

Genevieve Challenge

Guest Feedback

The following quotes are from some of those who sailed aboard 'Genevieve Challenge': -

2002

"Thank you very much for the great time on board, for the patience while explaining knots, duties and instructions again and again and for the fun and action with you on board! I really enjoyed the time on board Genevieve. It's a beautiful sailing boat! It was a relaxing and refreshing time for my body, mind and soul. I hope, that I can come again within the next years!"

"I just wanted to say thank you for the best week of my summer – if not the whole year. The food was great, the sailing was really great. I am so excited about everything I have learned this week, and for being able to get to know all of you. Thanks also for helping me to try new and "scary" things and for your patience when I just "don't want to do it"

"I have never experienced like this, it was the first trip with a boat like this and it was wonderful!!! I did a lot of thing that maybe I shall not do again. It was one of the better holidays that I spend in the last 5 years. I like this boat and this crew, Chris is very fun! Vasilis so good and patient with us! Lisa make the better that she can. Thanks of my heart (but I think that we share very very much) Oh! Captain have not the fault. I really enjoying it!!!!"

"It is the time for our trip to finish. When it started I thought that it would be great since I would have an experience I never had. Now that the trip is over, I couldn't imagine that the things I have learnt were so spiritual. It was a great trip with a lot of lovely find that will stay in my mind as the best experience ever had. I will never forget the cruise and all the days individually."

"The 5 days we spent on "Genevieve Challenge" were really a great experience. It was great fun and we learned a lot. It was a special trip and we are not going to forget it. It was so funny with Leighsa and her chicken soup, with Marita and her really good translation, with Chris and his clear orders (tigh off – or tie off?!? – everybody let the halyets go) and Vasili with his waveboard and his brave heart! We all thank you so much, don't forget us, we won't!"

"Thanks for the awesome, interesting, exciting, relaxing, fun/funny, great, challenging, extraordinary, dynamic, blessed, special, incredible, bonding, revitalising, captivating, strengthening, refreshing, adventurous, teasing, joyful, wet, sunny, jovial, motivating, jubilant, spiritual, life-changing, "duty-ful", beautiful, enjoyable, restful, Greek, splendid, fantastic, phenomenal, enriching, "chessy", "bruiseful", recreational, "vasiliated", unbelievable TIME !!!"

“When I first saw the boat, I thought where is the bed? As it is my first time on a boat and not a ferry or cruiser. Wonderful time, great sailing experience. You can trust that I’ll be back soon. Very good crew and great skipper. Thanks so much and all the best in your endeavours. God Bless you really good.”

“One of my ‘life’ questions to myself and others is: “When was the last time you did something for the first time?” Chris, Vasilios Martina taught me many things and I enjoyed a number of ‘firsts’. Thank you for your care, fellowship, safety. You are appreciated and I am very thankful. Love will win the world. Indeed it already has!”

“Once again a fantastic trip with new challenges to overcome. Lessons of leadership and life have been clearly seen and are valuable for the Journey of Life. As we worked as a team we achieved some great things. When we all pull together it’s amazing how each one of us gained a sense of Value and Worth as we fulfilled our tasks. Thanks.”

“A truly wonderful experience, from setting off at Skiathos on Sunday until our return it has been great. Highlights of the journey have been in seeing the natural beauty of the Greek islands. Skopelos is a great island much recommended. Friendships and Fellowship has been a great experience, I feel I have learnt a lot about people and bonded. Our ship duties have been great and brought out the best in team work. God is great, his presence is reflected in nature, in the things we see, in the people we meet, in the things we do. The Genevieve has helped me (shown me/reminded me) this life is an adventure to be enjoyed with all concerned.”

“The experience I have had on this wonderful boat will remain with me forever. It was a time where I learned about me, others and more of Gods characters. This has truly blessed me. The crew and cook have worked hard and I thank God for them. I hope in some way this experience has also touched them in a blessed way. Thank you all.”

“We really appreciated to stay here for almost 2 weeks. It was nice to have all these adventures: donuting, exploring caves, climbing up the mast and of course the storm! God worked in all of us, and we will pray that this ministry here will serve to other people as much as it did to us. Thank you Josh, Marita, Vasili (Bill) and Chris for everything.”

2003

An extract from an encouraging letter from a guest who came on board and organised a reunion for the guests of that trip: -

A Reunion

“We went swimming together and we spent the whole evening talking about the Genevieve and the trip. On the weekend it turned out that the trip changed something

in all of us. Now after some months you can see what it really did to our lives and one person said that it gave her the courage to think of starting something new in her life. What we enjoyed most was the open atmosphere between all the people on the boat. It was possible to tell the others your greatest fears and things from the depth of the heart without being afraid of getting hurt. It gave me an idea how Christians should deal with each other.

I hope that you find new strength to overcome all the obstacles you found on your way during the last weeks. I was really shocked when I read your prayer support letter, because I did not suspect that you had that big problems.

Today I mailed Theo the exact times when I will arrive in Greece and I am really looking forward to this week.

At the end of December when the plan for February was made, it seemed like it would not work out. I prayed to the Lord, because I thought that helping on the Genevieve may be just something that I wanted but nothing He wanted for me.

I read a book at that time about doing Gods will and there was a verse mentioned again and again talking about God calling us to do something for him.

The day I heard that it would be almost impossible to get a week off in February, I opened the "Losungen", a small book, which has bible verses for every day of the year... and found that verse from the book I read. Just a short time later I got the phone call that I would get 10 days off in February (which is more than I asked for). I am thankful that God confirmed me to be on the right way.

Ok, I have to finish that email because I am working night this week and I have to leave home in half an hour. Last night I was very tired between 2 and 4 o'clock even though I drank far too much coffee... I am on my own with two units so it would be great if you could pray for me. I experienced many times that something serious would have happened if God wouldn't have led me to the room in that moment. In the night I always know how dependent I am on God (guess I should be through the day as well, but I am feeling much weaker in the night.)

Hope to hear from you soon."

2004

"Thank you for your patience and kindness to all of us. Your service to God is pleasing to Him and we can see God's love and care of people through you and what you do.

Don't let anyone jump off high cliffs, just tell them to call me!

I will practice that rabbit in the hole, around the tree thing at home! Or is it up the tree?

Remember that Jesus loves you eternally."

"Thank you for passing on to us your knowledge and enthusiasm for sailing. Your amazing patience is such a picture of our father in heaven who is constantly patient with us when we don't always listen or follow instructions.

May you be blessed by the Lord as you continue to serve Him, and may you have favour with the Greek authorities when you enter each port!"

"It's time to say farewell to Genevieve and the wonderful crew that has made this time so amazing! With my last breath of salty air I want to say my most sincere thanks to Chris for "skippering" the boat. Chris, you have an amazing heart for people

and an inspiring heart for God. May the Lord bless you all.

“I came, I saw, I crashed a moped”.”

“Thank you for making this one of the best vacations in my life thus far! It truly was an adventure I will never forget. May the Lord richly bless you as you continue serving God in this way!”

“I can’t believe the time is already here to leave the Genevieve! It’s been a crazy and exciting adventure. Thank all you crew for all your patience and all your hard work – wow! I feel so blessed to have known you all. Pat, Tim, Marita and Chris. I also loved hearing all your testimonies! Chris you are a superb skipper for sure! Thanks again! May the good Lord bless you greatly!”

“We have had such an amazing time here on the boat. I could never thank the crew enough for all the hard work and time put into our time on the boat. I learned so much and God spoke to me in so many ways! I learned so much through the service and kindness of each of the crew. Thank you for all the memories and for making our time on the Genevieve the best!”

“Just a small card and gift as a thanks for knowing you. Thanks so much for your humour, your English lessons [with or without an ‘s’], your trust and above all your cares [and concern!!]

I really needed the concern, joke, No of course not, I am a stupid independent Dutch woman [Don’t smile now!] No serious, I had a wonderful time at the boat and learned so much from you. I admire you, how you became the person after all the things happened in your life,

Maybe you wonder sometimes what special things you are doing why people say that the time at the boat changed them. You don’t do that ‘special’, you are just yourself. You listen to people and encourage them to do things they never dreamed of that they would do them. The only thing you tell people is just do it. That’s at least what I learned, just do things, especially when you like it!

As a thanks [and also to remember to] a small gift. I think you can use it and hope you enjoy it! It is easy to make [with water!] Just read the directions for use, then you can practice also your Dutch. Have a blessed time and also joyful time at the boat.”

“With this letter I want to thank you for patience with us. I was unhappy because I felt alone but you were there. As I need somebody to talk or something else & you helped to forget the problems for some time. THANK YOU SO MUCH. It was a great time on the boat and I enjoyed it. I learned a lot about the sailboat & I had to speak English and that’s also good for me.

I will never forget this time with YOU and the crew. It was a time full of adventures, and I like adventures.

I’ll never forget you, thank you for this time.

God Bless you! I’m missing you!

Yours.....

Please don’t look at the mistake’s in the letter.

God Bless You!”

“Hi Chris,

I'll pray for you that you'll find a job like that again. You and the sea.... belong together. Thanks for the picture!

I think you are right about Theo. Do you remember the year when I came to help in February? In that time I thought about coming to Greece for a longer period of time, like Marita. But I found out that I would never be able to work with them. They are too good for me, too perfect. I am not that perfect, so I found it impossible for me to work there.

But I think God has a plan with the Greeks, the project, the staff. Sometimes we (human beings in common and Christian in special) have to learn things the hard way. And I think that is what will happen.

I hope you took your funnies with you back to England. Here is something new for your collection.

Hope to hear from you again,
Love “

“Hello Chris,
thanks for your E-Mail.

How are you? Are you a little bit lonely without Andy and Julia - and of course - us? It was a really wonderful trip. I don't know when I had the last time with such a lot of free time - time to pray, to think about, to read the bible, to enjoy the nature and so on. It was really wonderful!!! Thanks a lot for your work on the boat and for your impulses from time to time - they were a real enrichment for me. As a result of the trip, my prayer life with Jesus has changed. I try more and more to "share my complete thinking with him / make always a prayer". It's not so easy during the day, when I'm concentrated on my work, but I want to learn at this point and the sailing trip was a real start for this. Do you understand what I mean?!

When I went back to my work, I felt that I'm well prepared for the "normal life" - so it was a good start at home / at my work.

I'm really interested in your prayer list about the boat and you and so on, so please send me the mails from time to time.

All the best, god bless you and protect you, “

2005

“Chris I wished I could talk to you, because you are a person that accepts people no matter what education they have. I really miss talking to you....

I pray for you and that you find a work like on Genevieve! It was the perfect place for you.”

“Dear Chris

How nice to hear from you..we were just speaking about you as Laura and I just came back from a 3 weeks Biblical trip to Turkey and Greece and also a 4 day cruise in Patmos, Crete, Rhodes, Santorini, etc...it was a great trip but we were reflecting how the trip with you was once in a lifetime trip, fantastic in every way and in great part because of your skills and patience and gift with people...without you the trip would not have been a success and when the 8 young people with us talked about it, you are the one they talk about as the one who made the trip extraordinary....we were all baffled as to why Genevieve did not keep you...it is their big loss for sure, of that we

are all certain....

Here all is well, I have "retired" from work that is at the top of my success I have felt that I needed to refocus my life towards God's work....so I am closing my offices from coast to coasts, finding work for my long time employees, and that's it. My clients want me to stay for a few years as consultant which I will do but now, at 50, the rest of my life is dedicated to God's work in a more full time way....I had told you I would do this so its done....

Now it will take some time adjusting to the new life.....

Jeremy is graduating from university next week and then may do a year internship for a Christian organization before going to graduate school....he is doing very well as are Emilie our youngest and Harmonie our oldest.

Please send your adress and we will send you the DVD Jeremy made of our trip with you.

Also, if you come to the west coast, please come and see us. We are in Seattle and constantly have guests who come and stay for a few days...you are welcome here.

We were just talking about chartering a boat to do in the Caribbeans what we did with you in Greece...have you ever done that?

As for you and a sailing ministry, I am not aware of such a thing...does it exist?

We want to stay in touch so please do send your adress....we plan in being in London this year again so we can connect...

Everyone here says hi to you and sends their love. You were simply the best. We will pray that God will give you the desires of your heart in finding a ministry.

Love from all

Sincerely

Ps: my knee still hurts from jumping off the 70 foot cliff..we were idiots to do it, we could have killed ourselves..but now we are heroes because we did it..and every year the cliff will get higher...in ten years it will be a 150 foot cliff !!!! “

2006

“I think the reason for not having enough feedback is that giving feedback means speaking about feelings and emotions. It means opening a very vulnerable place in your heart to another person. If you had not understood my email the way I meant it, perhaps you would have hurt my feelings. It is easier to say nothing because the risk of being hurt is smaller.

The reason for relinquishing inner thoughts to somebody else is that confidence in each other is the only way to cultivate a friendship, to make it last and valuable. So many people, even Christians, are very lonely in difficult situations of their life.

Writing an email like the one I wrote to you yesterday is a little bit like climbing up the mast. It is hard to overcome your own fears, but when you reach the top you wouldn't want to miss out on the experience!

I pray very often for you to find a Christian boat to work on. I think you and boats and young people that belongs together. I wrote you some months ago that you are a very important friend for me. I meant that. Many times since I met you on Genevieve I asked God: "Why don't I have a father like Chris?" If I could choose one, it would be you and I am thankful to have a good friend in you. I just wished you were not so far away. “

“Hey Chris

Thanks heaps for your very kind words of encouragement, they really make me feel very appreciated and respected and loved. I try to live my life the way I think is right anyway but such feedback is very encouraging and motivating. It was a pleasure to work with you. I enjoyed to do all that I did because of the positive atmosphere you had created and your servant hearted leadership. I was really touched a couple of times the way you washed my feet, when I was ill you ran around and went and got for me the things that I needed, the way you sorted out what I needed for my back problem. I was really impressed. You have got so much sorted out and working well and under control on the boat, it is just a pity about the struggle with Theo. Maybe just try to do everything with a calmness as if you do them for the Lord. With your interactions with ---- just try and "act as if" the relationship with him was how you would ideally want it. You may find that he begins to respond the way you would like if you first begin. Remember it takes the strong person to serve the other and to make a beginning.

Thanks again, hope to see you in England some time. By the way it was only 8 degrees when I got here yesterday, was like the middle of winter! A bit better today though. It was a long day yesterday, got to bed about midnight, 2am your time. Bit of a slow day today if you can believe it. Nice greetings to everyone else.

Be blessed

The one and only -----.

(Be aware of imitations and pop up replicas!)

P.S. Thanks for the lovely thought of the chocolate. I'll put it down to a memory like one of my plumbing jobs :-)