



Discovery 67, SAPPHIRE II OF LONDON

A cruising yacht that has already done the thing most owners only plan for: a genuine westabout circumnavigation, ocean by ocean, from the fjords of Norway to the Cape of Good Hope.

Route

Home waters → Atlantic → Panama → Pacific → Indian Ocean → Cape of Good Hope

Oceans crossed

Atlantic, Pacific, Indian

Countries & landfalls

9 shown on this route

Some yachts are sold on the strength of a survey and a spec sheet. Sapphire II can be sold on the strength of a logbook. Over the course of her ownership she has been sailed, not stored: north to the Lofoten skerries, west through the Panama Canal, across the full width of the Pacific to Fiji and French Polynesia, down to New Zealand and northern Australia, on through Indonesia and Mauritius, and home round the Cape of Good Hope.

What follows is that route, plotted, with the photographs taken along the way. It is offered here as evidence of condition and capability rather than as a sales pitch: a boat that has covered this ground, in these waters, without drama, tells a buyer most of what a survey cannot.

The route

Ten landfalls, three oceans, one continuous passage home. Positions are approximate anchorages and ports of call along the way.



Equirectangular projection, centred on the Pacific to keep the westabout track unbroken.

01 London

Home port — start & finish · 51°30'N 0°07'W

02 Norway

Norwegian coast · 67°17'N 14°23'E

03 Panama Canal

Atlantic to Pacific · 9°05'N 79°41'W

04 Fiji

Mid-Pacific · 17°42'S 178°00'E

05 French Polynesia

Society Islands · 17°32'S 149°50'W

06 New Zealand

Bay of Islands · 35°16'S 174°06'E

07 N. Australia

Coral Sea / Torres Strait · 10°42'S 142°30'E

08 Indonesia

Lombok / Gili Islands · 8°21'S 116°02'E

09 Mauritius

Indian Ocean · 20°10'S 57°30'E

10 Cape Town

Passage home · 33°55'S 18°25'E



Leg 1

Norway

67°17' N 14°23' E

The starting point of the voyage shown here: quiet water among the skerries of the Norwegian coast, tied up beneath a working lighthouse. Norway is an unforgiving place to shake a boat down — tidal harbours, cold water, and long fetches between shelter — and it set the tone for what followed.



Leg 2

Panama Canal

9°05' N 79°41' W

The gateway from the Atlantic into the Pacific, and the moment a coastal cruising yacht becomes an ocean one. Sharing a lock chamber with a loaded bulk carrier is a reasonable proxy for how a boat handles close-quarters work under someone else's timetable — day or night.



Leg 3

Fiji

17°42' S 178°00' E

Most of the way across the Pacific, and anchored clear of coral in the kind of water that makes reef navigation and ground tackle non-negotiable. This is the widest ocean crossing on the route, and the boat arrived at the far side of it still looking, and sailing, like this.



Leg 4

French Polynesia

17°32' S 149°50' W

Landfall among the volcanic peaks and crowded anchorages of the Society Islands — a stretch of the route where a well-found boat is judged less by speed than by how comfortably she sits at anchor, night after night, sharing a bay with a dozen others.



Leg 5

New Zealand

35°16' S 174°06' E

South of the tropics and into a proper cruising ground, with a haul-out and refit market to match. New Zealand is also where the offshore passages start to bite harder into higher latitudes — this is the boat, and her crew, out of the trade winds and back into real weather.



Leg 6

Northern Australia

10°42' S 142°30' E

The run up through the Coral Sea and into the reef and strait country of northern Australia, a stretch known for testing ground tackle, tidal streams, and patience in roughly equal measure before the crossing into Indonesian waters.



Leg 7

Indonesia

8°21' S 116°02' E

Into the archipelago, and a different kind of anchorage altogether — shared with local fishing boats and dive traffic rather than other cruising yachts. This leg is as much about how the boat is provisioned and handled in less familiar waters as it is about the sailing itself.



Leg 8

Mauritius

20°10' S 57°30' E

Across the Indian Ocean and into a landfall best known, among cruisers, for the cyclone season it sits outside of rather than for the anchorage itself — the Red Ensign at the stern is a reminder of how far she is from home, and how far there still was to go.



Leg 9 — Cape Town & passage home

Cape Town

33°55' S 18°25' E

Table Mountain behind her, and the hull out of the water for the return leg home. Whatever the survey ultimately says, a hull, keel, and rudder that have covered this route and still lift clean out of the slings like this is a reasonable starting point for a conversation about condition.

Under way

Sunsets under sail, logged rather than staged — the ordinary evenings of a long passage.

