



THREEMASTEDTOPSAILSCHOONER

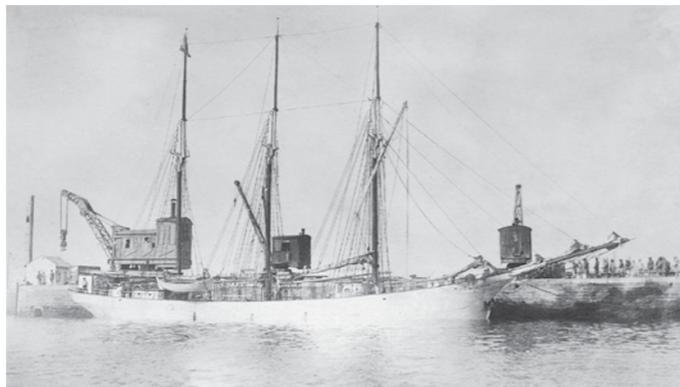
OOSTERSCHELDE

CABO VERDE

ROTTERDAM - THE NETHERLANDS

HISTORY OF THE 'OOSTERSCHELDE'

The three-masted topsail schooner 'Oosterschelde' was built in 1918 as sail-powered freighter. The vessel plied the European waters and was regularly seen off the coast of Morocco and on the Mediterranean Sea. In 1930 a heavier and more modern diesel engine was placed and the rigging was reduced. From 1939 the vessel sailed under foreign flags and underwent a drastic conversion into a modern coaster in 1950. In 1988, the 'Oosterschelde' was brought back to the Netherlands. The Rotterdam Sailing Ship Foundation took charge of the fund-raising necessary for the financing of the restoration of the vessel to its authentic condition. The 'Oosterschelde' is now the only remaining representative of a large fleet of topsail schooners that used to sail under the Dutch flag at the beginning of the previous century. She is registered as a monument by the Dutch ministry of Culture. The 'Oosterschelde' is self-maintaining and is deployed in domestic and foreign ports for presentation and promotion activities for businesses and other organisations. The vessel also sails along interesting coasts and these trips can be booked individually. In addition to many European countries, a visit was also paid to Spitsbergen. In 1998 the 'Oosterschelde' completed a journey of one and a half years around the world. The ship sailed to the tropics, but also made expeditions to Antarctica, the Falklands and South Georgia.



THE AREA

The islands of Cape Verde are situated in the Atlantic Ocean, over 600 kilometres West of Senegal at approximately 16 degrees North. Cape Verde consists of 9 inhabited and a few uninhabited islands. The Portuguese colonized the islands, which were uninhabited at the time, at the end of the 15th century. The islands were used as transit port for the slave trade. There were also plantations situated on the islands. It was not until 1975 that Cape Verde became independent and since 15 years there is a parliamentary democracy. Cape Verde is one of the smallest and poorest countries of Africa. The official language is still Portuguese, however most inhabitants speak Creole or sometimes English or French. Cape Verde has approximately 450.000 inhabitants; a mixture of different African races and the Portuguese, French and Italian race. Apart from that, there are many Cape Verdean communities abroad, for instance in The Netherlands (Rotterdam). A voyage to Cape Verde is a voyage to Africa. On this voyage we are able to see the most idyllic spots on these tropical islands, but we will also be confronted with the poverty in which a great deal of the inhabitants live. However, they have the most stable governments in Africa. The government keeps the bread and water prices artificially low so that it is available for everyone, as is medical care.

CLIMATE, FLORA AND FAUNA

The climate is tropical. The sea has an almost constant temperature of 25 degrees and the sometimes-strong breeze – the trade wind – comes from the Northeast almost whole year round. It incidentally rains and the sun almost always shines. However, frequently there are days on which the fine desert sand in the air blocks the sun (and even the view). All the islands are volcanic, but still each island is unique. The islands suffer different states of weathering and as one island is flat with beautiful white beaches, the next island has a height of 3000 metres with sharp cliffs and lushes overgrowth. The water is filled with flying fishes, tuna, wahoo, sea turtles and whales. Steep terrace fields with banana- and coffee plantations, black volcanic slopes and a fierce foaming, deep blue sea define the landscape.





SAILING ON THE OCEAN

Sailing with a large and genuine sailing ship is a special experience. Account has to be taken of the vagaries of weather at all times. Conditions at sea are never constant. The sea between the islands is extremely suitable for sailing. There is a permanent wind (NE trade wind, force 4 up to 7 Bft) and the 'Oosterschelde' is in her element on the long ocean swell. There are very little other ships on the water, except for a fisherman boat every now and then. On board of the 'Oosterschelde' one is not a passenger but a part of the guest crew. You will be assigned together with the crew to sail, steer and navigate the ship. You will also be instructed on how you and the other guests can participate in the life onboard and in case of an emergency. Sailing experience is not required for this. The crew will be happy to explain the functions of all the ropes, halyards and sheets to you.

EXCURSIONS

These voyages offer a good mix between active sailing and discovering a unique country. Every day (and sometimes night) of sailing, will be followed by a full day on an island. The landing places are carefully selected and in most cases there is an organised excursion ashore to give you a good impression of the island. Participating in the excursions is not mandatory; you can also explore the island on your own. The costs for the excursions are low and will be charged at the end of the voyage.

LIFE ON BOARD

The 'Oosterschelde' has become a favourite of sea and nature fans. People do not sail with her for a luxury cruise. The main feature is always active and direct exposure to the sea and sailing and of course the region being travelled and its fauna. The ship is comfortably furnished and supplied with all modern conveniences. All cabins are fitted with a washbasin with hot and cold running water. Showers are communal. The lounge has a very stylish and comfortable setting with reading tables, a sitting area and a piano. All cabins have forced ventilation and have the option to open a window or a hatch. The always-present wind provides a pleasant temperature on the lower deck. The lounge is an inviting place to write a letter or read a book. The library offers books on the area, on the flora and fauna and on ships. Furthermore, it provides general reading material as well as DVD's, magazines and CD's. Life on board is enhanced by good meals prepared by our professional cook.

THE CREW

The crewmembers are experienced ocean going sailors and most of them are employed on the 'Oosterschelde' on a permanent basis. The crew holds all the required certificates and diplomas and is qualified to sail worldwide. The atmosphere on board is friendly and informal.

EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

The 'Oosterschelde' is equipped to sail the world's seas. For this purpose the vessel holds all the safety certificates required by Dutch law. The qualified and experienced crew also contributes to ensuring safe passage. On board of the 'Oosterschelde' you will be part of the crew yourself. That is why attention will be paid to instructions and exercises of for instance safety procedures on board and your role in these, but there will also be attention for sailing instructions. We are able to produce drinking water from seawater using a filter system. Preservable food will be stored in the Netherlands. Vegetables, fruit, fish and meat will be bought locally. About 16.000 litres of diesel oil will also be bunkered for the generators and the main engine. There are two rubber dinghies with outboard engines and a wooden sloop for transport to the shore. In the interests of safety there are safety vests and life rafts, fire detection and fire extinction installations, a very extensive medicine cabinet, Epirb, radar transponder etcetera. For navigation and communication purposes the 'Oosterschelde' is equipped with a radar set, two compasses, satellite navigation system, an echo sounder, a sextant, an SSB radio, an Inmarsat-c-fax terminal, iridiumtelephones, marine telephones.

ITINERARY

On this voyage we will visit at least six islands. These are approximately a day of sailing apart. After each leg we take the time to explore the island of destination. At night we will mostly be anchored, but in some cases we will keep sailing through the night. The landing places are carefully selected and on most islands that we visit we will organise an excursion with local guides.

DAY 1

Upon arrival on Ilha do Sal you travel to Palmeira on your own accord, for example by taxi. The 'Oosterschelde' is waiting for you there, anchored in the bay. Palmeira is a rustic town where you will find few tourists. The island Sal is desert-like, with miles-long sand beaches. On the south side of the island there is the fisher's village Santa Maria where the larger hotels and busy tourist attractions are located.

DAY 2

The following morning you have time to take a stroll, make a visit to the town or take a dive in the ocean before we set sail. While sailing from the windward to the Leeward Islands we have the wind in our back. The passengers are divided up in shifts and are encouraged to participate in all duties onboard, from navigation, steering to trimming the sails. Those who dare can climb the mast to see the world from up a yard of a big sailing vessel. The crossing to Santiago is approximately 110 miles; we expect to arrive somewhere during the night.

DAY 3

We anchor in the beautiful bay of the village Tarrafal. Santiago is the most African island with mountains and green valleys. We will spend the entire day on the island. With a taxi bus we travel across the island to visit the colourful markets of the capital Praia and the oldest city of the Archipelago, Cidade Velha. In the inlands we find mango trees, banana plantations and old grog factories, where the sugar cane is still grinded by a grinding stone pulled on by a cow. We will not come back onboard until the evening. It is no exception that spontaneous parties start on the beach here, where everyone is dancing to the swinging Cape Verdean music.

DAY 4

The crossing from Santiago to São Vicente is the longest leg of this journey. Close-hauled and with most of the sails set we push 'Oosterschelde' to her limits. The night will be spent on the sea.

DAY 5

To reach the gentile beach of Mindelo we sail between the islands São Vicente and Santo Antão. Because of the venturi-effect the winds are usually very strong. Mindelo, on São Vicente, is the largest harbour and the second largest city of Cape Verde. There are restaurants, an indoor market, cafés and souvenir shops. A little beach offers a chance to go swimming.

DAY 6

Santo Antão is considered the most beautiful island of the archipelago. It is also the greenest and most fertile of the islands. With the ferry from Mindelo we sail to Santo Antão and let a taxi bus take us to the edge of the volcanic crater. From this point we take a walk down to Ribeira Grande. The variations in the landscape and the breathtaking views make this a walk to never forget.

DAY 7

Today we sail close past the coasts of several islands. On our way to São Nicolau we pass Santa Lucia, one of the uninhabited islands of the archipelago. It is very rich in fish so we throw out a fishing line to test our luck. Due to the large number of sharks, swimming is not recommended.

DAY 8

The destination on São Nicolau is also called Tarrafal. We anchor just before the harbour, or maybe even moor at the quay. Tarrafal is a peaceful fisherman's village where we will be welcomed with open arms. There is barely any tourism and the majority of fisherman sail instead of motorized boats. On São Nicolau we visit the beautiful worn basalt formations and drive up to the last remainders of a primeval forest in the mountains.



DAY 9 AND 10

Another amazing leg of our voyage that will take us to Boa Vista. A considerable distance from the village we drop anchor, as it will not be possible to come closer to the shore. The rubber dinghy is used to go to shore, but due to safety precautions we only undertake this during daylight. Boa Vista is one of the islands on which mass tourism is developing. Along the coastline several resorts have risen from the ground. The beaches are indeed beautiful and the inland is known for its remarkable moving sand dunes.

DAY 11 AND 12

The last crossing, from Boa Vista to Ilha do Sal, will probably be made with help of the engine. We drop anchor at Santa Maria, which has already been a touristic spot for some time. The upside is that there is plenty of opportunity to buy souvenirs or get some ice-cream. The last day of your holiday can be spent lying on the beach or renting a surfboard.



HOW TO MAKE A BOOKING?

You can make a reservation by completing and returning the booking request form. Required on this form are your passport details, date of birth etc. We need these details in order to prepare the mandatory passenger list for customs and excise. For this reason we ask you to complete the form in full. Of course this information will be treated with care. After receiving the form we shall send a confirmation and invoice with the terms of payment. 14 to 7 days prior to departure you will receive the final information.

WHAT SHOULD YOU TAKE WITH YOU

Each berth is supplied with a duvet and sheets. Sleeping bags are therefore not required. A small rucksack or bag is convenient during walks. Suitcases take up a great deal of space in the cabin; it's better to carry your luggage in bags. On deck we recommend shoes with somewhat rough and by preference soft soles. On land we advise firm walking boots. Other practical items are your health insurance papers and of course a valid passport. It will not be possible to just go to a shop if you have forgotten something. Please mind to bring items such as medicines, fluids for contact lenses, spare glasses etc.

Other items to be considered are:

- Binoculars for watching birds, dolphins and whales, or the coast.
- Sunglasses and suntan lotion.

- Water- and windproof jacket. Actual sailing gear or boots are not necessary in this area.
- Photographic equipment or video camera.

CONTACT WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Family and friends at home can follow the ships news and progress via our website (News Page). In emergencies you can reach the ship directly by satellite telephone. The number is: +881631850669. However this services is rather costly. It is best to contact the shipping company. We can contact the vessel via Satcom or SSB-radio.

INSURANCE

The vessel is insured for possible legal liability caused during your stay onboard. However, the 'Oosterschelde' does not cover any damage sustained on your transfer to and from the ship or during trips ashore. We assume that you have health insurance. Most of the time your insurance will not cover the costs to repatriate you in case of illness or accidents abroad. For both reasons you at least need a travel insurance, possibly in combination with a cancellation insurance. For inhabitants of the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg and Germany we are able to arrange these insurances.

SEASICKNESS AND HEALTH

The wind pressure in the sails results in a sailing ship lying much steadier in the water than a motorized ship. Almost everybody becomes used to the movement of the ship within one day. Should you however be apprehensive of difficulties during the crossings you can stick special plasters behind your ears, or take seasickness pills.

The shipping company provides optimal safety for all guests, but that does not relieve you of your own responsibilities. On a moving ship accidents can happen easily and when you are dependant on medicines, it can have serious effects when you are seasick. Furthermore, medical care is not directly available out at sea, so if your mental or physical health is not optimal you will be at extra risk during a sea voyage. In any doubt, we ask you to gather information from your doctor. On the booking form you have to fill in any medical information that might be of importance onboard.

TIME DIFFERENCE AND VACCINATIONS

In the winter the time difference between the Cape Verde and central Europe is two hours. Vaccinations are not obligatory, but are advised. We would advise you to contact your physician for information on the current regulations 4 to 6 weeks prior to departure.



MONEY DURING THE TRIP

In Cape Verde you can pay with the Escudo, 100 CVE is ± € 0,91, or with Euros. There are a few cash dispensers on the islands, but these work only with cards with a VISA logo. On some islands it is possible to withdraw money with your credit card. We advise you to bring enough cash money (Euro's) with you.

MEALS ON BOARD

Our experienced cook will prepare three delicious and varied meals a day. In between meals snacks will be served. Coffee, tea, milk and water are included in the price. Other drinks will be charged at normal bar prices at the end of the voyage. On board you can pay with Euro's, British Pounds or Escudo's. We are unable to process payments made by bankcard or credit card.

ARLINE TICKET AND VISA

There are several airlines that fly on Ilha do Sal. TAP Air Portugal flies via Lisbon, which is reachable from most airports in Europe. From some countries, for instance Germany, there are direct flights to Ilha do Sal offered by TUI. The costs for the tickets strongly depend on the period of the voyage and the period of booking. Most flights do not connect directly to the schedule of the 'Oosterschelde'. We therefore advise to arrive a day earlier or leave a day later and book a night in a pension or hotel.

For this voyage you will need a visa. The costs for a visa are approximately € 45,00. It is possible to buy a visa at the airport of Ilha do Sal or, if present, at the local Cape Verdean embassy in your country. Your passport has to be valid for at least 6 six months at the time of departure



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