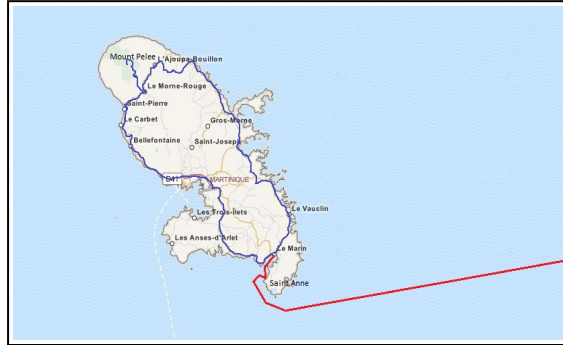




2. Martinique 2016



by Johan Kjellander 2016



Martinique was once a French colony and still belongs to France, now as an "Overseas Department" (Sv: ungefär som Län). Being a part of France, it is also part of the European Union, currency is Euro and people speak French.

For this reason it was easy for us to check in when we arrived, no customs or police, just go into the marina and pay with Euro, same as we did in Las Palmas and other places in Europe. I even got the opportunity to practice my French a little.



We arrived late in the evening and therefore decided to anchor in the bay of Sainte Anne, just outside the village of Le Marin which is one of the biggest yachting centres in the Caribbean. After 20 days on the Atlantic we celebrated with a drink and could finally sleep a whole night through.



The bay of Sainte Anne is a popular anchorage for visiting yachts. There is a bar and some small shops on the beach but we wanted to fill our food supply so the next day we went to the marina in Le Marin to look for a supermarket. Here we were welcomed by our friends Pekka and Barbro with a traditional Rom Punch. That was nice.



Le Marin has a modern marina and it is easy to find parts or service for your boat nearby. There is also a relatively cheap supermarket, Leader Price, with its own dinghy jetty. If you want a walk, have a look at the catholic church Eglise Saint-Etienne du Marin from 1766 and its graveyard, not far off.



I have always been fascinated by volcanoes and now was a good opportunity to see one which had a dramatic (pyroclastic) eruption only a century ago, Mount Pelee. It killed the entire population of the nearby city of Saint Pierre, about 30.000 people in 1902.

It showed that I was not the only one interested so we hired 2 cars and filled them with crew from different boats. Some of us wanted to walk up to the top of Mount Pelee and the rest visit the museum in Saint Pierre. It was a steep walk to the top at 1397 m and quite cloudy and wet. Those who brought extra clothes were lucky.



Some of the birds that we saw for the first time on Martinique are similar to those we have in Europe but not exactly. The Blackbird for example has a black beak instead of orange and the doves are brown instead of grey.

When I looked it up, I found that the Blackbird that lives in the Caribbean according to Wikipedia is a "New World Blackbird" and the one we see in Europe is an "Old World Blackbird". The dove on the picture above is probably a "Mourning Dove", one of 310 species of Pigeons and Doves.



The heron (Sv:Häger) is white and the seagulls are brown.

The White Heron is also sometimes called Egret and it seems to exist in several versions all over the world, smaller and bigger. I'm not sure exactly which species the one above is. The brown seagull on the last two pictures is a Frigate Bird and very typical for the Caribbean. It makes spectacular dives but does not swim under water because their feathers are not oily enough to be waterproof. Instead they catch squid and flying fish chased to the surface by hunting tunas.



The End of Martinique 2016

