Coordinates

A Serious Case of Travelling

14 / Mr Cape Horn

54° 66' 06.2"S 67° 37' 06.3"W

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Mr Cape Horn

The best radio operator in the Chilean Navy,
he worked as a lighthouse keeper on a rock in
the ocean off Antarctica. The End of the World
became his second home, and few others know the climate
and currents here better: Osvaldo Torres has rounded the
notorious Cape at the southern tip of Patagonia more
than a hundred times. These days, he takes visitors and
scientists out in his boat to see glaciers and whales.
But the real adventure began much earlier.
The story of his life contains a remarkable change
of course that turned a displaced
mountain boy into a seasoned sailor.

“Even the devil would freeze in this hell”

The southernmost pub this side of Cape Horn is closed. The yachters and marineros are far too busy to indulge in a nice cold beer tonight. A storm is brewing in the south-west, with winds expected to hit 80 knots. That’s more than hurricane force.

Flags flap furiously down in the estuary where the boats are berthed. On the electronic weather maps, the wind fields slowly change colour. Hellish conditions such as these are par for the course at the Fin del Mundo, the “End of the World”.

“Typical weather”, says Osvaldo Torres. “One low-pressure system chases the next. There won’t be any planes landing tomorrow.” He’s dressed in a green down jacket with a large hood. If he needs to, he can pull his head inside, as if retreating into a warm cave.

Torres knows all there is to know about the wind, the waves and the isolation here. He is well acquainted with the rocky outcrops and the landscape in this part of Chile, south of which there are no houses or streets. He knows the albatrosses and the whales. He also knows that conditions here on Beagle Channel are not nearly as severe as they are further south at the world’s southernmost cape, where winds can exceed 100 knots – more than 100 miles per hour – icy winds from Antarctica that drive twenty-metre-tall waves before them and can sweep a sailor from board in an instant.

So no, tonight is not a good night for a Cerveza Austral or a pisco sour. In the world’s southernmost marina, men and women deploy mooring lines and secure their boats several times over to make sure everything holds fast. Dogs roam and horses canter through the fields, their manes flying in the wind. Behind them, on the main pier, heavy anchor chains from two patrol boats clank into the grey water to secure these large vessels and stop them from drifting and ripping free of their moorings during the night.

Up on the cliff, lanterns begin to quiver, and the first rain shower moves through the village. Puerto Williams is the world’s southernmost town and primarily a Chilean Navy station. It has two supermarkets, two restaurants, a handful of bed and breakfast places for trekking tourists from afar and a tiny square lined with a few crooked houses.

People who live here are familiar with the weather in the Magallanes region, Cabo de Hornos province. The Wollaston and Hermite islands, a small archipelago at the entrance to the Drake Passage, lie a mere 60 nautical miles further south – the last small fragments of land between the Pacific, the Atlantic and Antarctica. The most southerly is home to that legendary rock and site of so much doom and devastation: Cape Horn, the Mount Everest of sailing.

Those headed for the southernmost tip of South America from more temperate zones such as Germany have to travel more than 20 hours by plane to get there. South of Patagonia, all you see of the earth are rocky outcrops jutting into a cold, 5° C sea. Cormorants soar on the wind, orcas and hump-backed whales pass through the Beagle Channel. The trees of the forest lining its banks display beaver marks at their base. The mountains of Argentina rise opposite, their flanks covered in snow and ice.

The explorer Magellan arrived here more than 500 years ago. Later, whalers from the Atlantic crossed into the Pacific, followed by windjammers and clippers. Many of the sailing ships came across the open sea and had no choice but to round the Cape. Some of them battled storms for weeks on end without gaining a nautical mile, the crew hanging in the ropes, drenched and frozen to the core. Many were lost to the waves. Some 800 ships are said to have gone down over the centuries, around 10,000 sailors are thought to have drowned in these icy waters.

“Even the devil would freeze in this hell”, Charles Darwin once said, referring to the Cape region. And the captain of a ship that had rounded the Cape put it this way: “The wind is madder here, the seas higher, the ice nearer. You get no sleep. You’ll get so wet so long your skin will come off with your socks if you get the time to take them off. But with luck you’ll get past Cape Horn and, by the grace of God, you won’t kill anybody.”

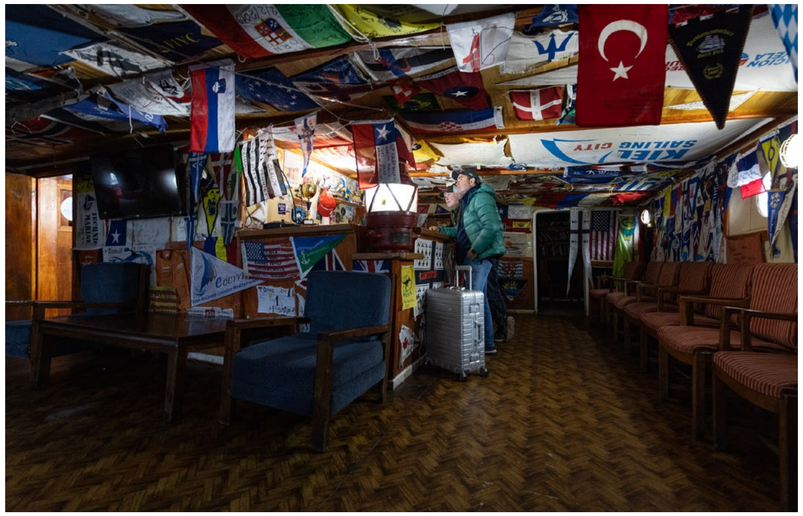
Gusts of wind tear at the trees and spray flies across the bay in Puerto Williams the next morning. A break in the weather is forecast for the following day, before the next front blows in. “Welcome to our southern summer”, Torres says. “It’s the best and only season to go sailing. In the winter, temperatures drop to minus 20 degrees and the snowfall is so thick you can’t see your hand in front of your face.”

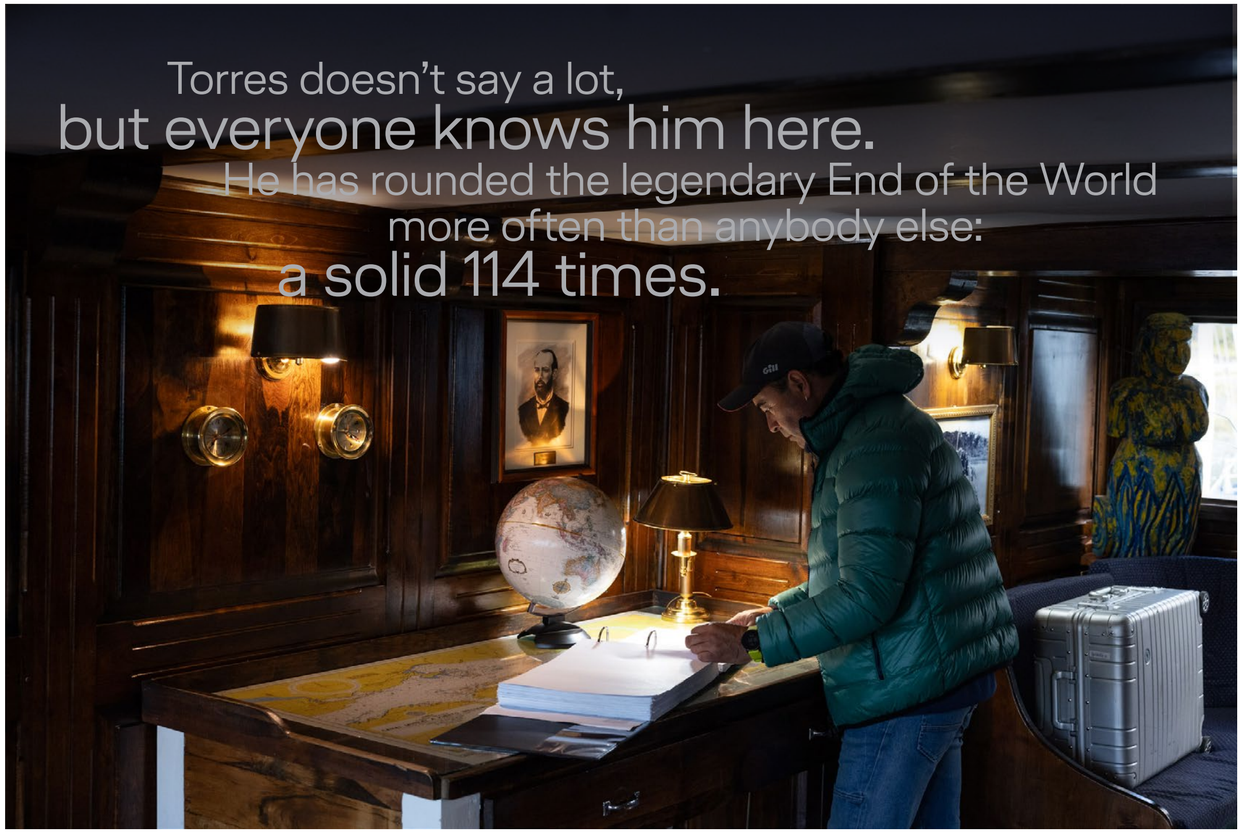
Torres stands on the deck of an old steamship lying in a sidearm of the Beagle Channel. The rusty tub was built in a Baltic shipyard near Stettin, then part of Germany, in 1925, and was used as a freighter in German waters. In 1928, it was sold to the Chilean Navy, after which the 850-tonne vessel transported miners and cargo through the rough seas off Patagonia. For years now, the grey steamer-cum-pontoon has lain grounded off Puerto Williams, where it is used by adventure-seeking crews as the last stop before Cape Horn.

The Micalvi is the final outpost before the Southern Ocean. Midships, a bar hidden behind flags and pennants serves as a meeting place for ships’ officers and sailors from around the world, those passing through and those who call the End of the World their home.

Upstairs, the cockpit still contains old chart tables and an engine telegraph from years ago. Torres climbs the creaky steps, sits down in one of the chairs and begins to flick through a pile of maps, his eyes roving across glaciers and fjords, across the wild expanses of water between Punta Yamana and Bahía Desolada.

He has sailed to virtually every peninsula in the Cabo de Hornos region, set anchor behind every ridge in order to escape the wind. Torres doesn’t say a lot, but everyone knows him here. He has rounded the legendary End of the World more often than anybody else: a solid 114 times.





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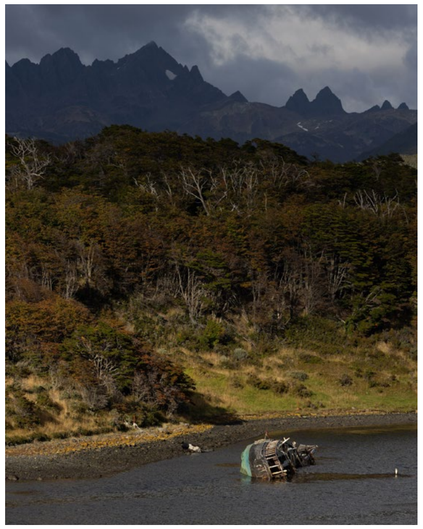

You have to clamber over five other vessels to reach Osvaldo Torres’s sailing boat, the Goya III – a 16-metre yacht made of high-strength fibreglass. Torres climbs aboard, leaping over the lockers to reach the cockpit. Two large helms are installed at the stern; ropes, sheets and halyards hang above the heavy winches. Below deck, radio equipment gleams in the navigation corner of the salon, which also boasts instruments for gauging wind, water depth and speed over ground.

Torres can take up to six passengers on board – people from around the world who long to sail in the Cape Horn region and see the awe-inspiring scenery for themselves. His guests include sailors and non-sailors, researchers and film teams, adventure seekers for whom the End of the World exerts a magical, otherworldly attraction.

Five days from now a well-known Spanish oceanographer will be coming on board. He want to take a close look at the Chilean glaciers in the western part of the Beagle Channel. Sailing trips like these are Torres’s bread and butter; they pay the bills, but they are also his passion.

His love affair with Cape Horn goes back to his early youth. For him, the End of the World marked a fresh start. It offered him a chance to redefine his own personal horizons. Again, the nickname fits. Torres never regarded this wild corner of the globe as a record-breaking destination or superlative. To him, it was always a refuge of freedom.

The Dutch discovered Cape Horn in 1616. Four hundred years later, there was an anniversary celebration to mark the event. Numerous yachts sailed to the Cape accompanied by the Chilean Navy. The Chilean president and Dutch minister of defence flew in to participate in the festivities. Osvaldo Torres, who attended as well, received a special distinction honouring his deep connection to the End of the World.

The broad, empty landscape at the southern tip of Chile is the land of his dreams. But it also mirrors his courageous and adventurous life’s journey.

Osvaldo Escobar Torres has a nickname – they call him Mr Cape Horn. Just back from his last sailing trip, he’ll be on land for the next five days and then head out to sea again. He has to replenish his supplies, food, water, diesel, and get his vessel shipshape. He also has to monitor the weather, stay abreast of storm development and currents, but most importantly of all: keep an eye on the capricious wind. Its direction, its shifts and its fierce fits of rage. A rule of thumb: conditions become dangerous for people and equipment at 50 knots or more; at wind force 11, even birds take refuge from the violent gusts.

54° 56' 06.2" S 67° 37' 06.3" W
Kap Hoorn, Chile / Cape Horn, Chile

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“You have to make the right move at the right time, otherwise you lose.”

to unanticipated levels. Torres encountered the worst storm of his life at Cape Horn with 136-knot winds, which far exceed double hurricane force.

The famous monument high on the rocky headland – a stylised albatross made of steel – was shredded by the wind.

Torres points to a recent weather map, starts to count and comes up with an incredible sum: 18 low-pressure areas are visible on the screen, closely spaced wind systems hurtling mercilessly from east to west across the hemisphere’s southernmost tip. Torres has been consulting special weather forecasts for a long time and always stays in contact with the Chilean Navy on his voyages. Sailing in the Cape region is now something of a maritime game of chess. As Torres says: “You have to make the right move at the right time, otherwise you lose.”

Two heavy duffel bags on the deck of his yacht offer an explanation. They contain 500-metre mooring lines, which Torres deploys when he has to secure the boat en route. When the wind gets too fierce, he sails into a protected bay and lets down all three anchors. Then he goes ashore in his dinghy and attaches the lines to the trees like a spider’s web, making the yacht fast with everything he has so that it won’t tear loose in the storm.

In the galley of his yacht, Torres smashes a big chunk of ice. It was taken from a nearby glacier and is tens of thousands of years old. “Pure, unadulterated water”, he says, “something to enjoy.” Then he pours out three glasses of whisky.

Back in the navigation corner he flips open his laptop and retrieves weather data.
“The wind rules everything down here”, he says. “It all revolves around the wind.” Over the years, the weather conditions at the End of the World have changed, and the wind hasn’t lessened any. Climate change has made it stronger, more temperamental and more erratic. “To sail here is to navigate low pressure areas in a zigzag course”, Torres says.

You have to seek out the gaps, take advantage of the lulls like a mountaineer on Mount Everest, where you often have to wait for weeks for a window in which to scale the summit.

For centuries, the weather at the Cape consisted typically of one large high-pressure area over the Pacific and two or three low-pressure areas over the Antarctic Ocean. This has changed, perhaps permanently. After moving far into the south, the high-pressure area now tends to stay in place and expand. The lows at the Cape and over the Drake Passage accumulate and intensify, shrinking the weather windows and making the wind even more vicious. The isobars on the weather maps move closer together and the air pressure drops

Cape Horn still rises to its historic reputation. Sailing tech may be more modern and equipment more reliable, but the wind just laughs in the face of such progress. It knows that if it wants to, it will always be stronger.

The heat is on in the salon, it’s cosy and warm. Torres prepares spaghetti carbonara – he’s the ship’s cook as well as its captain. A man for everything: skipper, wind expert, animal watcher. Someone who lives with nature and bears responsibility. Someone now standing at the stove in Crocs and a t-shirt, recalling some of his voyages. A man of the sea, a man of the harsh south. He talks about orcas and minke whales, about hair-raising rescue operations during his time in the navy. Torres describes the clear, icy mornings when the sun illuminates the land like a painting shining in glittering colours. He loves the weather here in the south. It changes quickly and without warning. Rain, showers, sleet, sun, clouds. Or as the locals say: “If you don’t like the weather just wait five minutes.”

Torres has spent nearly 30 years at the Cape, has experienced nature at its most fickle and most treacherous. He could dish up any number of fascinating anecdotes, but there’s one story that stands out, one he’ll never forget.

It was the middle of December in 2001. He was the second skipper on the Santa Maria, a yacht with five passengers on board bound for Antarctica from Cape Horn. Ahead of them lay a voyage of 600 nautical miles through the notorious Drake Passage. They expected to sail for five days before reaching Port Lockroy, a natural harbour off the coast of the Antarctic Peninsula, and part of the Palmer archipelago west of Grahamland. There was no satellite communication back then, just regular radio equipment.

A weather window opened, they weighed anchor and set off south. Very quickly, the weather conditions worsened. When the wind began blowing at more than 50 knots, they were forced to drop sails and continue through the icy, metre-tall waves by engine power. Then, during the night, a cross sea hit the cockpit, hurling Osvaldo Torres from one side of it to the other. The boat bucked through the rough seas, saltwater sloshing around below. This continued for a week, until they finally reached the enchanted world of the Antarctic.

After dropping anchor in Port Lockroy, they set off in the dinghy through the icy bays and empty fjords, admired the red-billed gentoo penguins and soaked up the magic of the white continent, then went ashore. They only heard the devastating news when they returned to Port Lockroy.

On its way back from Antarctica, the well-known cruise ship MS Bremen was in the middle of the Southern Ocean when the barometer plummeted, and black clouds began to tear across the water towards them. Before the crew knew what had happened, they were right in the middle of a vicious, force 14 storm. Then the unbelievable happened: the 111-metre-long Bremen was struck by a 35-metre-high wave.

When air is trapped inside such an enormous wave, it compresses to 15 bar – essentially turning the mountain of water into a bomb. The wave hit the ship, smashing the safety glass on the bridge, throwing officers off their feet and destroying the ship’s electrics. Listing to one side, the ship staggered through the sea, pounded by breakers again and again. One of the crew on board later said: “I felt the breath of God.”

The cruise ship very nearly sank, and the disastrous incident made headlines around the world. What nobody knew was that Osvaldo Torres had been in radio contact with the Bremen – in the middle of the storm and a mere eight hours before the mighty ship was nearly swallowed by the monster wave.

No one on board the Santa Maria would have been aware how narrowly they had escaped calamity. A 30-metre-plus wave would have buried the small sailboat beneath it.

Torres tells the story with losing his composure. He has replayed the events often enough in his mind and drawn his own conclusions.

After the meal, Mr Cape Horn washes and dries the dishes in the galley. He could spin yarns all evening long – about his years in the Mediterranean, his voyages to Svalbard in the far north. He’s covered no end of nautical miles. He could describe sailing around the world with his wife and two children, the South Seas and the Red Sea, and the sizzling hot ports between Yemen and Djibouti. He could speak about his marriage to a German teacher and how he now spends six months of the year in tranquil Bielefeld in North-Rhine Westphalia – more than ten thousand kilometres away from home.

Instead, Torres goes to bed. He wants to be up early to head for a quiet bay and prepare his boat for its next voyage. Even tiny Puerto Williams is sometimes too crowded for his liking, too much action, too many people. So, for the time being, he takes the real story of his life into his berth with him. Its telling requires a little time, a little more fresh air.

His story is also a tale about navigating great distances, but this time, the journey is his momentous life.

The next morning, Torres enters the Beagle Channel and sails east. The sky is blue, the clouds scud across it and the mountains of Tierra del Fuego rise to the north. The skipper has swathed himself in oilcloth and is wearing heavy sea boots. Long strands of green kelp trail past and a whale blows off the portside. There are seals in the water and penguins congregate on the rocks. After 15 nautical miles of sailing with the eastward flowing current driven by a 4-knot wind, the Goya III reaches Caleta Margarita on the north coast of Isla Navarino.

Torres lets out the anchor and strides across the deck. “This is a good place”, he says. “Even if the wind surprises us, the cover will protect us.” He turns his gaze to the clouds and studies the hachuring on the water out to sea. Torres doesn’t entirely trust forecasts. Gauging the all-powerful weather at the End of the World requires more. It requires a good eye. Instinct and experience. And above all, respect.

Torres opens the door to the engine room, checks the seacocks, the cooling water filter, the bilge. He inspects the life vests on board and checks his lists of provisions and equipment. His next voyage will be the last of the season. It’s late March already and snow can start falling anytime.

In the evening, Torres climbs back on deck and sits down in the cockpit beneath a darkening sky. A cold, piercing wind blows across the open spaces from the mountains, mere outlines in the fading light. Further to the east lies Puerto Toro, a settlement of 50 people. It’s the very last outpost before the Antarctic. Lennox, Picton and Nueva islands come next, in the mouth of the Beagle Channel. With them, the South American continent comes to an end. There’s nothing beyond that but the cold ocean.

Torres loves the vast, bleak solitude. Its language and its immensity, as far as anyone is able to grasp it. The wild landscape and rough sea were his salvation once, even if he didn’t know it at the time. The compelling stories surrounding Cape Horn, the wind-torn beauty of this landscape at the bottom of the world didn’t just capture his imagination – they were a lifeline during a boyhood characterised by fateful events.

Those were very different times, and Chile was a different country. Life wasn’t easy, and often, it was dangerous. Sometimes more dangerous than any storm.

When Torres was born, a man called Augusto José Ramón Pinochet Ugarte, a general who became a dictator, held the country firmly in his grip. Torture, murder and enforced disappearances were rampant during the ensuing years, and many thousands of people joined the ranks of the Desaparecidos.

But what does a young boy aged five or six know about any of that – a boy who spends most of his time thinking about playing with his friends? Torres hasn’t left the deck. “I was small and thin back then”, he recalls. “They all called me Spaghetti.”

One day his parents gathered up the children, including young Osvaldo, and fled the capital in a rickety little car. Without any time to pack their things, they left almost everything behind. They had to move fast, and without being seen.

Days later, Osvaldo found himself in the middle of the Andes, in a place he had never even heard of before. He looked around him. Nothing but mountains, cows and goats. The family took refuge near Huépil, a tiny village at the foot of the snow-covered Antuco volcano. It’s a barren, impoverished region, home to farmers and shepherds. Many of the children had never even seen a car.

The family had little choice but to accept their fate – and keep contact with the outside world to a minimum. Young Osvaldo played with his new friends, roaming between water troughs and mountain pastures for the next few years. But there was one thing he knew from a very early age: he didn’t want to become a farmer, didn’t want to subject himself to the archaic structures common in the Chilean Andes.

His life had been turned upside down, but he continued to dream. Of what, he wasn’t yet quite sure.

Soon, he formed a connection to his teacher, a man who had never left Chile himself but who provided young Osvaldo with a gateway to the world in the form of books and maps. Geography and the natural sciences fascinated the boy and sparked his imagination. He read, travelled in his mind – and learned about Cape Horn and the stories and myths surrounding the End of the World.

That’s where he wanted to go, he was certain. He devoured every book and every report that he could find on the region, read about the wildlife and the rugged wilderness at the southern tip of Chile. Cabo de Hornos. Three magic words that held the teenager in thrall.

When he was 14, Torres saw a TV advert for the Chilean Navy. In it, a training ship, the Esmerelda, lay at anchor against the skyline of New York. Ten officers stood on deck, all dressed in white, with an empty spot between them. The tagline went: This spot is yours. Join the Chilean Navy!

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The dictatorship was over, but the military and the navy still held a lot of sway in Chile. Young Torres didn’t give a hoot about politics, nor did he listen to his family’s misgivings. All he could think about was how to escape a life he didn’t want, that of a mountain farmer or a miner underground. He dreamt of the ocean, he wanted to go to sea – and eventually to Cape Horn.

Torres built his first sailing boat himself, made of cardboard. He even got it to float on the blue mountain lake at the foot of the volcano, but when he and his friends climbed into the narrow tub, it sank.

Against the wishes of nearly everyone he know, he signed up for the navy. The only person who helped him was a friend of his mother’s, a maths teacher from the coastal town of Conceptión, whose family he had visited during school holidays.

Torres recalls: “She understood my wish to get away, could see how much I needed to break out. She secretly helped me fill in the forms and accompanied me to the navy station to submit the application.”

Still seated on deck, Torres pauses, takes a break. He’s wearing a cap, but no gloves. All of this happened more than 35 years ago, but looking back, he can still see clearly how that crazy film, the story of his life, unfolded once he took the director’s chair. His path from slender mountain boy to seasoned seaman.

“Two weeks later there was a letter on the table”, Torres remembers. The acceptance letter from the navy. “It was my ticket to a new life, my ticket to the world.”

Torres left the village in a lurching old bus. The training was tough, but he endured it all, the ice baths in the mornings and the daily drills on the parade ground. Torres was still as skinny as a strand of spaghetti. He slept in the barracks with 180 other men. In the end, he achieved what nobody believed him capable of: he completed his training and became the youngest sailor in the Armada de Chile.

After two years of hardship, “Number 10” graduated from the academy. Soon, he found himself on a frigate in the Pacific, cruising between the Easter Islands, Hawaii and Tahiti. For the first time in his life, he saw other parts of the world, stood beneath palm trees and enjoyed going ashore. On the frigate, he displayed his rare talent as a master of Morse code, and became the navy’s best radio operator, evening winning a competition. The prize was a choice of one of three things: he could sail around the world on the training ship Esmeralda; he could take up a position abroad; or he could ask to be posted to a navy base within the country.

The world was wide open.

Again, everyone thought he was crazy when he chose the destination of his dreams. He requested what no one else would touch – a posting to Cape Horn.

He spent he first two years at the End of the World as a radio operator for the navy, lived alone in a lighthouse for months on end, surrounded only by the wind, the waves and the storm-swept cliffs. He harvested rain for drinking water. His food arrived by helicopter every few weeks and a generator provided electricity. Torres was happy in his solitary surroundings. This was the wilderness he had dreamt of in his youth.

He gained a deep understanding of the Magallanes region: Beagle Channel, remote shores like those of the Diégo Ramírez Islands and the wind-lashed ridge of the Isla Wollaston. When the two years were up, Torres decided to spend the rest of his life in this magical place. First he worked for the navy, then as a lighthouse keeper, later, he hired himself out as a skipper. In the end, Torres became captain of his own yacht, which he worked hard over many years to purchase. He married Jutta, a teacher from Germany whom he met when she was working in Punta Arenas for a year, and the couple had two children.

A rare, impressive biography, and definitely not for the weak of heart.

Torres closes the hatch to the companionway and descends into the salon of the Goya III. Rain is falling outside and the Chilean flag on the stern flaps wildly in the wind. “It’s just a squall”, says Torres, “nothing serious.” He has been navigating the waters around the world’s most famous cape for over 25 years, leading expeditions and hiring crews from all over the globe. Torres has travelled a long road: the exodus, the mountains, the breakout, the ocean.

He could tell stories all night long. Of yachts drifting in hurricanes and being lost. Of turquoise icebergs, blue bays and mooring places where the morning brings hundreds of penguins, huddling together to warm themselves in the wind.

Mr Cape Horn retires into his berth, but not before casting his eye over the most recent weather report: 40 knots from the west, due to pick up during the day and deflect to the right. “We’d better get an early start if we want to leave tomorrow,” he says.

Dithering is a bad idea out here, and indecision is never an option. One thing Osvaldo Torres has learned from the wind, but not only from the wind: you never know what life has in store.

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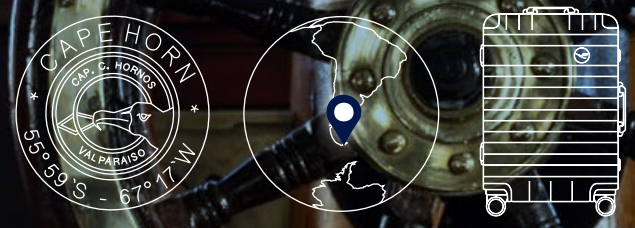

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Coordinates
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Coordinates represent fascinating destinations. They promise encounters with people, exciting stories, magical moments. Under the title “Coordinates. A Serious Case of Travelling” we invite you to discover the world with us. The journey in this magazine takes you to Japan. More specifically, to the small town of Beppu on the island of Kyūshū. An underground system of thousands of hot springs and geothermal hotspots transforms the city into Japan’s wellness capital. Water bubbles everywhere, hot steam rises from the earth. The Japanese use this for countless spas, thermal baths or soothing treatments in hot sand. Welcome to Beppu: Steam City!

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Marc Bielefeld / Writer
The author has been travelling the world for 30 years, writing books and reports for renowned magazines and newspapers. This was his first visit to Beppu, Japan. Bielefeld recounts: “The city is indeed steaming from every corner! The sidewalks are as warm as underfloor heating, and the Japanese even cook with the humid heat from the earth’s interior.” No doubt: This is a feast for wellness enthusiasts – and for geologists!

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Jens Görlich / Photographer
The photographer from Frankfurt has already survived many hot and cold adventures all over the world. This time, however, his equipment reached its limits. Misted by the hot steam, the lenses of the cameras fogged up – even from the inside. Görlich: “Sometimes I had to wait half an hour until the lenses cleared again.” But the effort was worth it. You hold the most beautiful photos from our trip to Beppu in your hands.

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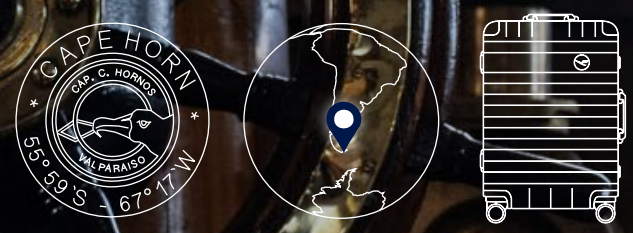
seasoned sailor.

Coordinates

A Serious Case of Travelling

14 / Mr Cape Horn



54° 66' 06.2"S 67° 37' 06.3"W

Coordinates
A Serious Case of Travelling
Coordinates represent fascinating destinations. They promise encounters with people, exciting stories, magical moments. Under the title “Coordinates. A Serious Case of Travelling” we invite you to discover the world with us. The journey in this magazine takes you to Japan. More specifically, to the small town of Beppu on the island of Kyūshū. An underground system of thousands of hot springs and geothermal hotspots transforms the city into Japan’s wellness capital. Water bubbles everywhere, hot steam rises from the earth. The Japanese use this for countless spas, thermal baths or soothing treatments in hot sand. Welcome to Beppu: Steam City!

Find these and more stories also here:

worldshop.eu/coordinates

Marc Bielefeld / Writer
The author has been travelling the world for 30 years, writing books and reports for renowned magazines and newspapers. This was his first visit to Beppu, Japan. Bielefeld recounts: “The city is indeed steaming from every corner! The sidewalks are as warm as underfloor heating, and the Japanese even cook with the humid heat from the earth’s interior.” No doubt: This is a feast for wellness enthusiasts – and for geologists!

Lufthansa Aluminium Collection / Travel companion
As a faithful travel buddy, the suitcase always serves us well on our trips and adventures all over the world. With its quiet wheels, sealed profile frame, and robust aluminium, it didn't even break a sweat in the steamy city of Beppu. It safely transported camera equipment, batteries, drones, and bathing accessories to our locations – without a trace of moisture damaging the items. This is what we demand of a solid piece of luggage. A Lufthansa original: designed by our crews and equipment experts. Born to travel just about everywhere!

Are you also looking for a travel companion? You can find our suitcases and many other products from the Lufthansa Aluminium Collection here: worldshop.eu/alu
Or visit us in one of our Airport Stores. Exact locations and opening hours can be found at worldshop.eu/stores

Jens Görlich / Photographer
The photographer from Frankfurt has already survived many hot and cold adventures all over the world. This time, however, his equipment reached its limits. Misted by the hot steam, the lenses of the cameras fogged up – even from the inside. Görlich: “Sometimes I had to wait half an hour until the lenses cleared again.” But the effort was worth it. You hold the most beautiful photos from our trip to Beppu in your hands.

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The silvery surfaces of this newspaper are like the trolleys in the Lufthansa Aluminium Collection: they acquire a patina with repeated use.

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