

Didac Costa began his sailing career on the family cruiser with his parents. They used to sail up and down the Spanish coast and down to the Balearics, which gave the youngster a taste of offshore voyages. During his adolescence, he developed a passion for solo sailing. He finished on the podium in several Mediterranean races before preparing for the big Atlantic crossing. This enriching experience encouraged him to go even further “on more powerful boats, which are faster and more extreme”.

Abroad these fascinating boats, Didac Costa – who says he is “patient, calm and optimistic” – has already completed one race around the world. That was in the 2014-2015 Barcelona World Race in which he raced with another racer from Barcelona. The Fundació Navegació Oceànica Barcelona (Barcelona Foundation for Ocean Sailing - FNOB) has committed itself to working with IOC-UNESCO to protect the environment, in particular the ocean. During the second edition of the Barcelona World Race in 2010/11, FNOB, IOC and the partnering institutions pioneered a ground-breaking partnership between sailing and ocean science, through which skippers recorded ocean temperature and salinity along its route to collaborate with oceanographers. The participating boats, in sailing through the remote southern ocean, a vastly under-sampled region that is critical for understanding climate change, used the opportunity of the race for the collection of scientific data for the first time, contributing with valuable information for developments in the fields of oceanography and meteorology. This was an unprecedented connection between the worlds of sailing and science, which has inspired the Barcelona World Race to set itself further challenges by having skippers transport and deploy multi-data collection Argo floats and other data measuring devices along the route related to weather observation salinity levels and surface seawater temperature, and to reveal skippers as frontline witnesses to the impacts of climate change on the ocean.