

Madrid doesn't have the sea, but it's not that far away! So let's go sailing!

A fresh breeze hits my face while the waves make us swing smoothly. Juan is steering the **sailboat**. He grasps the rudder and tells Vanessa and Daphne to get ready to swerve. Antonio, our **patrón** (skipper or captain), adjusts the rope that controls **the boom** (a spar on which the foot of a triangular sail is bent). In perfect harmony, we change course, picking up **2 more knots** of speed and a big smile on our faces. Let's do it again!



Although this could have been a perfect dream, this actually

became real for me for a few days. The journey started in **Cádiz** (a city in Andalucía, the southern region of **Spain**) when I decided to join in on an adventure with some friends on a Wednesday night. After having lots of **Biodramina** (sea sickness pills), I climbed into my cabin and quickly settled into the tiny space and the light rocking movement of the boat. Then I slept like a baby, pondering what sailing was all about.

On Thursday morning, I woke up fidgety and full of enthusiasm. After the right maneuvers, Juan got us out from the port and went along the edge looking for some wind. We ended up getting hit by what we thought was smoke from a boat in flames, but was actually **a cloud of mosquitoes from Africa**. I had my body covered with insects and thus my first impression of sailing wasn't very good. But then Antonio dropped the anchor at the same altitude as **Rota** (Spanish municipality located in the Province of Cádiz) and prepared the most delicious **tuna** I had ever tasted in my life. The tuna saved the day.





After lunch, the wind gained more strength. We took the anchor up, set the sails and went in the direction of the open sea. As if we were in a **regatta**, Antonio marked our target: **"A por ellos!"** (go after them!) and gave us instructions: **"Déjate caer Juan!"** (back starboard or catch the wind on the forward side of the sail), **"Hay que largar el Génova Vanessa!"** (I'm still wondering what that means...), **"James, get your butt in the Cockpit if you don't want to jump off the boat!"** (oops!)



A few swerves later, we headed for **Guadalquivir** estuary in **Sanlúcar de Barrameda**, (a small town in Huelva province), in front of which, you can find **Doñana** (a Spanish National Park), a beautiful paradise where Antonio decided to call it a day and prepare another amazing meal.



Doñana National Park

The next day, we woke up and had breakfast while the **National Park** was illuminated by the morning sun. After that, when I

thought it was going to be a calm day of sailing up the river towards **Seville**, Antonio proved me wrong once again. "**I won't waste this wind,**" said the captain. We raised up the sails and set out to the **capital of Andalusia**.







A few days after our trip started, we were finally pedestrians again. We spent Saturday walking around the city of Seville, just as it was getting ready for its world-famous week of partying, known as **La F eria de Sevilla**. We were lucky enough to sail with our friend, Vanessa, from [Las mesas de Vanessa](#) (a food blog from Madrid). She knew exactly where to take us for lunch—[Espacio Eslava](#)—a fantastic spanish restaurant which won the **Best Tapa of the Year in 2013**. This restaurant is a must if you find yourself in Seville. We ordered **salmorejo** (a typical Andalucian tomato soup made with bread, garlic, olive oil and tomato) and, my favourite, **costillas** (ribs), among many other unbelievable dishes.



It was hard to come back to reality. Life at sea can be pretty addictive. Yet now I know that even though Madrid doesn't have sea, it's not that far from here!

Sailing School Info: [Oversailing](#)

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Restaurant in Seville: [Espacio Eslava](#)

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