

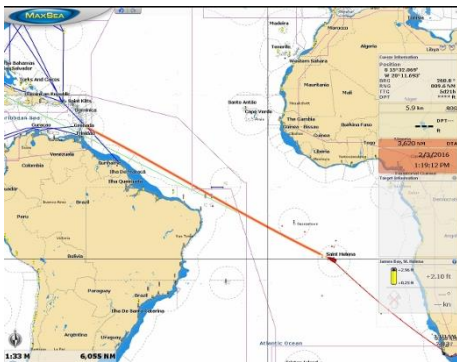


This year we completed our voyage around the world and returned to the continental US at Palm Beach, Florida. It had nearly 3.5 years since we [left from San Francisco](#) in the fall of 2012. We've now travelled 59,400 nm on *Dirona*, well over twice the circumference of the earth.



Jamestown, St. Helena.

For the past fifteen years, we've typically spent Christmas and New Year's Eve at anchor, but in a first for us, last year we spent both at sea. On December 23rd we departed Cape Town, South Africa on an 11-night, 1,713nm run to [St. Helena](#). A British holding, St. Helena is a volcanic tropical island in the southern Atlantic where Napoleon was exiled and later died in the early 19th century. We spent a week there enjoying this unique island with its [impressive scenery](#), and also topped of our diesel tanks and bladders for our longest passage yet: [3,700 miles directly to Barbados](#).



3,700nm from St. Helena to Barbados.

The 25-day passage to Barbados went smoothly. In the picture at the top of this page, we are celebrating reaching the halfway mark on that journey and re-crossing the equator into the northern hemisphere after nearly three years in the southern hemisphere. We enjoyed several relaxing weeks in Barbados, exploring the island and just taking it easy after the big run.



Relaxing in Barbados.

Our initial plan was to slowly work our way north through the Caribbean and return to the US via the Bahamas, but we had a bit of a setback in Barbados: a snapping line from the super yacht on the dock beside us hit Jennifer hard enough to [break her clavicle](#) (collar) bone. Jennifer developed nerve issues as the break healed, so we cut short our Caribbean trip and ran nine days directly from St. Lucia to Palm Beach, Florida for surgery that corrected the problem.



A bit of a setback.



Dirona returning to the US after 3 years.



Crawfish in Louisiana while visiting Metal Shark Boats.



On board the USS *California* nuclear fast-attack submarine.

We'd planned on a short stop in Palm Beach before continuing north, but ended up enjoying the area so much that we [stayed for almost 3 months](#). During that time we made several road trips, including to [Kennedy Space Center](#), [Naples](#), [Johnny Sessa Bulldozing](#), and Port Everglades for [Fleet Week](#). We also flew to Louisiana to tour [Metal Shark Boats](#), whose high-speed aluminum boats are popular patrol vessels. And perhaps the most unique experience was James had an opportunity during Fleet Week to dive to 500-ft below the water surface on the [USS *California*](#), a Virginia-class nuclear-powered, fast-attack submarine.

It had been over 2.5 years since our [last haul-out](#) in New Zealand, so before leaving Florida, we [hailed out](#) for bottom paint and a few scheduled maintenance items.

From Palm Beach, we ran almost directly to Boston with brief stops at [Cape Lookout](#), North Carolina and [Plymouth](#), Massachusetts. We spent six weeks in Boston, taking in this [historic city](#), visiting [Cape Cod](#), and enjoying the Independence Day celebrations. James also flew to Seattle for three weeks for work, and Jennifer joined him on weekends.

At the end of July we ran 750nm offshore directly to [Newfoundland](#), Canada with a stop-and-go in Lockeport, Nova Scotia to clear into the country. Our initial plan was to circumnavigate Newfoundland, hitting the highlights. But we fell in love with the wild, untamed south coast fjords and instead spent all of August exploring pretty much every one. The hiking and scenery was simply incredible.

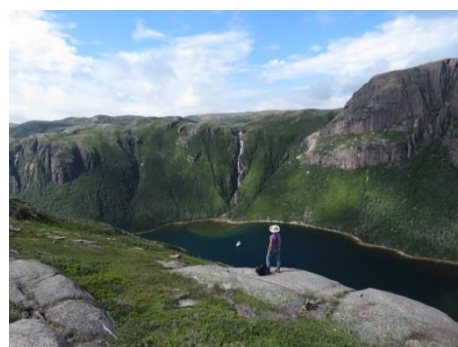
We eventually dragged ourselves away from Newfoundland south to the famed Bras d'Or Lake cruising area, a large inland sea in the center of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. Inventor Alexander Graham Bell lived here at [Baddeck](#) in his later years, conducting a various experiments, and an excellent museum there details his life and work. After a couple of relaxing weeks exploring Bras d'Or Lake, we continued south to mainland Nova Scotia, visiting [Guysborough](#) and [Liscombe River](#) before stopping for five days to explore vibrant Halifax. We loved the city, especially its many excellent [breweries and pubs](#), and even caught a [Halifax Mooseheads](#) Junior A ice hockey game and a Davis Cup tennis match.



Vehicle Assembly Building at Kennedy Space Center



Florida haul-out.



Aviron Bay, Newfoundland.



Baddeck, Nova Scotia, home of Alexander Graham Bell.



Halifax Mooseheads Ice Hockey

In late September, we left Halifax for Southwest Harbor, Maine. We stopped en route in historic Lunenburg, home of the *Bluenose II*, a replica of the famous racing and fishing schooner *Bluenose*.

In Southwest Harbor we spent several days enjoying beautiful Acadia National Park before continuing south, taking in the fabulous fall colors. We had no particular schedule and were mainly trying, not always successfully, to stay below the frost line as we worked our way south. We had a great stop in Belfast, Maine. From there we drove to [Bangor](#), the home of author Stephen King, and also to Camden, Rockland and the excellent [Owl's Head Transportation Museum](#).



Maine fall colors.



Precipice Trail, Acadia National Park.

After stops in Boothbay Harbor and Portland, Maine we continued south to Portsmouth, NH, home of the experimental submarine [USS Albacore](#).



USS Albacore, Portsmouth, NH.



Halloween in Salem, MA.

Our next stop was Salem, MA, the center of the Witch Hysteria that led to 20 people being sentenced to death in 1692. Jennifer is a Halloween baby and this was our first time back in the U.S. for her birthday since 2012. Halloween isn't celebrated much in the places we've been to around the world, so it was

especially fun to be in Salem for probably the biggest Halloween celebration in the country.

In Newport, Rhode Island [KVH Industries](#), the maker of our main satellite system, took us on an excellent tour of their R&D facility.

We spent most of November in Baltimore while James got some work done and we flew to Las Vegas for the annual Amazon Web Services [re:Invent](#) conference. We were expecting Baltimore to have more of an industrial feel, but at least the [Inner Harbor](#) has been transformed from a commercial working harbor to a vibrant destination popular with locals and tourist alike. While in Baltimore, we caught a Raven's NFL game, and visited the National Aquarium, the B&O Railway Museum and Fort McHenry, where Francis Scott Key was inspired to pen the "Star-Spangled Banner". We also got an opportunity to tour [TE Connectivity](#)'s trans-oceanic communications cable layer CS *Responder*



Baltimore's Fort McHenry, the inspiration for the "Star-Spangled Banner"

We left Baltimore in early December and enjoyed our first real winter



USS Wisconsin, Norfolk, Virginia

Christmas Cruise since leaving Seattle in 2012. We worked south through Chesapeake Bay with stops at Annapolis, where we toured the Naval Academy, St. Michaels with its excellent maritime museum, and Norfolk, home of the largest naval station in the world. In Norfolk we toured the naval base and the battleship USS *Wisconsin* and also visited the Virginia Air and Space Museum. From Norfolk we entered the sheltered Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) and had a leisurely nine-night run to Cape Lookout near Beaufort, North Carolina, spending Christmas at anchor in the Alligator River off Albermarle Sound.

On New Year's Eve of 2016, we made a 212nm, overnight run from Cape Lookout to Charleston, South Carolina and are currently enjoying the hospitality and excellent restaurants the city is famous for. Our only firm plan right now is to be in Daytona Beach in February to take in some NASCAR stock car and World of Outlaws sprint car racing. But sometime next year we plan to make another Atlantic crossing, this time to Europe to cruise Norway and the Baltic Sea. If you are interested, you can always see where we are at mvdirona.com.

Click below to view previous annual highlights:

- [2015](#)
- [2014](#)
- [2013](#)
- [2012](#)



Harborfest fireworks display, Boston.