

## **Sailors stranded in Tasmania due to coronavirus happy with their predicament**

By [Selina Ross](#)

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Carina Juhhova and Christophe Mora are happy to be calling Tasmania home during the global pandemic. *(ABC News: Selina Ross)*

When Carina Juhhova and Christophe Mora first hit land in Tasmania in December, they were very ready to settle on dry ground.

The couple had sailed 8,000 nautical miles from Queensland, around the Top End and Western Australia and through the Great Australian Bight.

Ms Juhhova said they did not expect to still be in the state eight months later, thanks to coronavirus.

"It didn't frustrate us too much," she said.

"We were rather happy because somewhere inside we missed the seasons we thought, 'why not, we'll spend our winter in Tasmania'.

"We are like coronavirus refugees, in a way."

Mr Mora set off from France in 2013, sailing singlehandedly to South America.

Mr Mora said he met Ms Juhhova, from Estonia, the following year as he sailed through the Patagonian Channel.

"And after we sailed both together the Pacific Ocean for three years to reach your country, Australia, and now Tasmania," he said.

Their first Australian destination was the Great Barrier Reef last winter, but Queensland was too hot, said Mr Mora, who hails from the French Alps.

"For us, our goal in Australia was to rush quickly to Tasmania to enjoy the cold weather," Mr Mora said.

"So, we quickly toured around Australia via the north and west coasts to reach the west coast of Tasmania."



Sailors Carina Juhhova and Christophe Mora onboard their yacht L'Envol. (ABC News: Selina Ross)

## Touring Tasmania

The couple spent three months in Strahan, exploring the region's mountains.

The local supermarket's offerings stretched their meagre budget so they hitchhiked once a month to the closest major supermarket, which was a 400-kilometre round trip to Burnie.

"Sometimes it wasn't easy to get a ride because we'd be dropped in a place where cars would go past really fast," Ms Juhhova said.

"We thought that people would think our backpacks were full of camping gear but, no, they were just full of cheese and potatoes."



Carina Juhhova and Christophe Mora would hitchhike 200 kilometres from Strahan to Burnie to buy groceries.  
(Supplied: Christophe Mora)

They sailed to Port Davey in Tasmania's remote south-west wilderness, just as the state recorded its first coronavirus infection in March.

Then Tasmania shut down.

"So we went into Port Davey thinking all is good then we discovered Tasmania was in lockdown," Ms Juhhova said.

"The charter boat anchored next to us mentioned that we wouldn't find any toilet paper nor rice in the shops anymore.

"And he kindly gave us rice and toilet paper."



The couple were at Port Davey in Tasmania's remote south-west when they learned the state had gone into lockdown. *(Supplied: Pat Fazackerley)*

During the lockdown, the couple continued living on the yacht.

Ms Juhhova said living on L'Envol meant they could stop in scenic spots.

"We were privileged to be residents on our own boat," Ms Juhhova said.

"We self-isolated in the most beautiful places, the Wineglass Bay, Port Arthur, Fortescue Bay."

## **Living a simple life**

Their 25-foot French-built boat is minimalist, especially for a round the world voyage.



It has only an outboard motor and few creature comforts in the tiny interior.



Carina Juhhova and Christophe Mora live a minimalist lifestyle onboard their yacht. (*ABC News: Selina Ross*)

Mr Mora said having a simple boat helped to reduce maintenance work and equipment failures.

"We don't have a complex toilet system — just a bucket — we don't have a hot shower on board, we don't have a heater," he said.

Despite the sometimes harsh conditions, their adventure had been relatively smooth sailing until Mr Mora recently injured his thumb helping chop firewood in Murdunna.

Ms Juhhova said the accident led to costly surgery.

"Which was an expense of four months budget for us," she said.

"So that was a very big blow, we did not expect that."

Ms Juhhova said their future is unknown while the pandemic continues, but being stranded in Tasmania is not a problem.

"It's beautiful, the best place in the world, really," she said.