

To Greenland with support from NMCF by Enrique Lagos

After picking up Oscar with the dinghy and buying more gas, we left Nuuk on the morning of August 19th. The first day was for Oscar to get used to the boat; we went under engine almost the entire day through inner channels. When we arrived at the abandoned settlement of Faeringehavn, we decided to try our luck fishing—and we certainly did. As soon as we dropped the lines into the water, four cods bit immediately, and we happily ate them. The next day we covered 60 miles, also with little wind, alternating between channels and open sea. We anchored among some small islands in Sarfat Kanglerngat.



We continued south through channels until we reached the Ice Cap, that flowed into a massive beach, so no icebergs came out—only very cloudy but clear water. From there we went out to sea for a two-day passage toward southern Greenland. We had north wind both days, with varying intensity, until just as we were reaching the entrance of the next inner channel, the wind died completely—but not the swell. The rest of the day we navigated through channels where we spotted a herd of reindeer, which we managed to film with the drone. We also saw a couple of Arctic foxes at the beautiful anchorage of Tungdliatsiaup Numa.



The next day we went through narrow inner channels under engine. The goal was to reach Nanortalik, stopping first at an island called Uunartoq, which has natural Viking hot springs where we planned to take one last warm bath before the crossing. In the end, we had to spend the night anchored by the springs because it got late.





We left early for Nanortalik, though it was only 25 miles from the hot springs, to make our last purchases and calls home since there would be no internet ahead. With the boat full of biscuits and nuts, we sailed to the western entrance of Prins Christian Sund—impressive mountains on both sides forming a 60-mile-long channel reaching the east coast of Greenland. We spent the rest of the day trying to arrive before nightfall at a small settlement halfway through the fjord called Aappilattoq. Upon arrival, we were able to moor at the cargo dock and take one last nighttime walk through Greenland. The village, located at a convergence of fjords, had stunning 360-degree views—a great farewell to this legendary place.

We were supposed to get up at 5:30, but a cargo ship decided to wake us up at 4:20 to dock where we were moored. Half-asleep and in the dark, we had to rush out of the village. Completely in darkness, we navigated through the narrow rocky entrance and turned on the radar to detect possible icebergs. As the Spanish saying goes, “A quien madruga, Dios le ayuda” (“God helps those who rise early”). We continued under engine for the rest of the morning, on a clear and sunny farewell day. Around 2:00 p.m., we reached the fjord’s exit just as a passenger

cruise ship was entering—after waving hello, it disappeared into the fjord’s interior.



And after more than a month of exploring and sailing almost the entire west coast of the island, the four of us and the Brown Bear left behind the east coast of the world’s largest island, with Cape Farewell to the south in sight, and ahead of us, the 1,500-mile crossing to Falmouth was beginning.

Months before the trip, Hugh told me he wanted to buy a drone for the voyage, that I should learn how to use it in Galicia, and then take it to Greenland. The chosen model was the DJI Mini 3 Fly More, with three batteries lasting about 40 minutes each, and a very comfortable controller with an integrated touchscreen. Importantly, it weighs less than 250 grams, so no special permit is needed to fly it. The camera records up to 4K at 30 fps, and the videos and photos look truly great.

As for maneuverability, it’s quite simple; the hard part is making smooth movements so the videos look good. The drone handles winds up to 20 knots well and can climb up to 500 meters high (it’s best to go up with plenty of battery since it takes a while to ascend and descend).

Takeoff and landing are without a doubt the trickiest maneuvers—mainly because of the boat’s motion and the wind. For takeoff, we launched it from the hand, finding the optimal spot on the boat. For landing, if we were relatively still, we’d land it on the hand or a rectangular cushion, and if we were moving, we’d catch it sideways with a towel or blanket, approaching it from behind the shrouds.



Despite optimizing the drone maneuver quite a bit, we still had several scares. We crashed it a few times while landing, but thank God nothing serious happened and it never fell into the water. We just had to replace the propellers and recalibrate the drone.

Lastly, I would like to thank Hugh for inviting me on this incredible journey through one of the wildest and most remote places on Earth. I am also deeply grateful to the Royal Cruising Club and the Marshall Award for their support and for giving me the opportunity to share this adventure in their magazine.