



4. Las Palmas 2014



by Johan Kjellander 2014

Tove's rehabilitation went very well and by the end of November her doctor said they had done what they could for the moment being. It was now okay to go to Las Palmas if she returned in six months for a check up. On the day of the start of the ARC Rally 2014 we were back in Bird of Passage. That was a fine feeling for both of us.



Las Palmas is a good spot to see some of the big Super Yachts. They come here into the marina ("Muelle Deportivo"), stay for a week or two and then continue, usually on their way to the Carribbean and usually only with paid crew. To the left above is Carbon fibre WinWin on her maiden voyage, a Baltic 108 built in Finland. To the right is the more classical style Alejandra. If you want to know more there is plenty on their websites.



Super yachts are big but even bigger are the old sailing ships that visit the harbour from time to time. Some of them are military training ships, like Falken below, but Gunilla above is run by a high school on Öckerö in Sweden. What a dream to be only 16 years old and sail the Atlantic on a real sailing ship.



The Swedish navy has two identical school ships, top sail schooners Gladan and Falken. Each year one of them comes to Las Palmas to change crew. In 2013 it was Gladan and this year it was Falken. During their stay in Las Palmas they arrange so that you can visit them, meet the crew and have a cup of coffee.



The biggest of them all are the cruising ships. Las Palmas is a popular harbour for big cruising lines like German Aida, Swedish Fritidsresor or British Cunard. Sometimes you can see three or more of these gigantic ships in the harbour at the same time. One of the worlds biggest is Queen Mary II, 345 meters long. You can see her above entering the harbour in Las Palmas an evening in December 2014.



The weather in Las Palmas is usually very good but during winter it can be rainy and windy at times. This year we had strong winds from NW for a couple of days in December. The marina is well protected from swell but the sound when 20 m/s wind blows through one thousand rigs can be alarming.

We took a walk to the Canteras beach to see the waves breaking on the reef. It was not easy to get there in the strong wind and there was plenty of salt

water in the air. We were surprised to see a couple of kite surfers in the water in these conditions. Later in the evening we went to Sailors Bar for a beer and then the sun roof blew apart.



There are quite a lot of Scandinavians in Las Palmas, not only sailors. This has made it possible to have a traditional Lucia celebration on the 13:th of December, much like the one we used to have at home. One thing is different though, there are two Lucia's. One from Las Palmas (to the left) and one from Sweden.

In the marina it has become a tradition to arrange a *smörgåsbord* on December 24. Everybody brings something to the table, a barbecue is lit and a lot of people, young and old, from different countries come to have a nice time together.



There was also time in December to do some mountain hiking. I really looked forward to this as it had been some time since my last hike. The picture above speaks for itself I think !



End of Las Palmas 2014

