

## Episode 69: Sailing Around the World

### Summary

Our guest Patrick is taking a break from his in-progress trip sailing around the world. He talks about the first part of his journey that took him from the United States to New Zealand.

### Transcript

Nick: This week's episode is brought to you by italki. italki is an affordable online platform that lets you connect with native-speaking teachers and learn from anywhere - except maybe not on a sailing boat. But anyway, you can get a special offer with your first purchase by visiting <http://go.italki.com/englishin10minutes>. Enjoy the episode!

Today I'm talking once again to my friend Patrick and last time, Patrick, you talked to us about your life in sailing. And at a certain point you decided that you wanted to sail around the world, which I guess is probably the dream of every serious sailor like yourself?

Patrick: And you don't have to be a sailor to have that dream, either. It's probably called, uhh, having itchy feet<sup>1</sup>. And yes, like you mentioned, I did start, uhh, sailing on Lake Geneva, and gave some classes for a few years. Umm, outside of the nice season here in Geneva, I would travel round the world and find some contracts, sail other people's boats, either in charter companies, flotillas or private individuals. And that worked pretty well, got some, umm, good experiences out of it. Also advanced in my certifications, umm, the different tickets that you can, umm ... or courses that you can take. And now I'm a full-fledged<sup>2</sup>, uhh, royal yachting association yacht master ocean. And having crossed, uhh, a few times the Atlantic to deliver a boat or be part of a rally, I had an idea and the idea was to have my own boat at one point. Of course, it's a big financial problem or equation to find, to solve. Managed to solve it by renting out my apartment here and living a little bit more on the cheap<sup>3</sup>. But an opportunity presented itself. A nice, uhh, blue water boat, which means capable of crossing oceans, and, uhh, went for the survey, had

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<sup>1</sup> itchy feet (expression): the desire to travel

<sup>2</sup> full-fledged (also fully-fledged): completely developed or recognised, of professional standing

<sup>3</sup> on the cheap (expression): cheaply, without spending too much money

a look at the boat. She was in Newport, Rhode Island. And after a bit of negotiation, I bit the bullet<sup>4</sup> and went for it.

Nick: Right, because you have a boat, as you talked about last time, here, that you've had for thirty-five years, but it's not a sea-going boat, is that right? It wouldn't be able to handle the oceans or at least crossing the Atlantic or the Pacific.

Patrick: Crossing an ocean would be a little bit difficult. It's a ten-metre boat, umm, doesn't have anything, uhh, in terms of equipment really, but it could be equipped to do it. But, no, I went for something, uhh, different. Umm, bigger, so it's, uhh, fifty-five feet, that's just shy of seventeen metres. And this time with the creature comforts<sup>5</sup>, umm, generator, water maker and, uhh, a little bit bigger space to live on.

Nick: And so were you looking to buy in the United States specifically or was it just that that boat came up at that time?

Patrick: It happened to be there.

Nick: Right.

Patrick: And, uhh, funny enough<sup>6</sup>, I wasn't even really looking for one. It, uhh, happened to be a Facebook, uhh, ad from a friend of a friend who was selling her boat. And the common friend said, 'Oh here's an ad, pass it on.' And that's what I did, looked at it as well, and said, 'Hmm, that's something possibly interesting for me.'

Nick: And so then I guess that dictated how your trip would, at least, begin. That you would begin sailing it from the northeastern part of the United States. And that's how you started, right, down the coast, uhh, the east coast of the U.S.?

Patrick: Down the east coast, through Norfolk (Virginia) at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, and then that was in November, so it was time to get away from the cold and the North Atlantic storms. And made my way to the Caribbean and spent the nice season over there, which is roughly from December to April. And then in April, uhh, started going west, through the Caribbean Sea towards the Panama Canal, crossed the Panama Canal and then into the unknown.

Nick: Into the unknown! And so did you ever consider going all the way down South America, or was it always going to be the Panama Canal?

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<sup>4</sup> bit the bullet (expression): made a brave decision, forced oneself to perform a difficult task

<sup>5</sup> creature comforts: things that give you warmth and comfort, usually in your house

<sup>6</sup> funny enough (or funnily enough): strangely, surprisingly, curiously

Patrick: It gets cold. We're now in December here in Geneva and I am freezing. I'm not used to this cold weather anymore. Uhh, so, yes, the idea was to stay in the tropics, uhh, somewhere along the equator and that seems to be the traditional route as well. Umm, no need to bash your brains, uhh, out passing Cape Horn (at the bottom of South America) just to go west. There is that lovely canal built, uhh, some hundred years ago or so.

Nick: And so that's obviously a very quick way to get from the, uhh, Atlantic to the Pacific. And ... but it's also really amazing, engineering-wise. I've been there. I haven't sailed through it like you did, but with all the systems of locks<sup>7</sup>, and you go up and down, and it must have been pretty cool to actually go through the canal.

Patrick: It is, even more so with a small boat.

Nick: Right.

Patrick: Because, uhh, it's mostly, the majority, I think 95-98 per cent of, uhh, of the traffic passing through the canal are big container ships or, uhh, tankers - anyway, big things. And so when you cross with, uhh, your own little sail boat, you feel quite small.

Nick: I'm sure. And so then you were out into the Pacific, like you said into the unknown. And was that ... or was it scary at any point? Did you come up against bad weather or huge waves?

Patrick: No, the trade winds, uhh, once you do catch them are quite gentle. It's, uhh, warm, you have the odd, uhh, squall, which is a little rain shower, that can generate some wind. That will never last more than an hour or two. Unless, yes, you didn't read your weather forecast properly and then you enter a bigger storm. But, no, uhh, afraid? The only thing I might have been afraid of was the distance, 'cause, umm, the longest one we did between the Galapagos Islands and French Polynesia, the Marquesas, that was almost exactly three thousand miles, nautical miles.

Nick: And how long did that take?

Patrick: And that took us three to four weeks.

Nick: Oh, wow. With no sight of land at all?

Patrick: No sight of land, uhh, so you need to have enough food, uhh, to last that long. Enough fuel, at least for the generator, but the idea is to sail, so you don't want to motor too much. And keep yourself sane<sup>8</sup>, that's the other thing, not

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<sup>7</sup> locks: systems in canals or dams that raise and lower boats by admitting and releasing water

<sup>8</sup> sane: mentally stable (the opposite of insane)

leaving your few square metres, uhh, for three weeks at a time, with other people. You can't jump away, you can't ... yeah, you're stuck there.

Nick: And you're just looking out and all you see is ocean and more ocean, and that's it.

Patrick: More sunshine, more sunsets and sunrises, fishing, umm, tending to<sup>9</sup> the few things of the boat. But otherwise finding a way to keep busy.

Nick: And so what did you do when you arrived on land after that? What was the first thing that you did?

Patrick: Umm, once we get the administrative part out of the way - so that obviously is the first thing, uhh, you do is go check in and present the passports and so you're legal in the country - umm, was to have a good fresh meal. And vegetables and salads just taste so much better, uhh, once you haven't had some for a few weeks. And also it's quite different, umm, it's really fresh and it's not, uhh, coming from a big supermarket and I don't know how many truck deliveries in between. So, yes, food, umm, obviously a few drinks as well, celebrating. And then making a plan to go discover.

Nick: Right, and so then you, umm, sailed for a little bit in the Pacific as well. And so then what you did is you docked your boat in New Zealand, so you're taking a kind of break from the trip. So you're - what? - a third of the way there, would you say?

Patrick: Umm, in terms of miles, uhh, well from Newport all the way to, uhh, New Zealand, we sailed thirteen thousand miles and, probably, technically, it's about halfway, but I would say about a third, and in terms of time, also a third. So another two-three years to complete the circumnavigation<sup>10</sup>.

Nick: Alright, well, good luck, and we'll have to have you back in two or three years to find out how the rest of it went.

Patrick: Good!

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<sup>9</sup> tending to: looking after, caring for, repairing if necessary

<sup>10</sup> circumnavigation: full trip around the world

## Comprehension Questions

1. How did Patrick find the boat that he bought to sail around the world?
2. Why didn't Patrick want to sail around South America?
3. What is the first thing Patrick usually does when he arrives in a new destination after sailing for a long time to get there?

## Exercises

*Use the words and expressions in the footnotes of the transcript to fill in the gaps.*

1. He's been in and out of mental institutions for most of his life. He's living at home now but I don't think he is really \_\_\_\_\_.
2. They settled down and got full-time jobs, but it didn't take long for them to get \_\_\_\_\_ and want to start travelling again.
3. We suggested going camping but my mother didn't want to rough it. As she gets older, she likes her \_\_\_\_\_ more and more.
4. If you fly between destinations and stay at fancy lodges, you can spend a lot of money in Africa. But you can also do it \_\_\_\_\_ by taking public transport and staying in backpacker hostels.
5. If you want a different water experience in Paris from the usual Seine cruise, you can take a canal tour where the water level will change as your boat goes through the various \_\_\_\_\_.
6. He started out flying small planes, but then he did his training to fly commercial jets, so now he's a \_\_\_\_\_ pilot.
7. As a nurse, she spends a lot of her working day \_\_\_\_\_ patients. They need a lot of care and attention.
8. Ferdinand Magellan was the first navigator to prove that the \_\_\_\_\_ of the globe was possible, although he died before completing it himself.
9. They knew that in order to have enough money to take a year off, they would have to sell their house, but in the end they \_\_\_\_\_ and did it.
10. She went on holiday to Spain for some sun, but, \_\_\_\_\_, it was hotter back home in the UK that week than it was where she went on holiday.

## Discussion Questions

Discuss these questions with a partner or in the [English in 10 Minutes Listeners group on Facebook](#):

1. Patrick's dream was to sail around the world. What is your dream?
2. Of the places Patrick has visited so far - the United States, the Caribbean islands, the Panama Canal, the Pacific Islands and New Zealand - which one interest you the most? Why?
3. What would be the first thing you would want to do when you arrive in a new destination after being stuck on a sailboat for several weeks?

## Answers

### Comprehension Questions

1. He saw a Facebook ad that had been forwarded to him.
2. He thought it would be too cold.
3. After going through the administration procedures, he has a fresh meal.

### Exercises

1. sane
2. itchy feet
3. creature comforts
4. on the cheap
5. locks
6. full-fledged
7. tending to
8. circumnavigation
9. bit the bullet
10. funny enough / funnily enough