

PASSAGEMAKING

Couple savoring each day of voyage

Thus far, it's been "a world of continuous treats," say Florida retirees in the midst of a 16-month passage

By Jason Fell

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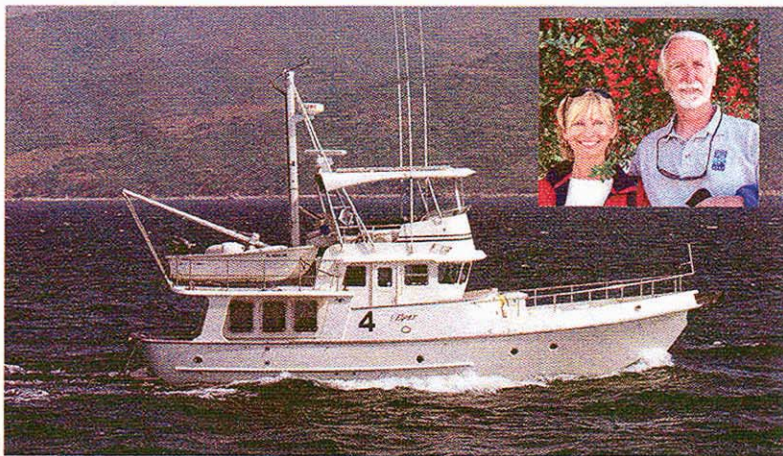
For most boaters, navigating more than 20,000 nautical miles over two oceans would be no ordinary cruise. For Scott and Mary Flanders it's just another chapter in their cruising log.

The retired Florida couple, who participated in the Nordhavn Atlantic Rally in 2004, are in the midst of a 16-month westward passage from the Mediterranean to New Zealand via Cape Horn. They hope their ambitious voyage aboard their Nordhavn 46, Egret, inspires others to undertake offshore adventures of their own.

"By enjoying what Egret has and will experience, our goal is to encourage people to embrace long-distance powerboat cruising," says Scott Flanders, 62, who spoke to Soundings over satellite phone while berthed at a yacht club in Mar del Plata, Argentina.

The Flanderses, who have been living aboard Egret since 2002, got under way Sept. 15 from Gibraltar, Spain. They cruised down the west coast of Africa, crossed the Atlantic and, by late November, had made stops in La Gomera in the Canary Islands, where they picked up crewmember Steve Lawrence; Bahia de Salvador and Florianopolis in Brazil; and Mar del Plata. The cruise has been chronicled on the Nordhavn Web site at www.nordhavn.com.

"The voyage so far is everything we've expected and more," says Scott Flanders. "When long distance cruising you do your research giving yourselves general directions; however, every day



Scott and Mary Flanders are taking their Nordhavn 46, Egret, from the Mediterranean to New Zealand via Cape Horn.

is a new day. Egret has enough miles to know the unexpected is expected. We live in a world of continuous treats delivered on the liquid conveyer belt by our lovely little ship."

Crossing the Atlantic and visiting exotic locales has provided the couple with many fond memories. "Being at sea is always a big highlight," says Flanders. "The Canary Islands and the islanders were a treat. Isla Grande in Brazil, with the tropical jungle, exotic birds and plants, is so beautiful it takes your breath away. And the friendliness of the Argentineans is remarkable. Within an hour of our arrival we were invited on a fishing trip with one of the locals."

Of course, the voyage hasn't been without its trials. The couple ran into trouble, haggling with a U.S. fuel-

bladder supplier and a line-cutter manufacturer and supplier. "They caused us weeks of delay, at a very high cost over and above the product, transportation and duty costs," Flanders says. "This was frustrating and discouraging at the time. However, this is a very rare issue in our boating lives, so life goes on."

The couple also experienced problems with a leaking gasket on Egret's stabilizers. After speaking with a service technician they decided to upgrade to an electronic stabilizing system while in Argentina.

"They have only had a couple of mechanical issues that they needed outside assistance with," says Nordhavn marketing director Jenny Stern. "Otherwise, the minor issues they've had they've been able to diagnose and fix

themselves. They also have encountered some menacing seas and dealt with some outdated cruising guides, but have taken everything in stride. I think in cruising, often times you have to go with the flow. They certainly have prepared themselves with that mental outlook."

Fuel consumption so far has been "exactly as expected," Flanders says. Powered by a 140-hp 6-cylinder Luger, Egret carries 1,000 gallons of fuel in two tanks and a reserve of 330 gallons in four fuel bladders. Flanders says that affords a range of more than 3,000 nautical miles.

From Argentina, Egret will head south along the coast, transit the Beagle Channel to Puerto Williams in Chile, and around Cape Horn. From the Horn they will push north through the Chilean canals, along the Chilean and Peruvian coasts to southern Ecuador, then jump to the Galapagos Islands and the long passage across the South Pacific to the Marquesas Islands. From there the voyagers hope to arrive in New Zealand next December. After that they haven't decided where they'll cruise to next.

"We plan to cruise until we physically can't. What could possibly be more fulfilling?" says Flanders. "New Zealand will be Egret's next winter port. Plans beyond New Zealand are unlimited and undetermined."

For more on the couple's voyage, see the October 2005 issue of Soundings or search the story archives at [Soundings Online.com](http://SoundingsOnline.com) (keyword: Flanders). ■