

Around & About...

“Nine of Cups” – January 2009

We decided to sail the 4,000 nm from Ecuador down to Puerto Montt, Chile because we really enjoyed our last visit to Chile, but had missed cruising in some of the northern Patagonian canals. This time, we were planning to linger in the canals for awhile and then head west across the Pacific. We had coast hugged western South America last time, beating most of the way. This time we made a huge loop offshore to avoid the Humboldt Current and picked up favorable winds for great sailing nearly all the way.

Puerto Montt, the Gateway to Patagonia, is a great little city with good shopping, reasonably priced marinas with good amenities, basic chandleries and services and a great jumping off spot for either heading south into the canals and beyond or heading west across the Pacific. There are three marinas in close proximity, two of which (Club Nautico Reloncavi & Oxxean) seem to attract most of the yachties. Provisioning options are excellent with several modern, well-stocked grocery superstores. Local transportation is easy and inexpensive and there's an international airport for trips home. This is also a great spot to leave the boat and head inland. Chile's national parks are outstanding and very accessible. Argentina is a short bus ride over the Andes.

We had kept in touch with Canadian Commodores Marlene & Benno on “Diesel Duck”, a trawler, whom we had met in Panama and seen again in Ecuador. We were surprised and delighted to see them tied up to the pier one morning and spent several evenings and outings with them before they left for points south. We were delivering Alaskan charts to the Danish boat “Sol”, whom we found were also SSCA'ers. The American boat “Endeavor”, also SSCA, left just before Christmas to head south to Ushuaia, the Falklands and on to South Georgia. The SSCA group was so social and informative, we convinced others to join SSCA and also recommended a local couple as Cruising Station Hosts here (Cata Yovane-Garcia and her husband, David Tideswell *Catch the Wind*).

If you're in this part of the world, we highly recommend you take the time to stop here and enjoy all that has to offer. An SSCA Port Guide is now available for this port.

Marcie & David Lynn (AA1ZM/AA1ZL)