CARIBBEAN COMPASS
On-line
NOVEMBER 2011 NO. 194
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

'CAMP GRENADA'

See story on page 24



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Cover photo: Davon Baker captured this iconic image of St. George's, Grenada. As many as 900 yachts per month visited Grenada this summer



Compass **covers the Caribbean! From Cuba to Trinidad, from Panama to Barbuda, we've got the news and views that sailors can use. We're the Caribbean's monthly look at sea and shore.**

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— Caroline Egloff and Urs Klopfenstein
S/V Petite Fleur

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Info & Updates

Buoy Adrift from Barbados, Sightings Wanted
The West Indies Rum Distillery has lost a buoy identical to the one in the picture.



The buoy went adrift last December 3rd from a position approximately one kilometer north of the Bridgetown Port, Barbados. The buoy is about eight or nine feet tall, and the white structure on the top is an orange-flashing light.

Boats that go adrift in this area often end up around the ABC islands or farther west (see 'Update: The Story of *Double H*' on page 6) in a month or two. A year later…?

If you have seen this buoy, please inform Rhett Harris at rhett.harris@thegelgroup.com or (246) 425-9300.

Navigational Hazard in Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou
The local cargo sloop *Phebeana Corion* sank on her moorings in Tyrrel Bay on September 11th. The following day, the inoperative ferry *Lexiana* dragged over the top of the sloop. *Phebeana Corion* has been well known in Tyrrel Bay as the source of wine sold by dinghy to yachts anchored in the bay.

As of this writing, the starboard side of the hull was slightly above water, as was the mast and some rigging. There are numerous markers (whether fish pots taking advantage of the wreck or true markers for the wreck), long lines and ropes all around at 12°27.490'N, 61°29.134'W, all of which constitute a navigational hazard to any vessel (dinghy or yacht) passing at what might be thought to be safe distance. The wreck is in three parts, two of which float. The Port Authority is reportedly arranging to have the pieces of the wreck pulled ashore for demolition.

For more information visit the Caribbean Safety and Security Net at www.safetyandsecuritynet.com.

Eight Bells
Dan Moreland reports: Capt. Arthur M. Kimberly and his wooden Danish brigantine *Romance* were fixtures in the Eastern Caribbean for decades, sailing between Grenada and the BVI and giving passengers and young crew the experiences of a lifetime. Before that, he sailed for years in the Bahamas. Known as "Skipper", …

—*Continued on next page*



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Barefoot Yacht Charters
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Wilsons' Cruzan Canvas
Christiansted

Trinidad & Tobago
Soca Sails, Ltd.
Chaguaramas



photo: www.yachtshotsbvi.com

Jet Stream, Leopard 45

—Continued from previous page
…he was the last of the "old school".
On September 17th, at age 90, Skipper slipped his springline and headed offshore. A memorial service was held on October 8th in New Smyrna Beach, Florida.
Farewell, Skipper, and fair winds.
For more information visit www.squaresail.com/romance.html.

Trinidad's YSATT Moves to New Office
The office of the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago (YSATT) is now located next to Sea of Styles boutique in Crews Inn, Chaguaramas, a one-minute walk from Customs and Immigration. This office is much bigger and better able to serve you.
For more information visit www.ysatt.org.

Regional Body Names Yachting Committee
The Secretariat of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) recently reconstituted the OECS Yachting Committee, which was previously dubbed the OECS Yachting Safety and Security Working Group. The inaugural meeting of the committee was convened on September 28th by videoconference.
The purpose of the meeting was, firstly, to follow up on the directives given by the OECS Authority relating to the yachting sector, with a view to providing a progress report to the next meeting of the OECS Authority (slated for this month); and, secondly, to look imaginatively and creatively at viable ways to maximize the value derived from yachting in the OECS.
The inaugural meeting of the Yachting Committee focused on key issues including facilitation of seamless intra-regional travel for yachts visiting the OECS; security management to ensure that movement of yachts between OECS territories does not compromise the integrity of the single yachting space; revenue collection management including the adoption of a mechanism that safeguards the income-earning potential of Member States; and adoption of the ESeaClear, an online pre-arrival notification system managed by the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council.
A unanimous decision taken at the meeting was the need for all OECS member states to fully implement the ESeaClear system. ESeaClear is a web portal that enables yachts to enter their clearance information online in advance of arrival, to expedite their Customs and Immigration formalities upon arrival at the port. The use of ESeaClear will serve as a platform to facilitate hassle-free movement of yachts across OECS waters.
Programme officer at the OECS Secretariat, Dr. Lorraine Nicholas, said the yachting subsector of tourism remains a top priority on the work programme of the OECS Tourism Desk. "It has been an agenda item on the two most recently convened OECS Council of Tourism Ministers meetings. Yachting visitors represent a potentially lucrative market for the OECS with opportunities for the further development of related business services, skills development and employment. The purpose of the Yachting Committee is to deliberate on, and make suggestions and recommendations to, the OECS Secretariat for the implementation of the mandates and directives given by the OECS Council of Tourism Ministers with respect to yachting. The Committee will also play advisory and facilitative roles with respect to implementation of actions required at the national level to fulfill ministerial mandates," she explained.
The committee comprises representatives from the nine OECS member states: Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. Other agencies, such as the Caribbean Marine Association and the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council, were also invited to the inaugural meeting.

CMA: "Economic Data on Marine Sector Needed'
The Caribbean Marine Association (CMA) recognizes the need for capturing current economic data for the marine sector. The last formal survey of the sub-regional marine sector, "Yachting in the Eastern Caribbean, a Regional Overview", was undertaken by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN/ECLAC) in 2001. While this report remains a useful source of baseline information, since its publication a decade has gone by and several noticeable developments to the marine industry have taken place, including development of marinas, changing of national yachting policies and introduction of marine training institutions in CMA Member States. Current data is required in order for the CMA to develop policy and positions that accurately reflect the current state of the industry.
Through the technical assistance from the Center for the Development of Enterprise under the project "Capacity Building of the CMA for Policy Dialogue and Promotion of the Sector towards the Goals of Many Islands, One Sea", one of the components was the development of survey instruments and gathering of yachting data through the conducting of surveys in participating member states. The budget for this component was Euro 6,000 and the implementation period was from May to July.
The overall objective of this initiative was to enhance the profile of the yachting industry through the collection of data to support the industry's economic contribution to member states. The survey objectives were to obtain robust yachting expenditure data for each of the participating national associations; to strengthen the capacity of national associations to conduct yachting expenditure surveys; to promote collaboration between the national associations and the national tourism authorities; to harmonize the collection and presentation of yachting expenditure data, and to prepare a solid foundation for eventual economic impact studies.
Some data was collected from a few member states, although the information was far from comprehensive. Challenges faced in the implementation of this component included timing and time limitations (e.g. May to July is a slow period for arriving yachts); funding; and human resource constraints.
The CMA must embark upon a follow-up project in order to collect the data required for the development of strong policy and lobbying positions for the industry. The future data collection project should include collection over one calendar year, with focus on different member states during their most active seasons; preparation of modified surveys depending on target market; securing adequate funding for the facilitation of the Regional Survey Coordinator to meet with key stakeholders and to hire dedicated interviewers for each participating member state; and inclusion of a validation workshop for key private sector and policy development stakeholders to introduce, validate and develop policy decisions for the industry.
For more information visit www.caribbeanmarineassociation.com or contact CMA President John Duffy at info@caribbeanmarineassociation.com.
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Update: The Story of *Double H*

In last month's issue of *Compass* we published a letter from Kathleen and Roland O'Brien asking if anyone could provide information about the yacht *Double H*, which had been seen wrecked and abandoned at Serrana Cay, Colombia by a fellow cruiser. Kathleen and Roland had known a yacht called *Double H*, and its owners, Sarah and Walton, in the Eastern Caribbean.

Information did pour in, but the news was of a sad love story. Here is the tale, as best we can piece it together from the information received:





Sarah, Walton and Double H *will sail no more, but the Higgins's grandson will have mementoes such as this brass lantern thanks to the kindness of their fellow cruisers*

It would seem that Walton and Sarah Higgins were determined to be liveaboard cruisers until the end of their days. Having once been active, more recently acquaintances said, "The occupants of *Double H* were an elderly couple who seemed content to keep to themselves". As they aged, Walton compensated for Sarah's many medical problems, and Sarah compensated for Walton's diminishing physical and mental capacity. As their son, Joe, says, "They together made one". In June of 2010, Sarah died in her sleep, next to Walton aboard their little ketch.

Four months after her death, while sailing north in bad weather in October of last year, Walton and a helper were rescued at night by the Coast Guard about 12 miles off St. Vincent. *Double H* reportedly had serious mast and rigging damage, could not be towed, and was apparently allowed to go adrift.

Joe arranged for his father to fly to the US from St. Vincent, but Walton missed his connection in Trinidad and was missing for three days until he wandered into the US Embassy. Joe retrieved him and took him straight to the Veterans Administration medical center in Mississippi, where he was found to be 119 pounds, dehydrated and anemic, and tested positive for TB and cancer. Walton died in his sleep 90 days later, aged 78, on February 2nd of this year. He was able to meet and spend time with his only grandson — Bryson Rainer Higgins, age four. Joe wrote, "God put many people in his path of life to get him home so he could die surrounded by love."

The US Coast Guard from Puerto Rico reportedly located *Double H* 300 miles from St. Vincent, half full of water and "not salvageable". The Higgins' dog was still aboard and was taken to a shelter. *Double H* arrived in calm conditions at Serrana Cay, at nearly the same latitude as St. Vincent, about two months after being abandoned — a drift rate of about 20 miles a day. (The yacht *Loose Cannon* went adrift in May of 2010 from Barbados and was found drifting north of Curaçao exactly a month later, giving almost exactly the same rate and direction of drift.)

Thanks to those who answered their request for information, Kathleen and Roland got in touch with Joe and shipped him two keepsakes for Sarah and Walton's grandson — a pair of Dietz brass lanterns that Sarah and Walton had given to them one morning after the Grenada Cruisers Net. We believe the Colombian authorities will also be able to return personal effects found aboard *Double H*.

Thanks to all who helped provide information and memories of Sarah, Walton, and *Double H*.

Site-ings

• Cruising guide author Chris Doyle has updated his website, ***www.doyleguides.com***. The downloadable GPS pages are updated (except Venezuela), as are nearly all the downloadable town maps, and all the island pages.

• The Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting has given its website a new look and made a few changes for your convenience: ***www.antiguayachtshow.com***.

• Interested in the culture of St. Lucia? Visit ***www.stluciafolk.org***.

• Heading for Grenada, or leaving "camp"? See clearance procedures at ***www.grenadagrenadines.com/yachting/clearance-procedures***. You can download your clearance form right there!

Welcome Aboard

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers Sunsail Marine Center of St. Vincent, on page 24, and Spice of India, Maurilla Cleaning, Roger Ourboard and Ryte Welding, all of St. Lucia in the Market Place section, pages 43 through 45. Good to have you with us!



BUSINESS BRIEFS

New Directions for Budget Marine Group Services

Budget Marine has been operating via Group Services for over ten years now, with the aim of providing support services to all Budget Marine locations to maintain a high quality of service with the best possible resources.



The current Group Executive has recently appointed Annette Grannetia (at left) as the new Operational Manager of the Group. This means that she will be overseeing the operations of Marketing, Accounting, IT, Inventory Control, Product Management and Business Facilitation. At the same time, the repositioning will allow Group Manager Robbie Ferron (right) to focus more on the specific areas of Business Consultancy, Products and Vendors. Annette's previous function was that of the Business Systems Facility Manager, and she has been with Budget Marine for almost five years now.

We wish both Annette and Robbie the best of luck in their new positions!

For more information on Budget Marine see ad on page 2.

Pantaenius Support Noonsite.com

The cruisers' online resource noonsite.com, operated by World Cruising Club, has just announced a three-year sponsorship deal with insurance specialists Pantaenius. Pantaenius have been long-term supporters of noonsite.com, and this latest news means they'll be involved until fall 2014. World Cruising Club managing director, Andrew Bishop says "We're delighted that Pantaenius have chosen to continue their relationship with noonsite.com at this time; it underlines the value of the cruising information and networks that noonsite.com offers sailors. Noonsite.com is going through a major redevelopment — watch out for the new site launch soon!"

For more information on Pantaenius visit www.pantaenius.co.uk. For more information on World Cruising Club visit www.worldcruising.com.

'The Ultimate Machine' at Grenadines Sails & Canvas, Bequia

Grenadines Sails & Canvas, Bequia announces that its loft in Admiralty Bay is now equipped with the ultimate sail-making machine, the Solent XL-760-HA long and high arm, manufactured in England. This machine is capable of three-step and zig-



zag stitching and can accommodate the repair of very large and heavy sails, awnings, and other mega-serious sewing jobs.

Avell Davis (at center) has been a professional sailmaker since 1984, and he and his Grenadine Sails team, Calvert Ollivierre (left) and Ravnel King (right), look forward to meeting all your sail and canvas needs — no matter how large!

For more information see ad on page 21.

2012 Nautical Almanac Available Now

The Nautical Almanac is the cornerstone for all celestial navigation, listing the celestial bodies used for navigation, a sight reduction table, and other information valuable to the offshore navigator. The content of the Paradise Cay edition is identical to the United States Naval Observatory edition. Paradise Cay Publications is the only entity in the United States other than the US Government legally authorized to publish the full contents of the Nautical Almanac.

Available at bookstores and chandleries or from www.paracay.com.

Canada Metal Pacific Acquires Rocna Anchors

Canada Metal Pacific of Vancouver has acquired New Zealand-based Rocna Anchors, and the Rocna manufacturing license has been re-assigned to Canada Metal Pacific.

—Continued on next page

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

1	Public holiday in Antigua & Barbuda (Independence Day) and Haiti (All Saints' Day)
2	Public holiday in Haiti (All Souls' Day)
3	Public holiday in Dominica (Independence Day)
4	Public holiday in Dominica (Community Day of Service)
5	SOL Optimist Championship, St. Maarten. St. Maarten Yacht Club (SMYC), tel (599) 544-2075, info@smyc.com, www.smyc.com
5	Carriacou Junior Sailing Club Fête (barbecue and boat games). www.facebook.com/carriacoujuniorsailing
6	St. Maarten Yacht Club Youth Sailing Program fundraiser. Ernest & Fidel Café, Porto Cupecoy. portofleamarket@hotmail.com
7	Caribbean 1500 rally departs from Virginia, USA to Tortola, BVI. www.carib1500.com
8 – 11	BVI Charter Yacht Show, Tortola. www.bvicrewedyachts.com/boatshow
10	FULL MOON
11 – 12	Nature Island Regatta, Portsmouth, Dominica. organisation@triskellcup.com
11 – 13	Heineken Regatta Curaçao. www.heinekenregattacuracao.com
11 – 13	Discover Caribbean Sailing Festival (first weekend), Ponce, Puerto Rico. www.ponceyachtandfishingclub.com
12 - 13	Jolly Harbour Yacht Club Regatta, Antigua. Jolly Harbour Yacht Club (JHYC), Antigua. tel (268) 770-6172, chrischitty1@hotmail.com, www.jhycantigua.com
12 – 13	Pete Sheals Memorial Regatta, BVI. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, sailing@royalbviyc.org, www.royalbviyc.org
12 – 16	Golden Rock Regatta, St. Maarten to Statia. http://website.goldenrockregatta.com
16 – 20	St. Barth Cata Cup (F18 catamarans). www.stbarthcatacup.com
17	Privateers vs Royalists Race, Nelson's Dockyard, Antigua
18	Public holiday in Haiti (Battle of Vertieres Day)
18 – 12	Discover Caribbean Sailing Festival (second weekend), Ponce, Puerto Rico. www.ponceyachtandfishingclub.com
18 – 21	Barbados Food & Wine and Rum Festival. www.foodwinerum.com
19	Peg Legs Round Tortola Race, BVI. RBVIYC
19	Public holiday in Belize (Garifuna Settlement Day)
20	Boreas Pursuit Race, Nelson's Dockyard, Antigua
20	ARC Flotilla, Castries Harbour to Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia. St. Lucia Yacht Club, (SLYC) tel (758) 452-8350, secretary@stluciayachtclub.com, www.stluciayachtclub.com
20	Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) starts, Canary Islands to St. Lucia. www.worldcruising.com/arc
21	Public holiday in the Cayman Islands (Remembrance Day)
23	Public holiday in Montserrat (Liberation Day)
24 – 28	22nd Karibik Trophy, Antigua & Barbuda. www.khp-yachtcharter.de
25 – 27	Course de l'Alliance, St. Martin. www.coursedelalliance.com
26 – 27	J/24 Barbados Match Racing Championships. www.sailbarbados.com
26 – 27	BVI Schools' Regatta. RBVIYC
30	Public holiday in Barbados (Independence Day)
30 – 4 December	Carlos Aguilar Match Race, St. Thomas, USVI. www.carlosmatchrace.com

DECEMBER

2 – 3	Gustav Wilmerding Memorial Challenge race, BVI
3	Une Femme, Un Homme, Un Bateau (double-handed race), Martinique. Club Nautique Le Neptune (CNN), Martinique, tel (596) 51 73 24, www.clubnautiqueleneptune.com
4 – 10	Antigua Charter Yacht Show. www.antiguayachtshow.com
10	Tempest Challenge, Martinique. Yacht Club de la Martinique (YCM), tel (596) 63 26 76, ycmq@wanadoo.fr
10	FULL MOON
13	Public holiday in St. Lucia (National Day)
15 - 18	Havana International Jazz Festival, Cuba. www.apassion4jazz.net/havana.html
16 – 18	Carriacou Parang Festival. http://carriacouparangfestival.com
16 – 24	Nine Mornings Festival, St. Vincent
17	O'Neal & Mundy Commodore's Cup, Tortola. RBVIYC
18	Kids' Sailing Regatta, Dominica. info@dominicamarinecenter.com
19	Public holiday in Anguilla (Separation Day)
22	Winter Solstice
25	Christmas Day
26	Boxing Day
26 – 30	Coupe de Noël, Guadeloupe. Cercle Sportif de Bas du Fort (CSBF), tel 0590 90 93 94, csbf.guadeloupe@wanadoo.fr, www.csbf-guadeloupe.com
31	Nelson's Pursuit Race, Antigua. AYC. www.antiguayachtclub.com
31	New Year's Eve, Old Year's Night. Fireworks in many places, including Trellis Bay, Tortola; Admiralty Bay, Bequia; and Fort-de-France, Martinique. Public holiday in Montserrat

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of Compass *went to press — but plans change, so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation. If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our monthly calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to sally@caribbeancompass.com*

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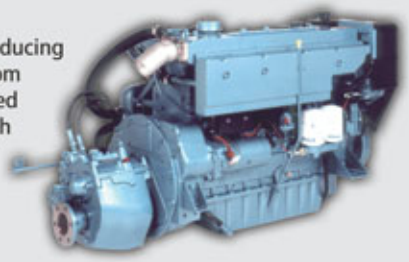
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—Continued from previous page

"We have been searching for a line of anchors and anchoring products to complement our CMP anchor chain," stated John Mitchell, president of Canada Metal Pacific, "and are very excited to bring Rocna Anchors into the fold. Their superior performance fits well with our focus on innovation and quality products."

Canada Metal Pacific is a world-leading producer of CMP chain, Martyr marine anodes, Octopus marine autopilot drive systems and Intellisteer remote steering systems.

"I am impressed with the manufacturing, engineering, and quality control capabilities of Canada Metal Pacific," said Peter Smith, designer of the Rocna anchor. "I look forward to working with them to continue Rocna's growth as the highest quality, best-performing anchor available."

For more information visit www.canmet.com.

Welcome to Spice of India in St. Lucia



"Excellent food! Great flavours. Beautiful ambiance. Really a great experience. Superb service". This is an excerpt of a review written by one of the many satisfied patrons of the Spice of India since it opened in December 2010.

The restaurant, brainchild of restaurateur Chef Adil, is truly a sophisticated Indian restaurant situated in the heart of Rodney Bay, St. Lucia. Great emphasis is placed on adhering to the authenticity of the food. Meals making full use of the freshest ingredients are prepared by experienced Indian chefs in an open display kitchen, which boasts an authentic Tandoor oven.

Going beyond the kitchen, Chef Adil imported many decorative elements including reflective mirrors, hanging saris, murals of village scenes and other Indian accents that are incorporated into the design of the restaurant. Walking through the front door many have been held transfixed by the visual impact of recreating a bit of India in St. Lucia.

Lunches are served daily and are modeled after a typical Indian family meal. Called a Chef Tasting Lunch Menu, many dishes are brought to the table where diners can enjoy a wide variety of food for a fixed price. The menu changes every day, giving diners a great way to enjoy many dishes on a budget, or serves as a great introduction to authentic regional Indian dishes. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes are available.

For dinner the restaurant is transformed into a fine dining setting where patrons can order from a lavish a la carte menu. Choices include popular favorites such as Chicken Tikka Masala, Karahi Goat, Naan breads, Biryanis, refreshing Lassi drinks and Masala Chai to name a few. The bar, made from thousands of Indian bangles, is fully stocked with an extensive array of beverages. Open air or air-conditioned seating is available.

For more information see ad in the Market Place section, pages 43 through 45.

Free Internet at Jolly Harbour Marina, Antigua

"Free internet," replied Festus Isaac, Marina Manager, when asked what was the most requested improvement for Jolly Harbour Marina last season. "We have listened



and taken action," he added. Jolly Harbour Marina is now providing free internet access for all its marina slips — just register when checking in at the Marina office.

Jolly Harbour Marina, located on the sheltered western side of Antigua, has over 200 slips on concrete piers, each providing water and power, and one pier has cable TV access. A full service concrete boatyard for maintenance or storage on welded stands or in cradles is open all year with a certified 70-ton travel lift. The fuel dock provides a waste oil disposal facility, along with new oils and propane refills, and the whole marina has 24-hour security to complement the CCTV coverage.

The marina is set within a larger complex which boasts one of the largest supermarkets on the island, a golf course, swimming pool, gym, car hire, taxis and good selection of bars, restaurants and shops.

For more information visit www.jhmarina.com.

St. Maarten Charter Companies Upgrade Crew with STCW'95

Crew from the St. Maarten charter companies including Eagle Tours, Aquamania, and Captain Morgan charters, have recently completed the STCW'95 course at the Maritime School of the West Indies. In addition, several other crew from the island and abroad took this September course. The school had offered a special "off season" course to enable charter crew to attend in time to be fully prepared for the upcoming tourism high season.

The STCW'95 is a five-day course that consists of several modules including First Aid, Social Responsibility, Personal Safety and Survival Techniques, and Fire Fighting.

The Maritime School of the West Indies is affiliated with the organization International Yacht Training. Sessions about the use of composite materials, marine paints, rigging, electronics and other specific yachting-related issues are being planned.

The Maritime School will again, as in previous years and in cooperation with the Caribbean Sail Training Association, offer the opportunity to Caribbean youth to sail on board several Tall Ships to Caribbean and European destinations as trainees starting in December and throughout next year.

For more information visit www.MaritimeSchool.net.

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Aruba's Big Haul

Varadero Marina in Aruba has hauled its first boat with the revolutionary haul-out solution, a hydraulic Roodberg slipway trailer, the world's fastest way of handling boats. A 30-ton catamaran was hauled with ease by one of the trailers, which has a



capacity of 60,000 kilos with a LOA limit of 80 feet and BOA limit of 32 feet. The yard also has a second trailer with a capacity up to 25,000 kilos and a travel lift with a 45,000-kilo limit.

The Roodberg trailer allows large boats to be hauled in a matter of minutes, operated by one person.

While the trailer can haul any type of boats, it is particularly attractive for catamarans, as it does not compress the hulls, as other boatlifts do when using slings. Every Roodberg trailer can hydraulically adapt to beam, height and length of every craft; it handles small RIB craft with the same ease, without wasting maneuvering and storing space. The trailer is the largest of its kind to be found in the Caribbean.

Varadero is Aruba's first modern boat yard. It has a capacity for 70 wet slips and a dry storage capacity for 160 boats. They will also be adding a fuel dock by the end of the year and a Budget Marine Chandlery moving into the yard in 2012.

Gill Sponsors St. Maarten Heineken Regatta

When faced with the task of finding a new Technical Gear line for their event, the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta team turned to Gill North America, and their President David Pritchard.

Gill, a well-known name in North America and Europe, has begun to actively create a presence in the Caribbean, making it the logical solution for the new technical gear provider for the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. Their new UV warm weather line of tech shorts and shirts make Gill and this event a perfect fit.

The new technical line from Gill includes several styles of Heineken Regatta branded tech wear including hats and new UV styles of tech shirts and tech shorts. Also Gill will feature select Race Collection styles, gloves, kneepads and Caribbean-weight foul weather jackets.

Gill will be on site during the regatta week featuring event-branded tech wear offered through local retail partner Budget Marine. You can order Gill products decorated with your boat name on line in advance of the regatta, for pick up at Budget Marine.

For more information please visit www.heinekenregatta.com.

Carriacou Schooner Joins Nicholson Charter Fleet

Jambalaya, 73-foot wooden schooner, has joined Nicholson Yachts Caribbean charter fleet. She was built in 2002 in Carriacou and owners Peter and Sylvie completed a full refit at the beginning of 2010 so all the interior design is new!



Blending the best of traditional wooden boat construction with the latest nautical technology and outfitted to the highest standard, *Jambalaya* is a perfect combination of tradition and comfort.

For more information visit www.nicholsonyachts.com.

Cruising Guide Author to Speak at SSCA Gam in Florida

Frank Virgintino, author of free cruising guides for various Caribbean islands, will be the guest speaker during the 36th annual Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA) Gam in Melbourne, Florida. This event will take place at the Eau Gallie Civic Center, November 11th through 13th. Virgintino will address cruising the million-square-mile Caribbean by section, or quadrant, and tell how this approach can result in a successful cruise of the entire Caribbean. (See his article on this subject on page 30.)

Virgintino will also lead the Sunday roundtable discussion featuring the Dominican Republic, whose waters he has cruised frequently. His cruising guide for the Dominican Republic was first released in 2008. The most recent (2011) revision is available, as are cruising guides to the Cayman Islands, Haiti, Jamaica, and Trinidad, in Kindle format at Amazon and as a free PDF at freecruisingguides.com.

A native New Yorker based on City Island, NY, Virgintino's 40-plus years of sailing have included the Canadian Maritimes, the whole eastern seaboard of the United States and the entire Caribbean. Aside from cruising he has spent the better part of his career building and administering marinas. He has personally researched all of the harbors and anchorages in his cruising guides.

The Seven Seas Cruising Association is the oldest and largest worldwide organization supporting the liveaboard cruising lifestyle. Founded in 1952, the SSCA is dedicated to sharing cruising information, fostering camaraderie, and "leaving a clean wake".

For more information about the Seven Seas Cruising Association and the Melbourne Gam, visit ssca.org. To access "A Thinking Man's Guide to Voyages South" as well as the free cruising guides, visit FreeCruisingGuides.com.



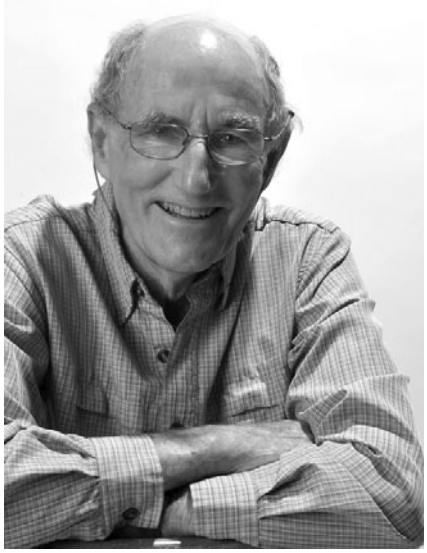
NEW RULES ENCOURAGE YACHTING IN ST. LUCIA

To help stimulate growth in St. Lucia's yachting sector, the St. Lucia government has approved revised policies. Several proposals presented by Yachting Director Cuthbert Didier have been sanctioned and will encourage private and charter yachts wishing to cruise St. Lucian waters as well as those wishing to conduct yachting business in the country. Some of the changes are:

- Visiting yachtsmen will now be permitted to stay in St. Lucia waters for six months
- Yachts with owners temporarily on island will be allowed to remain in the state free of duties and taxes for up to three years, after which they will become payable on current value
- 100-percent waiver of import duty and tax on yachts imported into St. Lucia
- 100-percent waiver on income tax from operations for the first five years for local charter companies with a minimum of one captain and three crew members, and which have a fleet of three or more power or sailing vessels
- Approval has been given for the formation of a Yachting Committee that falls under the purview of the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation and will incorporate all relevant institutions that function to regulate the yachting sector in St. Lucia
- 100-percent waiver of import duty and consumption tax on boat safety equipment and watercraft activity equipment, which includes (equipment for) sport fishing, scuba diving, kite surfing and other watersports, subject to verification of the Bill of Quantities by the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation for five years from date of Cabinet Conclusion
- 100-percent waiver of import duty and consumption tax on all equipment and materials imported or purchased locally for use in the establishment of infrastructure to service yachts over a period of five years, subject to verification and approval of the Bill of Quantities by the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation
- The Government of St. Lucia has waived the visa requirements for Russian and Australian nationals so that Russian and Australian nationals no longer require visas to enter St. Lucia.

Cruising guide author Chris Doyle interviews Cuthbert Didier about these changes:

Chris: Cuthbert, firstly congratulations to you and St. Lucia for making a major step forward in encouraging yachting. I noticed the first item on the list is "Yachtsmen will now be permitted to stay in St. Lucia waters for six months." As I understood it, this has actually been the law for quite a while, but Immigration in their wisdom have only been offering six weeks. I realize that Immigration have to have the last say on how long they let a person stay, but is there something in this new legislation that will make six months the rule rather than the exception?



Cruising guide author Chris Doyle

Cuthbert: *Thanks for your kind words of support for the new yachting Cabinet Conclusion #717. This six-month stay was included in a previous Cabinet Conclusion, however this new Cabinet Conclusion re-emphasizes that visiting yachtsmen and women are eligible for six months' stay once they meet all Immigration requirements. I have met with Immigration and this is being enforced fully. However I must confirm that this in no way prevents Immigration from doing their law enforcement duties.*

Chris: I would like to take the next two items together:

- Yachts with owners temporarily on island will be allowed to remain in the state free of duties and taxes for up to three years, after which they will become payable on current value.
- 100-percent waiver of import duty and tax on yachts imported into St. Lucia.

Obviously the first of these will be a huge help. Many yachtspeople have bought waterfront property and wanted to keep their boats in St. Lucia, only to run afoul of regulations, so this will be extremely welcome and should not only help yachting but also the real-estate market.

So the first part of my question is, do you have any indication of people waiting in line as it were for this new legislation to come in, wanting to either buy property or bring in their yachts?

The second part is, if there is a 100-percent waiver of import duty and tax on yachts imported into St. Lucia, why would they be paying duties and taxes after three years?

Cuthbert: *Yes, there are several persons who have been interested in importing yachts into St. Lucia but found the previous importation duties restrictive. This policy will also allow nationals to import yachts and participate in sailing, thus creating a culture and greater acceptance for sailing in St. Lucia. It also fits with our next step of registering yachts in St. Lucia.*

The issue of importation of a vessel after three years applies to persons who are not domiciled in St. Lucia but want to keep their vessels here indefinitely. If one has a house here in St. Lucia and has a yacht, under this new Cabinet Conclusion one will be expected to import the vessel and pay nominal fees. There is still environmental levy and Customs services charge. This comes to a total of approximately seven percent of the value.

Chris: Regarding the 100-percent waiver on income tax from operations for the first five years for local charter companies with a minimum of one captain and three crewmembers, and with a fleet of three or more power or sailing vessels.

As both you and I know, the charter industry has a huge impact on the local economy: all these charterers coming in by taxi, often staying ashore, usually eating out and then provisioning their boats. It puts lots of money into the pockets of dozens of local people. Do we have any new charter companies showing interest in St. Lucia that might be persuaded by this in the short term?

Cuthbert: *Yes, over the last few years, several companies have expressed interest in setting up charter operations in St. Lucia. However the issue of the importation of the vessels was restrictive. This new Cabinet Conclusion will encourage nationals to invest in this sector while providing a stimulus package to ensure that these new companies provide employment. Further, it will encourage the new partnerships with St. Lucian persons and persons from outside the island with capital to form companies that will operate in St. Lucia. Yacht charter operations create linkages in our economy and we are creating the environment for that to expand.*

Chris: Approval has been given for the formation of a Yachting Committee for St. Lucia, which falls under the purview of the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation and will incorporate all relevant institutions that function to regulate the yachting sector in St. Lucia. This sounds like an excellent idea. Do you know how the body will be constituted, and how much power they will have? Will it bear any relationship to the Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia?

Cuthbert: *The core membership of the committee will be comprised of persons representing the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation, the Department of Maritime Affairs, the St. Lucia Air and Seaport Authority, the Marine Police, the Immigration Department, the Department of Fisheries, the Soufriere Marine Management Area, the Marine Industry Association of St. Lucia, and the Customs and Excise Department.*

The committee will be housed at the Ministry of Tourism so it will have the power to advise and react to issues dealing with yachting on all fronts. The intention is not to replicate the private-sector Marine Industries Association but rather work alongside this association from a public sector angle.

Chris: The Government of St. Lucia has waived the visa requirements for Russian and Australian nationals so that Russian and Australian nationals no longer require visas to enter St. Lucia.

It has always struck me as strange, that when we want to expand tourism, we should actually put barriers, like visas, in the way of visitors, so this is good news. Do Immigration and Tourism ever sit down together and discuss why they have these restrictions and if they are at the minimum necessary level?

Cuthbert: *Chris, indeed the Immigration and Tourism people always sit down and discuss issues of national importance. However, you must understand that St. Lucia puts visas in place based on directives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Visas are often a form of control rather than a barrier. In this case, after providing information and a rationale for allowing growth in the yachting sector, the visa requirement for these two nationalities has been removed. This is testimony that Immigration and Tourism officials are working together! This further enforces the need for a steering committee on Yachting so that we can all share data and new trends in the industry.*



St. Lucia's Yachting Director, Cuthbert Didier

Chris: Back in June of 2010, I wrote an article for Compass about a very strange St. Lucia regulation, which says that every time a yacht wants to anchor in a place that is not a port of clearance, they have to get a "permit to moor" from Customs and pay a fee, and they have to specify which night they will be there. I mentioned at the time it sent a bit of a "yachts not welcome" message. I was very happy to get an excellent reply from you in May which said: "The general consensus is that this piece of Customs legislation is outdated and needs to be reviewed."

In this last batch of legislation did you manage to put this matter to rest?

Cuthbert: *The permit to moor issue has been settled by the Customs department of St. Lucia. This department has taken a policy decision not to charge and implement this regulation. This has been sent to the Attorney General's office for that regulation to be removed from the books. In the meantime it is not being implemented!*

Chris: The St. Lucia Government, with your involvement, has taken some bold new steps to encourage yachting. How do you see the industry developing from here?

Cuthbert: *From here I see this sector growing! Remember, I have been in this position for only two years. While I wanted to achieve more, I know St. Lucia has taken the first bold steps.*

This crucial change benefits everyone in the yachting industry, from owners to crew, charter guests and yacht businesses as well as residents of the island itself. We have been working on implementing these changes for some time, and anticipate great results for all involved.

The next step is to implement a strategic alliance with Taiwan's yachting sector and merge the yacht building and yacht registration together.

We need to become the BVI of the southern Caribbean, creating a hassle-free environment where yachts and yachtspersons can enjoy our sailing waters, spend monies in our economy and create linkages with all sectors of our economy. Yachting is real tourism and we must ensure it remains a tourist product that benefits all.

CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

Satellite Tags 'Star' at Puerto Rico Billfish Tournament

The International Game Fish Association has partnered with scientists from Stanford University to create the IGFA Great Marlin Race — a conservation research program that combines tournament angling with cutting-edge marine bio-logging science.

Large marine animals are difficult to study because most of the places that they go are off-limits to researchers. Bio-loggers are electronic sensors that can be non-invasively attached to animals. These typically have an on-board memory that can continuously store information on the habitat and activities of the animal under study. Such tags have been used to uncover the long migrations of great white sharks, for example, and monitor the feeding habits of elephant seals. While there are many kinds of bio-loggers, all of them have in common three things: a set of sensors for data such as depth, temperature, or heart rate; an ability to record the measurements in memory; and a mechanism for delivering the data to researchers.

New this year, the Club Náutico de San Juan's 58th Annual International Billfish Tournament (IBT) was the launch tournament for the International Game Fishing Association's (IGFA) yearlong Great Marlin Race. Angling teams sponsored ten pop-up archival satellite tags and placed these in released Atlantic blue marlin during the tournament. The tags are designed to pop off the marlin four months after being placed, float to the surface, and provide researchers with a wealth of data contained in the tags and picked up via ARGOS satellites. The IBT-placed tag that surfaces farthest from where it was deployed will win the race, earning that angler a free entry into the 2012 IBT and recognition by IGFA. This is just one way the world's longest continually held billfish tournament is promoting billfish conservation.

A total of 185 anglers from 12 countries fishing aboard 51 boats released 84 blue marlin in IBT 2011, held September 4th through 9th. *Mayte* won the Top Boat trophy with six blue marlin releases. "We released two blue marlin the first day, one the second and three today," says Puerto Rico's Jose Cestero, owner and one of four anglers aboard the 60-foot Hatteras. The Top Angler trophy went to Juan B. Soto Balbas who released four blue marlin. Puerto Rico's Stephanie Lebron, angling aboard the 54-foot Bertram, *Tati-Way*, earned Best Female with the release of one blue marlin.

Club Náutico de San Juan received a special honor from The Billfish Foundation (TBF), explains Elliot Stark, science and policy specialist. "We came down to present the Club with a plaque for TBF's 25th Anniversary. The Club played an integral role in the founding of the foundation, back in 1986."

The IBT is a qualifier for the prestigious Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship that takes place each May.

For more information on the IBT visit www.sanjuaninternational.com.
For more information on the IGFA Great Marlin race visit www.igfa.org.

SUP Race Raises Funds for St. Croix Marine Park

The Friends of St. Croix East End Marine Park held a benefit on September 4th for the St. Croix East End Marine Park. The fundraiser, a SUP (Stand Up Paddle) race, took place at the St. Croix Yacht Club. The first race was the three-mile Open category followed by a shorter yet very exciting kids' race. The final race was the six-mile Elite category with several racers who came all the way from St. Thomas. Besides the three SUP races there were fun activities for kids, live music by Deanna Brown and Dick's Garage, and plenty of raffle prizes with a grand raffle prize, a SUP board, donated by Bill Kraft of Kite St. Croix and Paddle Surf St. Croix.

With 40 racers and nearly 200 spectators, SUP for the Friends of the St. Croix East End Marine Park raised US$2,877 in net revenue. All net proceeds will directly benefit the St. Croix East End Marine Park through expanding and improving its education program. The Park would like to thank the Friends group, volunteers, donors and sponsors. A special thanks to the St. Croix Yacht Club, Kite St. Croix/Paddle Surf St. Croix, NOAA, DPNR—CZM and Teres Veho.

The Friends of the St. Croix East End Marine Park is a network of volunteers dedicated to the protection and preservation of the Park. For more information visit www.friendsofstxeemp.org.

Regional MPA Staff Train in Belize

The last two weeks of September saw an intense training and networking effort among environmental managers, park rangers and marine biologists from eight Caribbean countries in support of the management of marine protected areas.

An initiative of the Caribbean Environment Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-CEP) and the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management network and forum (CaMPAM), the Training of Trainers Course has been held annually for nearly ten years.

This year, the course was held at Hol Chan Marine Reserve on the Belize Barrier Reef. Participants came from Belize plus the seven English-speaking countries that are participating in the Caribbean Challenge initiative. This important investment in environmental management capacity in the region was made possible with support from the Directorate General of International Development Cooperation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Additional support was provided by the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program, the Belize Fisheries Department, the Protected Areas Conservation Trust, and Hol Chan Marine Reserve.

UNEP-CEP Programme Officer for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife, Alessandra Vanzella-Khouri, describes the significance of the training: "UNEP-CEP and CaMPAM are helping to build regional capacity for marine conservation and especially for the management of marine protected areas. The course is a great opportunity for those who work daily to promote marine conservation to come together, learn and share experiences."



These persons working in Caribbean marine protected areas are now equipped to train others in best environmental practices

The Caribbean Challenge seeks to conserve 20 percent of near-shore marine areas by 2020. Participants on the course came to Belize from Antigua & Barbuda, The Bahamas, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. The Dominican Republic is also part of this work and was the venue for last year's CaMPAM Training of Trainers course.

"Linked to us through international conventions such as the Protocol for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife, and through networks such as the Global Island Partnership, Belize has valuable experience to share with these other countries about the management of marine resources," commented Ms Vanzella-Khouri. "It also offers the chance for participants to witness first-hand the quality of the Barrier Reef system," she added.

According to CaMPAM Coordinator Dr. Georgina Bustamante, "Those who work in marine protected areas across the region face many similar challenges in their day-to-day work. In the past two weeks, veteran fisheries officers and experienced protected area managers have shared their experiences of overcoming hurdles and described the ways in which they slowly built public support."

Invited experts taught sessions on topics ranging from marine research and monitoring to staffing, communications and the planning of national and regional networks of ecologically connected marine protected areas. Field trips to snorkel in Hol Chan Marine Reserve and to snorkel and visit the facilities of Bacalar Chico National Park and Marine Reserve were a highlight of the course.

Dr. Bustamante says, "The course follows a 'training of trainers' model, and each participant now returns home committed to passing on the most relevant of their newfound insights to their colleagues, whom they will help to train in the best practices that they learned on the course from around the region and beyond."

For more information visit http://campam.gcfi.org/campam.php.

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REGATTA NEWS

Summer Successes for St. Lucian Sailors

Olympic hopeful Stephanie Devaux-Lovell, age 16, made St. Lucia proud at the 2011 UK National and Open Laser Championships held August 27th through September 2nd in Weymouth, England. One of only two foreigners in a fleet of 74 sailors in the junior 4.7 Laser Class, Stephanie finished first in the female class, and second overall behind Dutch national Benjamin Wempe.



St. Lucia coach Max Todd is very pleased with the development of sailing in St. Lucia. "Sailing at such a high level on an international stage is a considerable achievement considering that we come from a small island with a very small sailing community and a small budget."

Also this summer the St. Lucia Sailing Association sent Stephanie and its newest international sailor Scott Anthony (18) to the ISAF Youth Worlds in Croatia. Scott placed 48th of 49 in his fleet and Stephanie finished 30th in a fleet of 41.

Scott also helped with the SLYC's first-ever Summer Sailing Adventure camp, a grand success. There was fun for 40 adventurers who spent days on the St. Lucia Yacht Club field, playing cricket and football, and on the water, sailing and kayaking.

The St. Lucia Sailing Association congratulates St. Lucia's young sailors for their successes this year. SLSA is in full support of the SLYC Youth Sailing Programme and its coaches, and together they are working to keep St. Lucian sailors in the forefront of Caribbean sailing, and to get more St. Lucians involved in sailing as a National Sport.

Nature Island Regatta, Dominica

The Nature Island Regatta will take place in Portsmouth, Dominica, on November 11th and 12th, organized by the Triskell Association of Guadeloupe. Onshore events will be organized by Portsmouth authorities.

For more information contact organisation@triskellcup.com.

Join the ARC Flotilla in St. Lucia!

The ARC Flotilla 2011 takes place Sunday, November 20th. Starting at 10:00AM and sailing from Castries Harbour to Rodney Bay Marina, this festive event celebrates the official start of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) 2011, the event's 26th Edition, bringing 225 yachts from Europe to St. Lucia.

The flotilla is organized by IGY Rodney Bay Marina, the St Lucia Yacht Club, and the Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia in cooperation with the Saint Lucia Tourist Board.

Last year's flotilla had a record 50 vessels and more than 350 participants!

For more information visit www.stluciayachtclub.com.

New Opti Program in Bequia

Julie Lea reports: The free Bequia Youth Sailors program began this past summer with an initial membership of 50 youths.

In January, visiting Swedish yacht skipper and sailing instructor Christian Schrijver had noticed there was no sailing school for Bequia youth. He met local businessman Andy Mitchell, an active participant in area regattas. Both Andy and Tom Calthrop, manager of the Bequia TradeWinds Cruise Club, knew of eight old Optimist hulls left from a previous Bequia Rotary Club youth sailing program. Andy, Christian, and Tom repaired the four fiberglass hulls and salvaged two of the wooden hulls originally built locally by Orbin Ollivierre. Jamaican Eddy Brown, "a fanatic sailor" now retired in Bequia, joined in, as did Racon Ollivierre, whose son wanted to sail.

In late May, Eric Sommer, a French circumnavigator, anchored in Bequia. His dinghy was an Optimist. He "just happened" to have eight sets of Optimist sails which he had accepted, along with the dinghy, as a gift in French Polynesia. Andy traded his 14-foot fiberglass dinghy for Eric's Opti and the eight sails.



Avell Davis of Grenadines Sails volunteered to repair the sails and also some life jackets on loan from the Rotary Club, Andy and Chris. Piper Marine extended credit for rigging. Tradewinds Cruise Club donated storage space and lent their large dinghy for instructor use. Moon Hole resident Chris Thompsen and an anonymous donor gave cash contributions. Andy's six-year-old son, Drew, stirred up enthusiasm among his friends.

By August, Admiralty Bay buzzed with Optis and a rotating group of eager students, aged five through 14, waiting their turn to sail. Kimani James, who has been sailing for years with Andy, helped instruct.

Contributions continue to pour in. Richard Williams, owner of Mangos at Lower Bay, offers free lunches to the young sailors. Craftsman Phil Peters created necklaces with a shell pendant of an Opti under sail as a fundraiser.

For more information visit www.bequiayouthsailors.org.

BVI Junior Sailing on the Move

The Royal BVI Sailing Club (RBVIYC) youth sailors welcomed new instructor and coach, Omari Scott, to his first junior programme session on October 1st. Deborah Benjamin, country manager for Sol, attended and handed a monetary donation to volunteer Brian Duff, who helps run the programme. Sol is the largest petroleum company in the BVI, supplying the marine community at Hodges Creek, Nanny Cay Marina, the Moorings, Village Cay, Bitter End, Biras Creek, Oil Nut Bay, Peter Island, Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbour and Leverick Bay. The donation is part of Sol's agreement to support the RBVIYC junior sailing programme in conjunction with Nanny Cay Marina. The collaboration facilitates the collection of a donation from every gallon of fuel sold at the marina.

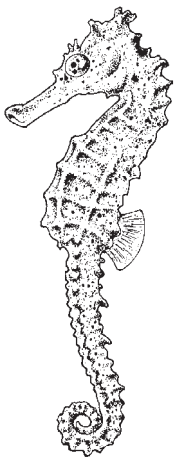
Omari Scott, a 28-year-old Antiguan national, earned his degree in Sports Management on a sailing scholarship at Hampton University, and came from a sailing coach position for the St. Lucia Yacht Club's Youth Sailing Programme. While at the RBVIYC, Omari will instruct and coach at all levels and is responsible for the development of the junior sailing programme and the BVI youth sailing team.



"I have been sailing since age five, and teaching sailing skills is a vocation for me," said Omari. "I am from the Caribbean and it is clear to me that our region should have the best sailors. We are surrounded by water and can sail year round. My goal is to help build regional sailing and nurture Caribbean sailing talent. I have seen potential with the BVI youth sailors and look forward to growing the RBVIYC's junior sailing programme."

For more information on the RBVIYC youth sailing programme visit www.royalbviyc.org.





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CARIBBEAN 2012 CELEBRATIONS

Weird, Wild and Wonderful Boater-Friendly Events

Where else on the planet can you sail into so many harbors, drop the hook or grab a mooring, pop ashore and — often within walking distance — join in so much unusual fun? Here is just a small selection of the unique Caribbean events coming up next year — a handful of happenings we believe to be like no others.



Arturo Tappin, the 'saxiest' man in the Caribbean, at Bequia Music Fest. The Mustique Blues, St. Lucia Jazz and Dominica's World Creole are among other easily accessible music festivals with Caribbean flair

January: Bequia Mount Gay Music Fest (www.bequiatourism.com/bequiamusicfest) and **Mustique Blues Fest** (www.mustiqueblues.com). Overlapping rollicking music festivals on two small Grenadine islands only eight miles apart, so you can sail back and forth to catch your favorite acts at casual beach-bar venues. In Bequia, anchor or rent a mooring in Admiralty Bay. Moorings are mandatory at Mustique's Britannia Bay unless they're all taken; in that case, you are permitted to anchor.

February: Trinidad Carnival. The ultimate in Caribbean revelry. Many visiting sailors arrive weeks early to join a costumed band and participate deep in the bacchanal. Book a berth at one of the Chaguaramas area's many marinas, grab a mooring in Chaguaramas Bay, or drop the hook near TTSA. Closer to carnival, check the Trinidad Cruisers Facebook page for up-to-date information on activities.

March: St. Patrick's Festival, Montserrat (www.irishcentral.com). Montserrat is the only country outside Ireland where St. Patrick's Day is a public holiday. Montserrat's Irish heritage dates back to the 17th century when the island became a haven for Irish Catholics who were persecuted on other Caribbean islands. The weeklong St. Patrick's Festival reflects a unique mix of Irish and African heritage. Anchor at Little Bay, and if there's a volcano warning, scoot.



When Afro-Irish eyes are smiling — St. Patrick's Day in Montserrat

Mardi Croix. In 2002, a group of St. Croix, USVI residents decided that it was time for a Mardi Gras celebration on St. Croix. Beard contests, costumed dog parades (boat dogs welcome!) and other general zaniness. Take part, or view right from the Christiansted anchorage. All this in a setting of Danish colonial architecture. Check the Mardi Croix Facebook page for details.

April: Buccoo Goat Racing Festival, Tobago. On Easter Tuesday tout le Tobago heads to the village of Buccoo for the Kentucky Derby of goat racing. Staring in 1925, goat racing was a grassroots response to the elite pastime of racing thoroughbred horses in Trinidad. Well-groomed goats sprint from a real starting gate, encouraged by their "jockeys" who run behind. Anchor in Store Bay and hop on a taxi or bus, or anchor in Buccoo Bay (Doyle's guide gives good directions). The goat races have a Facebook page, too.

Carriacou Maroon Festival (www.carriacoumaroon.com). The African origins of Caribbean Maroon culture are authentically depicted through the drumming, singing, eating of "smoke food" and other rituals practised by the people of this special Grenadine isle. Anchor in Tyrrel Bay or Hillsborough (the latter might be rolly) or take a mooring at L'Esterre or Sandy Island.

May: St. Lucia Jazz Festival (www.stluciajazz.org). World-class jazz under a tropical sky. Over the past 20 years performers have included Amy Winehouse, Santana, Herbie Hancock, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, The Isley Brothers, UB40, Mary J. Blige, Rihanna, Third World and Smokey Robinson. Anchor right off the spectacular Pigeon Island National Park venue, or take a slip at nearby Rodney Bay Marina.

August: Carnival in Grenada is eminently cruiser-friendly! The marinas encourage you to join the fun, and make it easy to do so. If Trinidad Carnival seems daunting, this might be the carnival experience you've been looking for. Anchor near St. George's (between Grand Anse and the Lagoon) or take a slip at Port Louis Marina for front-row seats, or catch a bus to St. George's from the south coast bays.

October: Blue Food Festival, Tobago. Blue food? Yes, a whole festival built around a tuber, dasheen, which turns blue when cooked. Of course there are accompaniments. Want armadillo, agouti or iguana with that? Don't panic, there's also curried land crab and "bush soup". One food blogger says, "If you are adventurous in your culinary exploits, this event guarantees the exotic will be on the menu and it will be well prepared." The Blue Food Festival is held in the village of Bloody Bay. Bloody Bay is poorly protected, but a good anchorage is nearby at Parlatuvier Bay.

World Creole Music Fest, Dominica (www.wcmfdominica.com). Dominica is not only the Nature Island, it is also home to a three-day event bringing together proponents of Creole music from Africa, North America and across the Caribbean. After a night of wild *zouk* and *cadence* you can spend the day soaking in natural hot springs in the rainforest. Anchor in Roseau and walk or taxi to the Windsor Park Sports Stadium.

Of course there are endless regattas, carnivals, parades, concerts, full moon parties, fish Fridays and other events throughout the year. Check our comprehensive Annual Calendar of Caribbean Events in the January 2012 issue of *Compass*!

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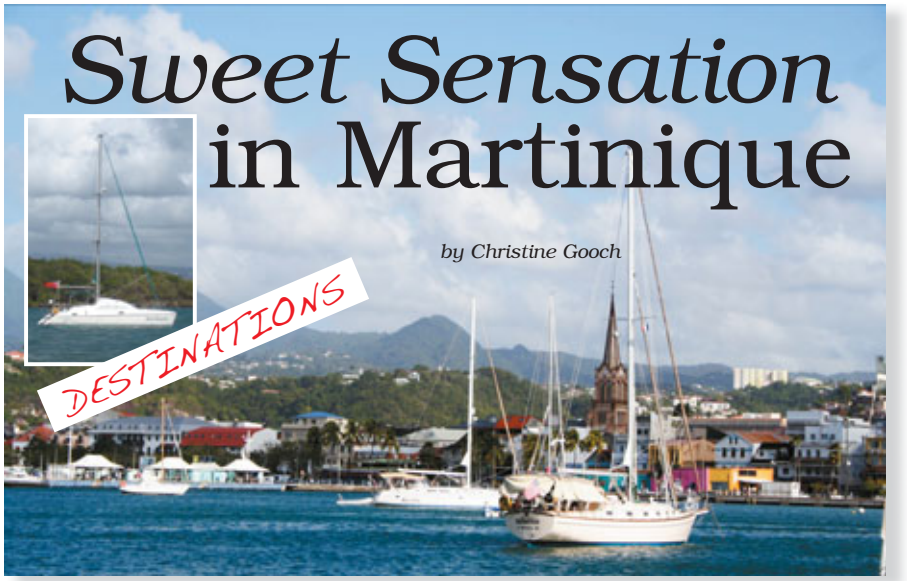
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Sweet Sensation in Martinique



by Christine Gooch

At the market we bought fruit and vegetables from a local lady dressed in a long flounced dress and a straw hat decorated with plastic fruit, who took a shine to my husband, Kevin, and gave him some free bananas. Where *were* we?

In January 2011, Kevin and I visited Martinique in our Prout 38 catamaran, *Sweet Sensation*. The Carib name for Martinique was Madinina, which means 'Island of Flowers'. Christopher Columbus landed in 1502 and in 1635 Frenchman Belain d'Esbambuc started a colony and, apart from a few brief periods under British control, Martinique has been French ever since.

We checked in at Le Marin on the south coast. The paperwork is very easy: you fill in the details yourself on a computer, print them off and hand them to a Customs officer who takes about one minute to check them and then you're in.

The island has a very French feel but with a Creole twist. The market mentioned above was at Le Marin.

Le Marin

Le Marin is the main charter base for Martinique. There is a 600-berth marina, plus 60 moorings and about 200 yachts at anchor. While we were there, small local boats called *yoles* were racing. They have one square sail, rather like a barge's spritsail. We had anchored near to the partly submerged haul-out apparatus, close to where the channel does a sharp left-and-then-right bend, as other cruisers had told us this was the best holding. Even so, several boats in various parts of the anchorage dragged while we were there. Our spot was also convenient to the Leader Price supermarket; you can wheel your shopping trolley from the supermarket to the end of the dinghy dock — a welcome relief from walking with heavy bags full of groceries. Cruising friends had told us that Martinique was expensive compared to Grenada and the St. Vincent Grenadines, but we didn't find this to be so. Wine and beer, often two of the most expensive items for Caribbean cruisers, were much cheaper and of course there are all those delicious cheeses and pâtés imported direct from mainland France.

Petite Anse d'Arlet

Martinique has several anchorages off pretty little villages. One of the quaintest was sleepy Petite Anse d'Arlet. A row of houses and shops and a church are sandwiched between a sandy beach and a dramatic green mountain backdrop. The church has a tiered steeple looking a bit like a wedding cake with a magnificent golden French cockerel for a windvane. The houses and shops look typical of a French village, with wooden shutters and metal balconies, but many are painted in bright colours.

Off the southwestern tip of Martinique is Diamond Rock. In the early 1800s the British Navy was short of ships; someone noticed that Diamond Rock was exactly where they would station a ship if they had one spare, so it was commissioned and became *HMS Diamond Rock* — probably one of the British Navy's most unusual ships.

While we were anchored off Petite Anse d'Arlet we discovered our headsail halyard was caught up at the top of the forestay, which meant that although we could still furl the sail we couldn't drop it if we had to. While we were furling and unfurling it to try to free the halyard, something flew through the air and (luckily!) landed in the dinghy hanging from its davits on the back of the boat. This turned out to be part of the forestay rigging assembly. Now we couldn't use the headsail, so we motored 15 miles or so up the coast to the capital, Fort de France, where there are chandleries and a rigger.

Fort de France and Trois Ilets

At Fort de France we anchored in the lee of the old fort, which is still used as a naval base. There are plenty of chandleries and shops within walking distance of the anchorage. We ventured farther afield on the local buses and found the drivers were very helpful; if you ask them they will let you know when you reach your stop and you can take fairly large items on the bus — such as the new teak cockpit table we bought at a garden centre. I speak reasonably good French, so I don't know how easy it would be if you don't.

It was too rolly to go up the mast at Fort de France, as ferries to the seaside resorts on the other side of the bay passed every half hour, so we motored across to Trois Ilets. This village turned out to be as sleepy as Petite Anse d'Arlet and as quaint; lots of the old houses had red clay 'fish scale' tile roofs (so called because of their semi-circular shape). The guidebook from the Tourist Office translated its original French name of 'Cul de Sac à Vaches' as 'Bottom of Cow Bag'; it got its name because the first French colonists bred cows here. It was later re-named after the three islets in the bay, which are themselves named after the three families who owned them and set up lime kilns on them. Kevin went to the top of the mast on the new spinnaker halyard, freed the foresail halyard and replaced the piece of rigging. The anchorage is quiet but quite small; a couple of other yachts anchored briefly near us before deciding to move on. On Sunday a series of rowing races went on around us, with the crews having varying degrees of success and a few sets of oars getting tangled up at the start line.

While in Trois Ilets we walked to the little museum at La Pagerie, the plantation where Napoleon's wife Josephine grew up. Only the outline of her childhood home is visible; it burned down when Josephine was three and as her father had spent all the family money on gambling and loose women he couldn't afford to rebuild it so the family moved into part of the sugar-cane factory. At 16 Josephine left for an arranged marriage in France. Her first husband was killed in the French Revolution, but one of Josephine's many lovers helped her escape. When she married Napoleon she was 33 and he was 27; as this age difference was unthinkable it was given out that they were both 28. The museum is in a pretty house that was the former plantation kitchens, surrounded by pleasant gardens. It contains a few letters written by Josephine, some furniture and the equivalent of Royal Commemorative Mugs — delicate porcelain cups and saucers with Napoleon and Josephine's portraits on them.

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St. Pierre

Our final stop in Martinique was St. Pierre, the former capital. We motor-sailed up the west coast past several small fishing villages, dodging fish trap markers as we went. The town of St. Pierre nestles at the foot of the volcano Mt. Pelée, behind a black sand beach and not far from the spot where the island's last Caribs were killed by the French settlers in 1658. The story goes that the Caribs died cursing the French and calling on the volcano to avenge them. They say revenge is a dish best served cold; this one would have been positively frozen by the time it came. But meanwhile the French colony grew and prospered, surrounded as it was by the finest plantations in Martinique. The anchorage was full of ships bringing slaves and returning to France with cargoes of rum, sugar, coffee and cocoa. Troupes from mainland France came to perform at the grand theatre; on evenings when there were performances the imposing curved stone steps flanking the façade were crowded with orange, pistachio and sweet sellers. The theatre could seat 800 and performances were often sold out. The town also had a prison, a mental hospital, and by the early 1900s even a horse-drawn tramway. There were two churches; one founded by the Jesuits in the Fort quarter, and a second Dominican one in the Mouillage (Anchorage) quarter. This church later became the cathedral; dedicated to Our Lady of the Safe Port, it was the sailors' and pirates' church — supposedly the pirates even donated their booty to it, although I find it hard to believe that even Hollywood pirate Captain Jack Sparrow would give booty away.

The first warning that all was not well came in April 1902, when Mt. Pelée began to rumble, then in the first few days of May some people and animals were killed by ash, boiling mudslides, lava and hot gases. Finally, on the morning of Ascension Day, May 8th, 1902, the Caribs got their revenge. At 8:02 the side of the volcano facing St Pierre glowed red and burst open and a giant fireball of gas flowed down, obliterating the town and leaving only smoking ruins. Twelve ships at anchor in the bay sank and almost 30,000 people burned to death; the only survivors were Leon Leandre, a cobbler who was in his cellar, and Louis Cyparis, a prisoner remanded in custody for murder; it is thought that the thick walls of his tiny cell saved him. Although badly injured, he survived there for three days before being rescued; he had no food but drank water that ran down the cell walls. There were many eyewitnesses to the tragedy, people coming over the hills from Fort de France for the Ascension Day service; those already in the church in the Fort quarter all perished and the church is just a ruin of huge tumbled stones and smashed columns.

Today St. Pierre is a mixture of stone and wooden buildings re-built after the disaster and the ruins of older buildings. Sometimes the wall of an older building has been incorporated into a new one; stone steps lead up from the waterfront and stretches of the original cobblestone streets remain. One of my favourite places was Mont au Ciel Street (Climb to Heaven Street), a series of stone steps and cobbled slopes that lead up to a seminary. The boys used to settle their fights here after school so the other inhabitants tended to avoid the place. We also saw Cyparis' tiny cell, a stone dome-shaped room that was so small Kevin had to bend down to get through the doorway. It looked very evocative as it was the only complete cell amongst the ruins of the prison. We were amazed at how quickly after the eruption the slope of Mt. Pelée has become covered in greenery; we could see trees, fields and banana plantations. We only rarely saw the top of the volcano though as it was usually shrouded in low cloud.

Being the most northern port where you can check out of Martinique, the anchorage sometimes got a little crowded. Early in the mornings the local fishermen came out in their open fishing boats to check their pots, several of which were near the anchorage. Our cruising guide said you check in and out at a local bar, but this has changed and you now have to walk to the Tourist Office at the other end of the town. Checking out is the same computerised system as checking in.

We really enjoyed our time in Martinique and are planning to return next year to stock up with groceries before heading farther north to explore Guadeloupe and Dominica.

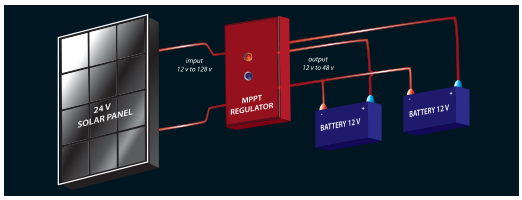




Above: The kitchen at La Pagerie plantation, Empress Josephine's childhood home
Left: Kevin at Cyparis's cell, St. Pierre
Previous page: Fort de France; inset: Sweet Sensation *at Trois Ilets*

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Just Past Trinidad, and a World Away:

THE MANAMO RIVER



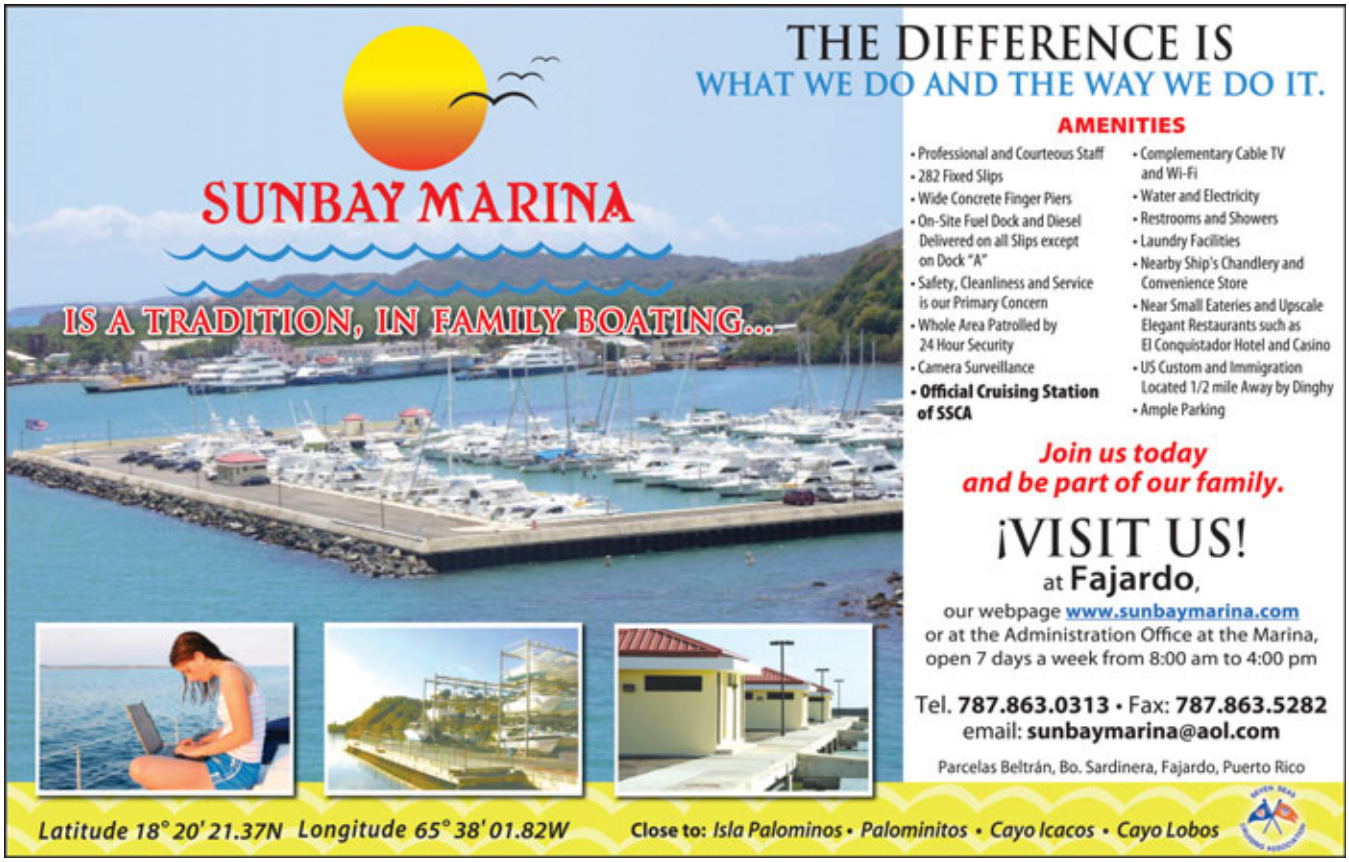
by Neville Howarth

When I first suggested a trip up the Manamo River in Venezuela, my wife's reaction was not favourable: "Hmmm, let me think about that. Jungle, hot, humid, mosquitos and piranha. Err, I don't think so!"

Then in Trinidad this summer, we met Rixzene and Steve on the catamaran *Pogeyan*. Rixzene had done the trip a couple of years earlier and raved about the wildlife and the Warao Indians in their dugout canoes. She said that it wasn't too hot and it was good fun. We also talked to Ian and Jackie on their 40-foot yacht, *Blackthorn Lady*, who wanted to go as well. A week later our small flotilla of three boats headed south-west, armed with a hand-drawn map of the river system and some notes written by cruisers who had done the trip in previous years.

The Manamo River is part of the vast delta created by the Orinoco River. It's a region of wild forests, jungle and mangrove swamps, which is woven with rivers and channels called *caños*. The approach to the river mouth starts about seven miles out and is roughly four metres deep, going past some very shallow patches. We found the GPS coordinates provided by the cruising notes and the electronic charts of the approaches to be accurate.

After a ten-hour passage from Chaguaramas, we anchored *Alba*, our Hallberg Rassey 42, off the small town of Pedernales and went to see the Guardia Nacional to clear in. →





We speak very little Spanish and they spoke no English, but we managed to let them know that we wanted to cruise the rivers for a couple of weeks. They simply wrote our details down in a ledger and that was it. We hadn't officially entered Venezuela, but they didn't seem to mind.

The next morning, we headed off around the point from Pedernales into the Manamo River itself. The delta mouth is almost a mile wide at this point and there is a shallow bar that sticks out halfway across the river. We nearly went aground a couple of times and it was a pretty tense hour of watching the depth gauge and working out which way to turn when it was getting shallow. Fortunately, once we were in the river, the depth varied between six and ten metres deep.

At this point, the river was about 400 metres wide; the jungle was very thick on both sides and the water stayed deep to within 20 metres of the shore. We took it nice and slow and enjoyed a gentle two-hour trip up to Ibis Island. Once anchored, we had several groups of Warao Indians visit us.

The Warao Indians are the indigenous people of the region and traditionally live in wooden dwellings, supported above the water on wooden piles and thatched with palm branches. They still fish from dugout canoes and live off the jungle, going to the towns to trade their traditional crafts including woven baskets and hammocks. This is changing rapidly as the Venezuelan

Left: The Warao traditionally live in wooden dwellings, supported above the water on wooden piles and thatched with palm branches

Right: Glenys was glad she came. Piranha for dinner!

government has been supplying the Warao with powerful outboard motors and setting up large villages with schools and more modern facilities.

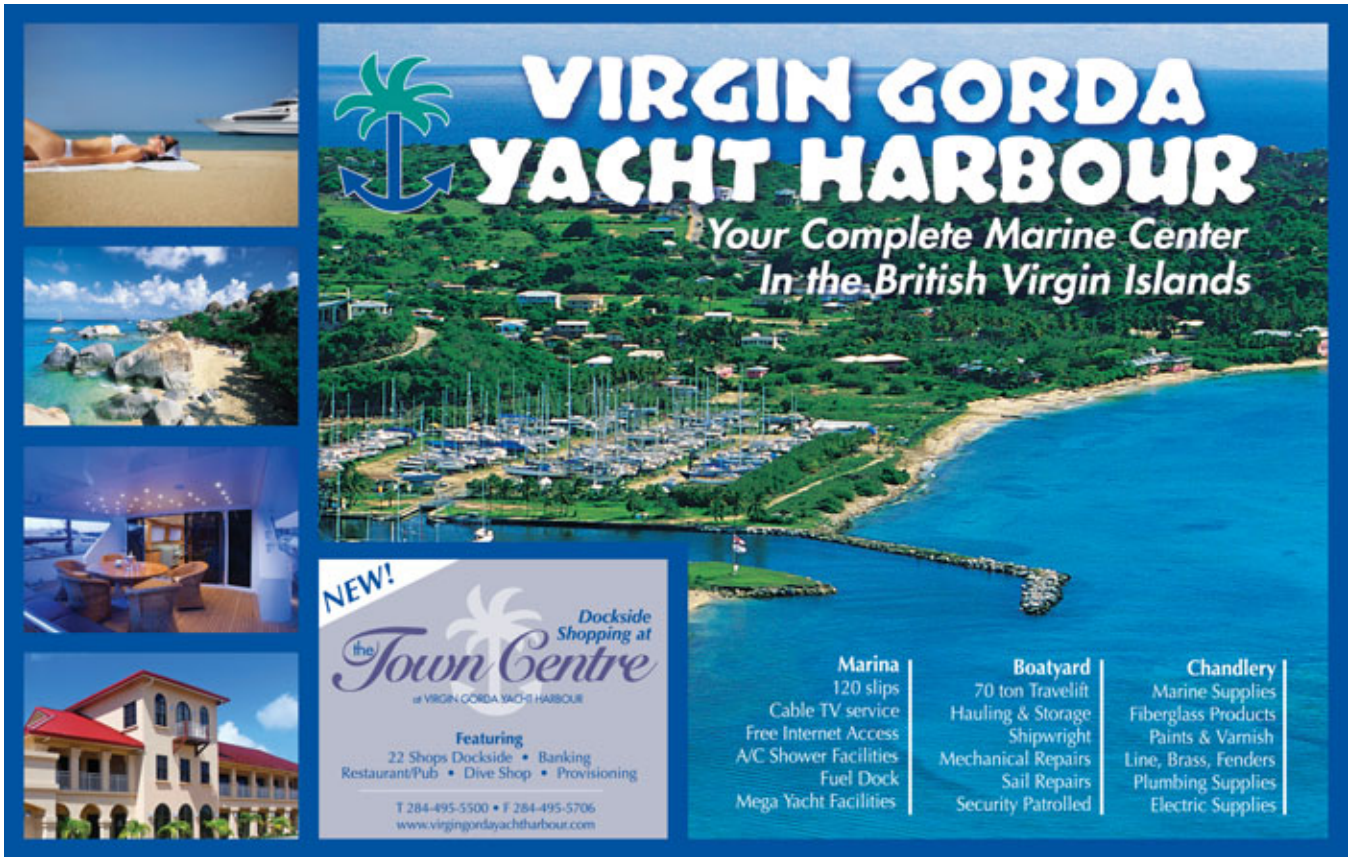
Our first contact with the Warao was not encouraging. They arrived in an assortment of dugout canoes and pirogues and were mostly children who wanted handouts. At one large village, we were mobbed by ten large pirogues full of children expecting sweets. However, on the third night, just as I was starting to get despondent about the begging, we anchored by a village and hoards of Warao Indians arrived with something to trade.

Glenys had a fun time bartering for baskets and bracelets. She established a process where she first chose one or two items from the many being offered. She then showed the Warao a small selection of items that she was willing to trade and laid them out on the deck, indicating how many items they could have. We'd been prepared for this and had brought small items like toothpaste, pencils, colouring books, small towels, clothing, soap, dress material, etcetera.



The fun part was watching the ladies touch the various objects, trying to decide which one they wanted. They are torn between the practical items like soap and the more frivolous items like toys for the children. Most times they ended up with a choice between two items and went for the practical object, at which point, Glenys cracked up and handed them both items.

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On our fourth day, we had our first encounter with water hyacinths. Large rafts of these floating plants drift around with the current and can get lodged on anchor chains. The first morning it happened to us, I spent 15 minutes hacking with a machete to clear it. Rixzene told me later that the best way to get the hyacinths off is to motor forward then to reverse back, leaving the mass separated from the chain.

There are a few small "eco-resorts" in the river. At the Boca Tigre Lodge, we organized a guide to show us around the area. We first donned big wellington boots and walked through the muddy jungle while the guide pointed out various trees that the Warao Indians use. Then we went fishing for piranha, which live in the smaller side caños. We used simple fishing poles with a half-inch long hook and small chunks of uncooked chicken for bait. The secret is to attract the piranha by splashing the water with the end of the fishing pole to simulate an animal that has fallen in the water. Glenys and I caught one each, which we cooked later and shared with the others as a starter for dinner — very tasty.

The wildlife is amazing. Parrots are constantly flying overhead squawking loudly, howler monkeys roar in the distance and toucans can be occasionally spotted in the trees. We were visited by river dolphins on many occasions. These strange, pink mottled mammals seem to like the shallower water where we preferred to anchor. Or were they just curious about us, like the Warao Indians?

After a week cruising up river, we arrived at the farthest navigable point which is a small town called Boca de Uracoa. There's an electrical cable strung across the river. Some cruisers have managed to get underneath the cable, but with a 60-foot mast, I didn't want to try it. Boca de Uracoa is a real one-horse town. There are impressive, gaily painted water taxi stands on the riverfront, but beyond that there is one main street with a few shops and food stalls. The main grocery shop doesn't have any sign, but can be found by the crowd of people hanging about outside the small frontage. There are red iron gratings stopping anyone going into the shop and you have to ask the shopkeeper for the items that you require — shoplifting is obviously a problem.

Pogeyan and *Blackthorn Lady* found the fuel dock and filled jerry cans with diesel. They bought 35 gallons of diesel for seven and a half bolivars, which is approximately US$1 — that makes diesel only three US cents per gallon. There's a small bar next to the fuel dock, where we managed to buy a case of beer for US$15, which makes beer 71 times more expensive than diesel.



The Venezuelan government has been supplying the Warao with outboard motors

We travelled back to the Boca Tigre Lodge where Glenys and I went exploring. All of the electronic charts stop about half a mile west of the lodge, so I thought that it would be interesting to map it out and see if the river leads to San José de Buja, which has a road going to a city called Maturin. After an hour, we came across a junction in the river, where there was a floating barrier across the branch which heads southwest. This was made from 56-gallon oil drums, strung together with chain and logs. The purpose appeared to be to stop water hyacinths going up that part of the river — and it looked to be effective. We watched a local pirogue slide across by pulling up their outboard, but there didn't seem to be any way that we would be able to cross it with our two-metre-deep keel.

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We continued up the other branch, continually doing battle with the ever-thickening rafts of water hyacinths. When we were eight miles from the anchorage, we came across another junction in the river. Both river branches seemed to be getting thicker with hyacinths, so we decided to call it a day and head back.

The cruising notes written by other cruisers have a couple of paragraphs giving some sketchy details about a yacht that went down a small caño and managed to get across from the Manamo River to the Pedernales River. We anchored close to the start of this caño on our 11th night. I was keen to give it a go, but *Pogeyan* thought that it would be too narrow for their 47-foot catamaran and *Blackthorn Lady* decided to stay with *Pogeyan*.

The next morning, Glenys and I lifted our anchor at eight o'clock and motored off by ourselves. The first half of the linking caño has depths between six and 15 metres and is initially over 50 metres wide. After we had motored for an hour at five knots, the caño started to narrow and trees began to encroach on the water. An hour later, we came to a junction where there is a Warao Indian village. They had very traditional dwellings with palm leaf roofs and most of the kids were naked. There were many happy, smiling children waving at this strange apparition passing very close to their homes.

We took the right-hand fork, which was 30 metres wide with many of the trees hanging over the water. From this point onwards, Glenys stood on the back deck, watching the trees and making sure that we didn't hit branches with our mast and rigging. I focussed on slowly steering us through this maze and watching out for water hyacinth and sodden floating logs. We hit two big logs with a thump, but both times I had the engine in neutral gear and no damage was done. The depth hardly ever dropped below five metres, which was a great relief, as we had enough to worry about with zigzagging between the trees. The narrowest point in the river was 15 to 20 metres wide and there were no places where we touched the trees.

It took us an hour of intense concentration to weave our way through to the Pedernales River and what a welcome sight it was. In retrospect, the route was not difficult at all, but it was stressful because we didn't know whether there was a way through. At some parts, where the trees are thickest, there is little room to turn a 42-foot yacht around, so we were pretty committed to keeping on going. Once we got through, both of us thought that it had been good fun.



Villagers arrived at Alba *in dugout canoes to trade their traditional crafts including woven baskets and hammocks. Sometimes the children just asked for sweets*

We slowly motored north down the wide river towards Pedernales, stopping for one night anchored off an island in splendid isolation. The Pedernales River is quite shallow compared to the Manamo River, being between five to ten metres deep. The vegetation on the shore was more regular with fewer palm trees as we went towards the sea. There are a lot of pirogues travelling up and down the river, and many drivers slowed down to stare when they saw us. We passed a few big Warao villages — these had more "modern" buildings with corrugated iron roofs. Many dwellings still don't have walls, but most of them have satellite TV dishes. The children waved and smiled from the shore. I don't think that they see many yachts down the Pedernales River.

We met up with *Blackthorn Lady* and *Pogeyan* who were already anchored off Pedernales and preparing to leave for Trinidad the next day. One of the problems that we faced going back to Trinidad was that we wouldn't have any documentation to show that we had been in Venezuela for two weeks. Some cruisers have had a very hard time from the Trinidad Customs officers when they arrive with no papers. We had prepared a homemade departure document (*zarpe*) that we hoped that the Guardia Nacional would stamp.

Glenys and I went in to see the Guardia Nacional with the others. I had written down what I was going to say in Spanish: "Es possible para usted meter una marca en mi zarpe?" He seemed to understand and immediately stamped my homemade exit papers and wrote down our passport details in his ledger. We found the officials to be very friendly and helpful — a credit to their country.

We all left early the next morning. Glenys and I decided to head directly to Grenada and the others went back to Trinidad. Twenty-four hours later, we were back in the "civilisation" of Prickly Bay where we had no problems clearing in with our homemade zarpe.

We had a fantastic two weeks of cruising and exploring an area not often visited by yachts. The people were friendly, we had no concerns about security and the environment is very different from the West Indies. As an added bonus, the fresh river water killed off all the barnacles that we had picked up in Chaguaramas.

As we travelled and explored the area, I drew a detailed chart with cruising notes, including the caño connecting the Manamo and Pedernales Rivers. This chart and a more detailed diary of this trip can be downloaded from our website: www.thehowarths.net/downloads.html.

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Bumming a Sail in the Sapodilla Cays

by Ryan Weaver

Three of us swim to shore. Everybody else is deposited by dinghy.

This is where the marine iguanas hang out, according to Captain Ryan. In particular over by the black log. Presently two young boys stand atop this log. One twirls a weighted fishing line like a lasso — only vertically beside him instead of horizontally overhead — and whips it about 30 feet into the sea. While he fists it back the other boy yells encouragement. There will be no marine iguanas here today.

My sister asks the older boy where we might be able to find an iguana. "Ovah deya," he says, pointing up the beach.

Ovah deya we go, passing a few pasty tourists lying in hammocks. They look insulted by our presence, which makes sense. They paid for that ends-of-the-earth brand solitude and had it until now.

Around the corner a young woman hangs laundry on a line by the sea. Behind her, a blue clapboard house on stilts. A titanic woman up there whirls out of a creaking hammock and bellows "Off de beach! You doan follow de rules!"

Rules? What rules? We don't need no stinking rules! We don't know whether to say something belligerent, like the previous, or run for it.

"Is RUDE come heya and no say hello to me fahst."

"Hello, then!" my Pops says cheerfully.

"OFF DE BEACH!" she booms. Chastised we depart. I feel this all must be a simple misunderstanding, however, something I can fix.

"We didn't know," I holler. "Sorry."

"Nobody tell you?" The massive matron crosses her arms — twin slabs of ham.

"No."

She snorts like a water buffalo pondering the merits of a charge — conversation over. My good will evaporates. *Good luck catching me!* I think. I envision her descending the splintering stairs and waddling toward me at her greatest speed while I leisurely rub driftwood together to make a fire and go collect herbs and boil them into tea and sip it until, refreshed, I swim around the cay, after which, wearied, I take a nap, awaking to tear asunder a coconut and drink its juice and finally stroll off yawning at the precise moment she reaches out to strangle me — *oops, just missed.*

Captain Ryan is perturbed by our eviction. He's new to the Belize base. Nobody told him anything about Lime Cay etiquette.

Around sunset we sail to nearby Hunting Cay. Even before we're secure at the mooring ball I dive overboard and swim to shore. This is my favorite part of sailing up to any island — jumping ship and thrashing to shore as if my life depends on it. By the time I flop on the beach, lungs bursting, I AM Robinson Crusoe.

Captain Ryan putters over in the dinghy. I accompany him to the office to pay our



Sapodilla Cays Marine Park entrance fees. On the way I observe that Hunting Cay is quite developed. Clearings, footpaths, a roofed picnic area with a dozen tables, even a concrete dormitory for some sort of college that is not currently in session. A mutt poses on the front steps in imitation of a model: gorgeous face, long bony limbs and the prominent ribcage of the starving.

In front of the office two large men play basketball on a half court. They seem loath to stop on our account and so do not. The bigger of the two pushes for the net, the woven Rasta cap atop his head swinging about like a sack of roots. He performs a clownish pirouette and shoots an air ball and leads us into the office panting. Ryan says, "Hey, what's the deal on Lime Cay? Some lady just kicked my tourists off."

"Yeah. Daht Sally."

"Well Sally says they have to say 'hello' to her first? What's that?"

The big man shrugs his shoulders unsympathetically. "*It she island.*"

I leave thinking *It she island. It she island…* There's something profound in this, some realization that will unveil itself to me sooner or later.

Instead of reading a book tonight I review my journal. The first day we settled into this 58-foot catamaran, *Joy*. We became acquainted with Belikin, the beer of Belize, stocked in such bulk it was vaguely insulting. Yllithia and I swam with dolphins in Placencia Lagoon. It rained all night, and with the hatches shut we all broiled to death in our separate cabin-ovens.

By morning it had not stopped raining. Everyone had been nervous about being on a thin-walled boat for a week with Yllithia and me, who are newlyweds, when apparently they should've been nervous about the weather. It's the rainy season and hurricane season and our hitherto good meteorological luck may have run out.

On Hatchet Cay some multi-millionaire foreigner has leveled the island to start over, play God. Three feet of imported sand. Professional landscaping. A spare-no-expense hardwood common area with a sunken pool, bar, views. Exquisite bungalows sprinkled about and one three-story promontory. Atop this we looked some direction (I didn't exactly have a compass handy) and noticed a squall of epic crankiness approaching. We ran for it but none of us made it. The Parents and I ducked into a large shed without much soaking — those who ran on almost drowned. We were welcomed by two friendly Latino workers. Behind us lay a shiny new hovercraft. That's right — a hovercraft. According to the workers the cost for renovating Hatchet has run about US$8 million *so far*.

Everyone woke up cheery the next morning. No rain and so a luxurious breeze funneled through our portholes all night. The weather report read "sunny" for the rest of the week. Our good luck had only hiccupped.

I helped unfurl the foresail and we sliced toward Queen's Cays. I wanted to go to the middle one of the trio, which looked like fodder for paintings and postcards, but Captain Ryan dinghied us to the closest. A huge wooden box took up much of this island. It couldn't be but was — a pair of sophisticated flush toilets (with fresh rolls of TP)! Each with enough square footage left over for three adults to sleep comfortably. A most bizarre *non sequitur*, these toilets. I forced myself to go sit for a spell in one when I realized that not to do so would be to miss the only attraction on the island.



Above: Three new divers off Tom Owens Cay, with Joy in the background

Below: The author and his new bride bummed a sail with The Parents aboard the chartered cat Joy, here anchored off Ranguana Cay

To Ranguana Cay for the night. My brother-in-law and I swam ashore. A large cheerful woman and her nephew greeted us warmly. "Have a rum an Coke," the woman said. We agreed. Nobody moved. "*A rum an Coke, den*," the lady snapped. Her nephew shuffled off. This is one of those bars where people hang mementos on the roof. Mostly shirts. One pair of lady's underwear big enough to fit a pachyderm with REAL MEN DON'T NEED VIAGRA printed in glittery letters across the rear.

The woman pointed to a lacy red pair of panties and said, "I see dem in de pocket a de preacher. I pull dem out and say 'What you doin wit dese, you de preacher!'"

The next afternoon we sailed to Tom Owens Cay, leased home of Reef Conservation International. Even from a distance I could see large gray cubes, one of them being worked on. I strolled up to the worksite. Three men speaking a Mayan dialect that sounded to consist mostly of X's and Q's, but mixed with English too.

"How long have you been building?" I asked.

"About three years."

"How much longer to go?"

"About three years."

"That's good work," I said, thinking of the rare blessing of six years of steady construction. The workers didn't immediately agree. The one shoveling the cement paused to wipe about a quart of sweat off his forehead. Another pawed through chalky chunks of coral. The third inspected his fingernails while waiting for the others to pass him a blob of cement and a block of coral. Long, tedious, sun-blasted years on Tom Owens Cay. Blessing?

The rest of the acre-big island glowed amber with do-gooder vibes. The Mayans did nice work on the tourist cabins. All are cozy circles cemented right down into the sea, open side facing the breeze. In the back a shallow lime-colored lagoon protects the dive boat.

The main edifice has a big enough kitchen that Polly, RCI operations leader, brokered a deal to feed TradeWinds passengers as we sail through. Eating ashore two nights is part of the routine, but this was different. This was no restaurant. There was no menu. Dive instructors posed as waiters. We brought our own drinks in a cooler. They charged a flat fee of US$25, "which," Polly said, "should be considered mostly a donation to the cause."

It was worth it because we ate the non-native, invasive lionfish. Polly explained what a tragic scourge they had become. Most fish procreate once or twice a year, but lionfish can do it every four days. They have no natural predators here.

They can eat juvenile parrotfish in a single gulp. Decimating the fish that pick algae off the reef will result in reef scumming and death.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

Lionfish are only poisonous on their many fanning spines, so once you cut those off you can handle them as carelessly as an onion and eat them with impunity. We gorged on quite a few of them. Lionfish are tasty: nice and light and clean. Polly encouraged us to ask for them at restaurants ashore whether we want them or not, a good policy because sufficient demand will prompt the local fishermen to get into the act of supplying. "This is one case of overfishing we'd love to see," Polly said.

At Nichols Cay the next afternoon four private motor yachts lay lashed to one another's sides. Popular Spanish music blasted over the water. I jumped ship and swam ashore.

Nichols Cay does not look ruined so much as hastily stripped of a former glory. Naked concrete pylons as plentiful as weeds. Up from the beach I found a local-looking shack with a large black man lying in a cot. I shouted "hello" a few times.

The man bumbled out and introduced himself as Mack, pronounced *Mach*. He was shirtless and shoeless and wore a belt crookedly cinched to keep up his shorts. That he couldn't be bothered to string the belt through any loops made me happy. Mack's eyes were so impossibly big and black they served as twin mirrors. I could see all six feet of myself shrunk down there to a few centimeters, warped as through a fisheye lens, the beach and water and boats colorfully behind me. I became fixated. I stared into his eyes so long he probably thought I was in love with him.

This is probable because the first thing he told me was about the boats offshore.

"Dat one TANGA, dat a gay boat," Mack said. Sure enough, those were all dudes floating on noodles in such close communion in the water. More lingered on the stairs in poses usually not seen outside photo shoots. At least two young women in string bikinis prowled the upper decks.

"What about them?" I said.

"Prostitutes," Mack said. "One got sent to me to ask if its okay dey party. She want to be wit me, but I say no, I'm a preacher, you bettah fix you ways, gy-urhl." I nodded, but skeptically, because suddenly Mack seemed a very likely candidate for the one who'd had red lacy panties in his pocket on Ranguana.

Pops paddled ashore in the kayak and introduced himself. "You have a nice son," Mack replied. "He come right up to say hello."

The pylons used to sit beneath tourist cabins, Mack began. Two thousand people could sleep on this cay in those days. Then the owner sold to the government who gave all the cabins away to friends and sold again. For a while the island was overrun



Queen's Cays. It couldn't be but was — a shack with a pair of sophisticated flush toilets

by drug dealers. That well sunk into the coral not ten feet from the sea burbles fresh water and never goes dry. Everywhere turtles lay their eggs. Thirty-three egg pits this season already.

Circumnavigation complete, Pops asked Mack if he fished much. He pointed to where they schooled but Mack didn't enjoy catching them. "How then do you manage such a healthy potbelly?" I wanted to ask. But Mack explained that he eats whatever visiting captains give him. Two years he's been living this way, alone, with only occasional homosexuals, druglords, and passing captains to say hello. Or not.

"Most people are RUDE," Mack said to Pops. "Not you guys, but most."

As we slept that night the wind kept the booming music away and filled our cabins with quiet, refreshing movement. I close the journal, turn out the light, and hope that tonight the breeze is equally generous.

Only Four Tree Cay remains between us and our return to Placencia. We anchor so far from it I can't swim the distance or even see it clearly. Yllithia and I lower the kayak.

That glowing white which we assumed to be sand turns out to be coral, chunky and unrefined. The whole cay is carpeted with trash and bird excrement. All four trees are wind-blasted and ragged. I am unable to fantasize about being Robinson Crusoe here for lack of enthusiasm. We paddle back.

It's time to surrender *Joy* to the next group of explorers, for whom the weather forecast has turned ugly. I picture them broiling to death in their cabin-ovens and shrug my shoulders unsympathetically. They should know better than to charter a yacht in rainy season, *ha ha*.

Two weeks since the trip now and I've done quite a bit of daydreaming, come to some conclusions.

What I've always found most intriguing about any island is picturing myself stranded alone upon it. (Now that I'm married I guess I should include Yllithia.)

There are still *bona fide* castaway islands, like Queen's Cays, which would be awesome to at least pitch a tent on for a while (toilets no problem), and Four Trees Cay, which would be awful. I can see us volunteering to monitor the reef and kill lionfish indefinitely off of Tom Owens Cay, although a life centered around scuba would wear on me. A caretaker gig like Mack's on Nichols Cay would be nice and easy, for Yllithia and I can fend off prostitutes and watch turtles lay eggs with the best of them. Most appealing, however, would be owning the shacks of Ranguana or the cabins of Lime Cay or the opulent bungalows of Hatchet, so as to be able to give tourists a taste of the dream that is our reality.

The profound and peculiar lesson I learned from all this is that I want *to be* Sally. I want her to evaporate and Yllithia and I to materialize in her place. Pasty tourists from all over the globe e-mail me, eager to fund my laziness. Years pass. I settle deep into the comfortable inertia of my dictatorship and also my hammock, a.k.a. my throne. For I am king on this island, answerable only to the queen, and even then not always. Our word is law simply because *It we island*.

"Ingrates!" I shout whenever uninvited tourists round the bend. "You've failed to adhere to island protocol, which is to lay flowers at my feet and to sing 'hello' in falsetto whilst weeping copiously."

"Hello!" they sing. Some begin to weep, others scramble for flowers.

"Too late! Those who can do impressive bird calls or twenty cartwheels in a row can stay a few more minutes." Some comply, others refuse.

To these latter I bellow "GET OFF DE BEACH!"



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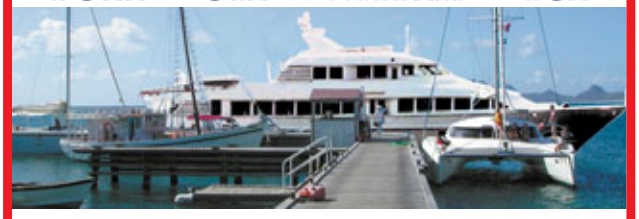
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SAILING THE CARIBBEAN COAST OF COLOMBIA

DESTINATIONS

Part Two: Cartagena and the Southern Islands

by Constance Elson





The Colombian coast provides contrasts ranging from the colonial city of Cartagena (left) to pristine jungle anchorages (above) to rural out-islands (below)

Between November 2010 and May 2011, my sailing partner and I sailed our Lord Nelson 41, *Tashtego*, almost the entire length of the Colombian Caribbean coast from the Guajira Peninsula in the northeast to Sapzurro on the Panamanian border. The places we stopped at are all well known to the set of cruisers who sail Panama and Colombia routinely. Good sets of notes exist for separate portions of the coast and these are listed in the sidebar along with other sources of information, but there is not yet a really comprehensive cruising guide for the entire Colombian coast.

At the risk of seeming presumptuous in writing this based on quite limited experience, I will describe our trip and provide anchoring details. Our information is current and I will also point the reader to sources of information for harbors and anchorages we missed. I offer this as a travel *aperitif* — with the hope that someone will write a complete travel guide to Colombian waters soon.

This is Part Two, covering Cartagena and the offshore islands along the southwest Caribbean coast. Part One, covering northern and eastern Colombia, was published last month and Part Three will cover the remainder of coastal Colombia and information on governmental regulations.

After leaving Cartagena, during six weeks traveling south to Sapzurro we saw exactly one other sailboat except while at Cholon. I felt I was seeing a glimpse of what cruising in the Caribbean was like 30 years ago: unspoiled, un-gringoed, requiring enterprise and an openness to the unknown, and entirely blissful. Many of the anchorages I have listed for these waters are fairly small and will not accommodate large numbers of boats.

NAVIGATION: When I give coordinates as four digits, ddmm, representing degrees and minutes, the purpose is only so you can locate the general area on a map. Coordinates given as six digits, ddmm.mm, with precision to hundredths of a minute, represent accurate positions for navigation. A warning about chart software: south of Cartagena many popular electronic charts are extremely inaccurate. According to our Navionics "Gold" charts, on several occasions we were anchored a quarter mile inland — disconcerting until we learned to turn the thing off.

PROVISIONS: The only places where you can get fuel and water dockside are at the marina in Santa Marta and at Club de Pesca in Cartagena, but you can jerry jug diesel and water everywhere. On the southern offshore islands water might be unavailable in dry season. Big cities have big supermarkets and in even the tiniest communities, small *tiendas* sell potatoes, carrots, cabbage, local fresh food in season, tinned food, often good bread and — of course — beer. Cellphone minutes are universally available and if you have a cellphone or 3G modem, you can enjoy WiFi almost everywhere in Colombia. ATM machines (*cajeros*) that accept international credit cards are available in the cities but are uncommon elsewhere. Banks and a few *tiendas* in smaller communities will sell you Colombian pesos for US dollars.

Cartagena: Who doesn't want to see this jewel of Spanish Colonial and Baroque architecture and seasonal playground of the world's wealthy? It is surprising how unappealing the options for bringing your boat to Cartagena are at present, considering its importance as a destination. The only marina open to transient boats is Club Náutico and it is in a state of neglect that has "progressed" from decrepitude to pigsty. However, they do provide a dinghy dock, WiFi and a water faucet for about US$3.50 per day. The long-time cruiser community still runs a net on VHF 68 at 8:00 every morning, offering lots of advice and help if you need it. If you are willing to spend a few nights in a hotel (all price levels are available) you can see Cartagena without bringing your boat there: leave your boat safely in Marina Santa Marta and take a four-hour bus ride ($13) or else anchor your boat in Cholon (see below and also section on governmental regulations in Part Three next month) and return to Cartagena using the 5:30AM launch ($7, one hour and a trip in itself!) to spend a few days feasting on the sights.

If you arrive in Cartagena by boat, the *Pizazz* waypoint (10°23.45'N, 75°34.47'W) is very helpful for entering Cartagena Bay via Boca Grande because the buoys on either sides of the opening are inconspicuous until you are very close. Once in, you sail along the western shore of Cartagena (Castillo Grande), dumbfounded at the wall of condominium "stalagmites", before turning into the bay proper. Avoid the buoyed shoal near the statue and anchor near Club Náutico (10°24.68'N, 75°32.50'W).

It is also possible to enter or leave the bay using the marked ship channel at Boca Chica, but we were advised to do so only in daytime.

There are good haulout facilities and long-established recreational marine services in Cartagena Bay. The Club Náutico website (www.ClubNauticoCartagena.com) has a tab labeled "Cruiser Guide" that lists all kinds of information and services for cruisers.

Cholon: Older maps may not show it but there really is a Bahia Cholon, about 16 miles south of Cartagena near the southern tip of the Baru Peninsula. It is a long narrow bay completely protected from the ocean by mangrove islands. The following waypoints will bring you safely through the only sailboat-accessible entry, the first waypoint being very conservative:

10°10.59'N, 75°40.56'W
10°10.41'N, 75°40.32'W
10°10.06'N, 75°40.32'W
10°10.02'N, 75°40.26'W
10°09.91N, 75°40.20'W
10°09.84'N, 75°40.18'W
10°10.59'N, 75°40.56'W

Navionics chartware will tell you that you are sailing over an island. It is wrong. The last two points mark a 20-foot-wide channel with a sandbank to starboard and happy motorboaters med-moored at a beach bar to port. This is not a time to watch bikinis!

Anchor anywhere in the bay where there is adequate depth. Cholon and all of the Baru Peninsula is vacationland for Cartagenans; fast launches provide transport for day-trippers. Long stays are possible here once you learn to ferret out local services; cruiser cognoscenti hang here for entire seasons. The town of Baru can be reached with a two-mile dinghy ride along mangrove channels — hire someone local to guide you the first time. Baru offers fuel and water, a variety of local food, domestic and hardware items, and an ATM machine that accepts international credit cards. Stock up if you need pesos; you won't see another one until Portobelo, Panama, where the currency is dollars.

The entire shoreline of Cholon Bay is privately owned and only a few places allow you to use their waterfront dock. One of these is the charming Sports Baru, near the cellphone tower. Well-behaved cruisers are welcome to use their bar or restaurant — their second-floor verandah is a sybaritic place for sundowners.

Wind permitting, it is also possible to anchor in very shallow waters off the southern tip of the Baru Peninsula at 10°07.74'N, 75°41.26'W. The on-shore resort there is welcoming and the mouth of a short dinghy channel into Baru is nearby at 10°08.09'N, 75°40.70'W.

A unique way to return to Cholon from a trip to Cartagena is to go to the chaotic *mercado*, catch a local bus headed to the town of Pasa Caballos, get off and walk two blocks to a ferry, ride it 250 yards across El Dique (a ship channel built to connect Cartagena with the Rio Magdalena, its modern incarnation was dug in the 1950s) and then catch a ride with one of the motorcycle-taxis who will take one of you back to Cholon or Baru for about $13. It's a bit strenuous but a real hoot.

Rosario Archipelago, Isla Grande: There are several possible anchorages in these islands; good sketch maps are said to be available at Club Náutico in Cartagena. We anchored only at Isla Grande. We passed through its breaker-outlined windward reef safely with good light, relying on the *Pizazz* waypoint (10°11.18'N, 075°44.45'W), left the drab hard-to-spot concrete post to starboard and eyeballed our way in to anchor at 10°10.90'N, 75°44.39'W. The anchorage was somewhat bouncy when the wind piped up because the protecting coral reef appears to be completely dead, but we had its turquoise waters all to ourselves the four days we were there. The tiny (one cottage) resort La Coquera let us tie our dinghy to an onshore tree and walk across their property to the main path.



A minimal island dwelling with up-to-date cellphone service

The northern coast of this island is proudly Afro-Colombian — imagine an island with only footpaths and not a single road, palm tree groves and a small village whose residents decided to own all their land in common to be able to control further development. Along the paths the houses were minimal (think of a stereotypical Caribbean shack) but the yards were swept and the islanders invariably greeted us with smiles and a "*buenos dias*". When we circumnavigated the island by dinghy we found two brightly colored luxury resorts and aggressively ostentatious homes on the leeward side, a jarring contrast with two quieter (also expensive) eco-tourism resorts on the windward side. There might be private desalinization plants at the resorts, but for everyone else water comes from cisterns that fill during rainy season; when the cisterns run dry, water is purchased in five-gallon bottles via a Cartagena launch.

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

Dry latrines, with unique walls made of adobe and Coke-bottle bottoms, provide sanitation for most of the islanders.

Everything on the island had two price tags: local and outrageous. This is a consequence of the island being a favorite day-trip and weekend getaway for Cartagenans and an eco-holiday for well-heeled northerners in the know. The fishermen who came to the boat wanted 20 dollars for crab and lobster but we weren't buying. There is a Nature Center on the island and in their log the Bernons, whose blog is noted in the sidebar, mention a private-but-open-to-the-public aviary I wish I had known about. We saw another sailboat anchored near 10°10'N, 75°45'W. Circumstances had us exit the Rosario Archipelago using a waypoint (10°08.21'N, 75°43.30'W); it involved ghosting across 12-foot sandy shallows for a quarter mile. The deeper channel to the west, through 10°09.02' N, 75°44.08' W, looks preferable.

The Rosarios archipelago was our introduction to an economic and cultural offshore world that stretches from Cartagena to Porvenir, Panama. It consists of local residents who live in tranquility and security, entirely without cars, having very few material possessions other than a cellphone and TV (ubiquitous everywhere except in conservative Kuna villages), and who are warm and courteous to strangers. In the Colombian islands the shorelines are almost all the property of well-to-do absentee owners; shoreline "ownership" is different among the Kuna of Panama, of course.



Soap opera hour at lunchtime in Baru

San Bernardo Archipelago, Tintipan: We anchored off the leeward shore of the largest island, Tintipan, in the clearest, most beautiful water we had seen since leaving Bonaire. In an effort to anchor in sand we initially were rather close to shore but an onshore wind shift made us move 100 yards out to the waypoint 09°27.47'N, 75°50.18'W.

Tintipan must be entirely owned by a very few individuals because the only structures we saw on the south shore were two large homes, each sporting a thatch-roofed *palapa* built out over water for shady lazy pleasures; the *palapas* were huge, each easily big enough to accommodate a party of 100 people. The local fishermen and their families all live about one mile west on a rocky treeless island (Santa Cruz de Islote) that a Colombian guidebook claims has the highest population density in the world. It is reachable only by dinghy and the local *lanchas*. The Bernons describe some of the other islands in the archipelago, including La Palma, which has an aquarium. On our second evening in our peaceful anchorage we were approached by a small boat with five men aboard whom I had watched fishing farther offshore for several hours. After we got past the 20-dollar lobster offering, I said what I really wanted was just two small red snappers (*pargo*). They couldn't figure out how to price such a small ordinary item so we settled on four dollars and everyone was happy.

We motored away on a flat calm sunny day, exiting the island group near 09°43.35'N, 75°50.15'W. There is said to be good snorkeling on the north shore of Tintipan; I don't know if the north shore also offers adequate anchorage when the wind is from the west.

Isla Fuerte: This island is almost entirely surrounded by shallow reefs and we were grateful to two local men in canoes who offered to guide us into a small quiet bay near the southeast tip of the island. It is big enough to accommodate three boats that coordinate their anchoring. The waypoints to enter (at one point you pass over a bar of coral rubble only eight feet deep) are:

09°23.04'N, 76°10.03'W
09°23.04'N, 76°10.28'W
09°23.05'N, 76°10.32'W
09°23.07'N, 76°10.36'W

We anchored in 15 feet of water at 09°23.18'N, 76°10.46'W and got permission to use the tiny dock belonging to the last house on the point and cross the property to reach the public path.

The alternative if the wind permits is to anchor well out, off the town beach, about half a mile to the southwest of our small bay. If you are traveling in unfavorable weather, you may not find good anchorage and should be prepared to sail onward — which would be a great shame because Isla Fuerte was a surprise and deserved more than the two days we spent there.

As you approach you can see that the island has huge trees growing on it. Much of the shoreline is given over to discreet weekend waterfront homes (belonging to *antioqueños* from Medellin, at a guess). Aside from caretaker families for those homes, the full-time residents almost all live in the town of Puerto Limón. A pleasant tree-shaded 15-minute walk, sharing the path with tiny donkeys carrying laughing groups of children or impossibly big loads, brings you into town. The surprise is how many of the small houses were carefully finished, at no small expense, and there were paved sidewalk-streets along the shorefront. The town sports a tiny *tienda*, a restaurant, and a friendly mayor. The Bernon logs, about their week on Isla Fuerte in 2006, are a good resource (see sidebar).

From Isla Fuerte we sailed 80 miles directly to Sapzurro, which will be discussed in Part Three, next month.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Sailing the coast of Colombia is not a trip that you lay out in detail months before you do it. In the absence of a comprehensive guide, it works better to let your plans evolve as you travel, using information gained from various sources, especially other cruisers who have sailed these waters. Here are the resources we used for our trip.

• *Pizazz* Cruising Guide for Coast of Colombia. For their latest edition contact Lourae and Randy Kenoffel, sy_pizazz@yahoo.com.

• Log of *Jarandeb*, 1994-95 circumnavigation of Caribbean. Contact Dick and Jane Rogavin, jarandeb2@yahoo.com.

• In 2006-7, cruisers based in Curaçao put together extensive information for Cartagena, Curaçao and San Blas. It was assembled and written up by Rija on *S/V Queen of Hearts*, qoh06@hetnet.nl.

There are many good sources of information and trip descriptions on the web:

• Cruisers_Network_Online, www.yahooGroups.com is a great resource with up-to-date firsthand information from a variety of perspectives.

• The Bernon essays are thoughtful and relevant: www.boatus.com/cruising/ithaka/logbook.asp.

• I have written more informal commentary about portions of our trip: www.sailblogs.com/member/tashtego.

Finally I thank the many, many cruisers from Trinidad to Panama who freely shared information and advice based on their experiences in southwestern Caribbean waters.

Dear Compass *Readers,*

Because my knowledge is decidedly fragmentary and because the marine industry in Colombia is in such transition, if you will please send corrections, additions, and updates to me at constance.elson@gmail.com, I will organize them for publication in a future issue of the Compass.

Thank you!

Connie



HEAR YE, HEAR YE!

A THINKING MAN'S GUIDE TO VOYAGES SOUTH

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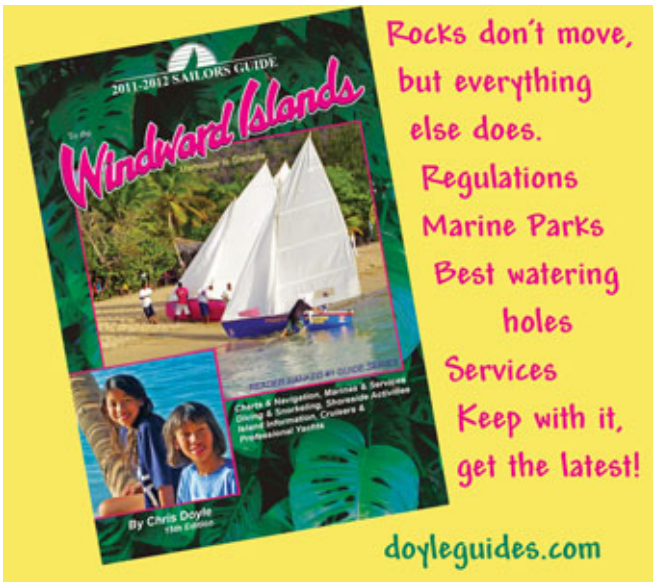
From Sue Richards, Editor, Noonsite
This is a worthy read and useful reference for all Caribbean cruisers, not just those hailing from N America. A welcome update to "A Gentleman's Guide to Passages South", by Bruce Van Sant.

From Gary E. Brown, Editor, All At Sea
At last here's an up to date in-depth guide for those making a voyageto the Caribbean. Rich in detail and packed with drawings and maps, not only will this book help you get to one of the world's most beautiful cruising grounds, Virgintino will keep you entertained while doing it.

From Sally Erdle, Editor, Caribbean Compass
Like respected authors before him, Frank Virgintino presents comprehensive advice on just about everything North American sailors will need to know to get to the Caribbean safely and enjoy a cruise here. The big difference is that Virgintino takes a wide-angled look at sailing to and cruising in the Caribbean — the WHOLE Caribbean. This was last done by Hart and Stone in 1976 (revised in 1991), and Virgintino's fresh perspective on the big picture is a gift.

Virgintino urges cruisers to get off "the beaten paths" (thorny or not) and consider a number of viable routes from various jumping-off points on the East Coast to various "entrances" into, and landfalls in, the Caribbean. His division of the Caribbean into four quadrants is a neat and functional way of comprehending this vast cruising area, and of getting over the idea that the Lesser Antilles alone are "the Caribbean".
Kudos to "A Thinking Man's Guide" for its wide embrace of the entire Caribbean!

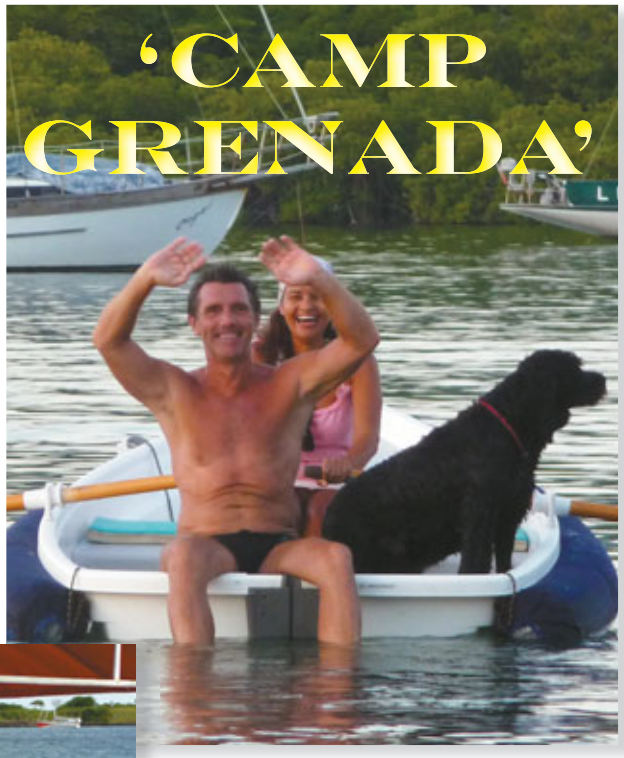
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'CAMP GRENADA'

by Ellen Birrell





Above: Here we are at summer camp for cruisers! Hog Island can be 'hog heaven'

Hello Muddah, hello Faddah, here we are at Camp Grenada!

Twelve "campsites" reach from St. David's in the southeast to St. George's in the southwest. The many activities enjoyed by cruisers in Grenada have elevated summer camping to new heights. Instead of erecting tents, we just sail from one site to another, taking a mooring ball or a slip or just swinging on anchor. This adult camping allows us to decide when we come and go. We are free to roam without permission of counselor or Customs!

Campsite #1: St. David's Bay

We liked the serene setting but found the conditions rolly. Ashore, Grenada Marine Bar has a wooden deck with great air circulation and comfortable tables. Normally quiet with a beautiful view over the bay and out to the reef break, it offers strong, reliable WiFi, no passwords, no excuses. Cruisers frequently use shoreside establishments as our living rooms, and my husband, Jim, and I have now added this one to our "Front Room List". They even have a variety of plugs for electricity at no charge. One camper was heard: "One-ten normal plug, no way! Wow!"

Bel Air Plantation resort adjoins the bay, offering beauty, mini-mart and restaurant. On a bluff above La Sagesse Bay, a ten minutes walk beyond, I became overheated. Wind off the Atlantic whistled through my sweaty mane. Mind and heart were stretched viewing the expansive rocky coastline.



Left: Rafted Concert at Le Phare Bleu on August 25th

Top left: The Carenage as seen from the St. George's anchorage

Campsites #2: Westerhall, #3: Calivigny, #4: Port Egmont, #5: Le Phare Bleu

We broke camp and sailed west aboard our Jeanneau Sun Odyssey, *Boldly Go*. Waters were lively, chop uncomfortable, scenery colorful with spectacular breaking foam against black volcanic rock.

We passed Camps 2 through 5 before we jibed into the reef-strewn entrance of Clarke's Court Bay. If there is a hurricane, we'll double back for shelter in Calivigny Bay or Egmont Harbour.

Campsite #6 Clarke's Court Bay

We dropped anchor near friends just east of Hog Island Bridge. Clarke's Court is remote, but a hearty dinghy ride gets you to Whisper Cove Marina and Lower Woburn, where buses are plentiful into town. We can also dinghy to Le Phare Bleu and Clarke's Court Bay marinas.

We got our music fix from a Rafted Concert thrown by Le Phare Bleu Marina on their tugboat. Campers arrived by dinghy, tying off astern. The featured visiting musician is required to write and perform a song about their impressions of Grenada.

The young Swiss vocalist-guitarist's song was sweet and spot on!

A week later, a squall howled down on us for several hours. (See "September 15th, 2011" on page 31.) A commercial fishing vessel nearly dragged over the top of our boat. It was scary.

Weary from the previous night's ordeal, we took reprieve at Whisper Cove Marina.

"I like that," proprietress Marie laughed when I described my "Meat & Meet Market" experience: "This week we kept meeting up with our cruising friends here. Pete, captain of *Coral*, came two afternoons in a row to buy meat. We got to meet Pete who was buying meat at Meat & Meet."

Marie chuckled in French lilt, "Yes, I like the sound of that."

Life in Camp Grenada can be quite structured if you wish. At 0730 hours, Monday through Saturday, the Grenada Cruisers' Net on VHF 68 broadcasts weather information and invites campers to share news related to safety and security, camp arrivals and departures, services, activities and bartering. Today Susie from *Spirited Lady* reported finding a single flip-flop and another cruiser offered up an AK47.

As at any good camp, there is a time for everything from crafts to recreation, cerebral to social activities, sports to community service. The campers and suppliers are daily inventing new activities. It is an incredible community.

—*Continued on next page*

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—Continued from previous page

Campsite #7: Hog Island

Tootling through the classic boats on anchor here — such as *Lily Maid*, *Coral*, *Old Bob* and *Gaucho* — for Hog Island's Sunday afternoon hangout is a lesson in cool. Grenadian families and yachties crowded the tiny beach and Roger's Beach Bar. Folks limed, music blared.

That week we played hooky with fellow campers Hilnoretna and Darko of *Dora*. We took the dinghy to Bus #2 and transferred to a Grenville bus. Requesting the Seven Sisters trailhead, the driver dropped us just beyond the Grand Etang summit.

We strolled through groves of mango, nutmeg, passionfruit, and callaloo. The path narrowed to single track. The jungle thickened, our heartbeats quickened. Intense shade and green consumed us. Thirty minutes later Margaret Falls came into view. Wow-za!

We enjoyed the cold percolating waters at the base of the falls while Jim scrambled up a muddy, slippery, vertical trail to visit Margaret's loftiest sister.

On Wednesday, campers mobbed Clarke's Court Bay Marina for Burger Night. They rustled up hot dogs for us when the burgers ran out. We gyrated to Jomo, Gylfi and Fred's '60s and '70s rock. Birthday girl Ruth from *Astral Wind* danced relentlessly. "I've been waiting a long time for the band to play me the Beatles' 'When I'm 64'!"

Campsite #8: Mt. Hartman Bay

We moved our campsite yet again, this time deep into the bay adjacent to Secret Harbour Marina. We take advantage of a quick dinghy ashore and walking to Budget Marine, other stores on Maurice Bishop Highway and the Dusty Highway, and the Excel and Spiceland shopping malls.

Do you wonder what it's like using walking as our form of transportation?

Jim and I try to get out early, but often find ourselves running errands in the midday heat. We wear long-sleeved shirts and hats, and carry a daypack with water and extra sacks. We consider it a part of a healthy life, like a good workout, hydration, nutrition and positive mantra. It gives us time to talk uninterrupted and connects us with our host community.

Coming back from the Dusty Highway, the massive Grenlec building blocked our direct route back to the boat through L'Anse Aux Epines. Jim tried cutting through an adjacent parking lot. He panted coming up the hill carrying several bags.

From a tiny guardhouse: "No, you can't pass there."

We both gave that burdened look.

"No. Oh, no," the guard said gently, kindly.

Jim responded, "We're always trying short cuts."

The guard replied smiling, "Mostly all of us tryin' dat."

In Secret Harbour Marina, there are 18 campers in Spanish class led by Ronnie Ramos of *Campechano*. Lesson One: the alphabet. "... B pronounced "bay": Bueno. Bonito. Barato. That is what you ask for when shopping: good, good looking, inexpensive."

Managing the gaggle of gringos, he seats us in a circle and asks each to compose a sentence. When it got around to Vicki from *Boto* who was seated next to Ronnie, she said: "Mi professor es muy guapo."

Ronnie's face flushed. He composed himself, and responded with a sentence none of us understood. He leaned forward in his seat, raised his Puerto Rican eyebrows and repeated it.

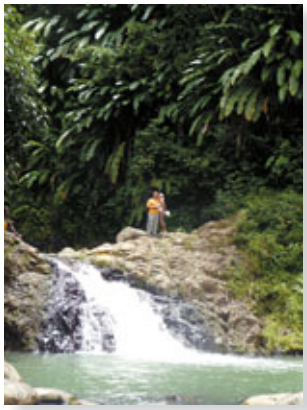
Finally, he translated, "Vicki, you are out of order!"

Campsite #9: Prickly Bay

A short sail landed us in Prickly Bay near the Tiki Bar. On Friday night, jumping around to Barracuda and his hip band including saxophonist, bass guitar and drums, it was an out-a-campsite experience!

Saturday afternoon we dashed ashore to catch a shuttle to Grand Mal just north of St. George's for Grenada's 700th Hash. As it was our first, we were considered virgins. (Read "Cruisers on the Run" by Rosie Burr on page 27.)

The next Saturday, with seven other campers, we assisted with the Mount Airy weekly reading program. It is provided free to children who wish to improve on their reading, writing and arithmetic skills. Excited and effusive, the children read from age-appropriate books, and then formed a large circle. Joke from *Zee Vronk* led all of us in a rapid-fire arithmetic game.



Darko and Hilno of Dora *enjoy Margaret Falls, one of The Seven Sisters*

Campsite #10: True Blue Bay

Thursday's cooking class at True Blue Bay resort turned out to be The Esther & Omega Show.

Fire leaped from the portable gas stove positioned in the center of the patio. Esther ladled steaming coconut cream sauce into Omega's open palm. The audience gasped.

Omega touched tongue to palm, rolled her eyes back, leaned forward and declared, "Dat's right."

"Today we makin' Nutmeg Callaloo Chicken," proclaimed large and magnificent Omega.

Esther continued, "Omega and I were arguin' in de kitchen. We sometimes stand at de doorway and do dat." The audience laughed. "De general manager caught us. He said, "I hear you usin' up your energy arguin' with each other. I want you ta channel dat energy in a positive way. I want de two of you ta start a cookin' class for our guests. Think about how you will do dat and get back ta me." Dis is how de weekly cookin' series came ta be."

Two 20-inch pans sizzled as Esther drizzled in vegetable oil. She poured in chopped christophene, onion, chive and ginger. Next she showed us how to slit a pocket into the chicken breast.

Like Laurel and Hardy, Esther and Omega two played off each other.

With a swoosh of steam, "Has ta have crunch! Barely cook dis so ya have crunch ta contrast rich stuffed chicken breast. Improvise! Make ya veggies work for ya."

One camper was heard saying, "Now that I know who's in the kitchen, I'll be sure to be back for a breakfast, lunch or dinner at True Blue."

—Continued on next page

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Petite Calivigny Bay, St. George's, Grenada W.I., POS 12°00'11N / 61°43'29W

—Continued from previous page

Campsite #11: St. George's Harbour

Tall Dutch Henk of *Zee Vronk* keeps his tall yellow catamaran at the anchorage off Ross Point for weeks. New mooring balls and the clear water near shore make this anchorage a winner, especially for access to St. George's town. Monohulls beware: northerly swells create relentless roll.



From cooking lessons (left) to Carnival (right) summer in Camp Grenada is hot!

Campsite #12: St. George's Lagoon

Anchoring here isn't viable anymore, but slips at Grenada Yacht Club or Port Louis Marina open up marina and city amenities. Shopping, restaurants, bars, entertainment — all at your fingertips.

What About Other Campers?

Some campers arrive at Camp Grenada, lay down their anchors, and stay put in one place from June to November.

Whether campsite hopping or stationary, most of us conduct boat projects, zoom about in our dinghies (or, like John and other young Old Salts, sail or row dinghies), and spend good amounts of time on land transported by regularly scheduled private shuttles or public buses into Grand Anse, the Carenage and St. George's. Many couples split temporarily for trips "home".

Mike and Rebecca of *Zero to Cruising* organize Tuesday and Thursday beach volleyball. Kate of *Mendocino Queen* leads yoga classes and plays dominoes. Trudie from *Persephone* is getting her scuba certification, and Gwynne on *Gaviotta* rides at Amistad Horse Stables.

Between HotHotHotSpot and CruisersNet, WiFi coverage blankets the populated anchorages of southern Grenada.

New In 2011

Port Louis Marina's completed expansion includes new docks, services, swimming pool, open-air bar and restaurant. From swank to picnic-table planks, there's limin' space for every stripe of camper.

Grenada Cruisers Facebook page facilitates information exchange 24/7/52.

Mooring balls adjacent Moliniere Bay's Underwater Statue Park located two miles north of St. George's.

Le Phare Bleu's Rafted Concerts.

Grenada Chocolate Company's new "Nib-A-Licious" bars. Think crispy cocoa nibs in 60-percent-cocoa chocolate.

Grenada camper ranks have swollen with controversies swirling around Venezuela and, to a lesser extent, Trinidad as "best" hurricane season hideouts. Trinidad's 2011 curfew, although cruisers there say it hasn't impacted them negatively, didn't improve the island's PR this summer.



With thanks and apologies to Allan Sherman (1924-1973), Camp Grenada signing off:

Hello Muddah, hello Faddah,
Here I am at Camp Grenada.
Camp is very entertaining,
and Lynn says we'll have fun even if it's raining.

I went swimming at Hog Island,
RIBs were zooming, lost my left hand.
You remember John from Gaucho,
Spleefin', limin', Nimrod's — pretty macho.

All the sailors fear the cyclones,
and the fall has heavy wet ones.
We'd take shelter in Calivigny
but we're too busy having a martini.

Let me go north, let me go west,
Tradewinds take me on the next quest.
I have savored every minute,
of this camp, but now I've done that and been in it.

Dearest Faddah, precious Muddah,
Bustin' north now in my cutta.
When I'm sailin', you won't hear much,
'til next summa when I'm back in Camp Grenada!



Ellen Birrell and her husband, Jim Hutchins, offer charters in the Eastern Caribbean. She is writing articles aboard Boldly Go. *For more information visit www.boldlygo.us/Boldly_Go/Welcome.html.*



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Cruisers on the Run

by Rosie Burr

On September 3rd my husband, Sim, and I left our boat at anchor on the south coast of Grenada and proceeded to a hot, windless sports field just north of the island's capital St. George's. More than 600 people — including over 120 cruisers — had come together in the blazing sun.

Why? For Grenada's 700th "hash".

For those of you not familiar with the concept, a hash is a motley group of people with a sense of fun and adventure who get together once a week to run, walk, skip or jump their way through predetermined jungle, forest, river, stream, hill, road and beach trails. Often muddy and wet (especially if you are in Grenada), these trails are marked with mounds of shredded paper every 30 feet for The Pack (as participants are known) to follow. Often led by shouts of "On On" by other hashers to let you know you are on the right trail, or "Are You?" to determine if you are on the right path, hashers are the most eccentric runners and walkers that you will ever come across. They are self-proclaimed "drinkers with a running problem".

According to their website, the Hash House Harriers, as they are collectively known, started back in 1938 when a group of British expats in Malaysia wanted to find a way to keep fit that didn't interfere with their drinking regime. The idea was based upon the centuries-old hare and hound or paper chase games where people would imitate the hunting sport. Runners would replace the hounds and paper trails replaced the scent that the human nose could not follow. The chase would normally end at some kind of drinking establishment where all the good efforts of the run would come undone. Now there are nearly 2,000 hash groups in 185 different countries. The Grenada Hash House Harriers was established on October 3rd, 1985 and since then has become one the largest and most popular hash groups in the East Caribbean. Hashing has become a huge social event where everyone is welcome.



More than 120 visiting sailors traded their deck shoes for trainers to help celebrate Grenada's 700th Hash House Harriers event

Lynn Kaak on *Silver Heels III* has had such a good experience at these events that she wanted to share it with other cruisers. She promoted the hash on the morning VHF net while in Grenada for hurricane season. She says, "It's a wonderful way to see the island and for cruisers and locals to interact and be part of the local scene". Organizing buses every week for cruisers that wish to take part, Lynn made sure that everyone got picked up from various anchorages and was often one of the last to leave, making sure that everyone got back to their boats.

Susan from *Peter Pan* says, "It's a great way to get off your boat and get some exercise while seeing some wonderful parts of Grenada with the lure of a Carib beer at the end." Jackie from *Xicale* agrees: "You are taken to parts of the island that you just wouldn't get to see otherwise. And it's not expensive, about EC$10 to $20 round trip if you take one of the organized buses, plus an EC$2 donation".

The cruisers' involvement has evolved so much that there are many who now have their own hash names. A hash name is a term of endearment that is usually uncomplimentary and has some sort of story behind it. Lynn's name unfortunately is too rude to mention in this respectable publication! But John on *Celtic Dream* received his hash name at this big 700th event and is now known as "Sat Nav". Others include "Blabber Beak" from *Tranquillo* and "Brain Damaged" from *Oceana*. Over the years the hash has been blessed with the presence of many dignitaries to help celebrate different landmarks, and this year the special guest was Grenada's Prime Minister, the Right Honorable Tillman Thomas, who received his very own hash name, "Prime Suspect".

To celebrate Grenada's 700th hash, Hash Master "Softwood", a.k.a. Mike Cowen, welcomed everyone to the event and started off the proceedings by thanking several people and the Carib brewery, which has been a big supporter for many years. A search was done for anyone wearing new shoes — to be christened or broken in by being filled with Carib and drunk from by the owner! Then the "virgins" (anyone who hasn't hashed before) got a briefing on what to expect. At the end of hash a certificate for "loss of virginity" is issued and you may even find a little free beer coming your way.

As this 700th hash was such a big event, there were three different trails; one for runners, one for walkers, and the "namby pamby trail" to cater for those with different abilities. Sim and I were with the walkers, as were the majority, it would seem because of human traffic jams building up through parts of the trail. We hiked across a small river (through it for some) and up the mandatory muddy hill thanks to the perfect timing of the rain earlier that afternoon. Up and up we went through trees and vines and more mud until we reached a road at the top. Sim lost the soles of his shoes in the mud and I lost my normal color by turning a very shiny red. But luckily, it was downhill all the way from there, affording some amazing views along the route. We traipsed through what seemed like people's gardens and private bits of land with cornfields and fruit trees and down some very steep roads.

The walks normally take about an hour or so — unless on the way down you stop, as we did at a rum shack where we refreshed ourselves and revitalized our energies with rum and ice-cold beer. Fearing we would be the last to return we hurried along the last leg of the journey, following the music and hum of the people from the party below. By the time we returned the party was in full swing with local band "Back in Time" pumping out some tunes. Food stalls selling everything from ice cream to chicken and chips and oildown had huge queues of hungry people waiting in line. And of course obligatory Caribs were being sold behind the bar. The beautiful sun set on another day as people cooled off in the sea and the party continued to celebrate Grenada's 700th hash.

Some parts of a hash are a little tricky as you climb up or down muddy hills, and getting dirty is inevitable, but there is a sense of achievement when you finally finish and camaraderie with your fellow hashers all the way through. For cruisers to be part of something local and to get to see some parts of the island that are off the beaten track really is something very special and not always easy to achieve. So here's to Grenada's next hundred hashes. On On!

For more information visit www.grenadahash.com or www.gthhh.com.

Rosie Burr and Sim Hoggarth are cruising the Caribbean aboard their Corbin 39, Alianna. *They have traveled through 23 countries and more than 12,000 miles in six years. Visit their blog at www.yacht.alianna.co.uk.*



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Best of People and Places

by Mark Denebeim

While cruising the Caribbean on my Island Spirit 37 catamaran, *Sanctuary*, I am often asked; "Where is your favorite place to go?" My standard answer is always: "Wherever my boat happens to be, whether sailing or at anchor!" All I have to do is think about life on the interstate and I have no doubts. But while I do prefer some islands (the BVI, Anguilla, St. Barths, Nevis, Dominica, and the Grenadines) to others (Martinique, St. Kitts, St. Eustatius, Sint Maarten), it is all just a degree of 'like'; I don't hate any of them.

From June 2010 to July 2011, I cruised from the BVI to Grenada, missing only Barbuda, Barbados, Montserrat and Saba, and kept some detailed notes about the best of my favorite things to eat, visit and do.

This is not your typical "Best Beach Bars" list; the following is directed at the cruising yachtsperson who considers atmosphere and vibe to be important, as well as keeping an eye on the cruising kitty (prices given are as of my cruise). In some cases, there is more than one "best" or there is a "best of" for each region: BVI = British Virgin Islands, LI = Leeward Islands, WI = Windward islands. And why not? More good places and things to check out! Hopefully, there will be some new "bests" for you to enjoy, and maybe some you will even agree with!

Best Big-Time Regatta Party

I went to almost all of them — BVI Spring, St. Maarten Heineken, Antigua Sailing Week, Interline Airline in the BVI — and they were all wild fun, but the Moorings



Interline was over-the-top crazy and sick! With about 45 boats racing, and another 20 or so "racing chasing", the party's size is perfect for socializing and raising hell! Each night is a themed event: "Anything But Clothes," "Jump Up and Jingle", and "Pirate" for example, and you won't believe the costumes people have brought with them from all over the world (most arrived by jumpseat, flying for free thanks to their status as pilots, attendants and other airline employees).

Honorable Mention: The Mount Gay Red Hat Parties prior to Antigua Week and St. Maarten Heineken — two hours of free or nearly free Mount Gay drinks... enough said!

Best Full Moon Party

BVI: Bomba Shack, Apple Bay, Tortola. All you can drink for US$50 (mushroom tea included, but they boil it instead of steeping so it has no effect — pay by the drink, skip the tea!), with a rocking live band and general mayhem. The granddaddy of them all.

Best Beaches

BVI: The north side of Prickly Pear Island, Eustatia Sound, Virgin Gorda; Loblolly Beach, Anegada; and White Bay, Jost Van Dyke.

LI: Meads Bay, Rendezvous Bay or Prickly Pear Cay, Anguilla; and Flamandes or Le Governeur, St. Barths.

WI: Petit Tabac, Tobago Cays (at the end of the world!); and Salt Whistle Bay, Mayreau (check out the Windward Carenage next door, too) — both in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (SVG).

Best Customs & Immigration

BVI: Spanish Town, Virgin Gorda, commercial dock — fast, efficient and no problem getting the full 30 days (when the officers are there!).

LI: Port La Royal, St. Martin — all computerized and stay a month for US$10.

WI: Portsmouth, Dominica — check in and out all at once, good for two weeks; it's the only country that offers this.

Best WiFi

Anywhere that's free!

Best Reef to Hit

Newlands Reef, Union Island, SVG — because then you could just walk over to Happy Island and have a beer without using the dinghy!

Best Bridge Opening

LI: St. Maarten Yacht Club, Dutch St. Maarten, 1730 inbound traffic.

Best Snorkel Spots (based on visibility, access and uniqueness)

BVI: Great Dog Island — the west side offers a tunnel about 25 feet deep, and a private alcove; Norman Island could be the best area anywhere, with the Indians, Pelican Island, the Caves and Privateer Bay; The Wreck of the *Rhone* (when it's calm and the dive boats aren't there); and Little Harbor, Peter Island — at the north entrance point are lobster, rays, many schools of fish, and great fauna.

LI: Ile Forche, and the Petite Saintes, Gustavia, St. Barths; and Pigeon Island, Guadeloupe — a Jacques Cousteau Marine Sanctuary.

WI: Moliniere Bay, Grenada — see underwater statues surrounded by great coral and fish; the Tobago Cays Marine Park, Grenadines — park in the northeast corner inside the reef and be surrounded by hundreds of fish in only eight feet of water; and the south base of the Petit Piton, St. Lucia — deep, but colors and fish everywhere (watch for current!).

Best Swimming Pool for General Public

LI: Top of the Baths, BVI.

WI: Aqua, Chatham Bay, SVG.

Best Swimming Pool for Rich People

Firefly Inn, Mustique, SVG. (Go check it out anyway!)

Best Jewelry Shopping

LI: Juicy Fruits Magasin, Grand Case, St. Martin.

WI: Molissa, on the sidewalk in Bequia, SVG.

Best Clothes Shopping

Who wears clothes in the Caribbean?

Best Haircut

LI: Simpson Bay Marina Haircuts, St. Maarten — a tiny place with good service.

WI: Island Cuts, Mayreau, SVG — Hudson will take care of your needs for only EC$15.

Best Bordello

I could tell you, but then I would have to shoot you.

Best Place to Buy Art

BVI: Ali Baba's Bar & Restaurant — I bought some paintings for the boat there; jewelry, too.

LI: Spindler Art Gallery, Les Saintes, Guadeloupe — great paintings, clothes and other interior stuff.

WI: Oasis Gallery, Bequia, SVG — not cheap but very clever, bright and totally original paintings.

Best 'Land Art'

BVI: The Baths, Virgin Gorda — don't go when the cruise ship is in! Don't miss hiking around the rocks on the south side of Devil's Bay; you will probably be the only one there.

LI: Red Rock at Pointe Baptiste, Calibishie, Dominica — bring a picnic and enjoy! You will likely be the only one there to frolic among the clay dunes and windswept, wind-carved topography.

WI: The Pitons, St. Lucia — grab a mooring at the base of the Petit Piton.

Dark View Falls, Chateaubelair, SVG — a nice walk on the way, and you might well be the only one there.

Best People Watching

BVI: *Willie T*, Norman Island — watch everyone make fools of themselves!

LI: Gustavia Harbor, St. Barths — watch the fashionistas with their little white dogs in tow.

WI: The Belmont Walkway, Bequia, SVG — watch the world go by.

Best Ring-Toss Game

I am biased here, since I donated and installed ring-toss games at Sammy's at Sandy Ground, Anguilla; Sun, Beach, Eat at Chatham Bay, Union Island, SVG; and Black Boy and Debbie's at Mayreau, SVG.

Best Hammock

Aragon's Art Studio, Tortola, BVI.

Best Statue

Humping Tortoises, Mustique, SVG.

Best Local House

A symphony in pink and white in Portsmouth, Dominica. You can't miss it.

Best Sunset



From the 'over-the-top' craziness of an Interline Regatta party to the serenity of a sunset over the sea, Captain Mark thinks the Lesser Antilles have all the best

Cane Garden Bay, Tortola, BVI; and Gustavia Harbor, St. Barths.

Best Places You Never Thought of Going

BVI: Key Cay, Peter Island — long beach with cabanas used by the resort... sometimes.

LI: Chevelle Island, St. Barths — great snorkeling, lobster hunting and a view of Baie St. Jean.

WI: Saline Island, off the south coast of Carriacou — gorgeous and private.

Best View

Any place where I have my boat at anchor.

Best Caribbean Magazine

Whichever one agreed to print this article!

Best of Food and Drink

Best Beach Bar

BVI: Ivan's Stress Free Bar, White Bay, Jost Van Dyke — shells in the walls, a great beach and the perfect place to kill a day with a drink and to hear Ruben play at night; Ali Baba's; Great Harbour — cool bar with jewelry, barbecue and a golf course right out front; and any Anegada beach bar!

LI: Elvis' Beach Bar, Sandy Ground, Anguilla — six-foot TV screen, boat-shaped bar, and people from the resorts and the locals mixing nicely on the beach at sunset, thanks to the bartender, Elvis; and La Bamba, Kim Sha Beach, Simpson Bay, Sint Maarten — if it's not rock n' roll night, it's Latin or karaoke, and the food is pretty good and cheap, too. Located next to the bridge. Great Painkillers!

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

WI: Black Boy and Debbie's, Salt Whistle Bay, Mayreau, SVG — amazing local charm and service; and Roger's Hog Island Beach Bar, Hog Island, Grenada — remote and idyllic, plenty of cruisers for Sunday afternoon barbecue; hang out all day or night.

Best Happy Hour

BVI: Saba Rock, North Sound — US$2.50 Painkillers (excellent), rum punch and Carib beer. Tell Josie that Captain Mark sent you!

LI: Plenty of bars in St. Martin offer US$1 beers, e.g. Lagoon Loonies and Barnacles.

WI: Several places in south Grenada (e.g. De Big Fish at Spice Island Marine, and the bar at Grenada Marine) offer either three beers or two mixed drinks for EC$10.

Best Bartender

Male: Elvis of Elvis' Beach Bar, Sandy Ground, Anguilla — an island personality with flair; the only bartender I know to refill melted drinks with fresh ice without being asked.

Female: Gloria of Soggy Dollar Bar, Simpson Bay Lagoon, St. Maarten — so attentive I fell in love, and I'll be back for that kiss you promised!

Best Pick-Up Bar

Hey, I can't give this one up — I don't need the competition!

Best Unique Bar and Restaurant

BVI: *Willie T* — on a Friday or Saturday afternoon when the St. Thomas restaurant crowd takes over (do not bring your children; it does NOT get any wilder than this!); and The Last Resort, Trellis Bay, BVI — just a cool place to hang out, live music and good food.

LI: Sunshine's, Nevis — no one is cooler than Sunshine, and he's the best host around.

WI: Robert's Righteous and de Youths, Mayreau, SVG — colorful, great food and laid back, and Robert *is* cool; and Happy Island, Union Island, SVG — as if building his own island out of conch shells wasn't enough, now Janti has added a covered bar and dining area and lives there!



Hallelujah, c'mon get happy… The Lesser Antilles are full of fun places to eat and drink

Best Cheap Lunch Spot

BVI: The Cyber Café, Trellis Bay — try the Awesome Fish Sandwiches for about US$12.

LI: Le Sous Marin, Marigot, French St. Martin, near Port La Royale — inexpensive (US$5 to $7) and tasty sandwiches and homemade specialties. A local favorite.

WI: Lambi Queen, Tyrell Bay, Carriacou, Grenada.

Best Sand Bar to Hit

The Sand Bar Restaurant, Sandy Ground, Anguilla — inexpensive and tasty tapas in a modern popular environment on the beach.

Best Barbecue Ribs

There are so many roadside barbecues and funky little places that this was a hard one.

BVI: The Chicken Shack, Road Town, across from Bobby's Market — great chicken legs and ribs.

LI: Kenny's roadside grill — take-out for US$6 slab (Thursday-Sunday); and Murray's Jamaican Jerk Centre — sit down, US$8 with buns. Both in Sandy Ground, Anguilla.

Honorable Mention: Lolos, Grand Case, French St. Martin — six barbecue establishments all occupying one large on-the-beach deck, with slabs of ribs for only US$4 and chicken legs for US$2. I always anchor in front, take out three orders of each, and eat like a king for five days for only US$18.

Honorable Mention II: Foxy's, Jost Van Dyke, BVI — spareribs like you dream about, all you can pile on two plates. Barbecue on Friday and Saturday nights; simply the best quality and best-tasting meal for the money, if you are hungry! Even at a cruiser-unfriendly US$29, try to go at least once. Get one order for two people.

I'll also give kudos to Big Papa, in Portsmouth, Dominica, right on the beach in Prince Rupert Bay. An unforgettable character in his own right, Big Papa responded "the food!" when I asked him what he would like to be most remembered for.

Best Roti

I am a big roti fan, every flavor, especially chicken. I try them almost everywhere, so to pick the best is not easy! Some cost as little as EC$7, and one, at Basil's Bar on Mustique, about EC$75 (that's almost US$30 for a roti!).

BVI: The Trellis Bay Market, Beef Island — big, fat, tasty and only US$7 (to go), usually ready at 1000, sold out by 1100, so plan accordingly.

LI: Sea Breeze Café, Falmouth Harbor, Antigua — at under EC$12 and tasty!

WI: I don't have the name for this place, but it's the house with the bar counter right at the foot of the steps that lead up to Del's Rainforest Lounge, Les Canaries, St. Lucia — rotis only EC$7 each! The owner of the Discipline Bar owns it and lives here, too.

Honorable Mention: Tie between the Green Boley and the Whaleboner (just had to get that name in print) — right near each other in Bequia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and each about EC$15 or less.

Best Conch Fritters

BVI: Saba Rock, North Sound, Virgin Gorda — not cheap at US$15 but they *are* good, and sometimes half price during Happy Hour.

WI: Aqua, Chatham Bay, Union Island, SVG — THE BEST anywhere, about EC$35.

Honorable Mention: Cooper Island Beach Club, Cooper Island — with a two-for-one Painkiller Happy Hour and Cistern Point nearby, they are good, but dinner is not cheap!

Best Seafood Soup

WI: The St. Vincent Yacht Club, Calliaqua, SVG — thick, chunky, full of flavor, EC$20, and you're right on the water.

Best Lobster

BVI: Neptune's, Anegada; and Sidney's Peace & Love, Little Harbor, Jost Van Dyke — even with Sidney gone, his girls are doing it up right.

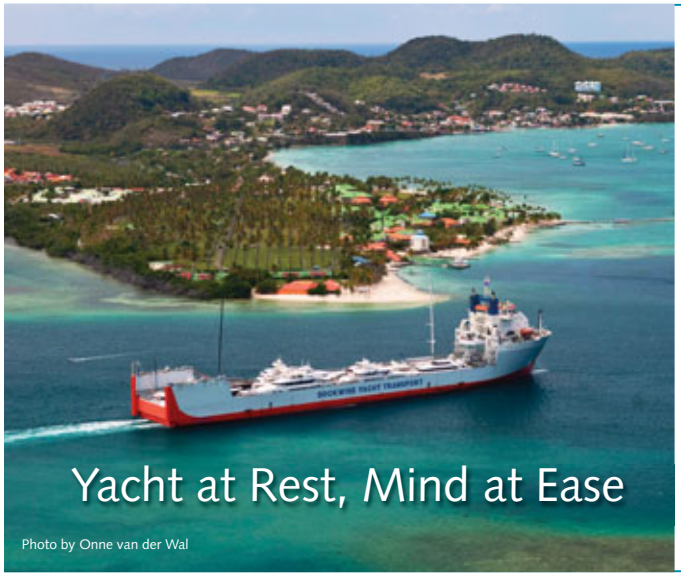
LI: There is a place at the St. Martin Simpson Bay Lagoon bridge that sells them live to restaurants and locals.

WI: Black Boy and Debbie's, Salt Whistle Bay, Mayreau, SVG. Throughout the Southern Grenadines, you can purchase (EC$35 per pound) huge lobsters from fishermen and prepare them yourself, or from locals who will cook them and bring them to your boat or serve them to you on the beach. Or go to Sun, Beach, Eat (EC$100) or Shark Attack at Chatham Bay, Union Island. But Black Boy does it best! (Note that the closed season for lobster in the Grenadines runs from May 1st through August 31st.)

Best Coconut Cake

WI: The Discipline Bar, Les Canaries, St. Lucia.

Captain Mark Denebeim offers charters and is writing articles and his memoirs aboard Sanctuary while sailing *throughout the Caribbean. For more information visit www.oceanbreezetours.com.*



VOYAGES FROM THE CARIBBEAN

November, 2011 - June, 2012

TO THE MEDITERRANEAN			DEPARTURE
Martinique	→	Genoa	11/2011
Martinique	→	Genoa	03/2012
Martinique	→	Taranto	06/2012
Martinique	→	Toulon	06/2012
St. Thomas	→	Palma de Mallorca	04/2012
St. Thomas	→	Port Everglades	04/2012
TO THE EAST COAST USA			
Martinique	→	Port Everglades	12/2011
St. Thomas	→	Newport	05/2012



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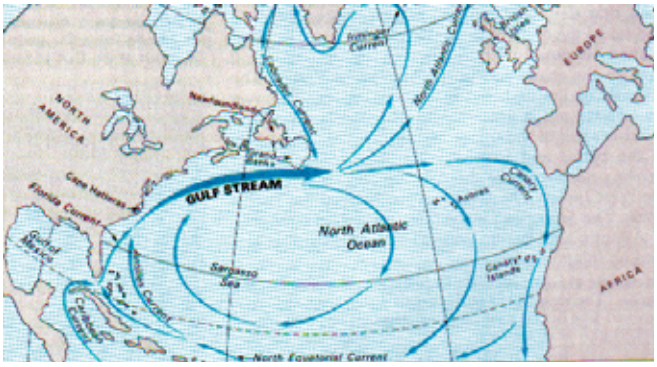
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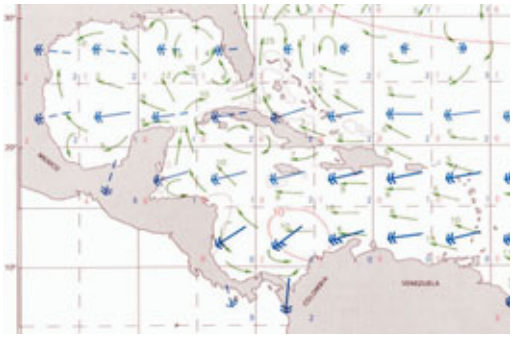
Part Two: Sailing Clockwise Through the Quadrants

by Frank Virgintino

It is with a great sense of satisfaction that you find yourself in the Caribbean, ready to realize a dream that formed in your mind many years ago. Where you arrived in the Caribbean — the Windward Passage, the Dominican Republic, the Virgin Islands, the Leewards, the Windwards, or even the Panama Canal — will of course determine where you start your cruise. Keep in mind that the Caribbean Sea is over 1,000,000 square miles and, in addition to the sea itself, contains many different island and mainland countries.

Wherever you begin, it's worth knowing the predominant wind and current. The





Above: The Caribbean Current is really part of the Gulf Stream or vice versa

Left: Lay out a route, and focus an area employing its peculiarities as to currents, winds and seas to make your sailing more enjoyable

Caribbean is deeply affected by the tradewinds. These are winds that blow from east to west. When they first start up in early December, contrary to what you may believe, they are not steady and many times you may find yourself with light winds or no wind at all — followed by periods of heavy wind. The strong and gusty winds at this time are known as the Christmas Winds.

The winds begin from east and blow east through northeast. As the season grows older, the winds become more easterly and finally at the end of the tradewind season become somewhat east through southeast. In late spring and early summer they are quite steady and blow 15 to 20 knots consistently.

The current in the Caribbean also runs from east to west and is known as the Caribbean Current. It averages one knot. The Caribbean Current is really part of the Gulf Stream or vice versa.

Learn how to use the current and it will be your constant companion and friend. Overlook the current and you will find yourself many times in opposition to it.

The best way to plan a trip through the Caribbean under sail (or on any cruising boat for that matter) is clockwise, no matter where you start. Moreover, because of the differences in various parts of the Caribbean in terms of height of the land masses, size of the islands, time of the season, etcetera, it is best to time one's passage to best take advantage of the seasonality that you will encounter. For example, "northers" come down from North America early in the tradewind season. They bring cool air and can reach east through the Virgin Islands. Cruising the Greater Antilles (Cuba, Hispaniola and Puerto Rico) early in the tradewind season necessitates taking northers into account — especially if you are on the north side of the islands. Northers have a stalling effect on the tradewinds and can be employed if you find yourself north and need to make your easting.

Over the years I have come to appreciate the Caribbean more and understand it better by dividing it into quadrants. I call this "Caribbean Quadrant Cruising". Study the quadrants, lay out a route, and focus on your chosen area — employing its peculiarities regarding currents, winds and seas to make your sailing more enjoyable.

Each quadrant has its own particular characteristics and when understood and taken into account these can be used to make a voyage throughout the Caribbean less arduous and perhaps even more meaningful.

The Greater Antilles are in the Northern Quadrant and are the largest islands with the highest mountain ranges in the Caribbean. The northers that come down from North America during the winter also affect the islands in this quadrant, and especially so on their weather side. If you are going to transit the Windward Passage or the Mona Passage you must keep this in mind as northers can make for heavy conditions and large seas. Additionally, one must understand what katabatic wind is and how it is different from "island shadow". The air at the top of an island mountain range cools when the sun goes down and becomes denser and thus heavier than the



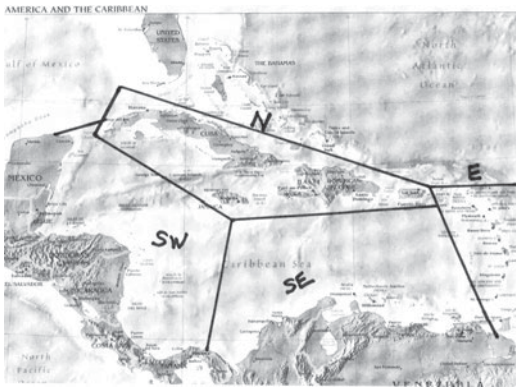
The Southwest Quadrant. A voyage through this area can be reminiscent of Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn in 'The African Queen'

air over the sea. As a result, the denser and heavier air begins to "slide" down the mountainside after sunset. Think of katabatic wind as a flowing river that you cannot see but that you can definitely feel. Sometimes it is so strong that it not only stalls the tradewinds close to the island but also creates an offshore breeze.

As we move clockwise to the Eastern Quadrant, we arrive at the Lesser Antilles. Many times people refer to the Lesser Antilles as "The Caribbean". They are not the Caribbean; they are part of it. From north to south they form an arc that is made up of many different small (in relation to the Greater Antilles) islands. You have not sailed "The Caribbean" until you have sailed through the Lesser Antilles, albeit that today they are referred to as the "beaten path" — one that so many have sailed through before you. They are beautiful and full of color and diverse cultures and languages. They are the first islands in the Caribbean to be touched by the tradewinds.

As you approach the southern part of the Lesser Antilles, you find yourself at the Southeastern Quadrant. In this quadrant are Venezuela and Colombia as well as islands such as the ABC islands. It is important that you research as you travel through each quadrant to understand how it is different from the prior one. While no part of the Caribbean is free from crime, indeed no part of the world, this part of the Caribbean has in recent years suffered from acts of piracy off the coast of Venezuela. You can check the Caribbean Safety and Security Net's website (www.safetyandsecuritynet.com) and Noonsite (www.noonsite.com) to read the many cases where crime off the Venezuelan coast has exceeded petty theft. There are parts in this quadrant, however, that are exceptional. Two of the most beautiful cities in the Caribbean can be found here. The first is Willemstad in Curaçao, which is one of the ABC Islands, and the second is Cartagena, Colombia. Neither should be missed.

The final quadrant is the Southwest Quadrant. This is remote and the least explored part of the Caribbean. From the mysterious Miskito Coast of Nicaragua through the islands of Honduras and the Rio Dulce in Guatemala, a voyage through this area can be reminiscent of Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn in 'The African Queen'.



Thinking of the Caribbean as four distinct quadrants helps make this vast cruising ground more comprehensible

Many areas of the Southwest Quadrant are remote and undeveloped. There are facilities, but fewer, and cruisers must be better equipped, more independent and self-reliant.

The seas in this area are far from the eastern islands of the Caribbean and the fetch across the Caribbean Sea is great, resulting in big rolling seas and often rough conditions. Additionally there is virtually no turning back. West of Aruba, wind and sea conditions will increase, and once you have sailed west of Aruba you have pretty much "crossed the Rubicon". Trying to sail back east against large seas, currents and adverse winds has caused many sailors to simply give up. You must sail *through* and move west or north to find an exit from this area.

When you consider the Caribbean, consider the entire Caribbean. I hope the Caribbean Quadrant Cruising concept will be of use. The more you research and the more you come to understand the Caribbean, the more she will offer you in return. Happy cruising!

For an in-depth discussion of voyaging to the Caribbean, see the author's recently released book, A Thinking Man's Guide to Voyages South: the many facets of Caribbean cruising, *available free at www.freecruisingguide.com or through Amazon in Kindle format.*

September 15th, 2011

John Rowland on *Silver Seas*: We had invited our friends Cathy and Rob from *S/V Quetico* over to *Silver Seas* for dinner. Nancy and I did team lasagna: I do the sauce and she does the rest. Nancy also made a peach crumble with mango rum. Cathy and Rob arrived at the appointed time, 5:00PM, and we were chatting over a glass of wine when the weather began to change. Clear skies turned to clouds, which turned to rain, which turned to thunderstorms, and the wind began to build. No forecast had predicted any high winds for the evening. We went below to the salon while the wind continued to build. After a bit Rob got nervous and poked his head out the companionway, concerned about the large (more than 200-ton) commercial vessel anchored roughly 500 yards to our port side.

Liesbet Collaert on *Irie*: It arose out of nowhere. All of a sudden. Nobody was really prepared for it. As a matter of fact, most cruisers were not even on their boats that Thursday evening, what with all the different activities being organized in the different Grenadian bays. Everybody ashore was having a good time, until the storm came and the peaceful anchorages turned into a giant mess of churning seas and turmoil…

Irie was anchored in Saga Bay (part of Clarke's Court Bay) and Mark and I had decided to take the dinghy around some headlands, through a few other anchorages, under a bridge, between the reefs and alongside the ocean to Mt. Hartman Bay, two miles away. The weather was fair, with plenty of sun and a slight breeze. It was 3:00PM and the plan was to play some volleyball with other cruisers, have a couple of happy-hour drinks afterwards and return to *Irie* before dark, which sets in a little after 6:00PM.

It was great to practice my volleyball moves again and to meet new people, being in a harbor where we hadn't set foot before. Around 5:00PM, the crowd moved to the bar, where beer, rum punch and *ti punch* were on sale. Mark and I settled in some comfy chairs, looking out over the bay, conversing with new-made friends. Instantly, the sky turned dark and a brisk, cool gust entered the open-air restaurant. Mark and I exchanged concerned looks, but we stayed. Usually, Caribbean storms pass pretty quickly and it wasn't even raining yet. Then, the breeze picked up momentarily, small objects started flying around and a huge downpour accompanied the wind. Chairs and bottles fell over, a sailboat's jib began to unfurl, the crowd got pushed into the corner farthest away from the balcony. People tried to keep an eye on their boats in the anchorage, but soon enough that wasn't possible anymore because of the curtain of rain and the heavy winds. A huge squall descended upon us and there did not seem to be an end in sight.

Ellen Birrell on *Boldly Go*: "You better come back to your boat!" Hilno's message, discernible but confusing, came through my Nokia. I sat silently across the table from Jim in Whisper Cove Marina. We stared at each other for a moment.

"Ellen, don't waste any time. Come quick. You need to get out here," Hilno, crew on *Dora*, repeated. "The black ship is dragging, come quick!"

John: The wind was now howling at 40 knots or more and still building, driving the rain in horizontal sheets. Sure enough, the commercial vessel, *Seahorse II* of Panama, had broken her anchor rode and was floating free, coming in our direction. The crew was out of country and the cruiser charged with tending to the generators in their absence was ashore. No one was on board the drifting ship!

We had no choice but to pull up our anchor and try to move out of the path of the oncoming monster. Rob came forward with me while Nancy took the wheel and off we went, with Cathy relaying directions above the noise of the wind. With the wind still building, Nancy battled the wheel to keep us from hitting the other boats around us as we pulled forward to get the anchor up. We couldn't get the exact position to pull the chain straight up so the windlass had to work significantly harder than usual, fighting the weight of the boat being pushed by the wind. Rob and I finally had to pull the last four feet up by hand. We got free and began to try to find a safe place to reset the anchor. Rob and Cathy jumped into their dinghy and went to tend to their own boat. The anchorage was turning to chaos.

Ellen: Through driving rain and chop, at full throttle we pressed the dinghy across Clarke's Court Bay toward the huge black ship. We could see the tops of two masts on its lee side. One contained our wind vane.

We reached *Boldly Go* and climbed aboard. With unspoken coordination, Jim went below to bring up the anchor windlass control; I took the helm and fired up the engine.

Studying the black behemoth beside us, this was not just any monster; this was *Seahorse II*, according to a small permanent banner on its port rail.

Seahorse. Seahorse is on the run.

Liesbet: The situation turned crazy. The wind grew stronger and rain poured down, all the way into the bar. All the cruisers who were present congregated in a corner, shivering from the cold. Phone calls and VHF calls came in about boats dragging. People started heading out in the midst of the storm, trying to save their sailboats.

Mark and I bit the bullet and left the security of the marina in our dinghy, straight into the wind and madness for a couple of miles. The rain hit us in the face, making the visibility extremely poor; waves kept crashing over the bow of our dinghy and us. (Sea water is so much warmer than rain water!) Our dinghy and engine did a good job (and Mark as the driver) to keep us from flipping over. With one hand on the dinghy painter and the other wiping my eyes to search for sticks marking the reefs, we slowly and bumpily approached Hog Island. The otherwise calm anchorage was a swirling mess of waves and swaying sailboats. We managed to avoid the reef. Our "exhilarating" trip back brought us through the swirling Hog Island anchorage and under the bridge, where two cruising boats had drifted onto shore. Gulp!

John: Unbelievably, the wind seemed to be still building. We moved about, avoiding the boats around us but struggling as the wind drove us back mercilessly. We made three passes through the anchorage only to be driven back as we got to the north end of Hog Island into less protected water. And still the wind seemed to be building. We had put up our large sunshades while at anchor. In this heavy wind, they were thrashing wildly and coming apart, but there was no time to deal with that until we safely reset the anchor. Between the driving rain and the shredded canvas, Nancy's visibility was less than perfect and I became her eyes, yelling directions from the gunnel over the howl of the wind and the roar of the engine. Finally, *Silver Seas* was driven into the mudbank on the north side of the channel, roughly 200 yards west of where we had been anchored. We tried to back her off but, with the wind pushing us and the suction of the mud, it was no go. The real danger was being blown over by the wind. The force of the wind was trying to rotate the hull then knock us on our side. While I held the wheel full to starboard and ran the engine in full reverse, trying to keep our stern into the wind, Nancy got on the radio and asked for assistance.

Our call for help was answered promptly by Mike from Palm Tree Marine and his friend, the chef from Le Phare Bleu. They arrived in a large RIB with two 50-horsepower outboards. We were able to rig a towline at the stern and, with some difficulty, we were pulled free of the mud. We then switched the line to the bow and, using his 100 horsepower to aid our 24, he led *Silver Seas* to a very protected spot in the channel, directly behind Hog Island.

Ellen: A French ketch to windward appeared dangerously close to *Seahorse*. We watched the ketch's forward section peek in and out from behind the big ship. A number of times, I gasped, thinking the bow of the ship was going to bash against the French ketch. This went on for over an hour.

"I can't believe they are staying put," I said to Jim.

"They're monitoring the situation, just like we are."

By 6:40PM, lightning was striking. From the VHF: "Radar reports the storm covering us extends two miles east. Once it passes, we'll get a reprieve. Another squall will come approximately 30 minutes after that. In the early morning hours, we see another system of equal magnitude to the one we are in. Unless it goes south, it should hit pre-dawn or early morning."

By 6:50PM, Darko on *Dora* agreed to start his diesel. We had become nervous about his proximity upwind of us.

"It's possible *Seahorse's* anchor is now entangled with *Dora's* anchor line. It may be dragging him down on us," Jim observed.

Tacking back and forth across the wind, the tall black steed snorted and postured above us.

Liesbet: We rounded the corner in Clarke's Court Bay to arrive in Saga Bay. There she was! Our *Irie*, all by herself, pitching wildly at anchor because of the long fetch. It was a bit tricky to get onboard with the big chop, but once that was achieved, we immediately took down our sun cover, which acted like a massive sail and put stress on the bimini and the anchor. Then, we succeeded in hauling our dinghy up, so it wouldn't get damaged or lost. We turned our engines on, just in case. Only then, we opened the door, took our dripping clothes off and breathed. It was good to be home! And, it was good to be so adamant and meticulous about our anchoring techniques.

We turned our VHF radio on, tried to get online to watch the Martinique radar and predict the coming weather. It was still blowing around 40 knots and the rain came down with a vengeance. Several cruisers were making announcements about dragging boats and a commercial ship in Clarke's Court Bay that had broken loose and was threatening to "take out" a few anchored sailboats. That resulted in more boats picking up anchor and trying to relocate in the midst of the storm. A drama series ensued on VHF 68 and all ears were focused on the chain of events. The night was exciting to say the least, with another storm of lesser force around 3:00AM and sailors staying up all night to listen to the commotion, help out fellow cruisers or keep an eye on their own boat. We had confidence in our anchor gear, but did stare behind us more than often, because the rocky shore was less than 100 feet away.

The situation turned crazy. The anchorage was turning to chaos

Ellen: Jim hailed Darko. The two captains discussed the situation and made the decision that Jim and I would get no sleep that night unless we pulled up anchor and relocated *Boldly Go*.

"Where should we move to?" Jim asked me. "If we move directly forward and there is a wind shift, the ship could roll over us."

"We had westerly winds just this past weekend. Who's to say they won't blow again? Stranger things could happen, especially with cyclonic development at this time of year." My further thought: "I like the tranquil area that Ronnie was anchored in, near the bridge into Hog anchorage."

In unison, "But what if *Seahorse* drags west again?" We agreed that the whole immediate area was too dangerous.

"Don't want to go all the way to Saga Cove in this darkness. Clarke's Court Bay is riddled with vessels, large and small. Wherever we go, we'll have to be very careful. How about a mooring ball over by Whisper Cove Marina?" A VHF call to the marina and it was a done decision.

By 8:00PM, wind and rain subsided.

"Now. Now is the time to go," said Jim.

With that, we raised anchor, carefully skirted *Dora's* lee rail and made a large arc through the bay. The looming black bow of *Seahorse* grew smaller and smaller until it disappeared into the darkness. Arriving in the northeast side of the bay, we slowed to a near stop, trying to spot a mooring ball off the boutique marina.

"There. There's one!" Weary yet enthused, I saw the basketball-sized mooring floating nearby.

This one last effort and we'll be secured for the night. We can do this.

The additional squall did not arrive. *Seahorse's* run was complete. She was corralled, at least for the time being. Along with the rest of the yachting people of Clarke's Court, we bedded down for the night.

John: We were able to get the anchor down and we were safe for the night. After half an hour or so the wind began to abate; by 3:00AM it was pretty much over. We were on anchor watch 'til well past dawn. When dawn did come, *Seahorse* seemed to be in the spot where we had been anchored at the start.

The chatter on the radio in the early morning hours was all about the drifting freighter. At some point in the wee hours of the morning, some guys did get aboard *Seahorse* and deploy a second anchor. Amazingly, the big floater did not damage a single boat.

Checking a weather website the next day, we learned that the winds had peaked at 64 knots, hurricane strength, and had maintained more than 50 knots for a couple of hours.

Liesbet: The weather in the Caribbean has been weird this summer — it seems to get weirder every year — and these unpredicted and violent squalls (the worst we have experienced in four years) were a good example of that. Lesson learned: you never know what can happen and when the weather turns nasty or out of the ordinary. Make sure your anchor is well set at any time, always carry a flashlight and close your hatches when you leave the boat, check whether your dinghy has enough gas and take a waterproof bag with you. Be prepared!



NOVEMBER 2011

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
You'll feel like you're at a big boatshow of romance: too many things to choose from! From the 2nd to the 27th each day will bring new possibilities, but it's all just "clouds in your coffee", to quote Joni Mitchell. Enjoy the fun while it lasts.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
You'll have a full gale of energy in the last week, but steer clear of ingenious new endeavors. There must be some routine maintenance on board to give you a feeling of accomplishment and pass the time.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
No matter which tack you take you'll be at the mercy of fluky winds in your love life. Criticism from your mate after the 3rd will make a solo sail off into the sunset very appealing.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Immerse yourself in visionary activities this month and you will make serious progress that will pay off in the future. This is an important time, as there are no distractions to interfere with your concentration.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
Romance will be the prevailing wind driving you on your course, but counter-currents of indecision could prevent any real SMG. Enjoy being the center of so much attention but don't let it become an obstacle to your inventiveness.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
You'll get a fair wind of work energy on the 11th, so set your sails for accomplishment and point the helm toward those projects on board that need it the most. Your attention to detail will make anything you do a success.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
There will be no crosscurrents on your business course this month so set your sails and put the helm on autopilot. Then you can concentrate on what needs to be done to balance your life's financial requirements.

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
Innovative interests will plot your course in life until the 23rd. There may be some squalls around the full moon on the 10th, but you'll have many days after that to secure the progress you've made so far.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
Love will bring you lots of opportunities for fun, especially in the first week. Use these positive feelings experiences to sail you through the rest of the month.

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
Positive aspects during the first week will help you clear the decks for the entrance of a new love interest on the 27th. Find a party or host a get-together with friends on the full moon, the 10th.

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
Keep your compass course pegged on business and don't let minor problems in inspiration distract you from this focus, as it will sail you to success over the horizon.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
Though your personal batteries may be low and your romantic course erratic, your creativity will demand your full attention. There are areas in your life that require work for the proper course to be chosen.

MANGO TANGO

Arriving at last
after long respite,
at that sleepy village
beside the sea.
Palm fronds waving
in the evening breeze,
soft surf murmuring,
breaking,
on the offshore reef.
Walking the street
in dusty twilight,
lantern-lit windows
a-glow in the gloom.
Blue bamboo,
moonlit
in tangled
willow pattern relief,
where tree-frogs creep
and peep in the dark.
Then back to the park
where hangs
the t'ree-toed sloth,
deep asleep
and bayonetta's beat
spills out
'cross the street
from Coco's Bar
as fireflies
light the night.

— Nicholas Lee



Island Poets

Cynara

Our boat is old now. I don't care.
I love each groan she makes. I swear
She has a spirit that's imbued
Deep in her hull; it helps her through
The tossing unforgiving sea,
Until she reaches port safely.

Zephyrs or gales, she chugs along,
Dear old *Cynara*, sturdy, strong.
She takes us where we want to go,
Albeit that the pace is slow.
With everything we need on board —
And friends, with me, that's quite a load!
With engine chugging, sails unfurled,
The boat is like a little world.

There's lots of water stored, and fuel,
Islands to visit, every tool
You can imagine. GPS:
No need now for us to guess
Exactly where the boat might be
While challenging the trackless sea.

On earlier journeys that we made,
A simple hand-held radio played
Its part in finding where we were.
I must say that I much prefer,
The gadgets that boldly display
The route, the wind, the depth, the way.

Powerboat fiends who speed on by,
Whose wake we bounce in, tell me why
They like their power, and their style,
Try to convert me — all the while,
I'm thinking, where's the quiet? Peace?
In roaring through the kicking seas?
No! Not for me friends, I would rather
Make my crossings on *Cynara*.

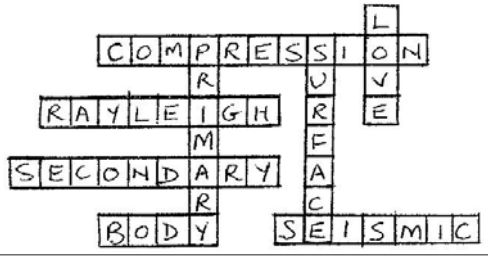
— Nan Hatch

parlumps marooned





DOLLY'S ANSWER



Five Simple Items for Your Ship's Pharmacy for More Pleasant Caribbean Cruising

by Lena Padukova

Every cruising boat, no matter the size, destination, or number of crew, should have a ship's pharmacy onboard. Obviously, you cannot bring all of the possible and impossible medicines, so one thing you should be sure to bring onboard is good health. Don't forget to eat well and exercise. Fresh air comes naturally with the lifestyle. But what else should you bring?

Setting off on a global circumnavigation with the Caribbean as my first major cruising area, I put a lot of effort into researching what the best choices for contents of the ship's pharmacy might be. My findings were that most doctors want to sell you a great lot of medicines you definitely will not need, simply because they have never sailed and greatly overestimate the risk of getting sick at sea. On the other hand, how many land-bound doctors will, for instance, think about the eye and ear problems that may be caused by excessive snorkeling, free-diving or indulging in scuba activities? What about a good cure for jellyfish stings, some diarrhea medicine, and allergy shots? The solution to this problem is to find a pharmacist or a doctor with some experience of sailing — they will be a real help.



TOMAS VRETHAMMAR

Reading a book on deck in the heat of the day gets you grilled like bacon. Serve with eggs — or cooling aloe-based lotion

To keep this short, I will exclude all the usual doctor-recommended medicines. Instead, I will list five simple, non-prescription, good-to-have, basic "pharmacy" items that I have found to be very much needed while cruising in the Caribbean. Also, it's quite obvious that you should bring any personal medication that you might need, be it allergy pills against wasp stings that you are oversensitive to, or diabetes medicines. Keep in mind the fact that I'm no medical expert, just a cruiser sharing useful information.

Disinfectant

Something that can be incredibly handy for sailors is disinfectant treatment for small cuts and sores. One gets a lot of small skin cuts, and they heal very slowly in a salty and moist environment, often getting infected, especially when located on hands, fingers, or feet. This treatment, sometimes iodine-based, may come in liquid or ointment form, and is usually available in most of the Caribbean pharmacies. Be sure to keep any sores clean and dry, and change bandages or patches often. If you notice that the skin around the cut gets swollen, red, or sensitive, it is a sign of a possible infection, so consult a doctor.

Lime Juice

Sea urchins present a risk when you go snorkeling, swim to the beach to put a line for anchoring stern-to, or if you're just are not careful enough when you are wading in the coral-strewn shore waters. The stings are very painful — and in the most unfortunate scenario, upon getting one in your foot, you may stumble and fall down, getting a few stings on your behind, too! Don't try to pull them out; it will not work. Instead, soak the affected body part in some lime juice to dissolve the urchin spine (so make sure you have sufficient lime juice on the boat). The pain disappears after about one hour; however during that time it will be very intense.

Aloe Vera-Based Lotion

Sores and sea urchins are not the only nuisance while cruising. You probably already have sunscreen with high SPF, but might forget to use it one day, and for many people that one day is enough (trust me!), for thanks to the constant sea breeze one does not notice how strong the sun really is. Red like a guavaberry, you will curse your forgetfulness, and scream in pain while you toss and turn at night as your sore skin rubs against the sheets. Plain yogurt gives relief when you have been sunbathing too eagerly — but where do you get yogurt when you're in a small anchorage without any stores? Aloe vera-based skin lotion saved me in many such situations. I was very impressed at how well it helped to ease the pain, moisturize the skin, and reduce redness. Any such lotion will be fine, but the ones that are advertised as "cooling" are excellent, as they remove the burning sensation. Bring a couple of bottles — one for yourself and one for visiting friends, as they are usually the ones who neglect sunscreen most often.

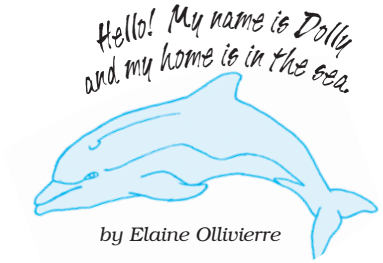
Rehydration Solution

In case of food poisoning or just sensitive tummy, your probable array of anti-diarrhea medicine would do just fine. But what do you do to help a poor crew that is dehydrated (which can be very dangerous in the Caribbean heat)? Drinking plain water will not help re-hydrate. Mix one litre of drinking water with half a level teaspoon of salt, six level teaspoons of sugar (to give energy) and lemon juice (to add vitamin C and antioxidants, as well as give some bearable taste to the mixture). Or ask the pharmacy for a powdered drink or some pills that help the electrolyte balance. Myself, I'm allergic to these, but a doctor once advised me that staying in the shade and eating salted peanuts will help restore electrolyte balance. (Unfortunately, he did not mention drinking beer along with this, which would be perfect).

White Vinegar

What else bugs you when cruising? Simpson Bay Lagoon in St. Maarten is The Place to get tortured by mosquitoes in the Caribbean, and in St. Vincent I have spotted a lot of small, stinging jellyfish, making it impossible to take an evening swim. There are special ointments for insect bites and jellyfish stings, but in case you have none onboard, it's still possible to relieve the unpleasant sensations, which can be very intense. Mix some white vinegar with cold water, soak some cotton wool in the mixture and apply to the stings, carefully. Just don't overdo the vinegar part!

Mosquito repellent is also incredibly good to add to your ship's pharmacy. The Caribbean mosquitoes are fierce, thrive near the ground, and aim for the legs. They are faster and smarter than their European brethren, and may bite several times in just a few seconds. Since it's hard to be wearing anything other than shorts or a skirt in the 30°C heat, you don't have much covering to protect you against the little monsters. My personal record is 55 bites on one leg only. You might have to try out several brands of repellants; ask your fellow sailors which work best for them. I think I'll go and get mine now!



ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2011 ©

by Elaine Ollivierre

DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

Do you remember what a seismometer is? It's an instrument that measures the Earth's movements. The first seismometer (or, more accurately, a seismoscope) was built almost 2,000 years ago in China. Seismoscopes can detect movements of the Earth but do not have the means of recording those movements. As technology has become more advanced, we are now able to record and measure the Earth movements caused by earthquakes near and far away. Seismographs and seismograms are the charts obtained from seismometers. The recordings used to be made on paper but, today, computers can more accurately track the way the Earth is moving and provide digital images.

How does this help us to predict a tsunami?

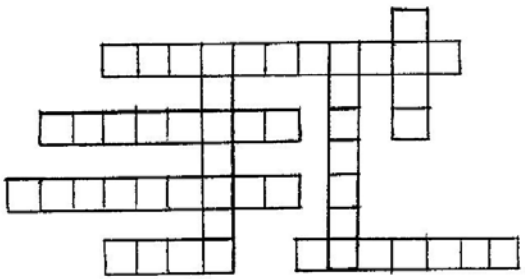
When the Earth moves, it causes waves of energy that travel through it. These waves are called **seismic** waves. There are two kinds of seismic waves: **body** waves and **surface** waves. There are two kinds of body waves: **Primary (P)** waves and **Secondary (S)** waves, and there are two kinds of surface waves: **Love** waves and **Rayleigh** waves. Sounds complicated? Let's look further.

Body waves can travel right through the Earth; surface waves travel only through the Earth's crust. When an earthquake occurs, the body waves produced reach seismometers around the world more quickly than the surface waves. P waves are faster than S waves. They can travel through solids and liquids. S waves can only pass through solids. P and S waves move the Earth in different ways. P waves are compression waves, that is, they alternately compress and then release the Earth through which they are passing. S waves move the earth up and down as they travel along. Love and Rayleigh waves are named after the scientists who first calculated the mathematical formulae for the surface wave motion. Love waves move the Earth from side to side while Rayleigh waves travel like water ripples over a pond. They shake the Earth, making it move up and down, as well as side to side, and are responsible for a lot of the damage caused by an earthquake.

Seismometers record the times at which all the waves arrive. The difference in the arrival times gives scientists a means of calculating the location of the epicenter of the earthquake. The size of the waves gives an indication of the size of the earthquake. This doesn't always mean that a tsunami is on its way but it does mean that there is time to warn people that it might be. Then they can take the necessary precautions to be safe.

WORD PUZZLE

Fit the names of the different types of wave given in the text into the grid.



— Answer on page 32

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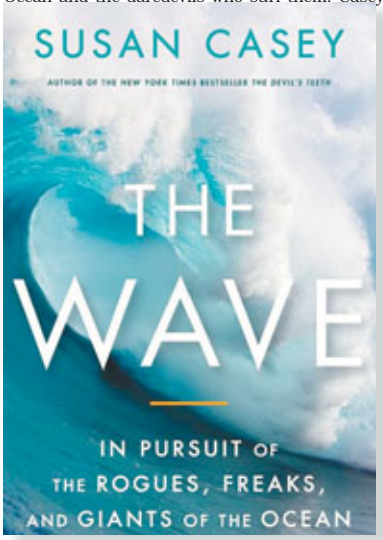
BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER

Goliath Waves!

The Wave *by Susan Casey, Anchor Books ©2011*, paperback, 432 pages, *ISBN 978-0-7679-2885-4*.

Rogue waves, monster waves, freak waves, giant waves, call them what you will, these Goliath waves dominate the pages of Susan Casey's *New York Times* bestseller, *The Wave*, along with the stories of surfers who ride these colossal walls of water and scientists who study these ocean phenomena.

Although a great deal of the book is taken up with the huge waves of the Pacific Ocean and the daredevils who surf them. Casey's discussion of super-sized waves and their effects on vessels at sea should be of interest to seafarers on any ocean. The information about wave generation and wave resonance in the North Atlantic will be of especial interest to *Compass* readers, since all of the Antilles islands have North Atlantic coasts, and sailors coming to these shores from Europe and the East Coast of North America transit Atlantic waters.



"In 1995 the Cunard liner *Queen Elizabeth 2*... was buffaloed by a pair of ninety-five foot waves that jumped out of sixty-foot Atlantic seas churned up by Hurricane Luis." The captain was able to determine the height of these waves "because their crests were the level with the bridge."

In 2007, *Norwegian Dawn*, a passenger ship "en route from the Bahamas to New York in heavy seas, was struck by a seventy-foot wave that smashed windows, flooded cabins, ripped Jacuzzis off the decks and hurled passengers from their beds."

Casey talks to wave scientists, shipwrights, weather forecasters, surf forecasters and mariners — professionals who are familiar with the phenomenon. Her interviews take her from South Africa's "Wild Coast", a 500-mile stretch of Indian Ocean that runs from Durban down to the Cape, to Lloyd's of London, to Britain's National Oceanography Center at Southampton, places where she obtains and documents first-hand information about the world's shipping losses and future weather and wave-related predictions (one of which, by Dr. Christine Gommenginger, is: "Like wind farms, wave energy is coming").

One of the most illuminating Atlantic monster-wave experiences was documented in an interview with Dr. Penny Holliday about an "ill fated, but revealing, research cruise in 2000". Dr. Holliday, an expert in the effects of climate change on ocean circulation describes the weather conditions encountered by the crew and the 25 scientists aboard the 90-metre research vessel *RRS Discovery*, which was hove-to for a week in maniac seas 175 miles off the coast of Scotland. "We were being battered by waves that made the ship jump and shudder. The waves would loom up in front of the ship; we'd potter up them and seem to hover at the top before crashing down the other side.

"One of the most intriguing aspects of *Discovery's* ordeal was that the biggest waves did not accompany the strongest winds. Rather, the hundred-footers showed up more than a day after the most violent gusts had subsided, at a time when the scientists believed the worst was over... The point is that all of these previously measured [giant] waves were under hurricane conditions, really extreme conditions," Holliday said. "But our big waves weren't."

It was believed that the cause "was an effect known as 'resonance', an aspect of nonlinearity that is endlessly complex when scrawled across a whiteboard and kindergarten-simple when explained by the analogy of a kid pumping his legs on a swing set, dramatically boosting his height on each pass. Energy is continually being added to the system, more and more and more, in erratic bursts, until the swing can go no higher. Likewise in the North Atlantic, wind energy surged into the waves until they grew to enormous proportions."

Despite their battering by waves rising to 80 feet and beyond, "the trip was far from a loss, however. During the endless trains of massive waves, *Discovery* itself was collecting data that would lead to a chilling revelation...

"Months later, when Holliday began to analyze these figures, she would discover that the waves they had experienced were the largest ever scientifically recorded in the open ocean. The significant wave height, an average of the largest 33 percent of the waves, was sixty-one feet, with frequent spikes far beyond that. At the same time, none of the state-of-the-art weather forecasts and wave models — the information upon which all ships, oil rigs, fisheries, and passenger boats rely — had predicted these behemoths. In other words, under this particular set of weather conditions, waves this size should not have existed. And yet they did."

Aside from being crammed with information, this book includes a 16-page illustration insert picturing Dr. Holliday aboard *Discovery*; extreme surfer Laird Hamilton and some of his pals surfing their amazing rides; and filmmakers Mike Prickett and Jeff Hornbaker, and underwater cinematographers Sonny Miller and Don King, who follow the surfers around to document their achievements; and of course some monster waves. There are also photos of vessels at sea in very heavy weather and pictures showing the aftermath of places hit by destructive waves including one in Alaska, where in 1958 a "1,740-foot wave scalped the forest around Lituya Bay of trees and soil".

Casey also presents a selected bibliography of books, scientific publications, periodicals and newspapers, as well as maps. Websites for weather forecasts and institutions and organizations are included, too. *The Wave*, subtitled *In Pursuit of the Rogues, Freaks and Giants of the Ocean*, is a book I'm sure seafarers, including pleasure craft owners, will appreciate.

This book is available at bookstores and from on-line booksellers.

The Sky in November

by Scott Welty

The Planets in November
MERCURY - Setting with Venus most of the month
VENUS - An evening "star" once again setting between 1900 and 1930 hours
EARTH - Shopping for inexpensive air conditioning
MARS - Rising between 0100 and then midnight during the month in Leo
JUPITER - Rising in the late afternoon and up all night in Pisces
SATURN - Rising just before the sun all month

Sky Events This Month
10th - Full moon
15th - Venus and Mercury set together (Figure 1)



FIGURE 1



FIGURE 2

18th - Leonids meteor shower (see below)
22nd - Spica, Saturn, and Crescent moon rise together 0500 hours. (Figure 2)
25th - New Moon and SOLAR ECLIPSE! (Note: you'll have to sail to the Antarctic though!)
27th - Venus and crescent moon set together (Figure 3)

Leonids Meteor Shower
This, the most famous of meteor showers, peaks on the 18th. The presence of the last quarter moon will tend to dampen the viewing but still you may spot a number of meteors per hour. The shower is called the Leonids because the meteors look to be emanating from the constellation, Leo. Leo rises around 0100 hours but you don't have to wait that long. Meteors will look to be streaming out of the east before that.

Cetus
Nice and high in the sky this month is the much-neglected constellation Cetus the Whale. This constellation is associated with the other "water constellations", Aquarius, Pisces, and Eridanus. It is neglected since it is just below the ecliptic — the path the sun takes through the stars during the year that defines the zodiac. In Greek mythology Andromeda was chained to a rock (naked!) due to the boastfulness of her mother (hmm, then why not chain… oh never mind!). About to be attacked by the sea monster, Cetus, she is saved by Perseus, her future husband. Thereafter she refuses to cook any fish dinners.



FIGURE 3

Jupiter will make it very easy to pick out Cetus (see Figure 4). Jupiter will be the brightest thing in the sky. The figure shows the sky at 2100 hours on the 15th. Look straight up. See Jupiter? Look to the south of Jupiter. The collection of stars shown (I've highlighted them but they are of moderate brightness) is Cetus the Whale. See the whale? Me neither!



FIGURE 4

Of historical interest (as opposed to mythological) is the star Mira which lies within Cetus. In 1596 Mira was the first variable star discovered. Over the course of about 300 days its apparent brightness changes tenfold. This was another nail in the coffin of the ancient system of the universe in which the heavens HAD to be unchanging, and helped usher in the Copernican revolution. Sunspots were another such nail as observed by Galileo.

Finally, I find a scuba group out of South Africa — Cetus Scuba and a US navy vessel *USS Cetus* (AK-77).

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck
A paper has been accepted for publication by *Science* magazine in which the author shows some fairly reasonable calculations that lead to about a third of the sun-like stars in the galaxy having planets in the habitable zone. That's the zone where water on the planet would be in the liquid phase that we are saying is crucial for the formation of life. How many potential earth-like planets would that be? Fifteen BILLION! Are we alone?

Scott Welty is the author of The Why Book of Sailing, Burford Books, ©2007.

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2011

Crossing the channels between Caribbean islands with a favorable tide will make your passage faster and more comfortable. The table below, courtesy Don Street, author of Street's Guides and compiler of Imray-Iolaire charts, which shows the time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this AND next month, will help you calculate the tides.

Water, Don explains, generally tries to run toward the moon. The tide starts running to the east soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then runs 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; i.e. the tide floods from west to east. Times given are local.

Note: the maximum tide is 3 or 4 days after the new and full moons.

For more information, see "Tides and Currents" on the back of all Imray Iolaire charts. Fair tides!

November					
DATE	TIME	21	0807	11	0013
1	1712	22	0901	12	0105
2	1801	23	0958	13	0156
3	1846	24	1058	14	0246
4	1930	25	1201	15	0336
5	2011	26	1303 (new)	16	0424
6	2052	27	1403	17	0512
7	2134	28	1500	18	0601
8	2217	29	1552	19	0652
9	2301	30	1640	20	0745
10	2346			21	0842
11	0000 (full)	**December**		22	0942
12	0036	1	1725	23	1043
13	0126	2	1808	24	1144
14	0217	3	1850	25	1243 (new)
15	0309	4	1931	26	1338
16	0359	5	2014	27	1430
17	0449	6	2058	28	1517
18	0538	7	2143	29	1602
19	0627	8	2231	30	1644
20	0716	9	2321	31	1727
		10	0000 (full)		

Searching for 'Devils' and 'Witches' at Sea

Observations of Endangered Seabird Needed; You Can Help

by David S. Lee

When friends ask where you are you sailing off to this season, you can enjoy telling them, "We're going on a witch hunt! Want to come along?"

The group Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) is seeking help in locating foraging areas of the endangered Black-Capped Petrel. Boaters who frequent offshore tropical and sub-tropical waters are asked to be on the lookout for these birds.

The Black-Capped Petrel (*Pterodroma hasitata*) is regarded as critically endangered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as well as by the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds. The US Fish and Wildlife Service might soon add this species to the Endangered Species List. The reporting of all your observations will be very helpful in our understanding of the marine distribution of these birds.

In the Creole-, French-, and Spanish-speaking islands, the petrel is usually referred to as *diablotin*, which means little devil. In Cuba, the bird is known as *bruja*, or witch. Both names are derived from the eerie nocturnal cries these birds make while flying over their nesting colonies. The first visitors to Bermuda thought the islands were haunted because of similar sounds made by the huge population of Bermuda Petrels. Petrels also vocalize at sea, but they are seldom heard as they are drowned out by engine noise.


JOSHUA ROSE

Offshore sailors are the observers most likely to see the rare Black-Capped Petrel

Believed Extinct Until Recently

The Black-Capped Petrel was long believed to be extinct until nesting colonies were discovered in Haiti in 1961. They are assumed to have been extirpated on their other historically documented nesting islands, but an adult was found in the mountains of Dominica in 2007 and there may be a few remaining there. The species is legally protected in Hispaniola, where national parks have been established in both Haiti and the Dominican Republic, but there is no actual protection of the birds' breeding sites.

Black-Capped Petrels nest only in the Caribbean, but they range at sea through the western North Atlantic from Brazil to North Carolina. They are uncommon in the Gulf of Mexico and appear to be uncommon in areas of the Atlantic not directly influenced by the Gulf Stream. Except when displaced by tropical storms or captured at night near their nests, they are almost never seen from land. Like other petrels and albatrosses, they are strong, swift aerialists. While nesting and feeding chicks in the Caribbean, many birds commute over 1,000 nautical miles to the productive foraging areas off North Carolina.

Within the historic period these petrels were documented as nesting on Hispaniola, Martinique, Guadeloupe and Dominica. Pre-Columbian man, and later European colonists and their slaves commonly ate the birds. Populations were rapidly depleted, and today these petrels are known to nest only in scattered sites in the mountains of Hispaniola. Other factors, all resulting from European contact, also led to the species' demise. The major issues were the introduction of predatory mammals such as dogs, rats, pigs, and the mongoose, deforestation, and habitat destruction. The closely related Jamaican and Bermuda Petrels faced similar problems.

The Jamaican petrel has been extinct since the late 1800s, and the Bermuda Petrel was thought to be extinct by the early 1600s until it was rediscovered in the 1950s when a few pairs were found nesting on tiny rocks on the fringes of the larger islands. That population has been nurtured and has now increased to over 100 breeding pairs.

The greatest threats to the population are continued habitat destruction and predation by introduced mammals on its breeding grounds and the proposed exploration for natural gas and oil on the Atlantic coasts of Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas. Clearing of land for agriculture, charcoal production, and poaching continue.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

Black-Capped Petrels at Sea

There are many unanswered questions about the Black-Capped Petrel's marine distribution. Like other seabirds they must make a living in a dynamic environment. While many at-sea reports are simply of vagrant individuals, there are areas where we know the birds concentrate their foraging activities — notably along the outer continental shelf from central Florida northward to North Carolina, and in a small area of strong upwelling off the southeastern coast of Cuba. We know that the birds occurring off of North Carolina use the area year-round with a few seasonal peaks of activity. From the collection of specimens we have learned that here these birds are predominately adult males. So where is the rest of the population? Furthermore, DNA studies show that the North Carolina individuals group genetically into two distinct types, and the relative abundance of the two shifts with the seasons. This suggests that there is at least one unknown breeding population somewhere. Biologists believe that currently only 1,000 to 2,000 adult pairs survive.

Natural History

Like other petrels, these birds are long-lived, probably take eight to ten years to reach adulthood, lay only one egg per year, and have extended incubation and fledgling periods. At their nesting grounds they are nocturnal, and because of past exploitation by humans and introduced predators, their nesting sites are now restricted to inaccessible mountain cliff faces. Pairs occupy the same burrow year after year returning in the early winter to clean out nesting burrows. They begin nesting in early winter, sooner than terns and gulls, and like other seabirds they complete nesting duties prior to the hurricane season. Black-Capped Petrels feed by seizing small, deep-water pelagic squid and fishes that congregate along current edges and in areas where strong upwellings reach the surface.

Cultural History

At the time of European contact, Black-Capped Petrels were still abundant. Deposits of sub-fossils found in caves in Haiti as well as the writings of naturalists from the 1700s tell us that at one time there were hundreds of thousands, perhaps a few million, breeding pairs. People were protein deficient, and the birds were considered a necessity as well as a delicacy. Consequently, these petrels were hunted throughout their winter-to-spring nesting season. Often dogs were used to locate their burrows. Enterprising French colonists on Dominica commercially exploited "great quantities" of petrels, exporting them to other French colonies in the Antilles. Into the 1960s Haitian peasants built large bonfires near the nesting cliffs to obtain the birds. The petrels were disoriented by the bright light and circled like moths into the flames, where they were captured and eaten. That practice has mostly stopped because there are too few birds left to make the climb up the mountain worthwhile.

In 1724, Père Labat, a priest, provided an account of the exploitation on Guadeloupe. "Those who read these memoirs will be surprised that we should eat birds for Lent; but the missionaries who are in these islands, and who in many matters exercise the power of bishops, after serious deliberation and consultation of a medical man, have declared that lizards and diablotins are vegetable food, and that consequently they may be eaten at all times."

Identification

Seabirds present a unique challenge for identification because they lack the bright colors or distinctive songs of many songbirds, and they are often seen in fleeting glimpses while they fly by your boat at 40 miles per hour. Black-Capped Petrels are medium-sized seabirds with a bill-to-tail length of 14 to 18 inches (35 to 46 centimetres) and a wingspan of three feet (94 centimetres). At a distance, they are simply black on top, and white below. Closer inspection shows a white forehead and a white collar, giving them their "capped" appearance. They also have a thick, white band across the upper portion of their tail and a thin wisp of black plumage that juts from the wing around to the chest but does not connect to make a full collar. On the white underwing, the leading edge is dark. They have short, thick, black bills.

A major distinction that separates Black-Capped Petrels from shearwaters and similar appearing seabirds is their flight. Typically they are seen at a distance as they break the horizon with their long arching, rollercoaster-like, flight. When flying in even modest winds, the birds' soaring flight is often perpendicular to the water so you see first the dorsal (top), and then the ventral (underneath), surfaces. They have a combination of fluttery wing beats followed by high erratic soaring flights. They hold their wings slightly forward of their shoulder, and they bend sharply back at the wrist. Just so this identification does not seem too simple and straightforward, the species comes in two genetically distinct color morphs: on the slightly smaller form, the white collar and rump patch are less pronounced.

Black-Capped Petrels are most likely to be confused with other species of petrels and the Greater Shearwater. Greater Shearwaters, while of similar size, lack the white forehead, the white on the tail is less conspicuous, and their wing position and flight is quite different. Shearwaters typically glide over the ocean with straight extended wings held parallel to the ocean's surface. Their bills are longer and not as thick. The other petrels that occur in the western North Atlantic are extremely rare and not as likely to be encountered, while their flight and size are similar, for most species their coloration and markings are quite different. Only the Bermuda Petrel is similar in build and appearance, but it is smaller and the dorsal markings are darker and far less distinct.

Even if you are unsure as to the identity of the birds, telling us about areas where numbers of seabirds regularly congregate would be most helpful. Typically pelagic birds occur along frontal boundaries of oceanic currents and areas of upwelling; often these are locally known as good areas for deep-sea fishing. Another telltale sign of current edges are long rows of surface drifting *Sargassum* mats (gulf weed).

In reporting sightings, please provide your name, the name of the boat, date, location (Lat. Long, or simply miles and direction from a known point), and descriptive features of the bird(s) reported. Water depth and surface water temperature would also be of interest. Sightings are more valuable when accompanied by photographs and detailed field notes, as such observations can be useful for confirming the identity of the bird. But no matter the quality of your photos, please send them. We are not running a photo contest, we simply would like to verify and document identifications.

This iconic species was once a superabundant part of the Caribbean landscape and is deeply engrained in the history of the Antilles. It is hoped that appropriate action will be taken to protect the few that remain. With luck — and with your help — maybe these sea witches and devils will be around to amaze and frighten our descendants.

Please send any photos and/or information about sightings of the Black-Capped Petrel to Natalia Collier at ncollier@epicislands.org.

For more information about Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) visit www.epicislands.org.

To learn more about these rare petrels visit www.wicbirds or www.fws.gov/birds/waterbirds/petrel.

If you wish to see Black-Capped Petrels face to face, Brian Patteson runs bird watching trips out of Wanchese and Hatteras, North Carolina throughout the year (http://patteson.com). You are almost guaranteed to see them on his excursions.

Author David S. Lee is executive director of The Tortoise Reserve, a non-profit turtle and tortoise conservation effort (www.tortoisereserve.org). For the last three years he has been working with NOAA and the US Fish and Wildlife Service on marine bird bycatch issues related to North Atlantic pelagic fisheries. David has spent much of the last 18 months at sea working on environmental issues related to the BP oil spill.





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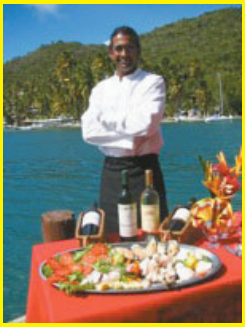
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CHRISTMAS STOLLEN à la Mrs. Reynolds

by Angelika Grüner

Just because you live on a boat is no excuse to give up your traditional Christmas baking. While Caribbean folks will be preparing their black cake, English cruisers will have a plum pudding marinating away somewhere, the French might be whipping up bûche de Noël, Americans will be getting out their star-shaped cookie cutters... and German sailors will be preparing a traditional Stollen. Whether eaten in front of a crackling fire in the frozen north or at a multi-cultural holiday potluck on the beach, this treat is sure to make the spirits bright!





Left to right: The dough kneaded 100 times, the dough after rising, and (on next page) the finished product

Christmas time is coming soon. Now is the time to start your special Christmas baking. Get it underway by soaking your dried fruits in rum right now! Then this famous Stollen needs to sit for at least three weeks before consuming. (It will easily last till Easter — if you can resist for that long!)

I offer this recipe for my fellow sailor folk in memory of our good old friend who baked the very best German Weihnachts-Stollen, and handed down the recipe to me. Mrs. Reynolds passed away some years ago, but I hope her recipe will survive forever. Here it is.

Ingredients for one large Stollen or two smaller ones (note that volume measurements are also given, but it's best to go by weight):

400 grams (1 3/4 Cup) mixed dried peel, e.g. orange peel and lemon peel
250 to 300 grams (1 to 1 1/3 Cup) golden raisins
100 grams (scant 1/2 Cup) currants
200 grams (1 Cup) white sugar
200 ml (1/4 teaspoon) good rum
200 grams (1 Cup) whole almonds
150 grams (1/2 teaspoon) fresh yeast or the equivalent amount of dry yeast

—Continued on next page

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WE SHIP AROUND THE WORLD!

—*Continued from previous page*

1 Tablespoon sugar
5 Tablespoons flour
4 Tablespoons lukewarm milk
3 eggs
1 Tablespoon vanilla sugar
400 grams (1 3/4 Cup) unsalted butter, softened (NOT margarine!)
1 kilo (about 7 Cups) all-purpose flour
For the topping, 150 grams (2/3 Cup) unsalted butter and about 200 grams (1 Cup) icing sugar

Mix together the mixed dried peel, raisins, currants, sugar and rum one week or more before preparing the dough, and put it in a Tupperware container, closing tight with a lid. Turn the closed bowl every day to soak everything well.

Put the almonds in boiling water, bring them to a boil again and quickly rinse the almonds in cold water. Peel them immediately by squeezing them between the fingers from one hand into the other, keeping the peel in one hand. Throw the peels away. As long as the peeled almonds are wet, it is easy to cut them lengthwise with a sharp kitchen knife. (If you cut each almond two or three times, that will be good enough.) Let them dry in the sun or dry them in a frying pan, turning them frequently till they get a little bit brownish.

Put the yeast in a bowl, add 1 Tablespoon of sugar, 5 Tablespoons of flour and the 4 Tablespoons of lukewarm milk. Let the yeast prove; it will need about 20 minutes.

Next add the eggs, vanilla sugar, softened butter, and about one third of the flour (not more!). With a wooden spoon, mix all nicely together to form soft dough. Knead the dough at least 100 times. After a while the dough will become smooth and glossy.

Now add the almonds and the rum-soaked fruits, and mix carefully. Don't use a mixing machine! The dough will become very soft and sticky. That's because of the rum.

Now add the other part of the flour handful by handful, to get a dry, kneadable dough — no dough should stick to the fingers any more. Add a bit more flour if necessary.

Cover the dough with a kitchen towel and let it rise for about one hour.

The size of the Stollen depends on the size of your oven. I would suggest dividing the dough in two. Dust each part with a bit of flour and make a roll about 30 centimetres (about a foot) long. The dough must be pretty firm. Take a bottle or a rolling pin, and press it lengthwise down the roll, making a long "dent" about a third of the way in from one long side. Brush that "dent" with water, and flip the bigger part over the smaller part. This will give the Stollen its special shape.



Brush a baking sheet thickly with unsalted butter, place the formed Stollens on it, cover them with a kitchen towel and let them rise again for at least one hour. If your oven is small, bake them one at a time.

Heat the oven to 140°C (300°F), brush the top of the Stollen with melted butter, and put it in the oven. It will take at least 45 to 60 minutes.

When the Stollen are nicely browned take them out, and brush them thoroughly with more melted butter. Don't be stingy with the butter! The butter must cover the Stollen. If the butter runs down, no problem, it will get absorbed from the bottom. Sprinkle icing sugar thickly over the buttered Stollen through a sieve.

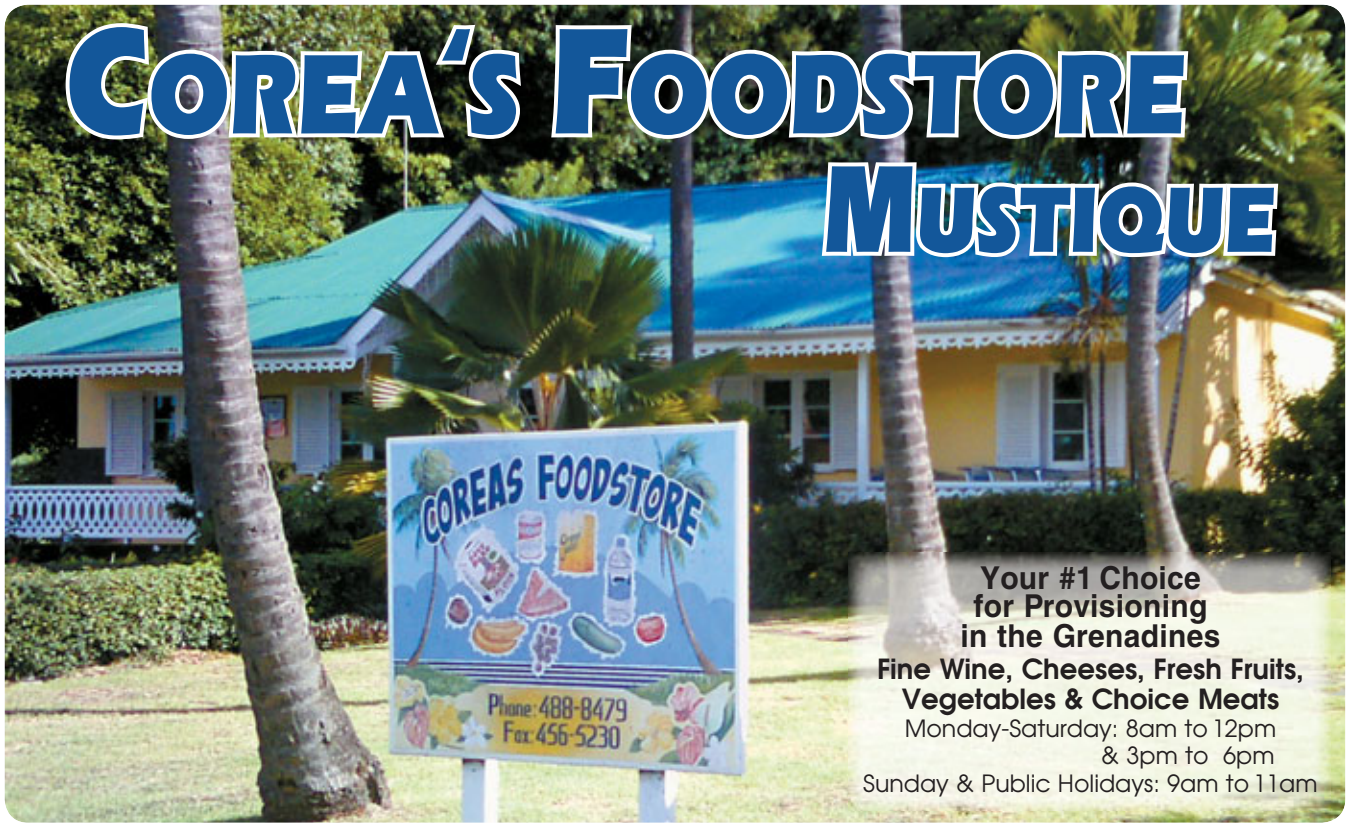
Let the Stollen cool overnight. (Keep it away from the cockroaches, including the two-legged ones!) In the morning wrap each Stollen in waxed paper, and then twice in extra-thick aluminum foil.

Ready — but not for consuming! Leave it for at least three weeks.

If you start preparing the Stollen now you will have this very traditional cake in time for Christmas. When you unwrap the Stollen, sprinkle with fresh icing sugar again before serving. I am sure you will love this as a special treat.

Merry Christmas and Guten Appetit!

Angelika Grüner is cruising the Caribbean with her husband, Richard, and son, Angelus, aboard S/Y Angelos.



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Dear *Compass*,

The September issue of *Compass* has the report of the yachting couple being attacked in the Tobago Cays, and the fact that the alleged perpetrators have been captured.

The suspects will be tried at some future date, but the victims state they will not wait around or return for the trial. As a result, when the case finally comes up in court, the judge will most likely throw out the charge, as the victims are not there to testify.

In the 55 years I have been involved in the Caribbean I personally know of many similar attacks where the perpetrator(s) of an attack on a visiting yachtsman have walked free after the victims were either unwilling or unable to attend the trial.

Ian Cowan, in the July issue's article entitled "The Caribbean Yachting Industry Now: What's the Problem? (And What's the Strength?)" is absolutely correct in urging the establishment of night courts to facilitate the prompt hearing of any case involving visitors.

Caribbean courts are notoriously slow, even in murder cases. When my late first wife, Marilyn, was murdered in Grenada in the 1960s, the police arrested "Precious", a known criminal, within 36 hours. The trial did not come up for eight months. By then I was in the States and had to fly back to Grenada at my own expense. Because of a complete balls-up by the police and prosecution, Precious walked free. Twelve years later he and seven others were hung by the neck until dead as a result of a horrific gang-rape murder.

As long as the authorities take months to bring cases to court, sailors and other visitors are fair game for criminals. The bad guys know the chances of being convicted are minimal, as long as their victims are unwilling or unable to attend a trial that can be half a year or more after the attack.

DM Street Jr.
Formerly of the red yawl *Iolaire*

Dear *Compass* Readers,

The September *Caribbean Compass* Letter of the Month by John Duffy, about the challenges faced by the recently revived Caribbean Marine Association, included information that is not documented. It also makes suggestions for the Caribbean that are inappropriate for the majority of us who read the *Caribbean Compass*. The article states that, "Despite 60 years of yachting tourism in the Caribbean, many politicians do not understand the value of yachting to the economies of the Caribbean countries." This is most assuredly not so. In a geographic location where the economy is as sensitive to tourism as is the Caribbean, you can bet your last anchor shackle that every politician worth his weight is keenly aware of where their revenue comes from, when it comes and exactly how much it is. The reason that the cruise ship industry gets such a large amount of attention is that they bring large numbers of tourists to major ports throughout the Caribbean, where those tourists spend a huge amount of money on jewelry, electronics, clothing, all manner and sorts of gifts as well as restaurants and transportation. That is why islands like St. Maarten, St. Thomas, Grenada, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, and the list goes on and on, have spent such a great deal of money to build docking facilities and to generate areas where the "ship's passengers" may disembark and spend the day spending.

The letter also states that, "many politicians fail to realize that, dependent upon size, as few as a single superyacht with a dozen people on board could spend more money per day than a cruise liner with 5,000 passengers." This claim may have some basis in an isolated study, but really does not hold up to any real scrutiny. There is a long line of people who like to blame "the politicians" but they are usually those who fail to take responsibility for their own problems. We, the recreational marine industry in the Caribbean, have so far failed to organize and to create a viable association that can represent the goals and objectives that our industry needs to define and attain for all of us that work and recreate in the Caribbean.

Insofar as the value of more superyachts, I am not sure that everyone shares the enthusiasm for "more and bigger". How many of us have cruised of late to North Sound, Virgin Gorda and anchored his sailboat amongst the five to ten superyachts that are also anchored there and which block the view in any direction? The invasion of superyachts into North Sound has relegated the average cruising sailboat to the status of a mouse amongst elephants.

To gain more of a type of boat that most of the Caribbean yachting industry facilities are not geared to, at the risk of losing what we have had for more than 50 years so prospered with, raises a serious question. I wonder if Foxy and all the people he has employed would have done as well with superyachts as with cruising sailboats? (Knowing Foxy, he would have done well with anyone; but I do not think he would have had as much fun as he has with the cruising fraternity). I wonder how many moorings in Bequia would be taken by superyachts? I wonder how many superyachts would have subscribed to the ARC and the Caribbean 1500? How many SSCA gams would have been attended by megayacht crew?

It must be kept in mind that the Caribbean is a young yachting area in comparison with Europe, and our infrastructure and sophistication are not equal to those on the other side of the pond. The superyachts are drawn to the Mediterranean as bees to honey, and I wish them well with their caviar and champagne lunches. For me and for the cruising boats that sail the Caribbean, most will take an unspoiled anchorage where we can swim with our families and guests, finished off by a Caribbean meal at the local beach restaurant or a barbecue on the rear deck of our boat.

If the funding that the CMA so desperately wants will fund an increase in superyacht traffic in the Caribbean, then I do not believe that we as an industry should assist in funding them. The CMA needs to represent the needs of the whole yachting industry in the Caribbean. On the whole, most of the businesses and marinas and yards that service the yachting industry are set up to handle a broad range of boats, but not superyachts. Most islands do not have the super yacht facilities that St. Maarten has. Even if we did have the facilities, I do not believe that megayachts would produce the level of spending that Mr. Duffy's letter states.

Yachting is defined as pleasure derived from the use of a boat. A yacht is defined as any boat used for pleasure. Politicians in the Caribbean are quite clear that the current make-up of the yachting industry provides a portion of their country's total revenue. A big part of their budget will always be revenue derived from tourism. Some tourists come by sea on large cruise ships and others on private boats. We need to grow the part that brings to the Caribbean more foreign cruising boats whose makeup is consistent with the facilities that the industry currently has in place to service such clientele.

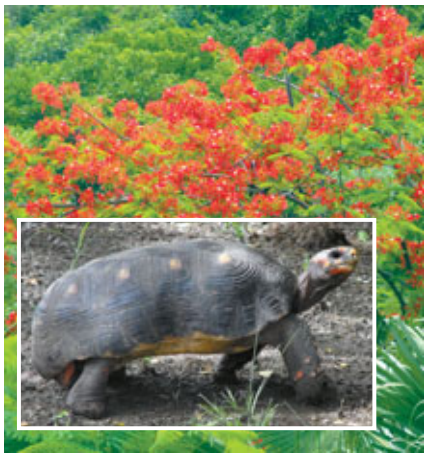
The allure of the megayacht is the mega-ego, and the growth of that does not in any way meet the needs of our industry. What we need is to make it our business to invite cruising boats of all types to come to the Caribbean because we can provide a safe and wonderful experience for them. First we need to go to work to invite them in all the ways we can, and then we need to be sure that they have a safe and wonderful experience.

Frank Virgintino
www.freecruisingguide.com

Dear *Compass*,

My wife, Nancy, and I visited Mustique this year for the first time. We came away with a different experience than Lena Padukova, who wrote "The Musts of Mustique" in the October issue.

—Continued on next page



—*Continued from previous page*

During the past five years, Nancy and I have steered *Silver Seas* past Mustique countless times. This year we decided to stop and take a look at the island. Not really knowing what to expect after hearing descriptions of an island full of empty mansions and manicured lawns, we tried to keep an open mind. Like the *Compass* writer in October, we enjoyed several nice meals at Basil's and a lovely Sunday lunch at Firefly. The biggest surprise, however, was the island itself.

We've read that the mooring field can be very uncomfortable but, fortunately, the weather was such that we were quite comfortable. The water in the mooring field is clear and filled with many varieties of fish. Hundreds of sergeant majors, blue tang, trunk fish — too many species to list — swam beneath the boats in the field. The snorkeling was better off the swim deck of our boat than we've seen in many of the highly touted sites in the islands. But this was only the first surprise.

The island itself is a jewel. Since it is a private island and caters to the "rich and famous", we had expected a finely groomed look. The island is well cared for and there are areas used for specific purposes which are manicured, but most of the island has the feel of a well cared for estate or national park in the States. There are miles of hiking trails through the rugged terrain of the island, frequently leading to pristine, secluded beaches. The water is clear and often the beach offers breathtaking views of reef and rock formations. For the strong, avid hiker, Mustique is a playground.

We are not hikers so we rented a "mule". This vehicle is an overgrown golf cart with a small pick-up like bed in the rear. Judging by the number used by local businesses and workmen, the mule is the core workhorse of the island. There is a good road system on the island, supplemented by a spiderweb of "two-tracks" that generally lead to park-like areas, from which the true hiking trails emanate. During our wanderings the mule proved capable of the steep grades and bumpy two-tracks, giving us access to many of the spectacular views this island has to offer.

The true star of our trip was the red-legged tortoise. These turtle-like creatures were all over the place. They tend to be about the size of an American football with colorful markings in shades of green, red and orange. The tortoises wander about in their methodical manner, going where they wish, while people watch out for them and traffic stops to let them pass. One day we drove past one that had stumbled over the edge of a drainage ditch and overturned. The creature was kicking its little legs at the air in a futile effort to right itself. We stopped and put the little guy upright. Later, talking to one of the locals, we learned this was a fairly common situation.

The flowers in July on Mustique were fantastic. Many of the residences are elaborately landscaped but those efforts pale next to the flamboyant trees and bougainvillea growing wild on the hillsides.

The local folks, those who live and work on Mustique, are friendly and helpful. They seem very proud of the island, as well they should be.

No, we didn't see anyone "rich and famous", at least that we recognized. We did have a grand time in a truly beautiful place. It will be very hard to sail by Mustique as we go north.

John Rowland
Silver Seas

Dear *Compass* Readers,

The Carriacou Children's Education Fund, through its annual fundraising efforts, has again this year been able to make a contribution to the Harvey Vale Government School's Lunch Program through CCEF's "Meals from Keels" project. This is the fifth year that CCEF has provided hot lunches for a number of Harvey Vale students unable to pay for their lunch. The total number of lunches provided during that time is 15,200! As one long-time yachtsman and CCEF participant says, "It's our neighborhood school."



Melodye Pompa, representing CCEF, turns over this year's donation to Cleopatra Lambert, principal of the Harvey Vale Government School

The Carriacou Children's Education Fund is an informal, voluntary group of individuals from visiting yachts from around the world, and a number of concerned local businessmen and women who benefit from the presence of the visiting yachts. Since 2000, CCEF has conducted fund raising activities during the last week of July and/or the first week of August at the Carriacou Yacht Club in Hermitage, Carriacou coinciding with the Carriacou Regatta Festival.

During this time, CCEF has raised over $150,000 to provide, in addition to the lunches, school uniforms and scholarships to T.A. Marryshow Community College; the mission is to help as many children as possible and to fill the gap between what is required for a child to receive a proper education and what the families can provide.

Since its inception, CCEF has provided assistance towards this goal in hundreds of cases. Success is due primarily to the hard work and generosity of the visiting yachts and the local population who support CCEF, and is the yachts' way of saying "thank you" to the people of Carriacou for the warm welcome always received.

Disbursements Committee
Carriacou Children's Education Fund

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Letter of the Month

Dear *Compass*,

Regarding the article by William 'Billy Bones' Pringle in last month's *Compass* about the late "gonzo journalist" Hunter S. Thompson sailing with me from the Virgin Islands to Bermuda aboard *Iolaire* in 1960, it is interesting to see how different people look at the same trip. Thompson did not think much of the trip, but the experienced crew and I felt it was excellent! In fact, when I look back on 54 years and three months of ownership of *Iolaire*, I regard this as one of the best — if not the best — of all *Iolaire's* offshore passages.



I had three crew from the States, sailing guest apprentices paying US$10 a day for bunk, board and booze. Scott Reeves raced IODs out of Larchmont, on Long Island Sound, and had crewed for me on the 53-foot Abeking and Rassmussen yawl *Ondine* during the summer of 1954 and the spring of '56. Joe Eubank was a friend of Scott's who had sailed with him on the IODs. The third fellow, whose name I have forgotten, was a small-boat sailor who had spent two summers on Maine coast schooners and a winter on Walter Boudreau's 113-foot Herreshoff schooner *Janeen* (now *Mariette*).

With this experienced crew, additional crew — if they were willing to pay, learn and work — would be a welcome top-up to the finances.

I signed on "Swagger Stick" Thompson (yes, he carried one), who claimed to be a former Marine lieutenant, as I figured anyone who had been through Marine boot camp would be tough and pull his weight. I did not realize what a fraud he was; his service was actually that of a pencil pusher in the Air Force! His gal friend did not know too much about boats, but she was a good sport; she really pitched in and learned fast, and my experienced crew felt she deserved much better than "Swagger Stick".

The third member of their group was pulled on me as a surprise the day before we left St. Thomas. He had managed to sail a small open boat single-handed from Puerto Rico to St. Thomas. He knew so little about sailing we could not figure out how he did it. But life on *Iolaire*, even jammed up in the foc'sle, would be much more comfortable than beating to windward from Puerto Rico to St. Thomas in a small open boat, so I signed him on, too.

We sailed out of Yacht Haven, downwind to West End, and off on a screaming reach. In those days *Iolaire* was a 7/8 double-headsail cutter that could be rigged as a sloop by disconnecting the staysail stay that was on a lever. She was fast but with the god-awful big mainsail (660 square feet) and smaller headsails than she has now, two hours on the tiller and the helmsman looked like an orangutan — his arms were stretched to the point his hands were at his knees!

The first three days' runs were 166, 165 and 164 miles. Then the wind eased and we only made 120, then we hit the doldrums, but we never lost steerage way.

During the first three days we ran into two problems. The first was an interesting navigational problem.

I had learned celestial navigation in 1956, using Mary Blewitt's book *Celestial Navigation for Yachtsmen* (now in its 12th edition) during my first transatlantic crossing on *Arabella* where I was cook and apprentice navigator.

On this trip aboard *Iolaire*, on the second day out when I tried to take my noon sight, I faced south, looked for the sun — no sun! It was early June; the sun was north of us. Since Mary Blewitt had done all her navigational teaching in northern Europe, she never discussed the situation with the sun being north of the observer at noon. I scratched my head, faced north, followed the sun up to maximum elevation, recorded it and scratched my head again.

Scott pointed out that since we had streamed the taffrail log as we cleared the western end of St. Thomas, by checking the distance run on the log we would have a very good indication of our latitude. We then played around with the figures and finally came out with latitude that matched up with our DR position.

Then we discovered that the engine would not start. But we had a fair-sized bank of batteries, and we used kerosene lights below decks and saved the electricity for compass lights.

I had a big single-luff cotton (!) spinnaker of roughly 850 square feet and we flew it from the masthead as a lightweight genoa. With the big mainsail, the 45-foot *Iolaire* was flying a total of over 1,500 square feet of sail. Even in drifting conditions we were still doing two to two-and-a-half knots.

The water was perfectly clear and we argued about how far down you could see. My US crew were all student architects with an engineering flair. Cutting up empty tin cans and experimenting, they successfully made a paravane that, when slung from the bowsprit from a short pole, would dive. They rigged a second line that would lead straight up from the paravane so they could measure how far down the paravane would go and still be seen. It was a trial-and-error operation that took most of the day. but by 1600 hours the paravane with its tow line and vertical line was finally operating as desired. We could still see the homemade paravane at 40 feet.

All the crew was very enthusiastic about the project except "Swagger Stick", who sulked in the stern.

—Continued on page 45

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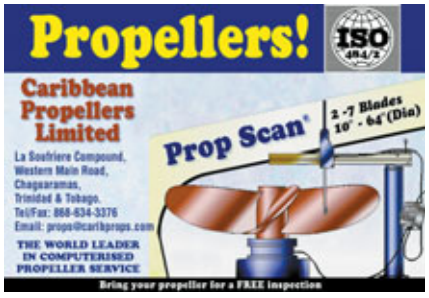
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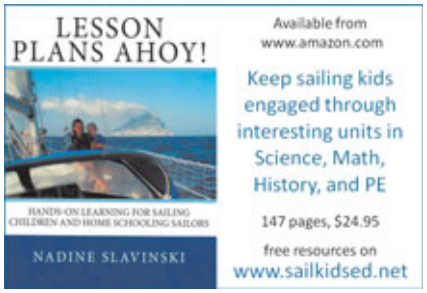




Venezuela



Caribbean-wide





Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

A Tasting Tour of Trinidad

St. Lucia's Historic Hideout, Marigot Bay

Christmas Shopping for Cruisers

... and more!

—Continued from page 42

Letter of the Month

On the afternoon of the seventh day we picked up Bermuda; the navigator was happy! It was a clear night as we approached the entrance to St. George's. Only the outer sea buoy was lit, but the chart showed a set of range lights to lead through the outer channel and into Town Cut. The wind had backed far enough into the south so we felt once we picked up the outer sea buoy we would come to a course of 280 magnetic, pick up the range lights and sail on in.

At first it went according to plan, but we had difficulty picking up the range lights, as there were so many other lights. We picked up the unlit outer starboard side channel buoy close aboard to starboard. All was well: we were in the channel. But then we picked up the next starboard-side channel buoy to port. At this point I said, "The hell with this; let's turn around, go back down the channel, heave to, and wait for dawn".

Scott, who was doing the piloting insisted, "No, we must go on," as he figured we could not find our way back out without hitting something.

We picked up Town Cut. It really is a "cut", with cliffs rising a hundred feet on both sides. As we entered it we went from close reaching to hard on the wind and were unable to lay the course. We knew there was deep water right up to shore, so I almost put the bowsprit into the cliff before tacking. I had Scott on the lee sheet, helm down, headsail sheet eased but not thrown off. As we came head to wind, the lee sheet was held for a bit to make sure we passed beyond head to wind, then thrown off and re-trimmed.

Town Cut is 400 yards long and 80 yards wide, so needless to say it required good sail handling. Four tacks and we were through. We sailed into the middle of St. George's Harbour, threw in the pick, and dropped and furled the sails. We then poured ourselves well-deserved shots of "Bito" rum carried in a 14-liter glass demi-john that had been covered with worn-out jib sheets done in half hitches to make it look like a fender — a great way to smuggle rum into the States.

The next morning I rousted out the crew and we sailed *Iolaire* up into the cut between Ordinance Island and the town mooring right outside St. George's Dinghy and Sports Club, bow on to the bridge that connects Ordinance Island to St. George's. The slot is 120 yards long and 30 yards wide. We came in on a beam reach with a good head of steam, sheeted down hard, one tack, then dropped everything and coasted alongside.

Once the club opened up I went to the bar and asked for a mechanic.

"What do you need a mechanic for?"

"The engine has not run since we left St Thomas."

"But how did you get through Town Cut last night and come alongside the dock?"

"Under sail."

I did not buy a single drink during our stay in St. George's.

Hunter S. Thompson, with his swagger stick under his armpit and a back that looked like a ramrod had been stuck up his ass, marched off the boat and departed with his two friends for Hamilton.

Don Street, Glandore, Ireland

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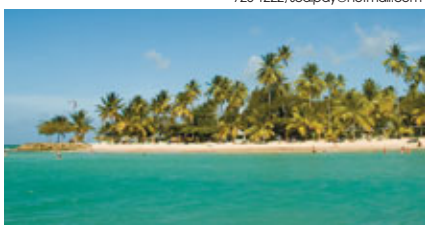
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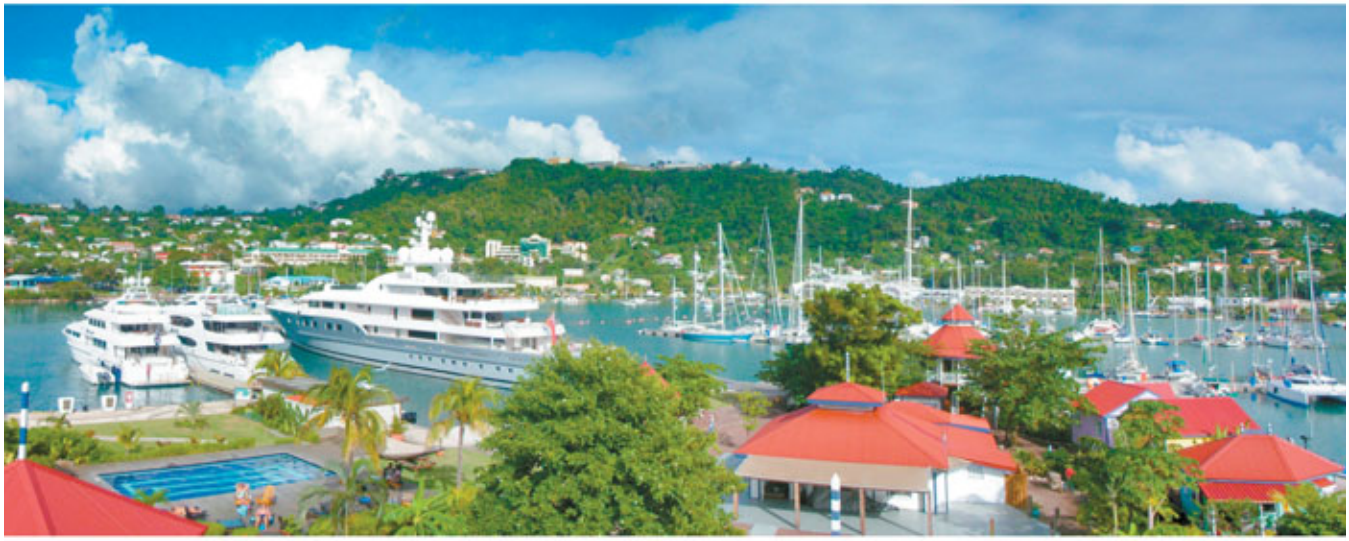
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