



In October we ran our boat across the Pacific Ocean to Hawaii. The photo above was taken at Nishimura Bay on the northwest tip of the [Big Island](#). We're now moored in Honolulu and are planning our next step to the South Pacific in the spring.



[Anchored in Effingham Bay, Barkley Sound](#)

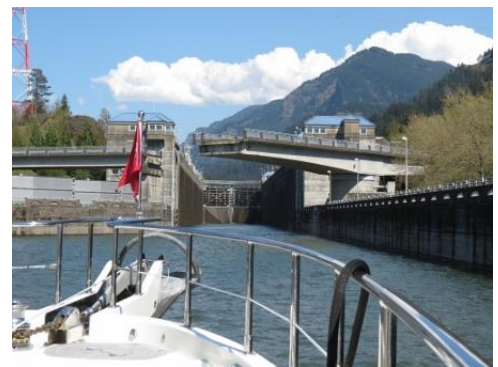
We ended 2011 with a winter cruise to Barkley Sound, off the West Coast of Vancouver Island. We didn't know it then, as we hadn't yet made our cruising plans for 2012, but this likely would be our last boat trip to Canada for several years. We enjoyed several days of [calm and sunny weather](#), but also had a chance to take in a [winter storm at Ucluelet](#), Canada's storm-watching capitol.

Our "summer" boat trip this year was in April. We travelled down the Washington Coast, across the Columbia River Bar, and up the Columbia and Snake Rivers all the way to into the Clearwater River in [Idaho at 738 feet](#) above sea level. The timing was a little earlier in the year than normal for us, as we expected to be busy in the



[View from Devil's Rest](#)

summer preparing for the crossing to Hawaii. The trip was much more interesting and diverse than we were expecting: we passed through the [Bonneville Dam](#) and seven others, toured the [Hanford Nuclear Reservation](#), visited two of the dams we'd passed through, biked along the [Historic Columbia River Highway](#) and through [Cape Disappointment State Park](#), visited the [Columbia Gorge Discovery Center](#), climbed 800' Beacon Rock and 2,500' [Devil's Rest](#), and spent time in Hood River, Portland and [Astoria](#).



[Entering the lock at Bonneville Dam](#)

Soon after returning to Seattle, we were invited on board the 915-foot container ship [Hanjin Oslo](#) for a tour. The crew showed us throughout the ship, from the bridge all the way down to the 3-story 74,700 HP engine. The scope and scale of the ship is amazing—the 605-foot Seattle Space Needle could lay between the pilothouse and the bow—and the Hanjin operation was extremely professional.

In August, we went through the Ballard Locks into Lake Union to have the boat lifted for bottom paint and some other maintenance work. Our trip to freshwater coincided with [Seafair Weekend](#), so we ran the dinghy to Lake Washington to take in the Blue Angels show. And before heading inside the locks, we toured the 509' destroyer [USS Halsey](#) that was docked for Seafair almost beside us at Bell Harbor Marina in downtown Seattle.



On board the [Hanjin Oslo](#)



[Blue Angels over Lake Washington](#)



[Heading under the Golden Gate Bridge](#)



[America's Cup Race in San Francisco Bay](#)

enjoyed exploring the Bay area. Highlights of our time there included watching [America's Cup Racing](#) and another Blue Angels show from the water, and touring the Napa River.

In September, we set off from Seattle for San Francisco. We wanted to stay away from the Hawaiian offshore waters during the northern hemisphere hurricane season (between June and November), but didn't want to leave Seattle and in November and travel through the North Pacific in during the winter storm season. So we first travelled to the San Francisco area to stay there temporarily for a few weeks before crossing to Hawaii in late October. This also put us 200 miles closer—Honolulu is about 2,200 miles from San Francisco and about 2,400 from the Seattle area. The prevailing winds and currents are better on this more southerly route as well.

The decision to spend a few weeks in San Francisco before crossing to Hawaii worked out very well. We skipped some of the nastier weather that hit the northwest coast of Washington, and we



[1,000 miles from land, halfway across the Pacific Ocean.](#)



Shortly after making landfall at Hilo.

In late October, we set off for the over 2,000-mile run to Hilo, Hawaii and arrived after eleven nights at sea. We had a [great trip](#)—the weather this time was the best of any of our offshore trips. The worst weather of the whole run was the last night, when we had to tread water in rough seas to wait for daylight to enter the harbor. Although our ultimate destination was Honolulu, we chose to make landfall at Hilo partly because Hilo is about 200 miles closer, but mainly because it's easier to clear our cat Spitfire in there. Another advantage is that we would be windward of

the other islands, so we could make a nice westerly run mostly downwind. [From Hilo](#), we travelled up the Kona Coast and spent time on leeward shores of Maui and Molokai before arriving at our new temporary home at the [Waikiki Yacht Club](#) in Honolulu.

Currently we are anchored for the holidays at [Kane'Ohe Bay](#), on the east coast of Oahu, coincidentally about five miles from [the estate](#) where President Obama is spending Christmas. This is quite a different venue where we were this time last year in Barkley Sound.



Snorkeling at the sandbar in Kane'Ohe Bay

We're still working on our plans for next year, but we currently expect to leave Hawaii in March and spend a week in [Palmyra Atoll](#) before continuing south. If you are interested, you can always see where we are at [www.mvdirona.com](http://www.mvdirona.com).



Diamond Head at dawn