



PRESS RELEASE

Update on Arctic Circle expedition – departure now in June 2025



Ella Hibbert has announced that her planned solo circumnavigation of the Arctic Circle will now take place in June 2025. With her yacht Yeva having undergone extensive refurbishment this year, Ella has had little opportunity for heavy weather training and extended offshore passages. She says, “Although I have every faith in my yacht, and the work and equipment installed in the last year, I don’t want my first heavy weather test to be in the middle of the North Sea heading for Iceland, miles away from help and safe haven.”

Now with full financial support secured from Capital.com, Ella plans to undertake training sails around the south coast of England during June. In July, she intends to sail from England to Norway, hopefully completing an expedition to Svalbard and exploring the islands and Arctic waters in that area. She says, “Getting up close and personal to Arctic sea ice, as well as giving me time to interact with the locals, I will be learning and spreading awareness of how climate change is impacting the remote areas up there.” Ella will be undertaking micro plastics sampling whilst on her sailing trips, and during her Arctic Circumnavigation, which will be used to assist research being carried out by the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton.

Another task will be ensuring she has the right visas in place for the expedition. Having secured a visa to be allowed to sail in Russian waters, there are currently extensive delays in obtaining American B2 visas. She explains: “I will be making the most of my visa this year, sailing from Norway into Russia. It is a multiple entry visa, meaning I can sail in and out of Russian waters, so I can explore North towards the ice, and return into Russian waters again. I will do this for a couple of weeks in August, before sailing Yeva back to England in early September. This will also give me time to make contacts within the Russian coastguard, and hopefully inform them of what I will be attempting next year. It is unusual for boats to enter Russian waters from the side closest to Alaska, most enter from Norway, so by doing it the "normal" way this year, that will help me enter from the "abnormal" side next year, once they know who I am and what the boat is doing there.”

Ella plans to spend the winter months touring yacht clubs and boat shows, giving talks and writing articles – including a regular feature for Yachting Monthly - and raising the profile of the expedition. After a further refit period over the winter, Spring will see her re-applying for visas and securing all final permits, and in May bringing onboard all of the food and spares for the voyage with the circumnavigation attempt planned for June 2025.

“The aim still very much stands to auction Yeva at the end of the circumnavigation, so most likely to be in Spring 2026, and all of the proceeds from that auction will be donated to Polar Bears International and Ocean Conservancy,” she concludes.

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June 2024 PR178