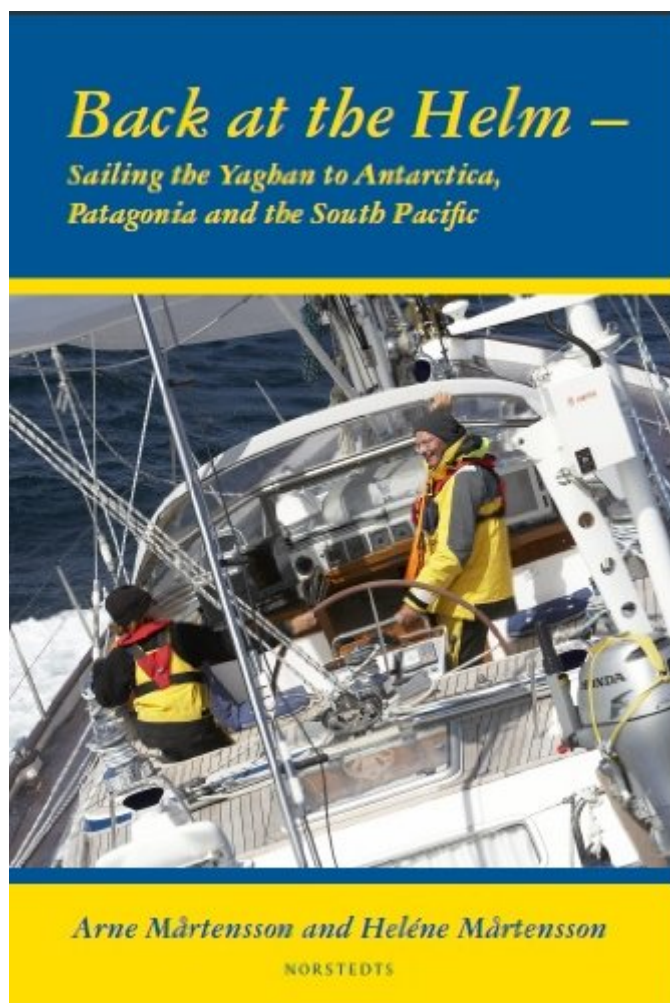


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Back At The Helm - Sailing The Yaghan To Antarctica, Patagonia And The South Pacific



Synopsis

The big adventure begins when Yaghan leaves Bullando Marina in Stockholm Sweden on June 1, 2006. Arne and Helene Martensson have both left important banking jobs in order to take on an entirely different kind of challenge - circumnavigating the world. Arne is chairman of Handelsbanken as well as on the board of some of Sweden's largest companies when he and Helene decide to pursue their dream and sail around the world. They travel west through the trade wind belt along the equator in the wake of James Cook's first expedition. They continue all the way down to the dangerous, but beautiful, Antarctic after which they sail up the coast of Chile and around the islands of Patagonia. The Yaghan is a 62-foot Hallberg-Rassy equipped with the latest in modern technology and everything else that makes a cruise around solitary waters easier. All important functions are doubled as an extra precaution in situations when help is a long way away. Arne and Helene write about how to equip a yacht to cope with an extreme circumnavigation, criteria for weather and route analyses, fantastic scenery and, above all, about their choice to lead another kind of life. 20, ten-minute films covering the entire round the world trip are available on Youtube. The channel is Etaomega07. The movies have subtitles in English, German and 50 other languages. "Back at the helm" covers the first half of the circumnavigation. In May 2011 the book about the second half "In the wake of Cook - sailing the Yaghan to New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and the Caribbean" was published as a Kindle ebook.

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Customer Reviews

Interesting book. I covers a round-the-world trip by an accomplished sailor. The book is an interesting contrast to many other books I have read about blue-water voyages: Yaghan (plus it's equipment) represents a multi-million dollar investment. No expenses were spared on this voyage: for example, while in Patagonia a technician was brought from Panama, resulting in a US\$ 12.000 tab ! It is fun to read about a voyage in a 62 foot yacht, even if for most of us sailing is undertaken in yachts that are probably worth 1/50 of Yaghan's cost. Even so, I congratulate Arne and Helen for a well-executed trip. As a citizen of Argentina, I am somewhat hurt by several disparaging comments they make of my country. Their experience with customs was unfortunate, but is a reality here. I understand their frustration with bureaucracy and corruption, but there is more in Argentina than this. Nevertheless, I feel that they "passed through" without having time for a more balanced perspective on the country.. It is probably understandable given their objective of only replenishing supplies in port. Last week I saw Yaghan moored in Punta del Este. She looked fine, a great yacht indeed.

Very nice

Arne Martensson lived two different lives. Born in 1951 he was only 39 years old when he became CEO of one of the four dominant banks in Sweden. But he started sailing when he was six years old and every summer he spent about 5 weeks straight in his sailboat and many weekends racing. This book is about the first half of a 3-year round the world cruise with his wife, after they both left their banking careers in 2006. Arne and Helene wanted to have no crew, but with a fairly large fortune they could buy a new 62-fot Hallberg-Rassy designed for long-distance sailing and add almost every high tech aid available (satellite internet connection, extra sonar for the rudder, etcetera). I have become very interested in round the world sailing and right before this book I read one about four Swedish naval officers that started their trip in 1920 and another about three Swedish students that went with a 26-fot simple Albin Vega from 1960. The contrast when reading about Yaghan is total: it has enough diesel fuel to travel 1500 nautical miles, a freezer full of food, washing machine and TV. Still sailing in hard weather is an adventure and sometimes vital tools like radar and

weather forecasting stop functioning. Reading about their trip was partly like reading about luxury hotels or expensive cars - something to dream about. But this book is very honest about all the planning, hard work and worry that are needed for any do-it-yourself world cruise. I really enjoyed reading this book. It gave me much to reflect on. But primarily I would recommend it to rich people that plan to sail long-distance. Negative, bringing my Rating down to 4 stars, are too many words and repetitions about their personal preferences in port, for example what restaurants they dined at and what jogging path they picket. Not enough information about how their boat is to sail, for example it was not until at the very end that I realized that all sail trimming is done by pushing buttons, every rope is hidden and nothing can be done to the sails on their HR62 without electricity. No information about how much they use the autopilot and what functions it has. My impression is that the book was primarily written to help other rich long-distance sailors with advice, less to explain to non-sailors what it is like to sail around the world. I read the Swedish original, so I cannot comment on the translation to English.

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