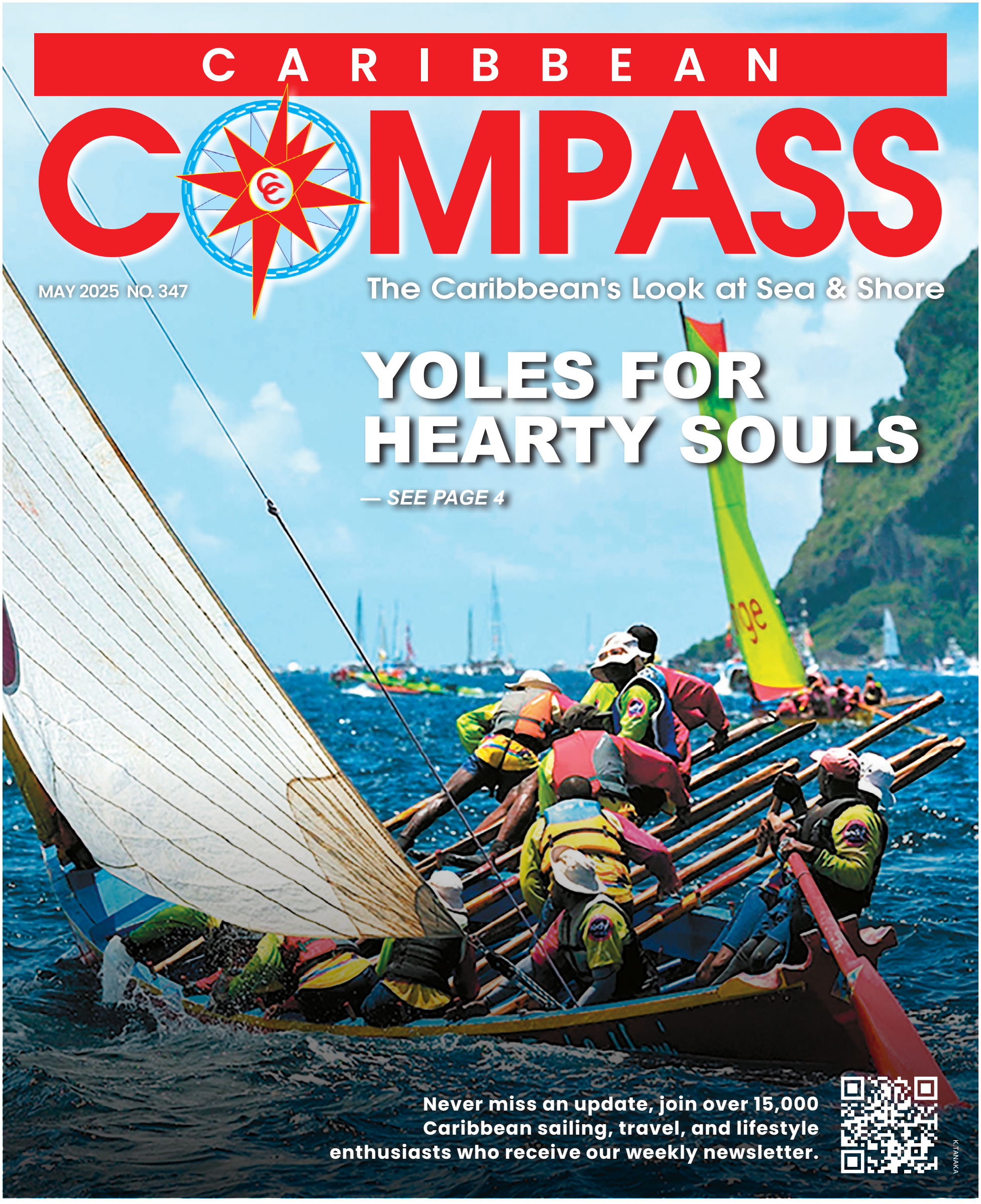
CARIBBEAN
COMPASS
MAY 2025 NO. 347
The Caribbean's Look at Sea & Shore

YOLES FOR HEARTY SOULS

— SEE PAGE 4



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Scene shooting, including nighttime firing of flares, for 76 Days Adrift, *the documentary based on Steve Callahan's famous survival at sea story, took place off St. Croix, in the United States Virgin Islands. Residents and crews of nearby anchored boats, concerned that someone was in trouble, quickly alerted authorities. For Callahan's story about filming in the Virgins, turn to page 16.*

STEVEN CALLAHAN

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On the Cover *In Martinique, yoles are the traditional fishing craft as well as the focus of a revival movement by various groups dedicated to maintaining their place in the culture and history of the French island. Besides the annual Tour des Yoles regatta, yoles are promoted to visitors as a fun and easy sailing craft for day outings. See the story on page 4.*

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Caribbean Compass

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Tour des Yoles 2025

by Ian Stalker

School's not out for those wanting to learn how to operate a distinctively Martinique boat that evokes widespread pride on the tropical island. Tourism authorities note that courses are available for visitors wanting to learn how to sail the local favorite Martinique yole, described as a light, fast, shallow-draft boat with a tapered shape, no keel or rudder, and one or two sails.

Yole crew members perch off the hull on long movable poles to balance their boat, something UNESCO, which in 2020 placed them on its Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, states requires "great agility, physical engagement and perfect coordination."

The Martinique yole was traditionally used by fishermen and is ideal for the specific conditions along the island's coasts. But during the 1950s and 1960s, other types of boats made of composites and equipped with motors gradually supplanted it. Faced with the threat of disappearance of the boats, which reflected the history and society of the island, a movement to safeguard them developed, first with races organized by the fishermen and gradually expanding. It is now supported by a broad range of longstanding associations and partnerships.

The main objectives of the safeguarding program are to preserve the know-how of local boat builders, transmit know-how on sailing, strengthen the ties between yole practitioners and the local community, and create a federation capable of organizing major events, particularly the annual summertime Tour des Yoles, a multi-day race that circumnavigates Martinique and is hugely popular with locals.

Martinique tourism authorities are now promoting the watercraft to those vacationing on the Caribbean island.

Mathieu Meril of Martinique destination management company Coeur des Iles says his company will cater to those wanting to learn how to sail a yole, with instruction given by veteran yole sailors.

M. SAMBI



More Tour des Yoles action

"It's a hands-on experience," he says of the classes, while reassuring would-be students that they're capable of operating one of the boats. "It looks more difficult than it is."

Yole sails may be 17 square meters, with the "steady winds" found off Martinique shores making local waters a great place for wind-powered boats, he added.

Claudie Ampigny of Martinique's Le Panoramic hotel notes that her property can arrange for guests to go on a yole day excursion, an outing she promises will be "lots of fun.

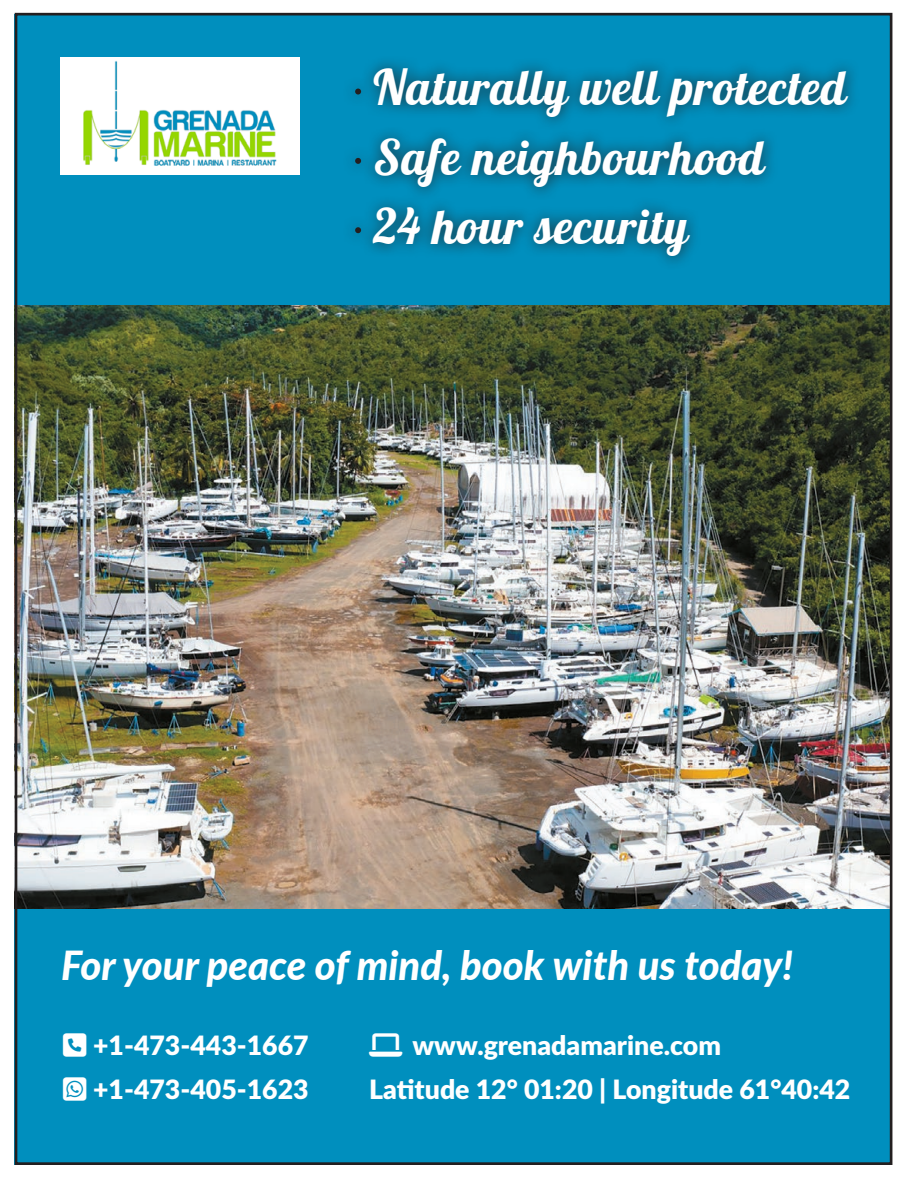
"It's something typical of our island," she continues. "You will never find it anywhere else." Meanwhile, Meril says those who are intrigued by yoles will only be able to board one in Martinique.

"Kayaking you can do in Alaska," he says. "If you want to ride a yole, you can only do it in Martinique. "

This year's Tour des Yoles is July 27-August 3. For more information on the Tour des Yoles, check out https://joedan.fr/event/tour-des-yoles-2025/.

—Continued on the next page





Buzz Race Team Pushes Hard to Kick Diam 24 Campaign Up a Notch

by Ted Reshetiloff



ANYA RESHETILOFF

Buzz Race Team for 2025 Heineken Regatta (from left): Olivier Pilon, Ted Reshetiloff, Jelke Jans, Leo Whitting

Buzz Race Team, based in the British Virgin Islands, has quickly emerged as a formidable force in the highly competitive Diam 24 racing circuit, particularly in events held in the Caribbean island of Sint Maarten. Led by Ted Reshetiloff, Leo Whitting, and Olivier Pilon, the team has consistently secured podium finishes in major regattas. As they set their sights on greater success, they are also actively seeking sponsorships to fuel their journey.

The 2023/2024 World Diam Tour Caribbean season marked Buzz Race Team's debut in the one-design Diam 24 class. Their breakthrough moment came at the 44th Sint Maarten Heineken Regatta in early 2024. Racing against nine identical trimarans, they secured finishes of 2nd, 3rd, and 2nd over four days, earning them 2nd place overall.

The momentum continued in April at the third edition of the Friars Bay Race. The two-day event presented by the Sint Maarten Yacht Club (SMYC) challenged competitors with a course stretching from Simpson Bay to Galis Bay and Friars Bay. Buzz Race Team dominated the first day of racing, sitting at the top of the leaderboard. They would finish second overall.



LAURENSMOREL/SALTYCOLOURS.COM FOR SMYC

Buzz Race Team competes in the 2024 Heineken Regatta round the island race.

Later that year, the team competed in the SMYC's Grant Thornton Keelboat Season Championship on November 27. The race day was not without drama, as a dismasting incident among competitors added an unexpected twist. Despite the challenges, Buzz Race Team remained focused and emerged victorious in the Diam 24 class.

In 2025, they returned to the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta for its 45th edition, embracing a new challenge — the introduction of beach-stadium racing in Grand Case. Once again facing 10 other Diam 24 teams, they adapted quickly to the innovative format, although a premature start penalty proved costly in one race, affecting the overall standing.

At the heart of Buzz Race Team is a trio of experienced sailors whose combined knowledge and skill have been instrumental in their success. Ted Reshetiloff, originally from Annapolis, Maryland, now resides in Tortola, where he manages B+G Marine Services at Nanny Cay. His extensive background in yacht sales with BVI Yacht Sales, refit management, and finance background provides a solid foundation for the team. His past victories include a first-place finish in the IC24 class at the 2016 BVI Dinghy Championships.



ANYA RESHETILOFF

Buzz Race Team at the Phillipsburg Grand Prix 2025 season opening regatta

Leo Whitting, a marine engineer, brings a wealth of expertise from his work with Salvage Sails in the BVI, including years of experience in marine systems repair, maintenance, and optimization for high-performance racing. His background in maxi yacht racing further enhances his competitive edge.

Olivier Pilon is best known for his success in the F18 catamaran class with Team Pilon Racing. His extensive knowledge of boat handling, sail trim, and tactical decision-making has been a key factor in the team's performance in the Diam 24 circuit.

—Continued on the next page

—*Continued from the previous page*

As Buzz Race Team looks to the future, its members understand well that competitive racing at this level requires significant financial support, from equipment maintenance to travel expenses and entry fees. With aspirations to expand a presence on the international stage, the team is actively seeking partnerships with brands and businesses looking to align themselves with a group that embodies skill, teamwork, and perseverance.

Follow Buzz Race Team on social media.

The author is a broker with BVI Yacht Sales Ltd. in Tortola, British Virgin Islands. Reach him at Ted@BuzzRaceTeam.org.

22nd Budget Marine Antigua ILCA Open

Organized by the Antigua Yacht Club, the 22nd Budget Marine Antigua ILCA Open brought together 17 sailors from Antigua, St Vincent and British Virgin Islands (BVI) in late March 2025.



ED GIFFORD

All of Kai's dedication really paid off.

Divided into three fleets — ILCA 4, ILCA 6 and ILCA 7 — participants completed a total of twelve races over the two race days: eight on the first day and four on the second. Saturday provided excellent conditions for competitive racing in Falmouth Harbour. On Sunday the wind picked up to 20 knots and the sailors showed resilience and determination.

The competition for the top spot in the ILCA 4 category was fierce. Kai Marks Dasent beat Antiguan Carrick Jones, who is the current ILCA 4 Caribbean Dinghy Champion.

In the ILCA 6 class, Scarlett Hadley fought hard and placed a very respectable second overall.

Kai and Scarlett have been putting in months of intense training. From practicing race starts to mastering mark roundings, studying the rules, race strategy and tactics, as well as working out regularly building physical and mental strength.

Vincy Sailing would like to acknowledge InterCaribbean Airways for supporting the team, once again getting them safely to the event, Kestrel Shipping for help with club equipment and logistics and the SVG Olympic Committee for continued support.



ED GIFFORD

Scarlett Hadley fought hard and placed a very respectable second overall.



Channel 16

Hope Fleet Looks Back at 2024

Hope Fleet, a Christian, nonprofit, humanitarian organization working to ensure children in the Caribbean have everything they need for a safe, healthy, and full life, reports a year of growth in 2024. Incoming donations were doubled, allowing the organization to reach more ports, serve more communities, and touch more lives than before.

Find Hope Fleet's annual report at https://drive.google.com/file/d/17zzxfdwB6EQond3Uynvi-Saq89LewPmR/view.



COURTESY ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY

Antigua Carnival offers visitors and residents new and exciting carnival experiences.

Antigua Carnival 2025 Set to Deliver Ultimate Vibes

Antigua Carnival takes place from July 25 to August 5, 2025, in Antigua and Barbuda. This year's theme, "Itz A Vibe," heralds a celebration of music, mas, culture, and revelry. The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority continues to report yearly increases in visitor arrivals, airlift capacity, and accommodation occupancy levels.

Saint Martin Ascends to the OECS

The Territorial Council of Saint Martin officially advanced its position toward associate membership in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) on March 19, 2025. Saint Martin is now the 12th member state of the OECS, joining the protocol member states of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the associate member states of Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Martinique and Guadeloupe. It is now the third French Overseas Territory with associate membership.

2025 National Women's Sailing Association Conference

The National Women's Sailing Association (NWSA) is expanding the 2025 National Women's Sailing Association Conference presented by American Sailing to three days, June 6- 8 at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg. The event welcomes women sailors of all skill levels, ages and backgrounds to workshops including the popular Take the Helm® track — an introduction to sailing for women, plus a view into the marine industry and opportunities to meet accomplished cruisers and racers.



Students and instructor take time out to strike a pose during an onboard class for women sailors.

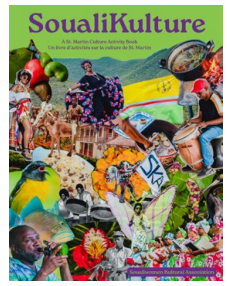
For details visit the conference website www.womensailing.org/national_womens_sailing_assoc.php

Dominica's Geothermal Power Plant Is on Track

Construction is advancing steadily in Dominica on a 10-megawatt geothermal power plant to become the second in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the first in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), with a targeted completion date of Christmas Day — December 25, 2025.

By harnessing the Nature Isle's volcanic potential, the facility, located at Laudat in the lush Roseau Valley, promises to significantly reduce fossil fuel dependency while providing stable, clean energy to some 23,000 Dominican homes, according to the Dominica Geothermal Development Company (DGDC), the public-private partnership driving the power project. The goal is to ensure that at least 30 per cent of the region's electricity comes from renewable sources by 2035.

SoualiKulture Book Launch in St. Martin



SoualiKulture is a bilingual book created by the Soualiwomen Kultural Association (SKA) and the nonprofit group Les Fruits de Mer. This first-ever activity book about St. Martin culture has over 100 pages of stories, heritage photos, mazes, word games, coloring pages, creative writing activities, and much more. Topics include art, music and dance, Carnival, food and fishing traditions, livestock and agriculture, and St. Martin sayings and language.

Download SoualiKulture for free here: https://www.lesfruitsdemer.com/resources/books/#SoualiKulture

OECS Countries Score at the Trophy Boxing Championships

Organized by the Guadeloupe Regional Boxing Committee, the 2025 Caribbean Trophy Boxing Championships wrapped up in Guadeloupe in late March 2025, showcasing the strength of regional boxing talent. Fighters from across the OECS and beyond delivered thrilling performances, with Guadeloupe securing the overall championship title, followed by Martinique in second place and Saint Lucia in third.

Held from March 27 to 29 at the Laura Flessel gymnasium, the tournament brought together elite boxers from Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint Lucia, French Guiana (Cayenne), and Canada, with each delegation displaying remarkable skill and determination in the ring.

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Sahara Dust Muddies Atlantic Tropical Cyclone Formation

By Amanda Delaney

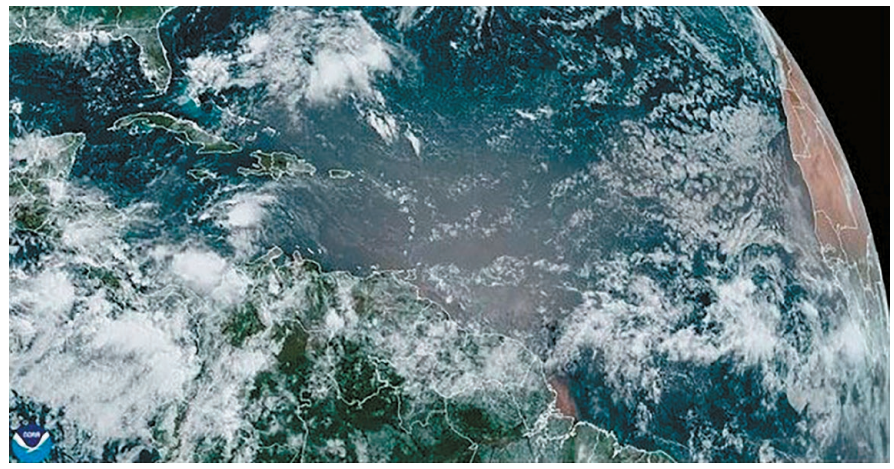
There was a lull in the active Atlantic tropical cyclone season earlier this year. One of the main reasons was abundant dust that blew east to west across the Atlantic Ocean from the Sahara Desert. This wasn't factored into the Atlantic hurricane forecasts because it isn't unusual to have dust plumes travel across the Atlantic while tropical cyclones attempt to develop over the Eastern Atlantic Ocean. In fact, the onset of tropical cyclone development and the dust plumes occur simultaneously each year.

Most tropical cyclone development that begins offshore Western Africa and tracks to the west occurs in a region known as the Intertropical Convergence Zone, or ITCZ. This feature, which can be found all year round to the north of the Equator, shifts farther north during the summer and closer to the Equator during winter. The ITCZ can be identified on satellite imagery as a band of showers and thunderstorms that move from east to west. During the late spring and through early autumn, the ITCZ shifts to the north over Central Africa, where clusters of showers and thunderstorms track west across the continent to the coast and offshore near the Cape Verde Islands, before continuing to the west toward the Caribbean Sea. These clusters of showers and thunderstorms come in waves, known as tropical waves, and will move offshore the African coast every 3-5 days and generally reach the Caribbean Sea approximately 7-10 days later.

Some of these tropical waves can move into a favorable environment that will allow the thunderstorms to strengthen and organize into a tropical cyclone under certain conditions: low or no stronger winds aloft, moist air, and warm sea surface temperatures (approximately 80°F or 26.7°C or more).

The ITCZ reaches its northern apex during late spring through early autumn. Tropical waves moving across Africa before reaching the coast

COURTESY NOAA



NOAA GOES-East satellite imagery of Sahara dust (the sandy-brown haze) over the eastern Caribbean Sea and western tropical Atlantic Ocean, June 26, 2024

generate more wind along their northern side. This happens to cross the Southern Sahara Desert, which allows dust to be picked up and blown toward and offshore the coast.

The dust is usually found approximately one mile above the sea surface but can extend as high as two to two and a half miles into the atmosphere. The larger dust plumes can spread as far west as the Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico and Central America.

Although there is ongoing research about how the Sahara Dust interaction can either promote or hinder tropical cyclone development, moisture can cling to the dust in the air and promote more moisture higher in the atmosphere and therefore, tropical cyclone development.

—Continued on page 10





Smooth Sailing Starts with Smart Coverage: A Closer Look at Anjo Insurance Agency

By Ronda Frederick, Underwriter Manager &
Germaine Serieux, Commercial & Marketing Manager



From harbours to horizons, where your boat docks or doesn't shapes your insurance story.



Details matter — because your boat's story is built on what you've added, fixed, and upgraded.

There's a particular magic in setting out to sea, the gentle slap of waves against hull, the golden wash of sunset across the deck, and the promise of freedom carried on the trade winds. Owning a boat in the Caribbean is a dream many chase. But before the champagne bottle breaks across the bow and the adventure begins, there's one crucial anchor you need in place: reliable boat insurance.

At Anjo Insurance Agency, agents for CG United Insurance Ltd., the mission is clear: help boaters navigate the often overlooked but essential waters of marine insurance. Because while boat ownership can feel like paradise, even paradise has its storms. CG United Insurance Ltd., our principals have an AM Best financial strength rating of A (Excellent).

Beyond the Surface: What Insurers Really Want to Know

Before you can get a quote that truly reflects your vessel and lifestyle, you'll need to come prepared with some specifics. Insurance, after all, is built on details, hard facts wrapped in peace of mind.

Start with your boat itself. Make, model, year, length, and construction materials (fiberglass, aluminium, or otherwise) aren't just trivia, they're the building blocks of your quote. Also, a current satisfactory marine survey (no older than one year) provides insurers with necessary information including the fair market value of the vessel. These details help us calculate the cost to repair or replace your boat, should the unexpected occur.

Registration numbers and the Hull Identification Number (HIN) are key too — they allow insurers to check the boat's history, including any previous claims. Got upgrades? Don't keep them a secret. Modifications can raise the value of your boat and your premium, but transparency keeps your coverage water-tight.

Pleasure or Commercial Charter? Usage Matters

Whether you're cruising at sunset, running day charters, or chasing the thrill of water sports, how you plan to use your vessel has a direct impact on your insurance needs. A leisurely coastal cruiser faces different risks than a boat used for commercial excursions or offshore sportfishing.

And don't forget your cruising range. The farther you venture from home port, the more exposure your boat has to wear and tear, not to mention unpredictable conditions.

Seasonal use is another factor. Hauling out during the off-season can reduce risks (and premiums), but don't assume your boat is invincible while dry-docked. Theft, vandalism, and storm damage don't take holidays, and neither should your coverage.

Location, Location, Location

Where your boat sleeps at night, whether in a secure marina, a backyard, or at anchor, tells insurers a lot about your risk profile. Covered storage and well-protected docks are recommended.

But moor your boat in a hurricane-prone region or leave it bobbing in open water, and your premium may reflect the elevated risk.

You, the Captain

Your personal information helps paint a picture of who's at the helm. Name, contact details, and birth date are just the start. More critical is your boating résumé. Have you taken safety courses? Held a license? Are you new to the game?

Insurers value experience and responsibility. A history of safe sailing and formal training can work in your favor. If you're just getting your sea legs, consider investing in a certified boating course. It's more than a wise move; it's often a requirement for coverage.

Your Insurance Backstory

If you've had prior boat insurance, this tells providers you're not a fair-weather captain. Details like how long you've been insured, your coverage limits, and any previous claims help insurers assess your reliability. A spotless claims history? That's insurance gold. But if you've had a few dings along the way, honesty is still the best policy.

Who Else Is Onboard?

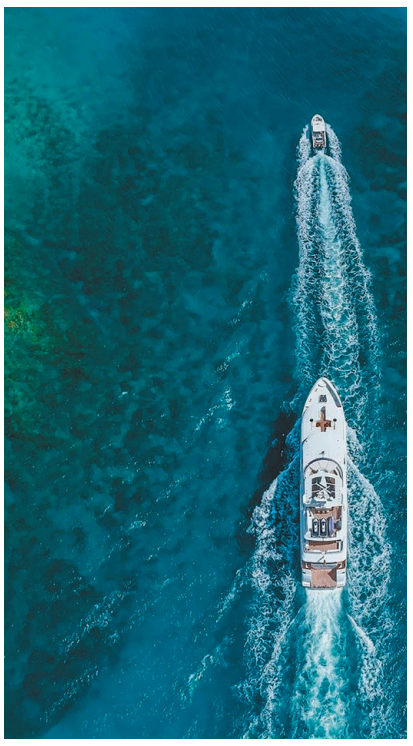
You're not always the only one behind the wheel, and insurers need to know who else might be steering your vessel. The age, experience, and certifications of other regular operators are relevant information that should be provided just as much as yours. If your crew is seasoned and safety-conscious, that's a bonus. If they're new but trained, that's still a step in the right direction.

Bonus Points: Safety and Tech

Extra safety gear is more than just good seamanship, it's being a proactive and responsible boat owner. Think fire suppression systems, GPS, alarms, and theft deterrents. These all show that you're serious about protecting your investment and minimizing risk.

Anjo Insurance Agency, P.O. Box #104, St. John's, Antigua; https://anjoinsure.com; anjo_ins@candw.ag;

1-268-480-3050



Every voyage begins with a course - and the smartest sailors chart theirs with coverage that's built to last.



Owning paradise? Yes. Protecting it? Even smarter. Insure the dream before it drifts away.

—*Continued from page 8*

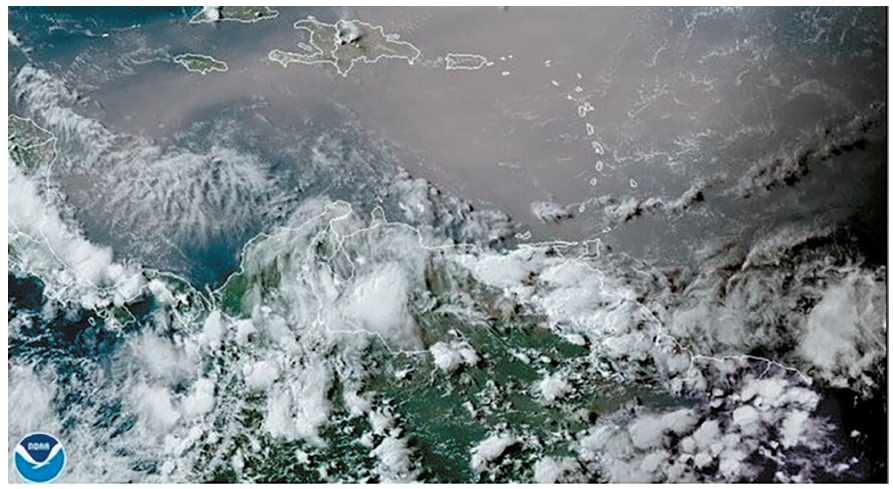
However, if there is too much dust, then this will hinder tropical cyclone development. These large dust plumes (also known as the Sahara Air Layer or SAL) will move offshore the African coast and can suppress tropical cyclone development in several ways. The SAL is drier than the typical tropical atmosphere over the tropical waters by as much as 50 percent. This will generally hinder cloud formation.

The dust also absorbs sunlight, which will maintain warm air as the dust is crossing the Atlantic. The SAL's arrival on land usually coincides with the warmest days in the summer. Stronger winds flowing from east to west form in the mid-levels of our atmosphere (between 6,000 and 15,000 feet) with the SAL. Not only does this transport the dust, but it also tilts any thunderstorms that may develop along the tropical waves, moving them away from the wave axis and any circulation that may attempt to develop along the tropical wave, thus disrupting the development of any tropical cyclones.

The SAL usually peaks during late June through mid-August before gradually waning through the autumn, when the ITCZ starts to shift back to the south. As a result, tropical waves will shift farther south, and associated higher winds will shift south of the Sahara Desert. Less dust is then picked up and won't spread as far west across the Eastern Atlantic Ocean. As the dust diminishes, and as the sea surface temperatures have a chance to warm up over the Tropical Atlantic Ocean, tropical cyclone activity can increase over the Eastern and Central Atlantic Ocean, typically near the Cape Verde Islands around late July through August, usually peaking around mid-September when sea surface temperatures are highest over the Tropical Atlantic Ocean.

An exceptional case of the SAL occurred near the end of June 2020, when a large dust plume tracked to the west and covered much of the tropical Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea, and extended as far west as eastern Texas and eastern Central America. This massive dust plume extended close to the surface, which reduced visibility and became a health hazard for people in these regions, especially over the Caribbean Sea. While this dust plume occurred, sea surface temperatures dropped by as much as 0.4 degrees due to the dust shielding sunlight. However,

COURTESY NOAA



NOAA GOES-East satellite image showing the exceptional Sahara dust plume that spread across most of the Caribbean on June 22, 2020

the warm air that came in with the dust plume allowed sea surface temperatures to rebound back to warmer than normal temperatures. This may have aided to a more active than normal tropical cyclone season for the rest of that year.

The weather features that allowed this dust plume to be so intense included stronger than normal tropical waves, more intense rainfall to the south of the Sahara Desert that increased winds near the desert, a weaker easterly mid-level jet offshore Western Africa that allowed the dust to accumulate offshore, then a strong high building over the North Atlantic that carried the dust farther west than normal.

This event allowed scientists to realize that Sahara dust contributes more to tropical cyclone development than initially thought. As a result, more research is being conducted to understand this relationship and how much IT could impact tropical cyclone development and rainfall amounts in these systems in the future.

Amanda Delaney is a senior meteorologist at Weather Routing Inc. (https://www.wriwx.com). WRI provides customized forecasts and online weather services to mariners worldwide.



ECO BRIEFS

British Virgin Islands Wreck Week Set for June

BVI Wreck Week, organized by the BVI Scuba Organization and scheduled for June 15-21, brings diving aficionados together for an exploration of maritime history and underwater wonders in a series of programs both above and below the waterline, designed for groups ranging from beginners to seasoned divers.



COURTESY BVI SCUBA ORGANISATION

Excursions are designed for groups ranging from beginners to seasoned divers.

The underwater exhibits are the meticulously preserved wrecks and art-reefs that dot the seafloor of the British Virgin Islands, from pirate ships to World War II-era vessels. Also included in the schedule of events are beach parties, live music performances, local cuisine, and educational seminars on marine conservation and preservation.

To register visit bviwreckweek.com

Electric Vehicle Training Takes Place



COURTESY GSI SKN

Participants receivined hands-on training in electric vehicle maintenance and repair during an EV training program.

CARILEC, the leading association for electric utilities in the Caribbean, has partnered with Green Solutions International SKN Inc (GSI SKN) to deliver an Electric Vehicle (EV) Training Programme in St. Kitts from June 23 to July 4, aimed at teaching professionals the skills needed to work with electric and hybrid vehicles.

The Caribbean region is increasingly adopting EVs, driven by government incentives, environmental concerns, and economic opportunities. Barbados leads in per capita EV usage in the region, with over 600 EVs on the road and more than 100 charging stations as of 2023. Jamaica has also made significant strides. *To register contact training@carilec.org or slprimus@carilec.org*

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Parts & Power Employee Highlights



COURTESY PARTS AND POWER

Above, left: Praneel Kasa, Parts and Power's Employee of the Quarter. Above, right: Seasoned operations and service management professional Mario Boyce

Mario Boyce, a seasoned operations and service management professional with a strong background in customer service, logistics, and team leadership, has joined Parts & Power as Service Manager in the Fish Bay, Tortola, BVI location.

Boyce has a strong background in customer service, and extensive experience in after-sales administration and parts management. He has led teams in optimizing service delivery and improving operational workflows, and is known for his ability to build strong client relationships and streamline service operations.

Praneel Kasa is Parts and Power's Employee of the Quarter. Kana has never been late. He goes above and beyond to the job done. He puts the customer first, and the company regularly gets positive reports afterward. An employee since April 2024, he hails from India and has been away from his family for a year now. Although it is a sacrifice for him to work in the Virgin Islands, he never lets it interfere.

Scrub Island Cabanas



COURTESY SCRUB ISLAND RESORT

Scrub Island cabana

Scrub Island Resort, Spa & Marina in the British Virgin Islands has unveiled three new exclusive cabanas on its private North Beach. Guests can enjoy food and beverage service on the shady, raised platforms with unobstructed views of the Caribbean Sea. The three cabana names — Flip Flop Hideaway, Loafer Lagoon and Lost Sole — reflect the casual, fun vibe of the adjacent One Shoe Beach Bar.

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TERMITES OF THE CARIBBEAN

Yikes! dry-wood termites could be eating your beautiful boat!

By Tony Gagliardo

Imagine you are the owner of a gorgeous wooden sailing yacht. You take amazing care of her; you spare no expense or effort in maintaining her condition. From the tip of her bow, suspended over the water, sweeping back to her glistening varnished taffrail — everything is kept perfect. You are vigilant in protecting her. You are known for harassing your guests to only touch your deck with their bare feet and to leave no chemical trace of repellent, sunscreen, or anything aerosol that might deposit a residue that could scar her teak or dissolve her perfect varnish. You take no cardboard or other insect life-supporting objects aboard her. You've never had roaches (okay, just one) and nothing more than the occasional fly or mosquito.

The pandemic hit while you stored her on the hard for nearly three years. Eventually you began to work on your boat, starting with a marine survey. Then the bad news: Your surveyor says you've got termites, and your immediate thought is they're eating your beloved wooden yacht!

It's all hands-on deck, with no time to waste getting rid of them!

Treatment depends on several factors, starting with determining the type of termites you have. In the Caribbean and southern United States, there are two types of these wood-eating pests: subterranean and drywood termites.

Subterranean termites are what visitors to the Caribbean are likely more familiar with since they affect buildings and structures back home that are on terra firma, where the pests move from the soil and into wood structures near or on the ground. They build mud tubes from the soil to their food source, which includes cellulose-based materials like wood. They rapidly destroy the structures they invade. Since boats are either in the water or stored well above ground, subterranean termites can be hindered from entering your vessel due to the open-air distance they would need to travel to enter your boat. Since a stored boat will sit on her keel and have shoring stands supporting her, pathways are well-defined, easily seen, and can be kept clear. Many owners coat their keel blocks and shoring stand screws in heavy grease that creates a barrier for any bugs like roaches, ants, and even subterranean termites.



ADOBE STOCK

Drywood termites

Drywood termites are another matter. They are a termite species that infest and feed on dry, sound wood. Unlike subterranean termites that require contact with soil, drywood termites do not rely on the ground for survival and moisture. Instead, they infest dry wood found in structures, furniture, and other wooden items. In the Caribbean and tropics, boats stored in yards where there are forests and infected structures nearby are at great risk since drywood termites spread by flying over to your boat, landing on it, and finding their way inside.

Here are some key characteristics and behaviors of drywood termites:

- Habitat: Drywood termites typically live within the wood they infest, creating their colonies and galleries directly inside the timber. They do not require contact with soil or moisture sources.
- Feeding patterns: Drywood termites consume cellulose found in dry wood, including furniture, structural wood, flooring, and wooden fixtures. They extract moisture from the wood and can cause significant damage over time.
- Infestation signs: Common signs of drywood termite infestation include the presence of fecal pellets (tiny, granular pellets that resemble sawdust), discarded wings near windows or light sources, small kick-out holes on the surface of infested wood, and a hollow or papery sound when tapping infested wood.

—Continued on the next page



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—*Continued from the previous page*

- Geographic distribution: Drywood termites are found in various regions worldwide, but they are more prevalent in warmer climates. In the United States, they are commonly found in coastal areas of the southern states.

It's important to note that drywood termites differ from subterranean termites in their habitat, behavior, and treatment methods. Understanding the specific type of termite infestation is crucial for implementing appropriate control measures and protecting wooden structures and items from damage.

When it comes to boats, termites can infest and damage wooden components such as the hull, decking, and structural supports. They can weaken the wood, compromising the integrity and safety of the vessel over time if left untreated. Once inside a boat, they typically target areas that have high moisture content, as it provides a suitable environment for their survival.

Not all boats are susceptible to termite damage, especially those made from materials other than wood, such as fiberglass or aluminum. However, for wooden boats or boats with wooden elements, proper preventive measures and regular inspections are essential to detect and address any termite infestation promptly.

Preventing drywood termites means sealing up any entrance points, no exposed damp structural wood (exterior teak is fine). Schedule frequent inspections for frass (termite poop), wings, and active termites flying and landing on your boat.

If a termite infestation is suspected, it is crucial to contact a professional pest control or marine surveyor specializing in termite inspections. They can assess the extent of the infestation and provide appropriate treatment options to eliminate the termites and repair any damage caused.

Signs of termite infestation may include:

- Presence of termite "swarmers" (winged reproductive termites) around the boat or near wooden structures.
- Mud tubes or tunnels on the boat's exterior, especially on wooden supports, hull, or decking.
- Hollow or damaged wooden components, such as beams, frames, or flooring.
- Presence of termite droppings or frass (small, pellet-like excrement) near infested areas.
- Weakened or sagging sections of the boat structure.

SHUTTERSTOCK



Drywood termite frass

Drywood termite infestations typically require localized treatments, such as spot treatments, fumigation, or heat, depending on the extent of the infestation and accessibility to the affected areas. Professional pest control services are usually required to eliminate drywood termites effectively. In most boat cases that I have been involved with, fumigation is the best option. It penetrates every crevice and permeates deep into wood structures where the termites are active, killing them all outright, and has the benefit of ridding your boat of other pests that may have taken up residence. Fumigation also leaves no lingering residue; once ventilated away, there is no risk to humans or pets. Since boats are mostly weather-tight, sealing them up is relatively easy when done with masking tape and plastic. Only on open boats that can't be sealed to contain the fumigation gas will "tenting" be necessary.

Here are a couple of references for more detail about dry wood termites: https://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/URBAN/TERMITES/Cryptotermes_brevis_west_indian_drywood_termite.HTM)

https://www.termitediversity.org

Marine surveyor Tony Gagliardo cruises fulltime with his wife Michelle and their son Angelo aboard their Swan 46, Artemis. *Visit www.globalyachtsurveyor.com. This story originally appeared in the newsletter of the Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors.*




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FILMING 76 DAYS ADRIFT

By Steven Callahan

Editor's note: *The film* 76 Days Adrift, *directed by Joseph Wein, opened in November 2024. Reviewers have praised its authenticity and emotional depth, also singling it out for its use of actual footage from Steven Callahan's 1982 survival voyage across the Atlantic after his boat collided with a whale, along with detailed recreations of portions of the adventure.*



ROGER HATFIELD

Off of Frederiksted, St. Croix, Miquel Lenhart, a boatbuilder at Gold Coast Yachts, used his boat and brought two friends to play my rescuers.

Because the film called for shooting scenes in the Caribbean, from St. Croix, in the United States Virgin Islands, Callahan shares his reflections of the experience with the Caribbean Compass *community. Over a decade ago, Callahan's unique perspective on survival at sea was tapped by director Ang Lee, who hired him as survival and marine consultant for his film* Life of Pi, *winner of four Academy Awards including Best Achievements in Directing and Cinematography, and several more nominations.*



ROGER HATFIELD

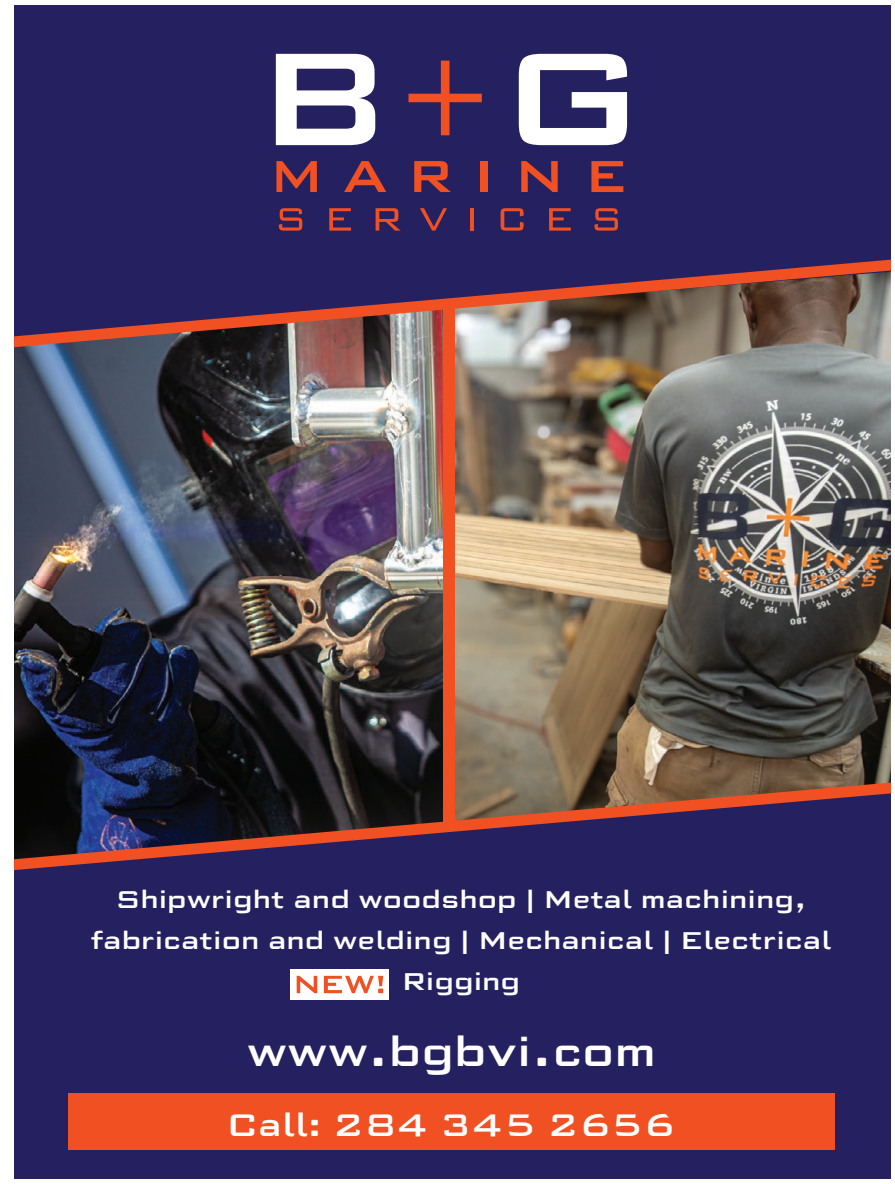
Film maker Joe Wein used a camera on his chest to give the viewers up close and personal points of view of life in a raft.

When I first stepped out of the aircraft on St. Thomas, in the USVI, back in the 1960s, the feel and smell of tropical islands became an immediate lure. I would sail to, from, and around the Caribbean numerous times over the decades, but a visit in January 2022 during Covid via the ultimate upwind machine captained by American Airlines would be unique and bring me full circle.

My initial attempt to cross the Atlantic for the first time on my 21-footer in 1981 was short-lived due to a dismasting en route from Newport, Rhode Island, to Bermuda, but jury rigging the boat and returning to Newport delivered some lasting gifts, one of which was to meet Roger Hatfield, who was repairing a big catamaran. With partner Rich Difede, Roger was carving out a marina and boat design-and-building business, Gold Coast Yachts, on St. Croix, just west of Christiansted. We shared our loves for designing and building boats, living aboard, voyaging, and racing, much of it on multihulls, still an uncommon breed except in the world of offshore adventure racing, which also was in its adolescence and more of a personal adventure than the fully professional sport it is today. We've been mates ever since.

—Continued on page 18





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—Continued from page 16

Rog expected to see me stop into St. Croix on my return crossing early in 1982. Alas, I never showed, or at least not for months. I lost *Napoleon Solo* on the return, spent 2.5 months in a life raft, and demonstrated the absolute dumbest and slowest way to cross an ocean, but I rarely give up on things, and found my way to the French West Indies and then to Gold Coast.

STEVEN CALLAHAN



Night shoot flares: Firing flares for filming was fun and enlightening as well as noted with concern by those ashore.

Over 30 years later, Joe Wein approached me with the proposal to create a documentary of the book I wrote about this journey, what I call my "fish tale," *Adrift, Seventy-Six Days Lost at Sea*. Since its publication in 1986, a number of folks had proposed film adaptations, but scripts I had read were centered on "Hollywood" and landlubberly visions of life and survival offshore. One actually ended with me and some unknown woman "humping like bunnies on the beach." I had to laugh. Joe's documentary would incorporate a week of interviews and my archival footage of crossing the Atlantic on Solo, and promised to more closely reveal life offshore on a small boat and in my six-person Avon, which I had dubbed *Rubber Ducky III*.

STEVEN CALLAHAN



It was great for me to see how reality compared to my memory and imagination of things like how the evolved raft looked at sea.

I had worked on two feature films and several other documentaries, and knew the latter were generally true labors of love with highly restrained budgets. I was not surprised when Joe had to persevere for a decade, but even so, he still needed a final visual element that would at least approximate what it was really like offshore in *Ducky*.

Joe had envisioned tearing up his backyard and flooding it to make a wave tank. Backgrounds would be painted in using computer graphics. Despite the fundamental challenges to any filming on the sea, this seemed a sure road to familial strain. Why not retain as much reality by filming in similar tropical waters? But how do we actually make it happen?

—Continued on page 20

PARTNER CONTENT

At Grenada Marine, We Go Above and Beyond for Boat Owners



A catamaran in the travelift at Grenada Marine is prepared for launch and high-season sailing



Aerial view of Grenada Marine, situated on the island's southeast coast, in St. David Parish

Since mid 2024, there have been a few changes at Grenada Marine, with Jason Fletcher back at the helm as general manager. Our project management department has been strengthened with the addition of Graeme Fletcher to the team. Together with Jimmy Bethel, our customer service and communication has been considerably enhanced. Meanwhile, the rest of the team has regrouped and the results are beginning to attract some great results and lovely reviews.

We understand that for our customers, a yacht is both an investment and a home. We are confident that our proven track record of care and attention for boat storage during hurricane season, together with our specially designed cradles for monohull storage, assure maximum stability and protection in those times of ultimate need. The cradles certainly offer peace of mind to boat owners.

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—Continued from the previous page

Once again, I dragged Rog, and through him, Rich, into my old drama. By January 2022, Gold Coast Yachts already had built more than 100 custom boats, almost all multihulls from 40 to over 100 feet and primarily designed by Roger. He and Rich agreed to support the effort. Rog served as the film's marine coordinator, and Rich kindly lent us a power catamaran that he had saved from ruin and rebuilt. Fast, comfortable, with shade for us pale-faced northerners, and room for carrying an inflated raft, it turned out to be the perfect support craft. Their contacts on St. Croix also proved essential.



STEVEN CALLAHAN

Rich Difede kindly lent us his boat, the perfect platform. Here, Roger and Joe get her ready for the day's shoot.

Joe had his shot list, and every morning I would hurriedly make props. We often anchored off Salt River and set Joe adrift on a long tether. He and his son had fashioned a camera rig that was mounted on his chest. He could see the output via an iPhone mounted on top. Instead of using an actor to play me, my interviews serve as narration while Joe's rig offers a first-person "point of view," as if each audience member is the survivor. A drone operator captured external shots of the raft actually drifting in the Caribbean, and a diver filmed what it looked like when I faced my biggest crisis — holing the bottom of my raft.



STEVEN CALLAHAN

Although the spear gun and twine were not perfect copies of those I carried, I tried to replicate the spear's evolution and details as closely as I could.

For me, these shoots were highlights. Indeed, I had long held images in my head of what this all looked like from a third-person point of view, but it was intensely interesting to see it in reality. Even moving around in a half-deflated raft, not to mention trying to live in it, proved more staggering than I remembered.

—Continued on the next page

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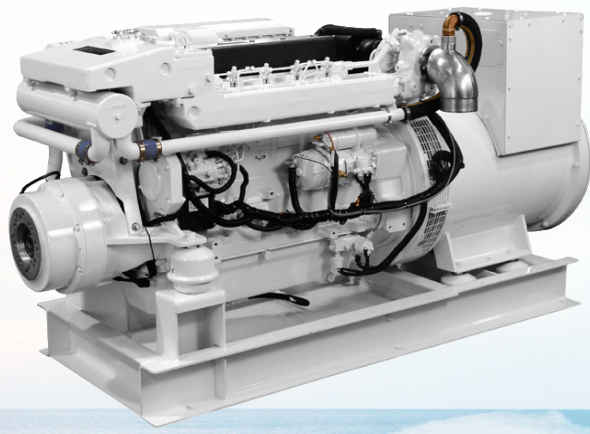
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—Continued from the previous page

Many details are admittedly not the same as they were in 1982. We could not replicate a real gale. Some gear was long unavailable. We lacked an enormous budget and a whole department devoted to finding and making custom props, which I had enjoyed when working on *The Life of Pi*. But Joe had found a rare period-perfect solar still and raft, and we replicated the evolution of the spear gun and other details as closely as we could. Rog had worked with the Coast Guard for decades because many Gold Coast boats are certified to carry passengers, and he got permission to light off flares.

We headed out to the mouth of Salt River. Seeing the real thing was, let's say, enlightening, visually and conceptually. We were entertained when we began hearing folks on shore or anchored boats reported to the Coast Guard that someone was in trouble on the reef, and encouraged that people were paying attention.

Getting to St. Croix during the pandemic was a challenge, but once there, we enjoyed a near-normal existence mostly out of doors enjoying warmth, incredible water, and good company, including Roger's and Rich's gracious friends.

The filming of *76 Days Adrift* could not have been possible without the people of St. Croix, who were nothing but kind and hospitable. On the south coast of St. Croix, a Gold Coast employee with his fishing boat and friends even served as my saviors for the final scenes of my rescue. The film has taken me from 1981 when I was a keen young man setting off on an adventure across the briny through my life raft drift to the present and back again, reminding me of the enormous gifts I've been bestowed along this winding voyage, from sailing as a lifestyle, adventure racing, and multihulls to relationships going back over 40 years, the tropics, still as delightful as my first visit in the 1960s, and as it turns out, even to an old fish tale about how not to cross the Atlantic.

Read more here about *76 Days Adrift* and Steven Callahan's participation in the Oscar-honored *Life of Pi*:

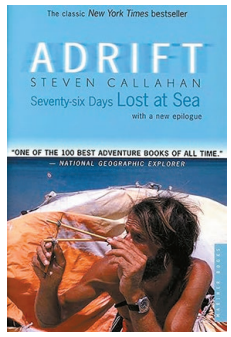
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Dinghy Light Dilemma

Dear *Caribbean Compass*,

Call me a coward, but I don't want to be run down coming home at night. And the Col. Regs do say I should have lights at night when operating my dink.

Between advancement in LED, solar and electronic technology there are some nice lights that meet the standards for navigation lights, self-charge, and turn on automatically at night. One popular model is meant to be bolted onto the top of an outboard. The trouble with that is — the top of the outboard is lower than the bow of the dink, and anyone in the dink blocks the light, so it can only be seen from abeam or astern.

What to do?

Here's my solution:

I bought the light, the tri-colour model, although the all-round white would be fine for a dinghy. Then I scrounged. I found a scrap of 15-millimeter plywood and cut it into a disc to fit the light onto. Next, I took a piece of plastic conduit, drilled a hole in the center of the plywood to fit the conduit, and glued them together. I screwed my light to the top of this mast.

Then I got some clips to hold the conduit. I screwed them to the transom of my dinghy so as to be out of the way of the motor, and in line, to hold the light's mast upright.

Since I got the tri-colour light, it needs to be aimed with the red/green LEDs forward. I cut a small notch in the bottom of the mast aligned with the middle of the white LEDs, then put a short screw into the transom where the bottom of the mast sits when in the clips. The mast bottom then slips over the screw and into the right alignment easily when I mount it.

When not in use the assembly slips out and stays inside the dink, or on the yacht for protection against going under the dinghy dock or tangling with anything.



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The mounting base in place



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The mast in place.



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San Blas Delight: Cooking with the Guna Indians

Story and photos by Margarita Askolskaya

Off Panama's Caribbean coast lies an archipelago of emerald jewels known as the San Blas Islands — 365 small isles and reefs, some no bigger than a sandbar. Here, among the crystal-clear waters and coral reefs, live the Guna Indians, a community deeply connected to the rhythms of the sea and land. During our sailing adventures, we were fortunate to step into their world, where we met Patrick, a Guna fisherman, and learned not just about their culture but also their delectable cuisine.

On Patrick's island, we were greeted by his family and led to a small, open-air kitchen shaded by coconut palms. The ingredients were simple: freshly caught conchs, plantains, coconuts, rice, and a handful of vibrant vegetables from a small garden inland.

Patrick demonstrated how to expertly extract conch meat from the shell, using a swift technique that involved boiling the shell briefly and then pulling out the tender meat. "You can also break the shell," he added, laughing as we struggled to perfect the art.

Once cleaned, the conchs were diced and set aside for the stew.

Patrick's friend Donny showed us how to grate fresh coconut flesh, extracting creamy milk by squeezing the pulp through a cloth. "This is what makes our rice special," he explained. The rich, fragrant milk was heated with a pinch of salt and sugar before adding the rice.

As the rice cooked, Donny saved the leftover coconut flakes for dessert, promising us a sweet surprise later. "Coconut is everything here," he said. "Food, oil, even shelter — it's part of our life."

While the rice simmered, we prepared ripe plantains, slicing them thinly and frying them until golden brown. For the stew, Donny sautéed onions, peppers, and tomatoes in coconut oil before adding the diced conchs. A splash of rum and a pinch of curry brought depth to the dish, while the aromas filled the air.

Using seasonal vegetables, we tossed a simple salad of crisp cucumbers, sweet tomatoes, and fresh greens dressed with lime and a touch of salt.

When the food was ready, Patrick reached for a large, beautifully polished conch shell. Holding it to his lips, he blew a long, deep note that echoed across the island. "This is how we let our family know it's time to eat," he said with a grin.



Donny boiling conches, making coconut milk and coconut rice

Patrick told us about the rich oral history of the Guna people, passed down from generation to generation through songs.

"This night deserves its own song," he said. He began composing a melody on the spot, singing of friendship, shared meals, and the beauty of cultural exchange.

As the sun set over the San Blas Islands, Donny smiled and said, "Mas Maya," which in the Guna language means "very delicious." And indeed, it was. We felt a profound gratitude — this wasn't just a meal; it was a celebration of life, community, and connection.

—Continued on the next page



—Continued from the previous page

Coconut Rice (Arroz con Coco)
2 cups of white rice
1 large coconut (or 1 cup canned coconut milk for convenience)
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. sugar
2 cups water

1. Extract coconut milk (if using fresh coconut): Grate the coconut and squeeze the pulp with 1.5 cups of warm water to extract the milk. Strain and set aside.
2. In a pot, combine the coconut milk, salt, sugar, and 2 cups of water. Bring to a boil.
3. Add the rice, stir, and reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer until the liquid is absorbed and the rice is tender, about 18-20 minutes.
4. Let sit for 5 minutes before fluffing with a fork.

Conch Stew with Tomatoes and Peppers
4 medium conchs (cleaned and diced; substitute squid or clams if unavailable)
2 medium tomatoes (diced)
1 bell pepper (diced)
1 medium onion (diced)
2 cloves garlic (minced)
1 tbsp. coconut oil
1 tbsp. curry powder
2 tbsp. white rum
Salt and pepper to taste

1. Heat coconut oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add garlic, onion, and bell pepper, sautéing until softened.
2. Add tomatoes and cook until they break down into a sauce.
3. Stir in the diced conch, curry powder, and a splash of rum. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Cover and simmer for 20-30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the conch is tender and the flavors meld.

Fried Sweet Plantains
4 ripe plantains
Coconut oil for frying

1. Peel and slice the plantains diagonally into thick pieces.
2. Heat coconut oil in a frying pan over medium heat.
3. Fry the plantains until golden brown and caramelized on both sides. Drain on paper towels and serve warm.

Guna Garden Salad
2 medium cucumbers
2 medium tomatoes
1 1/3 cups mixed greens
Juice of 2 limes
Salt to taste

1. Slice the cucumbers and tomatoes. Toss with mixed greens in a bowl.
2. Drizzle with lime juice and season with salt. Serve immediately for a fresh, tangy side dish.

Serving Suggestion

For a complete Guna-inspired meal, serve the coconut rice alongside the conch stew, with fried plantains and the garden salad as sides. Each dish brings a balance of savory, sweet, and tangy flavors, just as we experienced on the San Blas Islands.

Enjoy your meal, and as the Guna might say, “Mas Maya” — delicious food. Let it be a celebration of connection and community!

For a deeper dive into our culinary adventures and more delightful recipes, grab the link to the online book on Google Books for Apple, Android, and Windows users:

https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=rHvnEAAAQBAJ

Or if you would like to feel the book in your hands clink this link:

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Margarita with Guna family





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CALENDAR

May 2025

1	Public holiday in many places (Labour Day)
1-3	St. Barth Film Festival
2	Jump-Up, St. Croix
2-12	Cayman Islands Carnival (Batabano). caymanresident.com/cayman-carnival-batabano
3	Dockyard Day, Antigua. antiguanice.com
3	Point Fortin Borough Day, Point Fortin, Trinidad
3-8	Romerias de Mayo, Holguin, Cuba. rove.me/to/cuba/romerias-de-mayo
4	Jazz'n'Creole event, Dominica. dominicafestivals.com
8	Public holiday in Saint-Barthélémy (Victory Day)
9	Public holiday in Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saint-Barthélémy and St. Maarten (Ascension Day)
10	Start of ARC Europe rally from St. Maarten (or East Coast USA) to Portugal via Bermuda. worldcruising.com/arc_europe
10-11	National Dinghy Championship, St. Maarten. caribbean-sailing.com/calendar/#
10-11	BVI Dinghy Championship, Tortola. caribbean-sailing.com/calendar/#
11	Belize Cashew Festival & Agriculture Show, Crooked Tree Village. belizing.com/Cashew-Festival-and-Agriculture-Show-Belize/
12	FULL MOON (Flower Moon)
15-18	Virgin Islands Boating Expo (VIBE). https://vibe.vi/
15-18	Barbados Celtic Festival. facebook.com/barbadoscelticfestival/
20	Public holiday in the Cayman Islands (Discovery Day)
21	ARC Europe rally leaves Bermuda. worldcruising.com/arc_europe
22-26	Pan Pepin International Dinghy Regatta, Club Náutico de San Juan, Puerto Rico
22-27	Grenada Chocolate Festival. grenadachocolatefest.com
22-27	FesTopia Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. festopia.com
23-26	Aruba Soul Beach Music Festival
24-25	Foxy's Wooden Boat Regatta, Jost Van Dyke, BVI. www.westendyachtclubbvi.com
25	Keelboat Season Championship, Race Day Three, St. Maarten
25-1 Jun	Barbados Gospel Fest
26	Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI (Memorial Day)
28-2 Jun	Hi-Winds Amateur World Challenge, Aruba
30	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Indian Arrival Day) and in Anguilla (Anguilla Day)
30-1 Jun	Anguilla Day Premier's Cup. https://ivisitanguilla.com/festivals-and-events
30-8 Jun	St. Barth Theatre Festival. festivaldetheatredesaintbarthelemy.com
31	Out of this World Music Festival, Grand Cayman. ootwmusicfest.com
31	Coveside Concert – Memories on the Beach. Plantation Cove, St. Ann, Jamaica. covesideconcerts.com
TBA	Anguilla LitFest. https://ivisitanguilla.com/festivals-and-events
TBA	Coraland Music Festival, Cayo Santa Maria, Cuba
TBA	Placencia Sailing Club Regatta, Belize
TBA	Virgin Islands Music Festival, Road Town, BVI. bvitourism.com

See the entire calendar of events at caribbeancompass.com/caribbean-events-calendar



MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON
MAY 2025

Crossing the channels between Eastern Caribbean islands, an ebb tide carries you off to leeward and a strong flood tide creates lumpy seas, so crossing with a favorable tide is faster and more comfortable. The table below, showing the local time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this month, will help you calculate the tides.

Water generally tries to run toward the moon. The flood tide starts running eastward soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then ebbs westward. From just after the moon's setting to just after its nadir, the tide runs eastward; and from just after its nadir to soon after its rising, the tide runs westward.

The first hour after moonrise, the westerly current is barely negated. The second hour the flood tide is stronger, the third and fourth hour it's strongest, then it eases off in the fifth and sixth hours. The maximum tide is three or four days after the new and full moons. For more detailed information enabling the sailor to calculate the direction and strength of the current, check the tidal section in the booklets that come with Imray-Iolaire charts A27 or B1.

May 2025

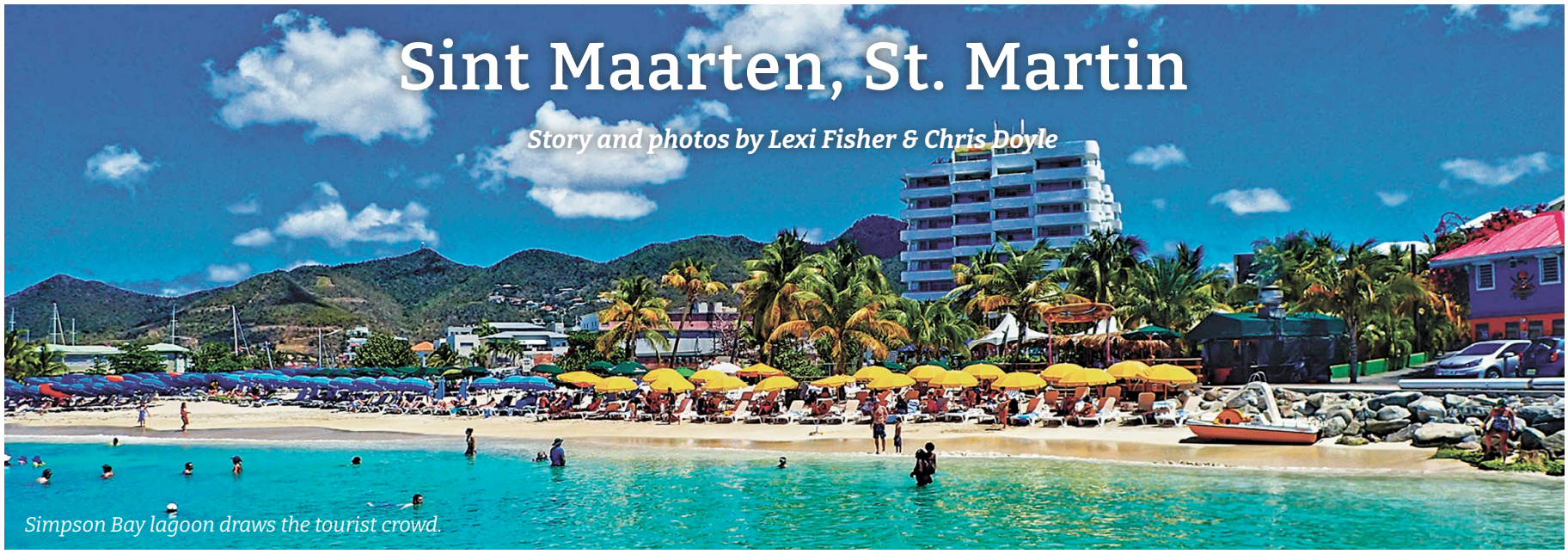
DATE	TIME
1	1543
2	1644
3	1739
4	1830
5	1915
6	1957
7	2037
8	2116
9	2156
10	2236
11	2319
12	0000 FULL MOON
13	0005
14	0054
15	0146
16	0239
17	0333
18	0426
19	0517
20	0605
21	0653
22	0740
23	0829
24	0919
25	1014
26	1114
27	1217
28	1323
29	1427
30	1527
31	1621

June 2025

DATE	TIME
1	1710
2	1754
3	1835
4	1950
5	1954
6	2035
7	2117
8	2202
9	2250
10	2341
11	0000 FULL MOON
12	0034
13	0129
14	0222
15	0314
16	0403
17	0454
18	0536
19	0623
20	0711
21	0802
22	0858
23	0958
24	1102
25	1208
26	1310
27	1408
28	1500
29	1547
30	1630

Sint Maarten, St. Martin

Story and photos by Lexi Fisher & Chris Doyle



Simpson Bay lagoon draws the tourist crowd.

St. Martin sits at the northern end of the chain of Eastern Caribbean islands and is one of the major yachting centers of the region. Its enormous Simpson Bay lagoon holds hundreds of yachts and is surrounded by marinas, boat yards, restaurants, and shopping. Just about anything you could want is a dinghy ride away.

In addition to a major yachting destination, St. Martin is also perhaps the best-known holiday destination in the Leewards. It is blessed with a multitude of superb white sand beaches backed by pleasantly scenic hills. Its fame has come from the way it has embraced tourism wholeheartedly, with casinos, condominiums, and scores of hotels. The whole island is a duty-free shopping plaza. Two of the Caribbean's biggest chandleries are based here: Budget Marine and Island Water World. With the help of their customers, they have generated enough buying power to be able to offer excellent prices to yachts.



The island is renowned as a duty-free shopping haven.

St. Martin is divided across the middle. The northern part is French, the southern part Dutch. There is a charming story, completely unsupported by historical fact, that the French and Dutch were so civilized that, rather than fight over the island, they had a Frenchman armed with a bottle of wine walk in one direction and a Dutchman equipped with a flask of gin take the other. Where they met became the boundary, and the French ended up with a bit more because the gin was stronger than the wine.

In the early days, the island was important to the Dutch because of the salt ponds in the southern part. St. Martin was successful for a time as a producer of tobacco, and then of sugar. With the collapse of the sugar market, it started a long decline. In 1939, the island was made completely duty-free. The strategy worked and St. Martin became the Caribbean's number one shopping mall.

In 2017 the island was hard hit by Hurricane Irma. Many marinas, hotels, and restaurants were blown away, most notably on Oyster Pond and the French side of Simpson Bay Lagoon. Most rebuilt, but some did not. Still, hotels are everywhere, cruise ships call daily, and there are hundreds of duty-free shops and restaurants, as well as over a dozen casinos. The tourism industry has quickly recovered, especially in Philipsburg, and there are facilities for most kinds of yacht work.

The Dutch side has the Sint Maarten Yacht Club, which organizes many races, and which cruising sailors can join. The club is right next to the Simpson Bay bridge, with a good dinghy dock. They have a very active youth sailing program and, if you are staying a while, you can join the club and your kids can enjoy the fun.

The Heineken Regatta is on the first full weekend in March, a world-famous international event that draws many famous yachts. Its office is upstairs in the Yacht Club. The Course D'Alliance is a three-day cruiser's race from St. Martin to St. Barts, then onto Anguilla, in December. If you have a catamaran, you can join in the Caribbean Multihull Challenge. There are many events, including informal races, year-round.

Both sides have marine parks. Yachts can anchor or pick up a mooring in most of the marine park anchorages. Moorings for divers and snorkelers are on many sites. The French marine park goes from Oyster Pond to Tintamarre and surrounds Roche Creole. Fishing, taking of anything, jet skis, any motorized water sports, drones, underwater lights, loud music, deck or hull cleaning, emptying holding tanks, and water-skiing are all banned within this area, and the rules are strictly enforced.



Grand Case Beach, one of St. Martin's multitude of superb white sand beaches

The only permissible overnight anchorages in the park are at Tintamarre and Roche Creole, where you must first get permission from the park by filling out and emailing the form available at reservenaturelle-saint-martin.com/en/camping-mouillage.

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Yacht dockage is plentiful — and packed.

Both sides have marine parks. Yachts can anchor or pick up a mooring in most of the marine park anchorages. Moorings for divers and snorkelers are on many sites. The French marine park goes from Oyster Pond to Tintamarre and surrounds Roche Creole. Fishing, taking of anything, jet skis, any motorized water sports, drones, underwater lights, loud music, deck or hull cleaning, emptying holding tanks, and water-skiing are all banned within this area, and the rules are strictly enforced.

The only permissible overnight anchorages in the park are at Tintamarre and Roche Creole, where you must first get permission from the park by filling out and emailing the form available at reservenaturelle-saint-martin.com/en/camping-mouillage.

Both the French and the Dutch sides have quite a few marinas and haulouts that are worth considering for the hurricane season, assuming your insurance company doesn't require you to be outside certain latitudes. Plus, the duty-free shopping, plethora of bars and restaurants, and variety of bays and offshore islands to explore add some welcome respite from the stress of haul and launch seasons.

Doyle Guides contain the Eastern Caribbean's most comprehensive and reliable sailing information, available in hard copy and online through a free mobile app, website, and Facebook group. (www.doyleguides.com).

St. Martin and Sint Maarten Entry and Exit Procedures

Ports of Entry:
St. Martin (French side) has three ports of entry and has a simpler, less expensive clearance process. Sint Maarten (Dutch side) has two ports of entry.

Advance Paperwork:
As in the rest of the French Antilles, clearance for St. Martin can be completed and approved online, prior to arrival. Sint Maarten has an online ED Card that can be filled out before arrival. For visitors from many countries, a visa is not required. Stays of up to 90 days are typically granted from both sides of the island.

Entry Process:
For St. Martin, either online clearance, or on arrival at one of the customs computers located in establishments island-wide. For Sint Maarten, all vessels must clear in with customs and immigration upon arrival.

Exit Process:
Same as the entry process for each country. Vessels clearing out from St. Martin should visit an authorized establishment to have their exit documents printed and stamped, as needed. For Sint Maarten vessels are advised to clear out of the same port as they cleared in, so that fees can be settled properly.

Rates:
St. Martin is inexpensive with a minimal cost if using a customs computer in an authorized establishment. Sint Maarten incurs larger fees with a small customs fee, weekly harbor fees, bridge fees and weekly mooring fees. **See Sint Maarten Fees** for more information https://www.noonsite.com/place/sint-maarten/view/fees/.

noonsite.com

Check https://www.noonsite.com/place/st-martin/view/clearance/ and https://www.noonsite.com/place/sint-maarten/view/clearance/ for more detailed information and updates. This information is provided by Noonsite.com, specialists in worldwide formalities for yachts, and was accurate at press time.



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MP = Market Place pages 29 - 30
C/W = Caribbean-wide
SVG = St. Vincent & the Grenadines

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