

Coverage

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Choppy waters ensure rock and roll Christmas

Sailing

Sam Davies
Vendée Globe Diary

Dateline 53° S, 155° E — 650 miles south east of New Zealand

Happy Christmas from Roxy. After 46 days at sea, I have just had my second Christmas on the water, and my first one alone. I have known for two years that I would be out here with Roxy, so I have had time to prepare, and I am not at all sad or nostalgic. I miss my boyfriend and naturally wish I were with my family but I feel extremely lucky to be doing this solo round-the-world race. It is a novelty to spend Christmas out here alone in the middle of the Southern Ocean, and all part of the adventure.

As I am on the other side of the world, timing is very different. My night starts in the middle of your day, and my day starts in the middle of your night. With this in

mind, I decided to do a "French-style" Christmas, with Christmas dinner on the evening of the 24th and presents on the morning of the 25th. This is all very easy to prepare because, being alone on Roxy, I can do what I like, when I want. However, there is a hidden difficulty factor: the weather. As it happens, the Wind Gods have made my Christmas a bit of a challenge. There are 25 knots of wind and we are light reaching — side to head on to the wind and waves. In other words, try putting your Christmas day on a rollercoaster and see how you get on!

When the time came on Christmas Eve, I excitedly unwrapped my Christmas dinner. It was prepared by my boyfriend, Ronan, and looked amazing — a lovely lobster bisque with croustons and rouille, some salmon rillette and a little packet of chocolates. Yum! Then reality hit home: imagine trying to cook, serve and eat lobster bisque on a rollercoaster. Not worth thinking



Bearing gifts: Davies was able to unwrap her presents in challenging conditions south east of New Zealand, but her lobster bisque for lunch was put on hold

about. I would probably end up wearing more of my Christmas dinner than eating it. So with much sadness, the Christmas dinner had to be postponed for a while. I had a glass of wine and managed to eat the rillette and the chocolates. It was all delicious but still followed by a freeze-dried pasta dish.

Now it is Christmas Day and I am still on that rollercoaster ride. The good news is that Father Christmas found Roxy down here. I have been spoilt with presents and everyone has had such good imagination. I even have a "grow your own male stripper" — although that may class me as no longer being single-handed in the race rules. Some more lucky red socks, games, puzzles, some miniature girle beauty products and even lip gloss. My shore team, parents and friends have also made a little video, which I have just watched and I'm still smiling now. I'm sure it will be a great thing to play whenever I feel down and in need of a morale boost.