas of the Indian Ocean, the World ARC route takes in Bali, Cocos Keeling, Mauritius and Reunion before enjoying Christmas and New Year in South Africa. From Cape Town the boats will visit St Helena, before enjoying carnival in Brazil and then heading back into the Caribbean via Grenada to finish in Saint Lucia in April 2013.

World ARC Fleet

In total 39 boats and over 200 people will take part in World ARC 2012-13; some sailing the full 26,000 miles, others joining for a stage. The largest boat is 20.8m *Discovery 67 Sapphire II* (USA), and the smallest is 11.96m Beneteau Oceanis 393 *Glamorous Galah* (AUS). The fleet includes five catamarans, three of which started in Saint Lucia.

World ARC is an international event, with boats sailing under the flags of 12 nations, and crews coming from more than 20 countries. Six children aged under 16 are sailing in World ARC, and the crews are a mix of families, people taking a couple of years away from work, and those who have sold businesses or taken early retirement.

Join the Fun!

It is still possible for boats to join the World ARC fleet in Australia in late August 2012 for the Indian Ocean crossing to South Africa, and onwards to the Caribbean. This route keeps

well away from areas of pirate activity, and allows the participants to enjoy experiences as diverse as the remote atoll of Cocos Keeling and the great animals of South Africa. See www.worldcruising.com/worldarc2012/index.aspx for more details, or email mail@worldcruising.com



The World ARC fleet depart from Saint Lucia © World Cruising Club. Credit Nick Martin