

# Kiwi couple deliver catamaran after 49-day voyage

REPEKA NASIKO | 18 October, 2021, 5:06 pm



South Sea Cruises staff members onboard South Sea Cruises' new vessel Sabre after the handover at Port Denarau Marina in Nadi. Picture: BALJEET SINGH

New Zealand husband and wife team Ralph and Yvonne de Grutyer sailed for 49 days from Sri Lanka to Fiji to deliver South Sea Cruises' new 78-foot catamaran Sabre.

The couple behind New Zealand-based Pacific Delivery travelled thousands of miles from the Indian Ocean to the South Pacific to deliver the new vessel which had been in Sri Lanka since 2020.

"We mainly deliver yachts across the Pacific and this was our first delivery from the Indian Ocean, specifically from Sri Lanka so it was something very new to us," he said.

"We had great weather along the way which was very fortunate for us and we had to make several stops along the way in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea before making our way to Fiji."

Yvonne de Grutyer relived their experience of trying to deliver the boat to Port Denarau amidst the global pandemic.

"The boat was supposed to arrive last year, but COVID happened, it basically was quarantined in Sri Lanka.

"They had caretakers staying on the boat for like 18 months after borders closed and we also faced delays in trying to get to Sri Lanka.

"We were supposed to go over in May and then they had a major lockdown.

"So we waited until August before the borders opened up and we were able to get through.

"It was a trying and difficult time in getting the boat ready, but once we set sail things improved.

"We made several non-disembarking stops along the way in Indonesia and then in Papua New Guinea before we made our way to Fiji.

"It was a long journey, but we are very happy to be here and to be able to deliver this beautiful vessel."