

C A R I B B E A N

FREE

C COMPASS



JANUARY 2009 NO. 160

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

ARC
See story page 11



TIM WRIGHT / PHOTOACTION.COM



2009

INNOVATIONS

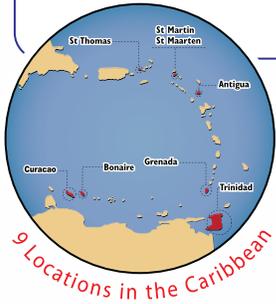
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Isotherm Cruise INOX is an exclusive range of stainless steel fridges and freezers that will enhance the appearance of any galley.

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Also see matching fridge, the Cruise Inox 85L INE/1085BA1MK.

- Size 625x495x555 mm (HxWxD)

Mast Step

LED NAVIGATION BULBS
MPR/RB010101

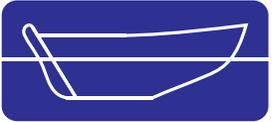


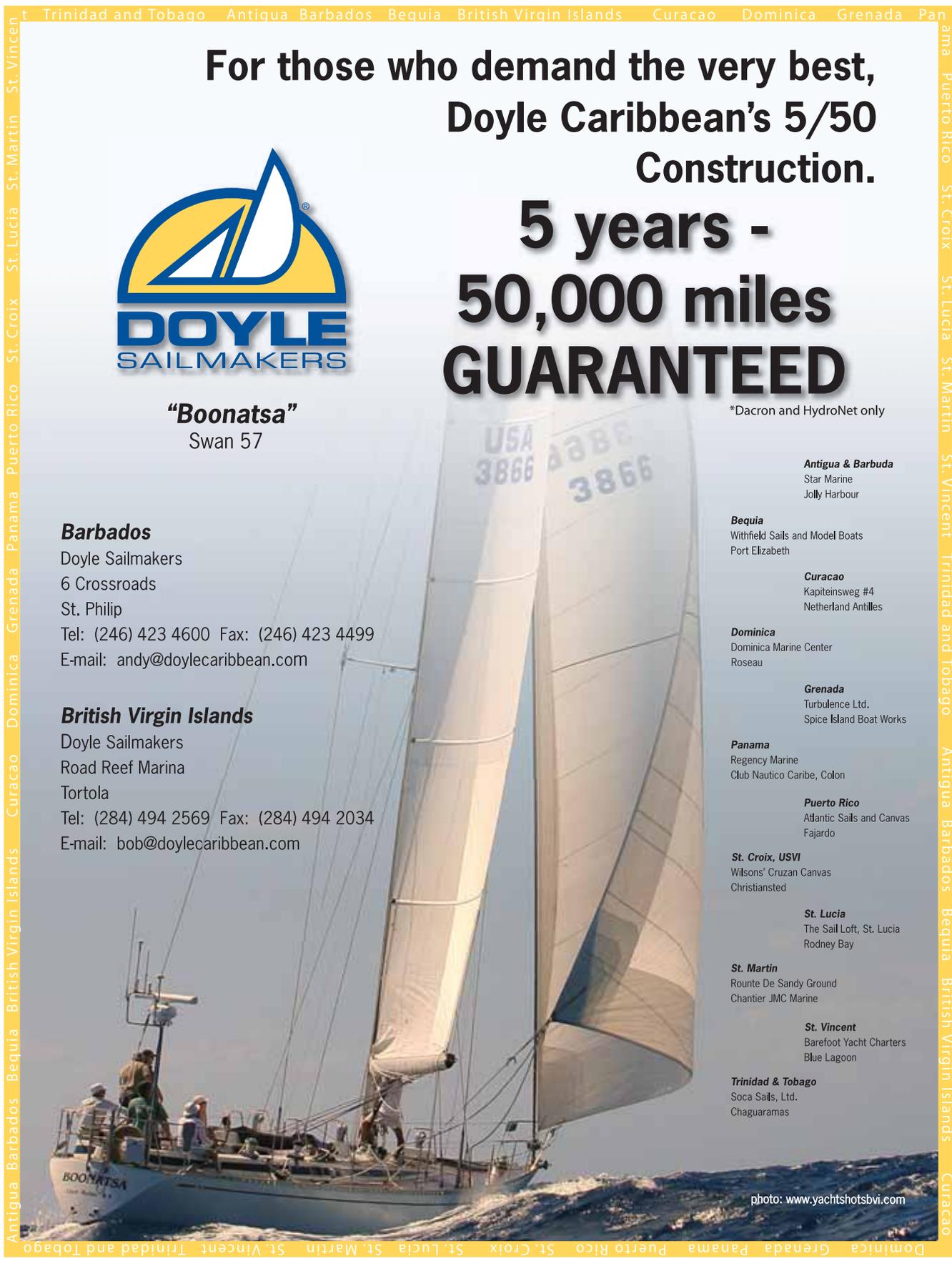
Award winning Mast Products LED navigation lights. They are insensitive to the movements and vibrations of the ship and feature a life-time over 50,000 hours.

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St. Croix, USVI
Wilson's Cruzan Canvas
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St. Martin
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Chaguaramas

photo: www.yachtshotsbvi.com

Antigua Barbados Bequia British Virgin Islands Curacao Dominica Grenada Panama Puerto Rico St. Croix St. Lucia St. Martin St. Vincent Trinidad and Tobago

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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

www.caribbeancompass.com

JANUARY 2009 • NUMBER 160



New Build...
...Grenadines style!..... 18

Tune In
Selected SSB Weather..... 21



Hello Kitty!
Cruising costs considered..... 24

2009 Events
Pull-out annual calendar 27



Life Support
Working to cruise 36

DEPARTMENTS

Business Briefs	8	Cartoons	39
Eco-News	10	Cruising Kids' Corner	40
Regatta News	14	Dolly's Deep Secrets	40
Destinations	22	Book Review	43
All Ashore	23	Cooking with Cruisers	44
Meridian Passage	23	Readers' Forum	46
Cruising Crossword	38	What's On My Mind	51
Word Search Puzzle	38	Caribbean Marketplace	52
Island Poets	39	Classified Ads	55
Sailors' Horoscope	39	Advertisers' Index	55

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Editor.....Sally Erdle
sally@caribbeancompass.com

Assistant Editor.....Elaine Olivierre
jsprat@vincysurf.com

Advertising & Distribution.....Tom Hopman
tom@caribbeancompass.com

Art, Design & Production.....Wilfred Dederer
wide@caribbeancompass.com

Accounting.....Debra Davis
debra@caribbeancompass.com

Compass Agents by Island:

Antigua: Ad Sales & Distribution - Lucy Tulloch
Tel: (268) 720-8868
lucy@thelucy.com

Barbados: Distribution - Doyle Sails
Tel/Fax: (246) 423-4600

Caracao: Distribution - Cees de Jong
Tel: (5999) 767-9042, Fax: (5999) 767-9003,
sbarba@attglobal.net

Dominica: Distribution - Hubert J. Winston
Dominica Marine Center, Tel: (767) 448-2705,
info@dominicamarinecenter.com

Grenada/Carriacou/Petite Martinique:
Ad Sales & Distribution - Alan Hooper
Tel: (473) 409-9451, sark@spiretse.com

Martinique: Ad Sales & Distribution - Isabelle Prado
Tel: (0596) 936 68 69 71, Mob: + 596 (0) 696 93 26 38
isabelle.prado@wanadoo.fr

St. Lucia: Distribution - Lisa Kessell
Tel: (758) 484-0555,
kessell@candw.lc

St. Maarten/St. Barths/Guadeloupe:
Ad Sales - Stephane Legendre
Mob: + 590 (0) 6 30 49 45 30
steflegendre@wanadoo.fr

Distribution - Eric Bendahan
Tel: (599) 553 3850, cirexpress@gmail.com

St. Thomas/USVI: Distribution - Bryan Lezama
Tel: (340) 774 7931, blezama1@earthlink.net

St. Vincent & the Grenadines: Ad Sales - Debra Davis,
Tel: (784) 457-3527, debra@caribbeancompass.com

Tortola/BVI: Distribution - Gladys Jones
Tel: (284) 634-2622 Mob: (868) 620-0978

Trinidad: Ad Sales & Distribution - Jack Dausend
Tel: (868) 634-2622 Mob: (868) 620-0978
jackd@boatersenterprise.com

Venezuela: Ad Sales & Distribution - Patty Tomasik
Tel: (58-281) 265-3844 Tel/Fax: (58-281) 265-2448,
xanadamarine@cantv.net

Caribbean Compass welcomes submissions of short articles, news items, photos and drawings. See Writers' Guidelines at www.caribbeancompass.com. Send submissions to sally@caribbeancompass.com.



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CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day. Public holiday or "recovery day" in many places. Junkanoo parade and food festival in Abaco, Bahamas
- 2 Victory of Armed Forces Day. Public holiday in Cuba
- 2 Ancestors Day. Public holiday in Haiti
- 2 Carnival Day. Public holiday in St Kitts & Nevis
- 2 - 3 St. Croix Christmas Festival Parades. www.stxfestival.com
- 6 Three Kings Day. Public holiday in many places
- 8 - 22 St. Barts Music Festival. www.stbartsmusicfestival.org
- 11 FULL MOON
- 12 Eugenio María de Hostos Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
- 12 - 18 16th Barbados Jazz Festival. www.barbadosjazzfestival.com
- 14 - 17 Carriacou Sailing Series. www.sailingcarriacou.com
- 15 - 18 Food and Rum Festival, St. Lucia. www.foodandrumfestival.com
- 16 - 18 7th Caribbean Laser Midwinter Regatta, Cabarete, Dominican Republic. www.caribwind.com/lrc
- 19 Martin Luther King Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
- 20 - 21 Spanish Water Lagoon Regatta, Curaçao. www.cyc2009.org
- 20 - 23 40th Annual Spice Island Billfish Tournament, Grenada. www.sibtgrenada.com
- 21 Errol Barrow Day. Public holiday in Barbados
- 21 Our Lady of Altigracia. Public holiday in the Dominican Republic
- 21 - 4 Feb 14th Annual Mustique Blues Festival. www.basilsbar.com
- 22 - 24 Jamaica Jazz & Blues Festival, Montego Bay. www.aizjamaicajazzandblues.com
- 22 - 25 St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta. www.ClassicRegatta.com
- 22 - 25 Bequia Music Fest. www.bequiatourism.com/bequiamusicfest
- 24 - 25 Around Antigua Race. www.antiguayachtclub.com
- 25 G.F. Core's Day. Public holiday in Aruba
- 26 National Heroes Day. Public holiday in Cayman Islands
- 26 Duarte's Birthday. Public holiday in the Dominican Republic
- 30 - 31 Abaco Art Festival, Marsh Harbour, Bahamas. (242)-367-2158
- 30 - 3 Feb Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival. www.grenadasailingfestival.com
- 31 - 1 Feb Anguilla Dinghy Regatta. aysc@sailinguilla.com
- TBA Around Barbados Race. www.sailbarbados.com

FEBRUARY

- 2 World Wetlands Day
- 6 Pineapple Cup Race, Montego Bay, Jamaica. www.montegobayrace.com
- 7 Independence Day. Public holiday in Grenada
- 7 - 8 Necol One-Design Regatta, St. Maarten. www.smyc.com
- 8 - 17 Havana International Jazz Festival, Cuba. www.jazzcuba.com
- 9 FULL MOON
- 10 - 14 Tobago Carnival Regatta. www.sailweek.com
- 12 - 15 8th International Club Náutico de San Juan Regatta, Puerto Rico. www.nauticodesanjuan.com
- 13 - 15 Budget Marine Valentines Regatta, Antigua. www.jhycantigua.com
- 14 Sunshine School Fundraising Auction, Bequia. nicola@begos.com
- 14 Man-o-War Cay Craft Fair, Bahamas. (242)-365-6049
- 14 - 16 31st Annual Sweethearts of the Caribbean and 27th Annual Classic Yacht Regatta, Tortola. www.weyc.net
- 14 - 24 La Route du Carnival rally, Martinique to Trinidad. www.franscaribes.com
- 16 Presidents' Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
- 19 - 22 Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta. www.grenadaclassicregatta.com
- 20 - 22 16th St. Croix International Regatta (first regatta of CORT). www.stcroixyc.com
- 20 - 22 6th Annual Optimist Valentine Regatta, St. Croix. www.stcroixyc.com
- 20 - 22 Sir John Compton Memorial Trophy and Diamond Dash Race, St. Lucia to Martinique and back. www.stluciyachtclub.com
- 20th Semaine Nautique Schoelcher, Martinique. www.optworld.org/09norMartinique.pdf
- 22 Independence Day. Public holiday in St. Lucia.
- 23 - 24 Carnival Monday and Tuesday in most Dutch and French islands, Puerto Rico, Dominica, Carriacou, Trinidad & Tobago, Venezuela, and other places
- 23 - 27 RORC Caribbean Offshore Race. www.antiguayachtclub.com
- 25 Ash Wednesday. Public holiday in Cayman Islands
- 27 Independence Day. Public holiday in the Dominican Republic
- 27 - 1 March South Grenada Regatta. www.southgrenadaregatta.com

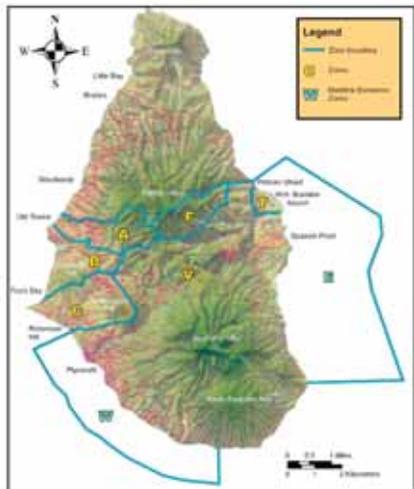
All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of *Compass* went to press — but plans change, so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation. If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our monthly calendar, please send the name and date(s)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

The Skiathos crew crossing ARC 2008's finish line in holiday style! Photo: Tim Wright / photoaction.com

Info & Updates

Yachts Alerted to Exclusion Zone

Yacht skippers are reminded to be aware of the Maritime Exclusion Zones in waters surrounding



MONTSERRAT VOLCANO OBSERVATORY

Montserrat, after activity at that island's Soufrière Hills Volcano increased with a series of four explosive events which started on the evening of December 2nd.

The first and largest event occurred without any warning or precursory seismic activity. The event started with a small dome collapse that was followed, within 15 seconds, by a pyroclastic flow. There was then an explosion, possibly two explosions, within 90 seconds. The explosion sent large incandescent blocks up to a mile from the dome and these were seen scattered over the northwestern slope of Gages Mountain. Some of these were later seen to have

generated substantial impact craters. The explosion and pyroclastic flow both generated ash columns that were accompanied by lightning strikes. The ash is estimated to have reached a height of 40,000 feet above sea level.

The pyroclastic flow was on the western flank of the volcano. It travelled down Gages Valley and it is estimated that the flow reached the sea within two minutes of the start of the event. According to the Montserrat Volcano Observatory (MVO), "The activity this week has demonstrated that explosions and pyroclastic flows do occur without any warning whatsoever."

Roderick Stewart of the MVO tells *Compass*, "We are currently at Level 3 which allows Daytime Transit of the western Maritime Exclusion Zone (MEZ). We would strongly recommend that no vessels enter either the eastern or western MEZ until we have made a full assessment of the activity."

Fortunately, the volcanic activity did not affect any currently inhabited parts of the island, and Ishwar Persad of the Montserrat Tourism Department says, "Note that all is well on island, all offices are open, the airport and seaport are functioning and the island is welcoming visitors."

For more information visit www.mvo.ms.

Yacht Moorings in Prince Rupert Bay, Dominica

Dominica's Portsmouth Association of Yacht Security (PAYS) would like to remind the yachting community that the association now has moorings available for visitors' use in Prince Rupert Bay. The cost of the moorings is as follows:

—Continued on next page



A warm welcome awaits you and your yacht at Port Louis



Port Louis, Grenada

Nowhere extends a warmer welcome than Port Louis, Grenada. Visitors can expect powder-white beaches, rainforests, spice plantations and a calendar packed with regattas and festivals. Grenada is also the gateway to the Grenadines, one of the world's most beautiful and unspoiled cruising areas.

Now there's another good reason to visit. There are 50 new fully serviced slips for yachts of all sizes up to 90m available right now for sale or rental.

Sitting alongside the marina, the forthcoming Port Louis Maritime Village will include luxury hotels, villas, restaurants and bars, plus some of the finest boutiques and shops in the region.

Limited availability

Slips are available for sale or rental. For a private consultation to discuss the advantages of slip ownership, please contact our International Sales Manager, Anna Tabone, on +356 2248 0000 or email anna.tabone@cnmarinas.com

To fully appreciate this rare opportunity, we highly recommend a visit. To arrange an on-site meeting please contact our Sales and Marketing Co-ordinator, Danny Donelan on +1(473) 435 7432 or email danny.donelan@cnportlouismarina.com



—Continued from previous page

Per night: US\$10
 Per week: US\$50
 Bi-monthly: US\$90
 Monthly: US\$170

Moorings fees should only be paid to Eddison Tours or Providence water taxi (Martin Carriere). Each moorings collector will be carrying ID and will provide a receipt. All fees will go to both maintenance of the moorings and supporting the night security provided by PAYS. Donations are welcome.

Those not wishing to use the moorings are asked to anchor your boat to either side of the designated mooring area.

PAYS is a registered non-profit association that was established in 2007 to run security patrols every night from November through May in the main yacht anchorage of Portsmouth. The organization currently includes 18 members from the yacht tourism sector in Portsmouth.

Bojan Sailor Andrew Burke Honored

Well-known Caribbean yacht designer, builder and racer Andrew Burke has been appointed to the Order of Barbados in the grade of Silver Crown of Merit on



REMIKA GOODRIDGE

Honored yachtsman Andrew Burke (right), with Imor Ward of the Barbados Yacht Club

behalf of Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom by the Governor General of Barbados. The award has been made in recognition of Burke's "significant contribution to the development of the water sports industry and in particular sailing".

Slave Ship Wreck Discovered in Caicos

According to NOAA, The United States National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, maritime archaeologists have recently identified the wreck of the historic slave ship *Trouvadore* off the coast of East Caicos in the Turks & Caicos Islands. NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration and Research significantly funded several years of archaeological research leading to the discovery by Don Keith and

sel was grounded on a reef, Caicos authorities arrested the crew, and most of the 192 African survivors settled on Grand Turk Island. It is believed that the African survivors of the *Trouvadore* are the ancestors of a large portion of current residents in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

In 2004, using historical accounts of where the *Trouvadore* went down, along with remote sensing and visual searches, archaeologists focused on a ship near



SEARCH FOR THE SLAVE SHIP TROUVADORE/NOAA

The hull remains of the so-called 'Black Rock Wreck' were measured and compared to the dimensions of known shipwrecks off East Caicos

Toni Carrell, from Ships of Discovery, an underwater archaeology research institute.

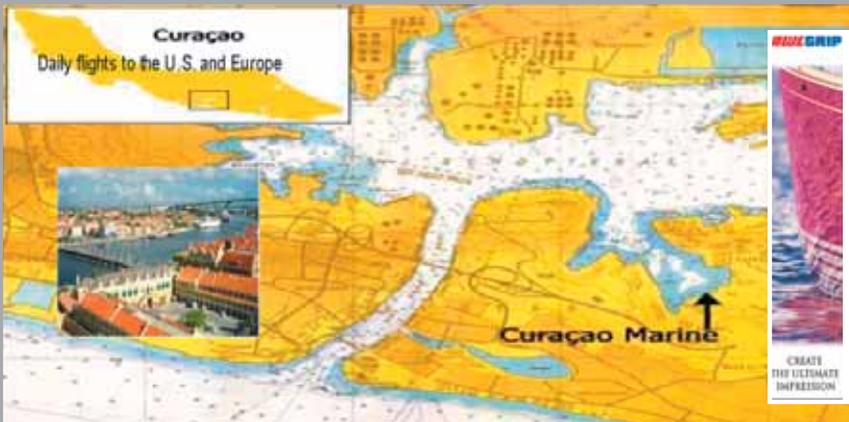
The Spanish vessel *Trouvadore* was participating in the slave trade, outlawed in the British Indies, including the Turks and Caicos Islands. In 1841, after the ves-

sel was grounded on a reef, Caicos authorities arrested the crew, and most of the 192 African survivors settled on Grand Turk Island. It is believed that the African survivors of the *Trouvadore* are the ancestors of a large portion of current residents in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

In 2004, using historical accounts of where the *Trouvadore* went down, along with remote sensing and visual searches, archaeologists focused on a ship near a local landmark known as the Black Rock. Records showed the vessel had sunk at Breezy Point, approximately two miles from the Black Rock wreck location. The archaeologists learned about the *Trouvadore* while tracing the current locations of artifacts from the islands that were sold to museums in the US and Europe over a hundred years ago. Examining records about "African idols" that were sold, they found the account of the *Trouvadore* wreck.

—Continued on next page

Curaçao Marine



New marine center presents the latest Dutch innovation in boat handling equipment. Hauling capacity 45 tons and Catamarans up to 33ft beam.



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www.curacaomarine.com

—Continued from previous page

Keith and his colleagues also discovered the wreck of the US naval vessel *Chippewa*, lost in 1816. The researchers discovered a line of carronades, a unique type of cannon carried by the *Chippewa*, near the reef off Providenciales, which the vessel reportedly struck. The *Chippewa* and the *Onkayhe*, sunk in 1848, were part of America's efforts to stop the African slave trade and piracy by patrolling the Caribbean. Keith plans to continue work on the *Chippewa* wreck site and hopes to discover the *Onkayhe* nearby.

Grenada Board of Tourism Launches Yachting Survey

The Grenada Board of Tourism will be launching its Yachting Survey in 2009. Survey questionnaire forms will be available at Ports of Entry to be completed and returned when clearing out.

Grenada Board of Tourism (GBT), in cooperation with

yachting visitors coming to Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique and the form is designed to apply to everyone — liveaboards, charter clients, 'hurricane season' storage visitors and megayachts.

"We ask all yacht captains to co-operate and look forward to getting feedback — what activities you enjoyed while in Grenada, how long you stayed, where you went to relax, what you think of our marinas and maintenance facilities, and what you like and dislike about our islands."

Also available at Ports of Entry is the MAYAG 2008/9 *Grenada Marine Guide* containing articles and information as well as a directory of marine services available in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.

The Grenada Board of Tourism website has a wealth of information on Grenada's attractions, with a boating section and yacht clearance form available online — see www.grenadagrenadines.com.



Grenada aims to always improve its yachting 'product' and the Board of Tourism wants your input

the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada (MAYAG), is hoping to learn more about how Grenada can develop and improve facilities and services, in what is a thriving sector of tourism.

Esther Thomas, Head of Research and Planning at the GBT says "We are interested in the whole range of

Eight Bells

Long-time Antigua resident and former Caribbean yacht charter operator Norma Prudhon died on November 11th, 2008.

As reported in the November 2008 edition of the

Caribbean Sailing Association newsletter, the English-born Norma and her husband, Frenchman Marc Prudhon, sailed their 50-foot *Anahita* to Antigua in about 1968 and started chartering with the ever-growing Nicholson fleet. The couple later ran the famous schooner *Lord Jim* for owner Jol Byerley, and then the 114-foot *Marie Pierre* (now called *Ashanti*) for Baron Bic. After Marc and Norma separated in the early 1970s, Norma settled ashore in Antigua, working in various businesses at English Harbour including the Galley Boutique and Nicholson Caribbean Yacht Sales. In the early days of *Caribbean Compass*, Norma was our Antigua island agent. One of the first members of the Antigua Yacht Club and one of the many early volunteers for Antigua Sailing Week, Norma is survived by family and friends and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Cuban Yacht Club to Host Boat Parade

Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba will host a Nautical Parade from Marina Hemingway to El Morro Fortress in Havana on February 15th, celebrating the usual winter arrival of visiting yachts from Canada. Visiting yachts of every nationality are welcome to participate. The boat parade will take in some of the most interesting coastline of Cuba's remarkable capital city, including the Malecón — a unique sightseeing opportunity for visiting yachtsmen and *habaneros* alike. The parade will be followed by a barbecue and party.

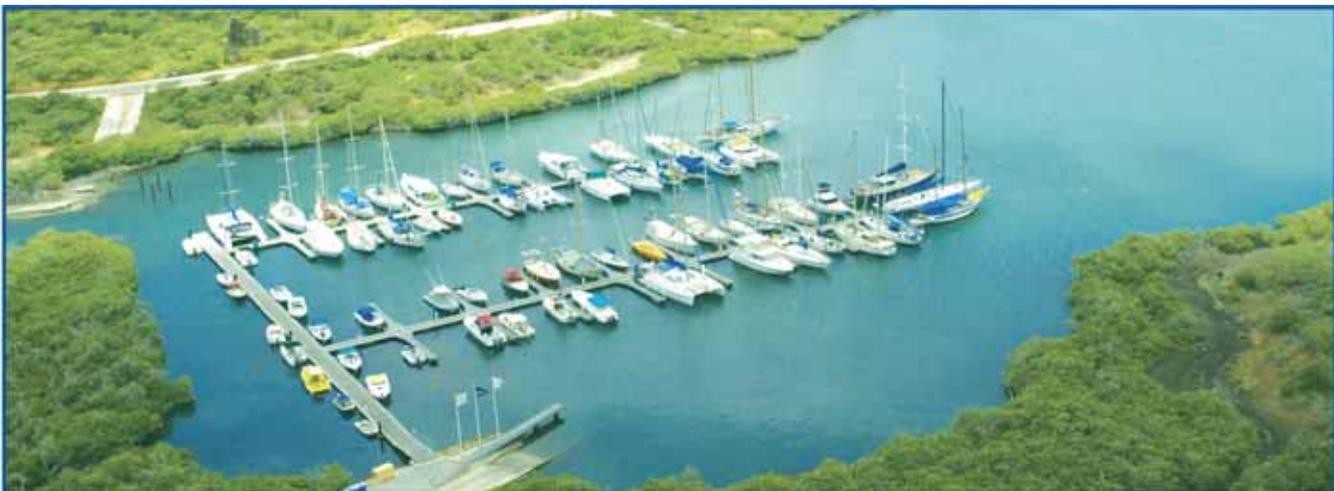
February is the month in which Hemingway International Yacht Club traditionally welcomes the most Canadian sailboats at Marina Hemingway. A number of Canadian sailors use Marina Hemingway as a take-off point for cruises to the west and south coasts of Cuba.

The club's Commodore, José Luis Díaz Escrich, tells *Compass*, "I would love this Nautical Parade to be a sign of friendship of the Canadian and international boating community with the Cuban people, and a moral support to our efforts for rebuilding the country after the hit last summer of high-intensity hurricanes Gustav, Ike, and Paloma."

For more information contact yachtclub@cni.h.mh.cyt.cu.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome aboard new advertiser Savon de Mer, in the *Caribbean Compass* Market Place, page 54. Good to have you with us!



CLEAR SKIES FORECASTED FOR THIS SAFE HARBOR



Seru Boca Marina, Curaçao's finest private harbor, has openings for dockage. Located outside the hurricane belt in the protected waters of Spanish Water Bay, Seru Boca Marina is considered one of the finest and safest yacht anchorages in the Caribbean.

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- Floating docks engineered in Holland.
- Accommodation for 68 yachts up to 150 ft. / 15 ft. draft.
- Electrical power (127 and 220).
- Cable T.V. and potable water available.
- Marina staff monitors VHF radio channel 67 and are available

to assist boaters in docking and leaving the Marina, as well as to assist in locating appropriate services as needed.

- Seru Boca Marina is a safe harbor that offers 24 hours security.

For information on rates and facilities, call (599 9) 560-2599

Porta Blanca, P.O. Box 4816, Curaçao, N.A.
Tel. (599 9) 767-9042, fax (599 9) 767-9003
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www.grenadamarine.com info@grenadamarine.com
 Tel: +473 443-1667 Fax: +473 443-1668

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Dominica's First Yanmar and Mercury Marine Center

Dominica now has its very own Yanmar and Mercury Marine center, located in Roseau. The full service and sales center is an attachment of the Dominica Marine Center, which has branches in both Roseau and Portsmouth. Yachties can take



advantage of the new Engine Center's "Going Into Business" sale for unbeatable new engine prices — and keep in mind, they have the duty-free advantage. Dominica Marine Center's Hubert Winston says, "If you don't believe our prices are unbeatable, call us last."

For more information see ad on page 52.

Savon de Mer is Clean and Green

Every sailor, boater, diver, swimmer, windsurfer or fisherman knows how wonderful it is to be out on the ocean, but one big downside is not being able to wash off the salt from your hair and skin using salt water alone, especially when fresh water is in short supply.

Savon de Mer is a new product that is designed to lather in salt water. The Savon de Mer Fresh & Salt Water Shampoo & Body Gel is effective for shampooing and bathing, with special emollients to counteract the drying effect of salt and sun on your hair and skin. There's also no need to rinse off in fresh water — just towel-dry will leave skin feeling fresh and hair tangle free. Savon de Mer is also pH neutral and biodegradable.

For more information see ad on page 54.



Prospects for Yacht Insurance

Don Street of Iolair Enterprises reports: Regarding predictions of trends in yacht insurance, no one seems to know! My feeling is that insurance rates will have to go up, as underwriters are currently not making any money from their invested income and therefore profit will have to come out of premiums. When underwriters are making money on invested income, they can afford to lose money on the insurance book as these losses are covered by their investment profits. But when investment income goes down, their income from insurance premiums must not only be sufficient to cover payout on losses, it must also be greater than those losses for the underwriters to stay in business.

Some companies will no longer insure a yacht with a value less than US\$750,000. I have found a non-Lloyds facility that would insure boats under that value, but would not insure boats that were US-owned and registered. However, I have made arrangements with a Lloyds underwriter who will insure US-owned, US-registered boats — as long as they stay out of US waters.

For more information on Iolair Enterprises see ad on page 21.

Tall Ship Youth Sailing Available

The Maritime School of the West Indies recently announced that they will be offering youngsters a chance to sail on board a sail training Tall Ship in 2009.

The Maritime School has reserved space for ten young would-be sailors on board the bark *Europa* for July to sail on a transatlantic voyage from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Belfast, Northern Ireland and on to Holland in the last leg of the Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge organized by Sail Training International.

Sail training Tall Ships from around the world are invited to participate in the Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge 2009, a spectacular odyssey around the North Atlantic Ocean of more than 7,000 nautical miles following the traditional route taken by sailing ships of a by-gone age. The final race will start on July 20th in Halifax, Canada, and it is there that the ten youngsters sent by the Maritime School of the West Indies (two from Saba, two from St. John's, two from St. Martin and four from Sint Maarten) will embark.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Sail training on board tall ships has been proven to be one of the most efficient educational ways to prepare youngsters for the real world. The members of Sail Training International are the national representative sail-training organizations of Australia, Belgium, Bermuda, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the UK and the USA.



Ten youngsters from the Caribbean will have the opportunity to sail this summer aboard the tall ship Europa

A new organization, the Caribbean Sail Training Association, has recently been formed with the aim of creating greater sail training possibilities to the youth of the region, in conjunction with Sail Training International. The Caribbean Sail Training Association is also preparing a project to bring the International fleet of Tall Ships to St. Maarten and other islands during a Caribbean Tall Ships Regatta in the coming years.

For more information about the Maritime School of the West Indies youth participation in the Tall Ships Atlantic Challenge visit www.MaritimeSchool.net.

For more information about the Caribbean Sail Training Association visit www.CaribbeanSailTrainingAssociation.com.

Unique Collision Warning System Can Save Lives

A "one of its kind" collision warning system recently launched in the United States is affordable, easy to use and more importantly, could save lives. Founders Jeff Robbins and Deirdre Schleigh designed the AISWatchMate™ after feeling vulnerable while cruising the Pacific aboard their 40-foot sloop. "We were as vigilant as you can be, but the most prudent watchkeeper will still occasionally find themselves looking at a ship on the horizon wondering, 'How did I miss that?'"

Using technology available through the Universal Shipborne Automatic Identification System (AIS), recreational boaters can take advantage of the enormous safety benefit this technology offers to assist in safe navigation — especially when maneuvering in busy harbors and coastal and short-handed offshore sailing. "The AISWatchMate takes the guesswork out of the other ships' intentions," says Robbins. "You'll know how close it'll come and when."

Unlike other navigational systems and tools available, the AISWatchMate delivers concise prioritized information about the ships in your vicinity. Using received AIS data and data from your vessel's GPS, the bearing, range and closest point of approach (CPA) are calculated for each ship. The CPA is the minimum distance apart your vessel and a target will come if both maintain their speed and course. Additionally, you know how much time until you meet the CPA, allowing for appropriate action to maintain safe passage.

The AISWatchMate is made especially effective by mandatory regulations requiring all international vessels over 300 tons and all domestic vessels over 500 tons to



have AIS transponders installed. The AISWatchMate offers unique filtering features that help eliminate false alarms that are common with other AIS devices. It also has four customizable alarm profiles (harbor, coastal, offshore and anchored) that allow the user to easily and quickly switch between settings as sailing conditions or locations change.

The AISWatchMate is "on watch 24/7", looking out for any potentially dangerous situations. The alarm sounds whenever a ship is detected that will come dangerously close. Even though the ship may still be many miles away, you're alerted immediately if there is a risk of collision.

The AISWatchMate is designed, manufactured and marketed by Robbins and Schleigh who pride themselves on being part of each process to ensure its top-end quality. Robbins combined his hands-on knowledge from years of expertise in the software and hi-tech industry to develop the collision avoidance system, and originally built the AISWatchMate for himself. "But everyone I showed it to wanted one," he says.

For more information visit www.aiswatchmate.com.



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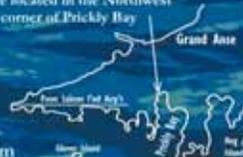
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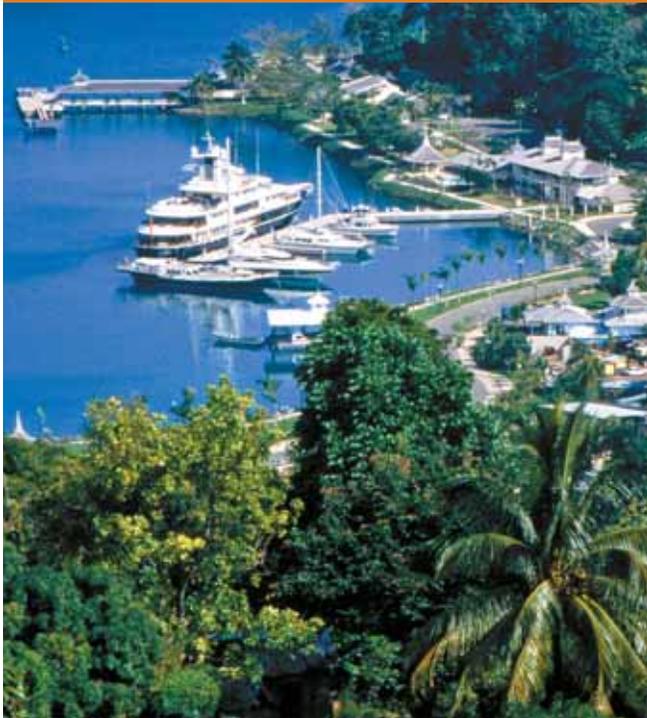
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Caribbean Eco-News

Tracking Caribbean Sea Acidification

A new study, which confirms significant ocean acidification across much of the Caribbean Sea, reports strong natural variations in ocean chemistry in some parts of the Caribbean that could affect the way reefs respond to future ocean acidification. Such short-term variability may prove an important consideration when predicting the long-term impacts of ocean acidification to coral reefs.

Conducted by scientists from NOAA and the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, the study was published in the October 31, 2008 issue of the *Journal of Geophysical Research - Oceans*.

Approximately a quarter of the carbon dioxide that humans place in the atmosphere each year ends up being dissolved into the ocean. The result is that the ocean becomes more acidic, making it harder for corals and other marine life to build their skeletons or shells.

In the new study, NOAA scientists used four years of ocean chemistry measurements taken aboard the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line ship *Explorer of the Seas* together with daily satellite observations to estimate changes in ocean chemistry over the past two decades in the Caribbean region. Tim Keeney, co-chair of the United States Coral Reef Task Force, says, "These new tools provide [researchers] with better information to guide future research. This is the first time that anyone has been able to track ocean acidification on a monthly basis."

The study supports other findings that ocean acidification is likely to reduce coral reef growth to critical levels before the end of this century unless humans significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions. While ocean chemistry across the region is currently deemed adequate to support coral reefs, it is rapidly changing as atmospheric carbon dioxide levels rise.

C. Mark Eakin, Ph.D., coordinator of NOAA's Coral Reef Watch, said, "Organisms from highly variable environments are often better adapted to changes like we have seen in the last 20 years. The real question is how far corals can adapt and if this natural variability will be enough to protect them."

For more information visit www.noaneews.noaa.gov.

Historically Valued Trees Identified on Jost van Dyke

Jost van Dykes Preservation Society reports: Several stands of *Lignum vitae* (*Guaiacum officinale*) and Teyer or Broom Palm (*Coccothrinax alta*) have been identified on the British Virgin Island of Jost van Dyke.



BVI fishermen use leaf-spines of the Teyer palm to string their catch

Lignum vitae, a native tree with a distinctive trunk, had an economic value for its hard and heavy wood, as well as for oily resin that permeates the wood. Historically, the trunk of this tree was used to make bearings and blocks for propeller shafts and bearings for roller mills. *Lignum vitae* is almost extinct in the wild in the neighbouring USVI and is protected under Territorial Law. Trade of the wood of this tree is controlled under the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES).

The Teyer or Broom Palm is also a historically and culturally significant tree in the BVI, where it is used to make brooms, thatch roofs, and string fish. Teyer Palm is endemic to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Over a dozen stands of this tree were identified on Jost van Dyke during an October 2008 field assessment.

The findings are the result of ongoing field research in Jost van Dyke as part of the Overseas Territories Environmental Programme-funded project entitled "Jost van Dykes Community-based Programme Advancing Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development". Research on this project is being conducted by the staff of the Island Resources Foundation in partnership with local professionals. The project is coordinated by the Jost van Dykes Preservation Society, whose office is located in Great Harbour Jost van Dyke.

Environmental Group Challenges BVI Development

A legal case that is to be heard soon is expected to have far-reaching consequences for the protection of the fragile Caribbean environment.

According to a report by Robert Verkaik in the November 28, 2008 edition of the UK newspaper *The Independent*, Sir Richard Branson of Virgin Atlantic Airways fame is backing a landmark legal challenge by environmental campaigners against a multimillion-pound luxury leisure complex that threatens to destroy some of the most important mangrove swamps in the British Virgin Islands. Sir Richard has paid for a team of barristers to fly to the BVI and seek to stop plans to build a marina, five-star hotel and golf course on Beef Island.

A spokesman for the Virgin Islands Environmental Council says, "This is a landmark case that addresses a number of important issues which will impact on the future of environmental law and practice throughout the Caribbean. The outcome of this case will definitely impact the way other large projects currently under planning review are dealt with, leading to a more sustainable future for the BVI. The case will serve to define more clearly the government's responsibility in adhering to environmental laws when granting or refusing planning permission."

In October 2008, the case went to the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, which rejected legal objections by the BVI government and the developers to the legal action going ahead. The action will begin in full early this year. The campaigners hope the legal action currently underway will lead to a reversal of the planning permission and the re-designation of Beef Island as a national park.

ARC 2008

Fast passages usually make happy bluewater sailors. But sometimes leisurely can be good, too.

More than 200 yachts carrying more than a thousand crewmembers of 25 nationalities arrived in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, last month, having safely sailed some 2,700 nautical miles across the Atlantic Ocean from Las Palmas in the Canary Islands in the 2008 Atlantic Rally for Cruisers. The organizing body, World Cruising Club, and the ARC participants themselves can all claim credit for this achievement.

Every autumn, hundreds of yachts prepare to leave Europe, bound for a winter of unbeatable sailing conditions in the Caribbean. In 1986, yachting journalist Jimmy Cornell went to their traditional departure point, the Canary Islands, to interview skippers for an article for *Yachting World* magazine. He got the idea of organizing a race across the Atlantic, and the ARC was born.

The 23rd annual running of the ARC featured slower passage times than most previous years. Especially in the early part of the rally, which started on November

LET THERE BE LIGHT AIRS

By Sally Erdle



Andrew Bishop of ARC organizers World Cruising Club (left) popped aboard to greet skipper Ian Van der Woude minutes after *Mikado* arrived in St. Lucia. Ian says that ARC 2008 was 'brilliant!'

23rd, 2008, a series of low-pressure systems in the central Atlantic caused unsettled weather patterns resulting in lighter-than-usual tradewinds. Thus, no records were broken, but neither were any bones or large amounts of boat gear.

The first boat across the 2008 finish line was Karsten Moller's Swan 82, *DreamCatcherKM*, skippered by Jarrod Cripps, on December 7th — a time of slightly less than 14 days. Just one week later, 130 of the ARC 2008 fleet had arrived, many having motored (which is allowed in the Cruising Division, which usually makes up some 85 percent of the fleet) for many of the miles. By the morning of the 16th, with breezes freshening, 175 had made landfall. Typically, the passage takes between 18 and 21 days. The ARC's fastest passage time so far — 11 days, 5 hours, 32 minutes and 30 seconds — was set in 2006 by the Italian Maxi *Capricorno*.

In this slow ARC, crews had time for cooking, sleeping and blogging. And perhaps because the yachts weren't always outrunning the fish for a change, many crews reported unusually good fishing. The Australians aboard *Mikado*, a Beneteau Oceanis 473, caught a ten-kilo wahoo and "at least a dozen" dorado, while the English crew on the Beneteau First 47.7 *Gilly B.* boated numerous tuna, barracuda and dorado (secret weapon: blue Rappalpas), lost two swordfish and even spotted a marlin breaching — a rare and magnificent sight. A German skipper said his crew finally got selective: "We could only eat fish twice a day, not three times!"

Improving the ARC

With the ARC conceived as "a friendly race" for cruising yachts to make the Atlantic crossing both safer and more enjoyable, those participating must carry a range of safety equipment onboard including a liferaft, EPIRB and VHF radio. Daily radio nets contribute further to the safety of the crews, while the presence of many experienced sailors is another incentive, and a comfort, for those heading across an ocean for the first time.

Andrew Bishop of World Cruising Club says, "We are always adding improvements." For example, because many man-overboard deaths occur when lifejacket wearers are drowned by "swallowing" waves, new for this ARC was the requirement for lifejackets to have spray hoods — an existing recommendation from the international governing body for the sport of sailing (ISAF), but now an ARC rule.

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Also new but on a lighter note — and equally crucial to the successful ARC formula — were the Tobago Carnival Regatta party before the start in Las Palmas, and the venue for the Welcome Party in St. Lucia: Royal by Rex Resort. The Tobago Carnival Party, hosted by the organizers of the new Tobago Carnival Regatta (which will hold its inaugural event from February 10th through 14th), gave ARC crews a foretaste of Caribbean culture with Carnival costumes and live steel pan music. On

Meet the Fleet

The ARC fleet definitely represents typical offshore cruising boats with 49 percent of the fleet measuring between 12 and 15 metres LOA and with a median size of 14.30 metres (46 feet 11 inches). Dominating this year's entry list with 30 yachts are French builders Beneteau, although cruising stalwarts Oyster (17 yachts) and Hallberg Rassy (15 yachts) are both well represented. Fifteen cruising catamarans also took part. David Bartholomew and his long-time offshore racing buddy Brian, both from



By December 15th, the new floating docks at Rodney Bay Marina were all chock-a-block with ARC 2008 arrivals. The new mega-yacht dock waits its turn to be filled

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the other side of the Atlantic, the St. Lucia Tourist Board and the Rex staff went all out to throw a bash that partygoers proclaimed "absolutely amazing".

A new Platinum port sponsor on the St. Lucia end was Digicel.

Preparing the Marina

In early 2007, Island Global Yachting (IGY) acquired Rodney Bay Marina, which has hosted the arriving ARC fleet since 1990, and announced plans for redevelopment to commence after ARC 2007 boats had left.

Although ongoing work on the finishing touches such as landscaping, adding the last few electrical connections and dredging of shallow spots continued as ARC 2008 boats arrived, Ian Cowan of Island Water World chandlery's St. Lucia branch says, "The transformation of the marina between February and December 2008 has been nothing short of miraculous," giving kudos to construction done by C.O. Williams of St. Lucia and Marengo Ltd. of Barbados. The marina and boatyard stayed open throughout. Before the redevelopment, the marina had 232 berths. Very soon there will be 252 operational slips, including 30 for megayachts.

Cuthbert Didier, General Manager of Rodney Bay Marina, says, "It hasn't been easy, but we've delivered what we promised." Although much attention has been given in the media to the addition of the dedicated megayacht dock, Cuthbert emphasizes: "We haven't lost sight of our core market: cruisers and visiting yachts. We have remained a Caribbean family marina while adding berths for the megayachts — we recognize that they are more seasonal, but we need to include them, too. We're proud of our product mix. Clearly, all these segments can co-exist; it is seen elsewhere, so why not here?" He adds, "We really appreciate all those cruisers who came to us with their advice and concerns, and thank them for patronizing the marina and the boatyard throughout this transition."

Hamble, England, arrived on December 12th aboard David's four-year-old *Gilly B*. They said that after "an unpleasant October crossing" (with British under-statement, "unpleasant" involves a mast-in-the-water knockdown), sailing the Atlantic — with five paying crew aboard — was "a piece of cake". The addition of a new mast and suit of North sails paid off: *Gilly B* came 13th across the line, not bad for a 47-foot monohull in a 209-boat fleet that included big cats and 80-footers.

Why the ARC? Although it was David's second transatlantic and he has well over 15,000 sea miles under his belt, he says he liked the safety factor in consideration of his guests aboard, and adds, "The ARC is well run and it's always improving." David plans to campaign *Gilly B* in the Caribbean, including racing in both the new RORC Caribbean 600 Race and the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta.

Ian Van der Woude and crew arrived December 12th aboard *Mikado*, which he bought in Bodrum, Turkey. Ian modified the boat for the Atlantic crossing with radar, more sails and a third reef in the main, an extra fuel tank (situated in the bow), safety gear, extra storage, lee cloths on the bunks, and "creature comforts". Ian says he's "very impressed" with the boat's performance; *Mikado* was the first Oceanis 473 of five across the finish line. Ian sailed the ARC with two adult male friends and his 15-year-old son Nicholas, who is taking a "gap year" — all are racing sailors who enjoy cruising. Like many others, they suffered very light winds during the early part of the crossing: "a trough haunted us, so we motored to escape it".

Ian's wife Jenny and home-schooled daughter Georgina, 11, will be joining him and Nicholas in St. Lucia. They'll cruise the islands for about three months and then head through the Panama Canal home to Australia. Ian also had high praise for World Cruising Club: "The organization is impeccable — brilliant! After all these years, they have it down pat. Plus, the camaraderie is priceless — we've had a hoot!"

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ARC: The Next Generation

Thirty-four children sailed in ARC 2008, and young Nicholas on *Mikado* wasn't the youngest by far. For example, ten-year-old Norwegian Lina Lund and her sister



Above: The crews of *Mango* and *Madonna*, two of the ten Norwegian boats in ARC 2008. Back row, left to right: Karl Otto, Frode and Tone Lund, Paal and Paulina Bratbak, and Lars Duettonessen. Front row: Elma and Line Lund; Edvard, Emil and Marina Bratbak

Below: Christoph von Reibnitz with his sons Jarl (left) and Gard aboard ARC veteran, *Peter von Seestermühe*. This 17.98-metre (59-foot) yawl was built as an ocean racer in 1936 and has crossed the Atlantic more than 20 times

Right: Cuthbert Didier, Rodney Bay Marina's General Manager, proudly says, 'We have remained a Caribbean family marina'



Elma, age 7, sailed aboard the *Bavaria 44 Mango*. Lina, whose longest previous passage was four days, says, "The three weeks at sea went like nothing!" She enjoyed seeing flying fish, turtles, a whale and especially dolphins leaving sparkling phosphorescent wakes at night. The girls sailed with their parents, Tone and Frode, and family friend and racing crew Lars Duettonessen. Mom Tone says, "It was a really great trip. The only thing wrong was a ripped spinnaker." Spinnaker? Yes. Lars says, "After the first few days, we got into competitive mode." *Mango* was the first of the fleet's ten Norwegian boats to cross the finish line.

Lars adds, "The ocean didn't feel as big as I expected it to. You can only see as far as the horizon, and it's not hard to imagine land just beyond it. And there were only three days when we didn't see another boat." He also notes that passagemaking with children is a good experience and "very different from sailing with a bunch of guys!"

The honor of being the very youngest (and a major contrast to the oldest participant, 77-year-old Lurelle Verplank aboard the 82-foot Oyster *Sundowner*) went to a nine-month-old baby, the aptly named Marina, aboard another Norwegian boat, the Beneteau First 31 *Madonna*, which also had the designation of being the smallest boat in the 2008 ARC fleet. Marina sailed with her parents Paal and Paulina Bratbak, family friend Karl Otto, and brothers Edvard and Emil. *Madonna* crossed the finish line only five hours behind *Mango*. Ten-year-old Emil cheerfully disclosed that he would like to do the ARC in his own boat some day — "a Class 40!"



Let's Do it Again!

Emil echoes a sentiment common to ARC participants — many would like to do it again, and some have already done it more than once. A prime example: 2008 line honors went to previous ARC participant Karsten Moller in his newest *DreamCatcher*. Finishing very close behind *DreamCatcherKM* was another regular ARC participant, Bruce Dingwall on the Southwind 80 *Matelot*.

Organizer Andrew Bishop notes that many people repeat the ARC, and many of them are former ARC crew who later enter the event in their own boats. It's not surprising that Andrew himself got involved through being an ARC participant. And, although not sailing in the ARC 2008, former ARC crews who are still cruising in the Caribbean volunteered as the finish line committee this year.

Christoph von Reibnitz sailed in the inaugural ARC in 1986, and has done the ARC aboard his 1936 classic yawl *Peter von Seestermühe* every other year since 1994. This year Christoph's young son Gard joined him and his charter guests for the crossing, and Gard's mom and younger brother Jarl met them in St. Lucia for the arrival festivities.

Christoph says that the party that Cuthbert Didier and his wife Sancho host annually at their waterside home for all ARC crews had "the best atmosphere of all the ARC parties" — so far, anyway! The gala prizegiving party will be held as this issue of *Compass* goes to press. And then, of course, there will be ARC 2009, scheduled to start on November 22nd — no doubt with return participants and improvements, as usual.

For full results of ARC 2008 and complete list of sponsors visit www.worldcruising.com/arc. Many thanks to the St. Lucia Tourist Board, LIAT airlines, the Palm Haven Hotel and World Cruising Club, who made *Compass's* first-hand coverage of the finish of ARC 2008 possible — and fun!

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REGATTA NEWS

Elusion Takes Top Honors in 19th Caribbean 1500
Elusion, a Hallberg-Rassy 49, owned by Kirt and Gayle Schultdt from Virginia Beach Virginia, took Overall Handicap Honors in the 19th Annual Caribbean 1500 Rally. First to finish, and winner of the Performance Cruising Class was *Between the Sheets*, a Hallberg-



The Caribbean 1500's Overall Handicap winning crew on *Elusion*

Rassy 62, owned by Tom and Diane Might, from Phoenix, Arizona, who completed the 1500-mile ocean passage in six days, 22 hours and 24 minutes. After a week of preparatory briefings, safety inspections, and gala social events in Hampton, Virginia, the Caribbean 1500 Rally fleet left Hampton, on November 7th and arrived in Tortola in the British Virgin Islands six to 13 days later. "The heavy weather played to *Elusion's* favor," said winning skipper Kirt Schultdt of his Hallberg-Rassy ketch. "On top of that, I had an excellent crew. The winds being at 20-plus most of the time helped greatly. What is really nice to see is that even an old *grande dame* (*Elusion*, hull #36, was built in 1986), once in the hands of good sailors, still has a dance or two left in her."
 The 2008 Caribbean 1500 fleet included participants from 17 states, four Canadian provinces, Germany, the UK, and Chile. Over 40 percent of the boats were owned by veteran Ralliers. The boats averaged 48.5

feet in length. Two boats joined the Rally in mid-ocean after a Charleston, South Carolina departure. Seven multihulls and a schooner joined the fleet of sloops and several ketches to make up this year's fleet. "The wind blew 20 to 25 knots for most of the Rally," said Steve Black, founder and President of the Cruising Rally Association that manages the event. "In the past several years, Rally participants racked up motoring hours in light air and calm seas. This year, the winds stayed up and the squalls blew through on a regular basis, especially for boats that followed the rhumb line south."
 The fleet sailed in two divisions in which owners chose to enter the Cruising Class to enjoy a cruise in company, or the Rally Class to participate in the fun race. All boats received the same safety, weather and communication benefits, and awards were presented in

Kent Bradford on *Destiny*, a Bristol 45.5. Ken and Janet Slagle on *Aquila* received the event's Tempest Award, presented to the crew that best exemplifies the "Spirit of the Caribbean 1500." The Slagles, with their crewmember Aaron Galvin, stood by when *Clover III*, a Swan 56, experienced rigging problems and diverted to Bermuda. Ken and Janet have completed a nine-year circumnavigation and are five-time veterans of the Caribbean 1500.
 The award for Best Performance by a Double-Handed Crew went to Tom and Harriet Linskey on *Hands Across the Sea*, a Dolphin 460 cat. Tom and Harriet will spend their winter managing a nonprofit organization dedicated to donating schoolbooks to children in the Caribbean. The Ellsay Family (Chris and Christine with their kids: Carl, Ryan and Andrea) on *Stray Kitty*, a PDQ 42 cat, out-fished the rest of the fleet and earned the event's Fishing Trophy.

With Axonn wireless transmitters on each yacht, positions were broadcast via the Globalstar satellite network six times each day, every four hours. Each boat's track was displayed on the Caribbean 1500 website (www.carib1500.com) using software customized by Magnalox that incorporates features from Google Earth. Davenport & Company LLC sponsors the Event Tracker program for Cruising Rally Association events.
 All Ralliers received cold champagne and a warm welcome at Village Cay Marina in Road Town, Tortola, BVI, where Mount Gay Rum hosted nightly parties for the sailors. The Awards Ceremony and Farewell Dinner honored participants for meeting the challenges of the offshore passage to the Caribbean. The Phat Virgin Party, sponsored by Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbor, followed.

The Cruising Rally Association, founded by veteran solo sailor and sailing event organizer Steve Black, is widely supported by leading companies in the marine, tourism, and financial industries, including Davenport & Company LLC, West Marine, Blue Water Sailing, World Cruising Ltd., Island Packet Yachts, Switlik, ICOM, Quantum Sail Design, Gill, Hydrovane, OCENS, Bluewater Yachting Center, Hampton's Towne Bank and Towne Mortgage, Hampton Roads Convention and Visitors Bureau, Village Cay Hotel and Marina, Virgin Gorda Yacht Harbor, Mount Gay Rum, and Reed's Almanac.

A return rally, the Atlantic Cup, is planned to start on May 2nd. The Atlantic Cup will leave from Village Cay in Tortola and finish in Bermuda. Participants will enjoy the same camaraderie, adventure, and competition that have made the Caribbean 1500 a perennial favorite, and will reunite with their fellow Ralliers to share stories of their winter in the Caribbean.

This year's Caribbean 1500, slated to start November 2, 2009 will be the 20th annual running of this Rally, and organizer Steve Black anticipates a record entry of returning Ralliers for the reunion and anniversary activities.

For more information visit www.carib1500.com.

BVI Youth Sailing Team Selected in Trials

Emma Paull reports: November 22nd and 23rd saw 13 Optimist sailors and six Laser sailors take part in the BVI Youth Sailing Team trials, which determined who gained a place on the BVI Youth Sailing Team.

Weather conditions provided some testing sailing for the sailors. On the Saturday the Optimists were abundant, as most of the older Laser sailors were taking part in the Round Tortola Race. The gusty northeast winds coming off the hills behind Baughers Bay had sailors guessing which side of the course had the wind on it. Eight races were sailed, with Mollie Donovan and Jason Putley battling it out for first place going into the Sunday.

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page

The regatta was open to all and some of the newer sailors had fun competition further down in the fleet in

BVI Yacht Club and coached by Team BVI coach Chris Watters.

For more information contact sailing@rbviyc.com.



Juniors fought hard to see who would get a place on the 2009 BVI Opti Sailing Team

their first proper regatta.

As the sailors became used to the unusual conditions, the Sunday saw tighter racing plus the addition of the Laser classes. With separate starts and three laps for Lasers and two for Optimists, the Race Committee managed to fit eight more races in for the Optis and eight for the Lasers. The wind increase meant exciting sailing and fast finishes with lots of capsizes in the strong gusts. The Laser fleet was international with two sailors from USVI (Will Bailey and Max Nickbarg) who came to train with the eventual winner, BVI sailor Alec Anderson. Optimist Ace from last year Dontae Hodge moved up a class and topped the Laser 4.7 fleet.

The final winners on points, with one discard over the 16 races were:

Optimists

- 1) Mollee Donovan
- 2) Jason Putley
- 3) Johnathon Woods

Lasers

- 1) Alec Anderson
- 2) Will Bailey
- 3) Max Nickbarg

The 2009 BVI Youth Optimist Sailing Team will include 11-year-old Mollee Donovan, Jason Putley (10), Jonathan Woods (10), Sam Morrell, (9), Kairon Branch (12), David Hirst (11), Ryan Woodbridge (9), Robert Poole (10), and Barney Nockolds (13).

On the 2009 BVI Youth Laser Sailing Team will consist of Alec Anderson (17), Elsa Meyers (17), DonTae Hodge (15), and Inigo Collins (13).

The Team will be traveling this year to major events such as the Volvo Youth Worlds in Brazil, the Optimist North Americans in the Dominican Republic, as well as hosting the first annual 2009 International Laser and Optimist Clinic to be held in March at Nanny Cay, Tortola, BVI. The team will be managed by the Royal



Hark – the ARC! St. Lucians' fun flotilla raised event awareness

St. Lucia Flotilla Raises ARC Awareness

Keats Compton reports: With a blast from a conch shell, and an escort from the St. Lucia Marine and Ports Police patrol boats, the 3rd annual ARC Flotilla set sail from Castries Harbour at 1030 hours on November 23rd, bound for the newly reconstructed IGY Rodney Bay Marina. Boats came from Soufriere, Marigot, Castries and Rodney Bay. Observers on two cruise ships and a French naval vessel in port had great views as boats maneuvered in the constant rain and mist.

The Flotilla is held annually in St. Lucia on the start

day of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) in Las Palmas, Canary Islands, and is designed to raise the profile of the event locally. St. Lucia is the ARC's final destination. Forty-nine power and sailboats registered in advance for the 2008 flotilla, an increase over previous years. Sponsors who came aboard for the first time — Heineken, Digicel, Colombian Emeralds and Travel Concepts — were happy to see the numbers.

This wind remained well below its previous years' peak of 30 knots, and so the Hobie Cat Get Away, at 16 feet the smallest in the flotilla, had no need of rescue. A new record of sorts was also established, that of the youngest participant: two-month-old Lucas Phillip, son of Nikko, captain of the power-cat *Pandora*. Winston Lauder, on the Grand Banks *Another Time*, branded with Colombian Emeralds banners and crew, was the senior participant. Media were out in force, with a dedicated press boat at their disposal. Boats were led through the cut into Rodney Bay Marina by the mother yacht, *Breeze-a-Way*, Bernard Johnson's Morgan 50 — which, in 1995, was the first St. Lucian yacht to ever participate in the ARC. St. Lucia's Minister of Tourism, the Honorable Allen Chastanet, his Permanent Secretary, Darrel Montrope, St. Lucia Yacht Club's Commodore Charles Devaux and St. Lucia's marine trades association president, Keats Compton, all enjoyed the view from *Breeze-a-Way*.

The first "mass occupancy" at the Rodney Bay Marina's new floating docks allowed participants to proceed to Scuttlebutts restaurant, and be treated to complimentary Heineken beers, and lunch provided by the St. Lucia Tourist Board. Certificates of participation were presented by Hayle Harvey of the St. Lucia Tourist Board, Martin Lucas of IGY, and Keats Compton of the Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia.

This year's sponsors were Digicel, Heineken,

DANIELLE DE ROUCK / ST. LUCIA YACHT CLUB

Colombian Emeralds, Travel Concepts, Mega J, Mercury Outboard Engines, St. Lucia Electricity Services, St. Lucia Property Advice, SOL EC Ltd., Vacation & Corporate Car Rental and Baron's Food. The organizers also gave special thanks to Danielle, Membership Secretary of the St. Lucia Yacht Club.

The Flotilla is organized by the Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia and the St. Lucia Yacht Club, with generous assistance from the St. Lucia Tourist Board and IGY marinas.

For more information visit www.stluciayachtclub.com.

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Puerto Rican Dominate Quantum IC24 Regatta, BVI
 Emma Paull reports: They came, they raced and they conquered! Fraitó Lugo and José Santiago of Puerto Rico swept the six British Virgin Islands teams aside at the RBVYC 2008 Quantum International IC24 regatta, held November 29th and 30th.

Fraitó proved again that he and his team are the ones to beat in IC24 racing by convincingly winning the regatta. José Santiago sailed consistently to place second by a comfortable margin. One BVI team went



The only BVI crew to reach the podium was led by 17-year-old Alec Anderson

to the podium: third place Alec Anderson, who at the age of 17 is making a habit of showing his transom to more seasoned BVI helms. There were no USVI entries this year.

The Saturday morning saw a shifty northeaster battling with new pressure from the east. The first race saw the hard left pay. Several teams fell foul in the middle with wind lines tantalizingly close but never quite reaching their sails. Everyone found it hard to be consistent, apart from Fraitó! The breeze freshened in the afternoon, settling more into the east. The fleet of eight tightened up and enjoyed some picture-perfect racing. At the end of the day Fraitó had established his lead, with José in second place and Richard Woolridge in third.

The Sunday morning's forecast called for strong winds, with ships reporting winds up to 30 knots in the Anegada Passage. It never became that windy on the racecourse, but strong gusts and a choppy Sir Francis Drake Channel had all crews struggling to sail upright. Race Officer Guy Eldridge kept the purple "no spinnaker" flag firmly furled, so there was some fine downwind surfing on display.

At the prizegiving it pained Quantum's Kevin Wrigley to present the winner's check to Fraitó, who runs a Quantum loft himself. Sam Childs, age six, was given a gold star as the youngest competitor. Ryan Woolridge, nine, joined Sam on Sunday to help Alec Anderson snatch third place from his father, Richard W. Ryan. Kevin presented the hapless Chris Haycraft with a large frozen turkey for winning the battle for last place! Photographs taken by Guy on the committee boat were handed out to each competitor. Mike Kirk single-handedly ran the mark boat all weekend. A big vote of thanks was given to Guy, Mike, the RBVYC

staff and Commodore Clair for making the regatta such a success.

As Thanksgiving and a very tight November racing calendar ruled out many regulars in 2008, Kevin Wrigley of Quantum BVI is poised to shift the regatta back to early summer this year.

Grenada Sailing Festival 2009 has a Home Port

For the first time in its 16-year history, yachts taking part in the annual Grenada Sailing Festival will all be able to dock at a "Home Port" — the brand new Port Louis Marina by Camper & Nicholson's Marinas.

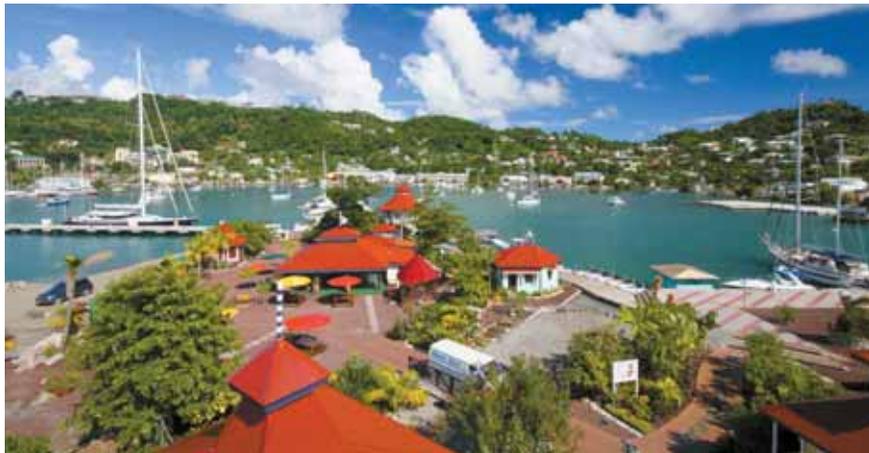
Clyde Rawls, General Manager C&N Port Louis Marina, says, "We are extremely pleased to have become presentation partners of this important event, and to be providing a central base for participating yachts. Steadily over the years the Grenada Sailing Festival has put the island back onto the map of international sailing. We believe that a partnership with Camper & Nicholson's, a name linked with quality and prestige, will result in even greater numbers of yachts heading for and staying in Grenada. We look forward to welcoming owners, skippers and crews to Port Louis in January and providing a taste of what is to come in the future."

Danny Donelan, Sales and Marketing Co-ordinator for

ning an Advanced Race Management Seminar on January 28th at True Blue Bay Resort. The Seminar is open to race officers and competitive sailors from the region's sailing associations. Selected participants may also have the opportunity to join the Festival Race Committee as observers.

The ever-popular After-Race Party scene will also have a new character, thanks to the work of a planning group made up of event organisers and sponsors. Headed by Brian Sylvester, Bryden & Minors' brand manager for Mount Gay, with key members Brenda Baptiste of Colombian Emeralds, Digicel's Raelene Lazarus and Joslyn Smith of Heineken, expertise and advice is being pooled from many sources to make 2009 a fun Festival to remember. New plans include a "Pirates of Calivigny" Party at the new Le Phare Bleu Marina and a return to the ever-popular Aquarium beachside restaurant for a "Taste of Spice" night. Prize presentations will have extra sparkle with Moët & Chandon champagne.

The event for 2009 will be run with presentation partners Port Louis and Camper & Nicholson's, in association with the Grenada Board of Tourism. The organisers also thank True Blue Bay and Work Boat Regatta sponsor Digicel, plus Captains' Club Members for 2009:



Welcome home! Port Louis Marina will be the Grenada Sailing Festival's new 'home port'

C&N Port Louis says, "This is a particularly exciting time for Camper & Nicholson's, the Grenada Sailing Festival and Grenada. The island's image in the international yachting scene is changing and, with the new initiative of the Southern Caribbean Regatta Circuit, there will be even more interest in staying in this region. Being a key player in the Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival and encouraging more sailors to experience the great friendliness and great facilities that are on offer is a very big part of our commitment to making Grenada a premier international sailing destination."

The Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival & Digicel Work Boat Regatta will run from January 30th to February 3rd. There are some changes planned in the schedule, including for the first time a full-fleet Pursuit Race. 2009 will also be the first year that there will be racing classes under both CSA and IRC Rules. Hank Stuart, Principal Race Officer for the 2009 event, will be run-

British Airways, Colombian Emeralds, Mount Gay Rum, Heineken, North South Wines, ScotiaBank and United Insurance; and Crew Club Members: Budget Marine, Boval, Island Dreams Yacht Services, TSL Grenada Ltd., 809 Design and COT Media group. Thanks also go to new 2009 party venues Le Phare Bleu and the Aquarium, plus long-term supporters Coca Cola, Glenelg Spring Water, Deyna's and Art Fabrik.

For more information visit www.grenadasailingfestival.com, designed and managed by TSL Grenada Ltd., the official Internet Partner of the Festival.

Affordable 36th International Rolex Regatta, USVI

The 2009 International Rolex Regatta, to be hosted by the St. Thomas Yacht Club, March 27th through 29th, is lowering entry fees by 25 percent and offering IRC boats free dockage at two island marinas.

"There are plenty of great reasons to sail in the International Rolex Regatta," says Event Co-Director John Sweeney.

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"With the economy as it is, providing logistical aid for visiting yachts and making the event more affordable this year feels like the right move." The 25-percent cut equates to a US\$100 discount for boats sailing IRC, CSA and One-Design, and US\$50 off for beach cats.

Organizers are standing by to provide logistical assistance for boats coming to the regatta. "If you plan to stay on a mooring near the Club, we've got one with your name on it," said Sweeney, emphasizing the user-friendly aspect of the regatta. "If you want to drop your hook at nearby Christmas Cove, we provide free launch service. If you prefer to be on a full-service dock, American Yacht Harbor (www.igy-american-yachtharbor.com) and Yacht Haven Grande (www.yachthavengrande.com) are offering free dockage and space for containers on a first-come, first-serve basis. Interested yachts must register and make a request to regatta directors."

Shoreside parties are a signature of the regatta, and every night they have colorful live entertainment and low-cost options for dinner. The regatta remains a part of the US-IRC Gulf Stream Series, which last year attracted campaigns from the United States and Europe when it became the first Caribbean regatta to offer IRC racing classes.

The International Rolex Regatta is followed by the BVI Spring Regatta and Sailing Festival, which is held "right next door," and links the two events to make Virgin Islands Race Week (VIRW), now in its second year. It offers eight days of racing in a ten-day period.

Looking to fit the International Rolex Regatta into busy schedules are Roger Sturgeon's *SIP65 Rosebud* and Jim Mitchell's *R/P 52 Vincitore*, when returning is Sam Fleet, to defend the 2008 title he won aboard *Team Aquarius*. Fleet won the inaugural IRC 1 class with his *Swan 601*, winning lodging at the Marriott Frenchman's Reef hotel for the 2009 event. "We will definitely be returning, however it may be in a different boat," said Fleet. "We want to charter a grand prix boat for the 2009 Florida and Caribbean season, and race in IRC and CSA regattas throughout the region. The season will serve as an excellent training ground for the 2010 Audi MedCup."

For more information visit www.rolexcupregatta.com.

The BVI Spring Thing!

Linda Phillips reports: The 2009 BVI Spring Regatta and Sailing Festival will take place from March 30th through April 5th.

The BVI Sailing Festival will commence on Monday, March 30th with a Welcome Party at Peg Leg's, Nanny Cay Marina, Tortola. The next day, the Bitter End Cup race will sail from Nanny Cay Marina to the Bitter End Yacht Club on Virgin Gorda. There, the Nations Cup race will be held on April 1st. On the 2nd, the Nanny Cay Cup will take participants back to Nanny Cay.

Also on April 2nd is Registration for the BVI Spring Regatta and Mount Gay Party. The Festival Village will be open daily until midnight.

BVI Spring Regatta's three racing days, April 3rd, 4th and 5th will each see racing on three courses in Drake Channel. Awards will be given on the 5th.

For more information visit www.bvispringregatta.org.

Nanny Cay Marina Selected as Host Port for ARC Europe

Alastair Abreghart reports: ARC Europe 2009 will start in early May from Nanny Cay Marina, Tortola, British Virgin Islands, with a second start from St. Augustine, Florida. The two fleets meet up at Bermuda before crossing the Atlantic to the Azores Archipelago, finishing at Lagos, Portugal.

In November 2008, World Cruising Club selected Nanny Cay Resort & Marina in Tortola as the Caribbean host port for the start of ARC Europe 2009, the annual eastbound transatlantic cruising rally, bringing the rally to the British Virgin Islands for the first time.

Miles Sutherland-Pilch, general manager of Nanny Cay said: "We're very pleased to be part of this well-established and popular event. The fact that we are attracting such high quality events shows we are creating a world-class marina here in the BVI. We're extremely well-placed to ensure that ARC Europe participants are fully prepared and rested before their Atlantic crossing back to Europe. We look forward to welcoming them here in May."

WCC Director Andrew Bishop commented on the move to Nanny Cay Marina: "We are delighted that ARC Europe 2009 will start from Nanny Cay Marina. Many skippers will have spent the winter months cruising the Caribbean, and they will welcome the opportunity to haul out and thoroughly prepare their yachts using the excellent facilities available at Nanny Cay. The marina's location in one of the region's top cruising areas will be a great incentive for yachts to explore the northern Caribbean before crossing to Europe."

ARC Europe is open to cruising monohulls with a minimum length of 27 feet (8.23 metres) and cruising multihulls from 27 to 60 feet (8.23 to 18.29 metres) LOA. The Rally is open solely to cruising yachts, so they may motor in calm periods; results are calculated for each leg and fun prizes awarded.

For more information on ARC Europe 2009 visit www.worldcruising.com/arceurope.

FISHING LINES

Trinidadian Teen Breaks World Fishing Record

Steven Valdez reports: Fifteen-year-old Trinidadian Sean Mendonca now holds the International Game Fishing Association (IGFA) male junior Atlantic Blue Marlin World Record. This breaking news from the IGFA



puts the young Trinidadian in the record books and Trinidad & Tobago on the world map for Blue Marlin fishing. The record 890-pound fish was caught in the 28th Trinidad & Tobago Game Fishing Association (TTGFA) "Marlin Madness" Tournament in Tobago in April 2008.

At the recently concluded TTGFA Annual General Meeting held at the Trinidad & Tobago Yacht Club, Sean was presented with the official IGFA world record certificate by the TTGFA's President, Chris Mouttet, who is also an IGFA representative along with Malcolm Boyack. Also on hand was TTGFA management committee member and owner of Paul Roods, Paul Wittet, who made a special presentation of a personalized hand-made 80-pound rod to Sean, in the hope that he may break another record in this year's "Marlin Madness" tournament carded for April 29th, 30th and May 2nd.

Who Will Break the Caribbean Blue Marlin Record?

Audrey Quiniou reports: The 18th International Billfish Tournament in Martinique ended on November 1st, 2008 after a successful run which began on October 29th. The Port Plaisance marina in Le Marin, which lies on the southeast coast of the island, was host again to the tournament. Nobody broke the record set by Reynald Pasquier of Guadeloupe, who landed a 767.5-pound fish in 2003, which smashed the previous record, held by Murray Fourellier of Trinidad, by more than 110 pounds.

In 2008, with Reynald fishing for the fifth year, the tournament saw a return to the 300-pound range. On the first day, Yonna Merlini on *Black Pearl* of Martinique landed the first marlin at 305 pounds. A 302-pounder was landed by Ruth Liney on Day 3 on *Rum N Coke* of Antigua.

Pair a Dice from Trinidad was champion boat with 3,100 points. In second place were *Big Swordfish* and *Why Not*, both from Martinique with 1800 points each. Champion angler was Patrick Audel on *Why Not* with 1700 points. In second place was Ryan Edghill of Trinidad on *Pair A Dice* with 1500 points. Third was Ruth Liney with 1143.6 points. Top female anglers were Ruth Liney and Yonna Merlini. Junior champion angler was Jean-Baptiste Renoir on *Big Swordfish*.

A total of 30 blue marlin, two sailfish and four spearfish were released. Among the landed species were two yellowfin tuna of 102.5 and 87.8 pounds respectively, a dorado of 39.6 pounds, the two blue marlin, and a 20-pound wahoo. Boats came from Martinique, Trinidad, Tobago, Grenada, Antigua, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent.

The Martinique Billfish Association has extended thanks to all participants, well-wishers and sponsors who worked towards making the 2008 event a success, and is looking forward to an even better event in 2009.

Historic 40th Anniversary Spice Island Billfish Tournament

Grenada's 40th Anniversary of the Spice Island Billfish Grand Slam Tournament is scheduled for January 20th to 23rd, and organizers say, "It is going to be our best event ever! Come and try to beat Adrien Johnson's 669-pound record Blue Marlin and win EC\$30,000!"

Other prizes will include rods and reels, Yeti coolers, and Costa del Mar eyewear. Eighty-pound line will be allowed. Duty-free fuel for registered boats will be available at the Grenada Yacht Club.

SIBT is the first round of the 2009 Southern Caribbean Billfish Circuit, and is a qualifier for the IGFA Offshore World Championship. The winner of SIBT 2009 will be invited to compete in the Tournament of Champions in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico in 2010.

Registration is on Monday, January 19th at Grenada Yacht Club, St. George's, Grenada. There will be three days of fishing, January 20th, 21st and 23rd, with Layday fun and food at GYC on the 22nd.

The Spice Island Billfish Tournament is a modified release event where teams are encouraged to release the majority of the billfish they catch. Minimum weight for Blue Marlin is 400 pounds, and 60 pounds for White Marlin and Sailfish. At the end of the tournament the boat and angler with the most points are the winners. Emphasis as always is on fun, sportsmanship and good fishing.

Major sponsors are Port Louis Marina, Carib Beer and Island Water World.

E-mail wendypatw@yahoo.co.uk to request your copy of the full-colour souvenir brochure. Registration and full rules are available at www.sibtgrenada.com.

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CHRIS DOONE

CLEAN SWEET WAKE

by Susan Payetta

On a roll. Traditional boatbuilding in the Grenadines is having a revival. Here Beauty of Petite Martinique touches the water for the first time

The beauty of the small Grenadine island of Petite Martinique is innovation itself.

Launched on Sunday, November 30th, the last official day of the 2008 hurricane season, *Beauty of Petite Martinique* was built by Baldwin "Balo" DeRoche for Jeff Stevens, owner and captain of the 65-foot Windward schooner *Jambalaya*, built by Alwyn Enoe & Sons at Windward, Carriacou. The new 48-foot six-inch wooden sloop is similar in design to the 40-foot sloop Balo built for Jeff last January, but before *Sauvy* was launched, her purpose and destiny changed. She was purchased by a prominent businessman to promote his new marina development in Grenada, presenting a well-timed opportunity for Stevens and DeRoche to make some innovative changes to the new vessel's design.

"She's going to be a green boat," says Jeff, who is wearing a shirt the same shade of blue as the top stripe on *Beauty's* two-toned blue hull. "Not green the colour, it's bad luck to paint a boat green," he explains with reverence. "We're using green technology."

Prior to the launching, speculation regarding the naming of *Jambalaya's* little sister bristled — *Crawfish Pie? Filé Gumbo?* — little more than dead reckoning since the vessel's name is always kept secret, not to be revealed until the launching. Even the Bishop had to wait until her name was revealed before he could perform the blessing. The name came as no surprise to those who saw her during the final phase of construction as they all agreed: she's a real beauty!

Ceremonial customs vary but the launching is often enacted as either a christening, with godparents playing the role of sponsor, or the less common version where the vessel is "wedded" to the sea, sponsored by bridesmaids, both customs made popular by the French in the 18th and 19th century. It is often a unique mixture of

various religious beliefs and local customs, but always deeply rooted in maritime superstitions, some dating back to ancient times.

On the eve of the launch, the "parents' plate" was shared in the candle-lit cabin to pay respect to "those who came before us". The solemn ceremony was held to honour the ancestors of today's guild of boatbuilders who are working hard to keep the skill alive on this small island. Before the arrival of the labour force who were to provide the "Norwegian steam" necessary to launch the vessel, the Roman Catholic Bishop performed the blessing using holy water while ladies from the church sang psalms. Balo's son Gilbert DeRoche accepted the honour of becoming *Beauty's* godfather, with a promise to raise her if she sinks, and *Beauty's* godmother, Kristina Smith, performed "the dancing of the cake", accompanied by a traditional string band, a local custom often seen preceding wedding ceremonies on Carriacou and PM.

Beauty may be the first of her kind, a traditional wooden sloop built in the Windward Islands with a high-efficiency electric motor, providing clean, quiet, self-sufficient power while eliminating dependency upon fossil fuels and the stench and noise of a diesel engine. The Thoosa 1300 is a 72-volt electric inboard drive system (13 kW continuous power replaces a 25 to 40 horsepower combustion engine. For technical specifications visit www.asmmarine.com). Recharging of the batteries is made possible by the ability of the sloop to maintain a consistent speed under sail for a minimum period of time. By letting the propeller turn while under sail, the batteries are charged by the forces of nature. To gain sufficient charge the boat should do a minimum of five knots, a prerequisite practically guaranteed by the persistent tradewinds in the Grenadines and Balo's reputation for building fast boats.

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—Continued from previous page

While the cost of the electric engine is comparable to that of a Yanmar diesel engine, the added expense of the batteries is an investment sure to pay itself back quickly given the current price of fuel in today's volatile energy market. The lighter weight of the electric engine is compensated for by the additional weight of the batteries and the challenge of storage space for the bank of batteries is easily overcome



Left: Cheers! Launching customs vary, but a celebratory beverage is always in order. Note the snubbing post to control the cradle's rate of descent

Right: With a little help from the cargo vessel Adelaide, and an honorary crew aboard, Beauty meets the Caribbean Sea

on the tree stump holding the check line, it uprooted. While a few men shored up the stopper, a large group of strong men were barely able to hold her back. Straining to control the speed while they eased the check-line out, she lurched forward like a mad palomino and her bow stuck firmly into the sand surrounded by shallow water where the stern just met the shoreline. With 5,000 pounds of lead ballast in the attached keel and the added resistance of the cradle dragging sand, they threw a line out to the *Adelaide* and the big cargo vessel tugged the sloop and cradle until she floated free. Balo is confident that the rollers will work better next time if they can convince a few more men to get wet, placing planks under the rollers as they are moved forward during the final stage of the launching process. Balo has learned another valuable lesson in the trials and errors of boat launching and he says the rollers will be left on the beach for all to use.

While many Caribbean islands struggle to meet the challenge of economic stimulation and employment for skilled workers, Petite Martinique is ahead of her time. Construction of the two sloops launched less than a year apart has already contributed directly to the local economy, with the possibility of a new schooner being



SUSAN PAETTA ©

during the design stage. By placing the batteries in a box secured to the keel they can be repositioned forward or aft, with their weight adding ballast for optimal performance while providing the 72 volts of power required to operate the engine.

The spar is recycled, salvaged from the schooner *Moonshine*, which was demolished by Hurricane Ivan in 2004. The mammoth mast is hollow, made of two-inch-thick laminated Sitka spruce and is a thing of beauty in itself, very lightweight and perfectly proportioned for the sloop, which will be gunter rigged.

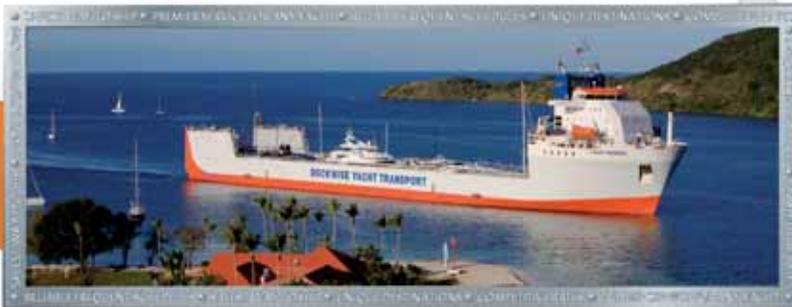
Even the launching was innovative, rolling the vessel into the water while still in her cradle, a kinder, gentler way to ease the vessel into the sea and less risky than cutting down supports. The cutting down is tricky and must be well-timed. It can pose a hazard if the vessel comes down on her side too fast, harming the most vulnerable part of the hull where the impact is likely to be greatest. By keeping the hull upright in the cradle until afloat, damage can be avoided.

They rolled the cradle using large steel pipes salvaged from the defunct desalination plant where they were scrapped and left to rust. It was looking like it could be the fastest launch in the history of boatbuilding in the West Indies, generating speculation that if the speed of *Beauty's* launching is any indication of her speed over water, "she gone be a fass boat!" There was very little time between the first few pulls on the line running out to an anchor in the bay, and such a great strain

commissioned — a serious inquiry, and a direct result of the recent activity. It could prove to kick-start another resurgence of local boatbuilding the way Linton Rigg's commissioning of *Mermiad of Carriacou* did. After establishing the Carriacou Regatta in 1965, Rigg partnered with master shipwright and winner of the first three regattas, Zepherine McLaren, to build *Mermiad*, challenging local working decked sloops to race against her. Douglas Pyle chronicled what he thought was a dying art in 1981, when he published *Clean, Sweet Wind*, visiting the same islands and families whose descendants have somehow managed to keep the tradition alive with little outside assistance. Whereas previous governments have failed to take advantage of the opportunity presented to them, perhaps the newly elected government of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique will see fit to support this industry in a way that would enable it to thrive in these tough economic times. A few tools and some much-needed shelter would be a welcome start. Local expertise is readily available.

With an innovative approach to sustainable tourism, *Beauty of Petite Martinique* will provide peace of mind for charter guests wanting a guilt-free holiday — the chance to retrace Douglas Pyle's journey through the Windward Islands while leaving nothing behind but their own "clean, sweet wake". International guests from the jet-set with a less-than-pristine conscience may offset their carbon footprint by planting a coconut tree on a small island or cay of their choice.

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Some Useful Weather Information Sources

Atlantic Tropical Weather Discussion
www.nhc.noaa.gov/text/MIATWDAT.shtml

Atlantic Tropical Weather Outlook
www.nhc.noaa.gov/text/MIATWDAT.shtml

Caribbean Weather Information
<http://caribwx.mwxc.com/marine.html>

Jeff Masters/Weather Underground
www.wunderground.com/blog/JeffMasters

Local Forecasts

- www.wunderground.com/cgi-bin/findweather/getForecast?query=piarco
- www.weather.com/outlook/travel/businesstraveler/tenday/TDXX0002?from=36hr_fcst10DayLink_business

NB These examples are for Trinidad, the former is for Piarco and the latter for Port of Spain (although neither is very good for cruisers in Chaguaramas). It's easy to get local forecasts for other islands on these websites.

Offshore Waters Forecast for the Caribbean Sea
www.nhc.noaa.gov/text/MIAOFFNT3.shtml?

Offshore Waters Forecast for the Tropical North Atlantic
www.nhc.noaa.gov/text/MIAOFFNT3.shtml?

Virtual Buoy from Buoyweather

<http://Buoyweather.com> — enter a virtual buoy location anywhere you want. Buoyweather uses the GFS model; it simply reports what GFS is predicting for your chosen location. For a small fee you can have daily e-mails (either text or graphic format, your choice).

WindGURU

<http://windguru.cz/int/index.php?sc=59> (has some pre-set virtual buoys — faster than Buoyweather, also GFS, but you can't set your own buoy)

Other weather tidbits:

www.srh.noaa.gov/srh/jetstream/
www.nhc.noaa.gov/marinersguide.pdf
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weather_forecasts

Thanks to Clayton and Fiona Lewis of the yacht Argo for this information.

General Net Procedures

Nets are run by the Net Controller (NC). He or she will usually begin with some sort of preamble, identifying himself, usually stating the objectives of the net, perhaps giving some emergency information, perhaps giving information of general interest (such as a weather forecast), and ending with a call for traffic. This is your signal to call in with your boat name or ham call sign. The NC will recognize you and perhaps several others, forming a call list. He will then call you in one at a time, giving each an opportunity to speak with him one-on-one — which everyone else will hear, of course.

You can request to call another station for a brief conversation on the net frequency. If you wish to speak to that station at length you should ask to take that station to another frequency (referred to as a "QSY"). When you are finished with your contact with the NC, you sign off with your boat name and your status ("standing by" or "shutting down"). The NC will then recognize the next boat, and so on. If you need to re-enter the net you can call "re-entry" anytime the NC is calling for new traffic. This should be used judiciously.

If you have information that someone is requesting, you may insert the word "info" at an appropriate break in the conversation. If the NC does not have the information he will usually ask if anyone does have it, and that is your entry.

If you hear a station that you wish to speak to, insert the word "contact" and the NC will call you in at the first logical break.

Insertion of the word "break" infers a higher degree of urgency, which the NC will try to recognize. The use of the double break ("break, break") implies an emergency situation, which requires immediate attention. All of these "insertions" tend to disturb the natural flow of the net and should be used with care.

The NC will usually close the net officially at some specified time or after there are no more responses to calls for traffic.



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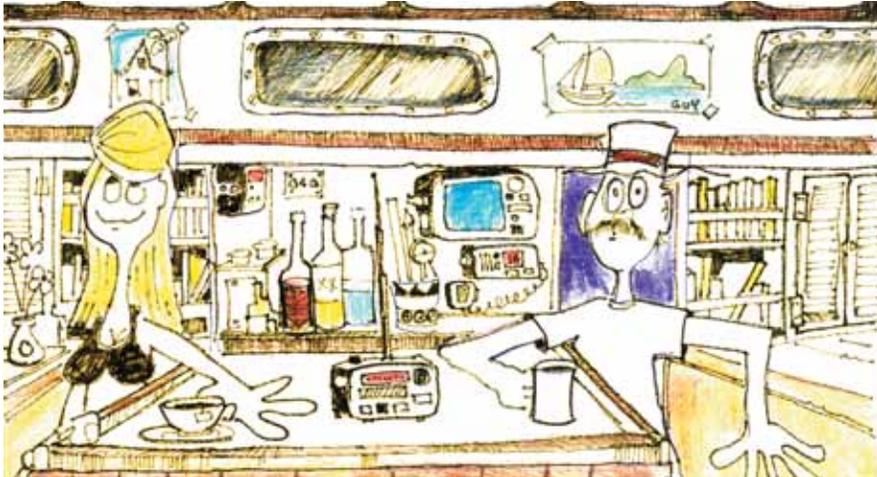
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SELECTED CARIBBEAN SHORTWAVE WEATHER REPORTS

UTC	AST	STATION & REPORT DESCRIPTION	FREQ	TYPE	MODE
0600	0200	NMG Broadcast	B	Wefax*	USB
0930	0530	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
1030	0630	Trinidad Emergency Net 9Z4CP (Eric)	3855	Voice	LSB/ham
1030	0630	Carib. Emergency & Weather Net	3815	Voice	LSB/ham
1100	0700	Caribbean Weather (Chris)	8137	Voice	USB (Note 2)
1100	0700	Caribbean Maritime Mobile Net	7250	Voice	LSB/ham (Note 3)
1130	0730	KP2G Caribbean Weather Net (George)	7086	Voice	LSB/ham (Note 1)
1200	0800	NMG Broadcast	B	Wefax*	USB
1230	0830	Caribbean Weather (Chris)	8104	Voice	USB (Note 2)
1300	0900	Caribbean Sea (WLO)	C	Voice	USB
1330	0930	Caribbean Weather (Chris)	12350	Voice	USB (Note 2)
1530	1130	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
1800	1400	Caribbean Sea (WLO)	C	Voice	USB
1800	1400	NMG Broadcast	B	Wefax*	USB
2000	1600	Southbound II (Herb)	12359	Voice	USB
2030	1630	Carib. Cocktail & Weather Net (George)	7086	Voice	LSB/ham
2130	1730	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB
2235	1835	Caribbean Emergency & Weather Net	3815	Voice	LSB/ham
0000	2000	Caribbean Sea (WLO)	C	Voice	USB
0000	2000	NMG Broadcast	B	Wefax*	USB
0330	2330	Offshore Forecast	A	Voice	USB

* Since November 3, 2008 several radiofax charts produced by the National Hurricane Center which are broadcast from New Orleans are based on information from different model run times. A 36-hour wind/wave chart has been added to the New Orleans broadcast. For full details visit www.nhc.noaa.gov/radiofax_transmission_charges.shtml

Frequencies (in kHz):

- A) NMN, Chesapeake, 4426, 6501, 8764, 13089, 17314.
Caribbean Sea approximately 25 minutes later.
NMG, New Orleans, 4316, 8502, 12788.
Caribbean Sea approximately 25 minutes later.
- B) 4316, 8502, 12788, 17144.5
- C) 4369, 8788, 13110, 17362, 22804. Gulf of Mexico, Southwest North Atlantic, then Caribbean Sea

- Note 1:** An in-depth voice report followed by faxes and SSTV, except Sundays.
Note 2: Unless severe weather threatens, this net is not conducted on Sundays. When there are active Tropical systems in the Atlantic, Caribbean Weather (Chris) runs a Net at 2300 UTC / 1900 AST, on 8137, Voice, USB. For complete schedule and changes visit www.caribwx.com/ssb.html
Note 3: George comes on approximately 0710 with a weather synopsis, then moves to 7086 and at 0730 gives the complete Caribbean forecast including rebroadcasting WEFX.

- There are also a Bahamas Weather Net at 0700 EST on 4003, and a Puerto Rico/VI Weather Net at 1110 and 2310 UTC on 3930LSB.
- WWV has World Marine Storm Warnings (Voice) at 8 minutes after each hour, and Solar Flux information at 18 minutes after each hour on 2500, 5000, 10000, 15000, and 20000 AM.
- During hurricane activity, information can be found continuously on the Hurricane Watch Net on 14325 USB/ham.
- Anyone, licensed or not, may legally operate on HAM frequencies in the event of a life-threatening emergency.

SELECTED CRUISERS' VHF NETS

St. Martin/Maarten	0730	VHF 14	Monday-Saturday
English Harbour	0900	VHF 68/06	Daily
Grenada	0730	VHF 68	Monday-Saturday
Chaguaramas	0800	VHF 68	Monday-Sunday
Porlamar	0800	VHF 72	Monday-Saturday
Puerto La Cruz	0745	VHF 72	Monday-Saturday

Thanks to William Mills of Toucan I, Teri Rothbauer (and the Ghost) of FREE, Dave Richardson of Overstreet, Bill Campbell of Alcheringa II, and the Pompas of Second Millennium for information, which was correct to the best of our knowledge as this issue of Compass went to press.

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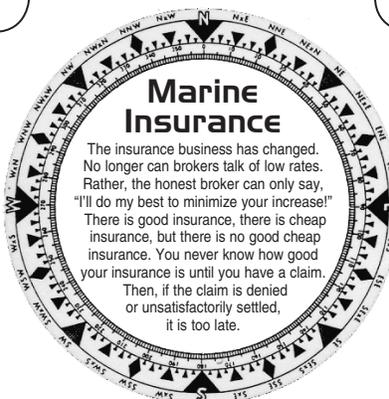
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DESTINATIONS

A pelican and his mate bobbed serenely on the water off our port bow. My husband, Chris, and I were aboard *Che'lu*, our ten-year-old, 36-foot Trawlercat, anchored off Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands, in December 2007. Raising the anchor spooked the big birds and they took off, their feet pushing at the water to help lift off, leaving three little rings where they touched. They circled in a big arc, then, like synchronized divers, plummeted into the water side by side, emerging, shaking their feathers, and resuming their leisurely floating.

was wood and was destroyed by fire. Its replacement was enlarged in 1833, partially destroyed by Hurricane Marilyn in 1995 and was restored. I was surprised to see that the floor is sand. It is believed that this is derived from a practice during the Spanish Inquisition, during which time Judaism was practiced secretly and the sand helped muffle the sound of prayer and song. The woman in the gift shop was the Rabbi's wife. It turns out they are the neighbors of our friends, the Linds, who we know from Guam! In the course of conversation, she invited Chris to play golf with her hus-

band. They continued around the cove, dispensing their holiday cheer. A guy on a windsurfer saw "Guam" on the back of our boat and hollered out, "Hafa adai!" I asked him how he knew that and he said he had spent several years in Guam, Rota and Saipan. We invited him back for a beer, but he never showed up. Later, I dinged over to *Cloud 9*, which had a huge Texas flag flying, and invited Jason and Stephanie to dinner. He's from Lubbock and she's from Canada. They both live and work on St. John.

The next day we took the dinghy across the channel to St. Thomas to All Points Marine, where they have the stuff we need to clean our turbo chargers. Then we went to Budget Marine but, before going in, walked up the road to see what was around. There was a big Food Store (catchy name!), so we went in to see what they had — lots! Nice store: big, clean and well-stocked. Budget Marine didn't have an anchor ball in stock, but they ordered one for us from their St. Maarten store. When we mentioned that we had gotten one there earlier, but it somehow came untied and blew away, the salesclerk offered Chris a book on tying knots to go with it!

Then we returned to Christmas Cove for the night. A rainbow graced the cove as we approached. There were several showers in Christmas Cove the following morning, and we saw a single, then later a double, rainbow.

We took a tour by dinghy, checking out various bays and anchorages we hadn't been to yet, assessing which we might like to come back to. Then we crossed to Redhook to get internet (for bill paying), but couldn't get connected, so we checked out Great Bay (couldn't get connected there either), then decided to call it a day and went back to Christmas Cove for the remainder of the afternoon and overnight. A trimaran named *Glory*, white with red trim, came into the anchorage — single-handed by a man who reveled in posing and displaying himself in all his "glory".

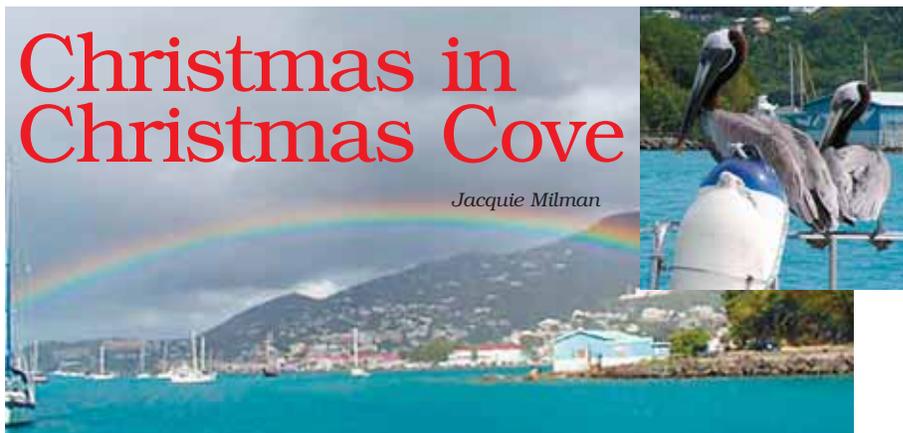
The next morning we went to Crown Bay marina to pick up the anchor windlass part we had ordered — they had e-mailed us that it had arrived. There is no anchorage there, so we went to Honeymoon Bay off Water Island, a quick dinghy ride to the place. The last time we were there, there were a lot of boats in Honeymoon Bay. Today it was totally empty except for one lone sailboat — seemingly weird. Just as we dropped the anchor, a large inflatable came up to us. The driver said they were filming a movie there and we'd have to move. Filming was to begin at noon and it was only 10:00am, so when we explained we were only going to be about 30 minutes, he said it was okay to stay. "If anyone asks, tell them you've cleared it with Rick!" The movie, starring Brad Pitt, was "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button".

The anchor windlass part that arrived was the wrong one! The marina will reorder. So we went to Benner Bay, and I did bill paying while Chris went to Budget Marine. The anchor ball hadn't arrived yet, so he came and got me and we went and shopped at the Food Store across the street. Benner Bay was very rolly, so as soon as we got everything stowed we decided it was another holiday and headed back to Christmas Cove.

Jacquie and Chris Milman and cruising the Caribbean and Bahamas aboard the yacht Che'lu.

Christmas in Christmas Cove

Jacquie Milman



We took the boat around to Benner Bay, where Budget Marine is located, but it was rolly so we returned to Charlotte Amalie. Chris had been hankering for pizza, so we went to Pizza Hut and got carry-out. We carried it home and set the table, lit candles, and feasted.

The next morning, TWO pelicans sat on the bow. I took a picture, then chased them away and cleaned the bow seat. Chris tied string from the flag to the rail so they can't land there anymore. When we got back from our errands, they were on top of the doghouse! The sound of the dinghy scared them off and they haven't returned (yet).

I received a lesson on manners in the Caribbean here in "American paradise". I needed a guarantor's seal on a document, so we went to Scotia Bank. I started off on the wrong foot though, by acting like a "foreigner" and directly stating my business. The woman straightened and stiffly, pointedly, said, "Good morning!" I apologized for forgetting my manners and wished her a good morning, but the damage had been done. She remained frosty and told me they would only do it for their customers.

We walked to the St. Thomas Synagogue for a visit. Founded in 1796, it is the oldest synagogue in continuous use under the American flag. The original building

Main photo: The Virgin Islands seem made for rainbows

Inset: 'The next morning, TWO pelicans sat on the bow...'

band. We hit it off and said that when we take the Linds out on *Che'lu* we'll have them come, too.

We thought it was appropriate to go to Christmas Cove on nearby St. James Island to spend Christmas Eve and Christmas. Once the anchor was down, we got out the snorkel gear and went snorkeling around Fish Cay, a small rocky island in the middle of the cove. There were a lot of starfish. There was also a baby barracuda and, when I grew chilled and returned to the boat, he followed me a little way. I kept an eye on him; he was small so wouldn't be really dangerous, but a bite could still hurt. However, he seemed satisfied that I was leaving and not going to bother him and turned away. On the way to the boat, I saw a small ray skimming along the bottom.

Christmas was a beautiful day in Christmas Cove, with over 30 boats anchored there. The occupants of a monohull in front of us, *Cloud 9*, came over in their dinghy bearing Christmas cookies; their dog, Ziggye,

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VISITING TRINIDAD'S PITCH LAKE

by Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal

This is a tale of a lake that cannot be sailed. Located in the village of La Brea on the southwestern peninsula of Trinidad is the Pitch Lake. To locals and visitors alike, the Pitch Lake at first glance is not very exciting or much of an attraction. Let's face it: it looks like a huge parking lot. Despite this it is a tourist attraction with approximately 20,000 persons visiting it annually. But why is the Pitch Lake so important? And what is a pitch lake?

Pitch or asphalt lakes are also referred to as tar pits or more correctly asphalt pits. They are formed when subterranean bitumen leaks to the surface and accumulates, forming a pit or lake of asphalt. The Pitch Lake at La Brea in Trinidad is one of four known worldwide. The others are those in McKittrick, California, the La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles and Lake Bermudez in Venezuela. You might notice that two out of the four lakes contain the word "La Brea." This is because *la brea* is Spanish for "the tar". So why is it also referred to as the "Pitch Lake"? This is simply because "pitch" is an old-fashioned term for tar.

At the mention of tar you would assume that walking in the lake would be impossible, but you are actually walking on the lake. As the tar hardens upon reaching the surface, it forms a skin that prevents the tar from sticking to one's shoes. As I mentioned before, although Pitch Lake looks like a harmless parking lot, it is advisable



Tour guides will show you where to walk — and where not to!

to get a guide. Parts of it are quite soft, especially near the centre, and a car can quickly sink into it.

The lake covers an area of 40 hectares, and if you were to slice the lake in half you would see that it is shaped like an inverted cone with a centre that is reported to be 75 metres deep. It can be thought of as a slow-motion black hole, which pulls things into itself. There are also underground channels or "veins" of pitch which stretch outward for several kilometres from the main lake.

But how did the Pitch Lake form? It is theorized that it was formed at the intersection of two faults that force oil from a deep deposit. At the surface, the lighter elements in the oil evaporate leaving behind the asphalt. This also contains petroleum due to the bacterial action on the asphalt at low pressures.

So, as the lake is made of fossil fuels, would it not make an excellent source of fuel, instead of being used for road construction? Well, this was attempted in 1820 by Governor Sir Ralph Woodford who used it to light a beacon in the tower of the Trinity Cathedral in Port of Spain, Trinidad. However, the strong smell proved unbearable and the idea was abandoned. The lake also emits gases and a strong smell of sulphur.

There is also folklore associated with the Pitch Lake by the Chaima Indians who believed that it was formed as a punishment by their winged god who caused the earth to open up and emit pitch that swallowed up the entire village. This was because during celebrations after victory over a rival tribe they cooked and ate the sacred hummingbirds that were believed to hold the spirits of their ancestors. The locals also claim that during the dry season, ospreys drop freshly caught fish on the lake's surface to cook.

Besides tar, lighter distillates are also visible on the surface of waterholes as well as a cream-coloured substance referred to as "mother". It is also believed that the rainwater that collects in nooks and crannies on the lake has healing powers. It is claimed to be good for arthritis and joint pain, among other ailments.

As for importance, these pits hold great archaeological significance: they are excellent localities to excavate bones of prehistoric animals that fell in and were unable to escape. There is a small museum which contains Amerindian artifacts found at the lake.

The asphalt is mined and exported for high-quality road construction, with mining taking place at the south and east rims of the lake. Since mining started in 1867, ten million tonnes have been mined. But this is not its only use, as it was immediately put to use caulking Sir Walter Raleigh's ship when he discovered it in 1595.

At present there is a visitor facility operated by the La Brea Pitch Lake Tour Guides Association. The facility opens daily from 9:00AM to 5:00PM and admission includes a guided tour. Admission rates are (approximately) US\$5 for adults and US\$2 for children from six to 12 years. Children under six years enter for free — and keep a good eye on them! Groups of 20 persons or more get a 20 percent discount. There are special rates for students and teachers of local schools.

Tour guides can be easily identified by their red T-shirts from Monday to Friday and by orange T-shirts on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays. However, one must be cautious for there are also unlicensed tour-guides that hang around the facility offering tours to visitors. But they are easily detected by their lack of uniform.

All in all, this large "parking lot" is quite useful and a visit makes a unique outing. So the moral of the story is: don't judge a book by its cover, especially when it comes to the works of Mother Nature.



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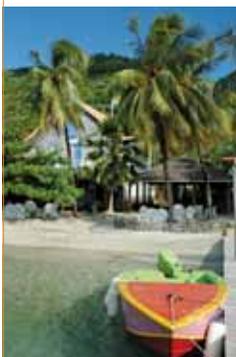
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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2009

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-Iolair 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. 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 Iolair charts. Fair tides!

January		20	0726	8	2340
DATE	TIME	21	0815	9	0000
1	1549	22	0906	10	0035 (full)
2	1631	23	0957	11	0124
3	1714	24	1046	12	0211
4	1800	25	1135	13	0258
5	1849	26	1221 (new)	14	0344
6	1943	27	1305	15	0431
7	2034	28	1348	16	0519
8	2148	29	1403	17	0609
9	2255	30	1513	18	0659
10	2359	31	1557	19	0750
11	0000 (full)	February		20	0840
12	0102	DATE	TIME	21	0929
13	0158	1	1644	22	1016
14	0249	2	1735	23	1102
15	0337	3	1831	24	1145
16	0442	4	1931	25	1228
17	0507	5	2035	26	1312 (new)
18	0552	6	2139	27	1356
19	0638	7	2241	28	1442

AS new arrivals sail into the Caribbean with a cruising kitty that might be "feeling the crunch", or sailors who once intended to blast through the Caribbean in a couple of months have now decided they want to spend a few laid-back years here, experienced Caribbean cruisers share some tips that can make anyone's stack of "freedom chips" go further while enhancing their enjoyment of the Caribbean.

For starters, many sailors from North America and Europe are accustomed to docking at a marina nightly. The Caribbean offers a wide and wonderful selection of marinas catering to virtually every requirement, taste and pocketbook, but seasoned sailors point out that in the Caribbean you can often anchor out, too — and usually for free.

Then they universally recommend "doing as the Romans do" — shopping local and eating local; it's more economical and more adventurous as well.

Here is a treasure trove of many more hints from old hands. Thanks to all the long-term Caribbean cruisers and former cruisers who shared their ideas and experience.

Cost-Efficient Cruising

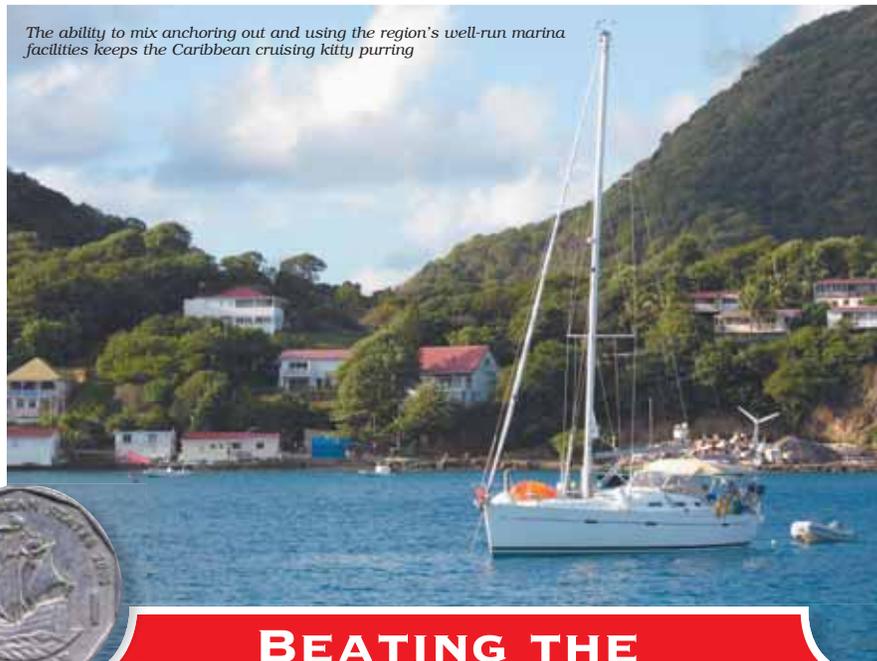
To trim the fuel bill, Ruth Lund of *Baraka* says, "Sail rather than motor — even short distances, especially if you have a boat design that sails in light winds and points high when the wind is on the nose." Pauline Dolinski, formerly of *Syrena*, elaborates: "Slow down. Leave early to sail to the next island or anchorage and drift along rather than turning on the engine as soon as the wind eases. Of course, this works better if you have a good sailing boat. (Power boaters need to figure their most efficient speed.) Or stay put! The next bay may be beautiful, but is it more beautiful than the one you are in? Each time you fire up the engine to move, think of that fuel as liquid money burning up."

And when it is time to fuel up, Tony Sanpere of *Cayenne III* notes: "St. Croix now has the cheapest fuel."

When planning your itinerary, Marcie Connelly-Lynn on *Nine of Cups* advises, "Frequent 'off the beaten path' places (e.g. Saba, Tobago, St. John) instead of tourist spots for better prices and warmer receptions, as well as a better look at the local culture." Phil Chapman on *Chaser II* says, "In my experience, the farther north you are the more expensive it is to live, moor or anchor."

—Continued on next page

The ability to mix anchoring out and using the region's well-run marina facilities keeps the Caribbean cruising kitty purring



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Trinidad is a good place to hang out for a while in hurricane season. Venezuela, although becoming more expensive in recent months, is still a place where you can eat, drink and get work done at a reasonable cost. Puerto La Cruz marinas are popular, and Porlamar in Margarita is good for duty-free shopping."

Mindful Maintenance

Ralph Trout of *Sea Cow* says: "To keep a bit more money in your pocket, learn to do most of your own work. One sure money-saver will be to take a course on outboard/small engine repair. Try to get a shop manual for everything. Of course, keep as much as possible as simple as possible. The fewer the whistles and bells, the less there is to break."

"Maintain everything on a written schedule. Keep the batteries filled with distilled water and all connections cleaned. Change the oil and filters by the hour-meter. Be ultimately organized and equipped for a quick and productive haul-out. Reef the sails as soon as you think of it, rather than re-sewing them. Having an efficient water-catcher will save a lot. Check your ground tackle regularly. Buy good chains and locks and keep them lubricated."

"A primary cruising realization is that there are few bargains in used gear. Buy once, wisely."

Ruth Lund adds: "Buy good quality filters – to clear fuel and save on engine problems, and to make tap water drinkable."

Eat Fresh, Eat Local

St. Thomas-based Barbara Gail Warden says her top kitty-stretching tip is: "Fishing! Eat for free! Eat more fish! Save a dollar, kill a fish! Troll a line everywhere you go and make a habit of leaving one over the side whenever you're on board at anchor. Everyone we know complained about how expensive the Bahamas were, but we spent two months eating fish and rice and hardly spent a cent. Also, we were lean and toned!"

Pauline Dolinski agrees: "Head out fishing whenever you can. If you don't have a freezer to keep leftover fish, try pickled fish – it keeps for a long time." (Moreover, Dr. Rajendra Pachuri, chair of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, said that people should have at least one meat-free day a week if they want to help tackle climate change. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization has estimated that meat production accounts for nearly a fifth of all global greenhouse emissions. Cows emit methane gas, which is 23 times more effective as a global warming agent than carbon dioxide.)

Angelika Gruener on *Angelos* says, "Always see what the locals buy at the market. Usually local veggies are much cheaper than imported food. Learn to deal with them. It is adventurous, fun, and part of Caribbean cruising." Pauline Dolinski notes, for example: "Breadfruit is inexpensive and plentiful, and makes great French fries, chips, cottage fries and other potato recipes, and can even be used in pancakes or desserts."

Devi Sharp on *Arctic Tern* concurs: "Eat local foods and shop in the fresh fruit and vegetable markets. If you eat the fruits and vegetables that locals eat, you will almost always find good variety at good prices."

When you see something that is new to you and you don't know how to use it, ask the vendor. It is a great icebreaker to give local folks the opportunity to share their knowledge with the foreign visitor. In the supermarkets you will pay dearly for brand names like Bounty, Charmin and Raisin Bran. Look for local alternatives to your old standby brands."

Melody Pompa of *Second Millennium* has this tip: "Buy products made in Trinidad or Barbados – they are often as good quality as anything imported from the States, the UK or Canada, and at a fraction of the cost. Try their tomato ketchup, mustard, jams and jellies, many canned veggies, paper goods, etcetera."

"Also check the small local grocery shops – you'll be amazed at what some of them stock. I know a small shop on Victoria Street in Hillsborough, Carriacou, where I find skinless boneless chicken breasts, Trinidad-produced pork chops and tenderloins, and cottage cheese. The proprietor will try to order anything you request and she doesn't inflate the prices. Patronize the local vegetable and fruit vendors but don't be afraid to say no if their prices are out of line – that means you'll have to shop around to know what good prices are."

"Be friendly with the local merchants and vendors. If a particular store does not have what you want, they will

often direct you to another place, even a competitor."

Melody's husband, John, adds some caveats: "Check expiration dates before buying. Especially in small 'Mom and Pop' stores, items can stay on the shelf for many years. And, unfortunately, product that has passed its expiration date in other lands has a way of finding itself down here to the Caribbean."

"If you see something that you will need in the future, buy it now! There is a very good chance that it will not be available when you need it (keeping expiration dates in mind, of course)."

"When shopping at a market, ask the price before



The wind is still free — so make the most of it!

buying and make sure you understand which currency is meant (e.g. 'dollars' can be EC dollars, US dollars or TT dollars). Also when shopping at the market, be aware that some, not all, have different prices for us 'foreigners' than for locals."

"Do not, repeat DO NOT buy lobster out-of-season, no matter what you are told (e.g. "that rule does not apply to us fishermen, just to stores and restaurants", etcetera). Big fines are involved!"

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—Continued from previous page

Ruth Lund advises: "Unless you are going on an ocean crossing, don't overdo the buying of tinned stuff, especially when anchored in a place where fresh food is available. Otherwise you'll end up throwing away dated and swelling tins or running the risk of food poisoning."

"Buy biscuits, snacks, cereals and flour that are packaged and sealed in small quantities — in the tropics they rapidly get soggy or 'weevily'. Sometimes smaller is better."

"Decant milk into glass bottles. In plastic, however hard one cleans with a bottle-brush, it goes off fairly quickly."

Many cruisers get into making their own bread, yogurt, and other basics, for quality as well as economy. St. Croix-based Mandy Thody tells us: "On many English-speaking islands you can buy yeast in small metal tins with a plastic lid; this keeps well. In the USVI you can buy it in caterer's pound packs, vastly cheaper than those silly sachets."

"The islands all have whole-milk powder for making yoghurt. It usually comes in large tins, but in some shops it's repackaged into unmarked plastic bags, so ask the shopkeeper. It's a good deal if you buy the largest size and keeps six months at least."

Marcie Connelly-Lynn adds: "Make up your own salad dressings, cake mixes, etcetera. Corinne Kanter's *KISS* cookbook is worth the investment, or just Google the internet for recipes."

Trinidad-based Shirley Hall elaborates: "Each off-the-boat meal should provide new recipes to prepare in your galley. Make your cruise a reinvention of yourself into a sailing gourmet who uses whatever the island has to offer, getting healthier by the day."

"Make it a private contest to prepare the best-tasting, most nutritious meals on the leanest budget. Try brown rice, whole-grain pasta, and all the various locally grown root vegetables, such as cassava, sweet potato, dasheen, eddoes, and tannia. Eat beans, beans, and more beans, every way you can cook them. Beans are great as they keep well, and eaten with brown rice create the perfect protein. Switch to a heart-good cooking oil like canola and use just a tablespoon to fry or sauté. Eat locally grown greens, especially spinach, dasheen bush, and pak choy in soups, sides, or salads for good sources of iron for healthy bones."

"Cook with fresh herbs such as thyme, sage, basil and chives. Most of these can be grown in small pots

in the cockpit. Season your meals with island chutneys that you have concocted from mangos, pomegranates, or tamarind. Snack on popcorn, roasted chickpeas, or pumpkin seeds you have prepared. As you mature to galley chef, look for other cruisers who might enjoy a potluck evening, swapping dishes and recipes."

"Try a breakfast of local fruit. Sample the local teas such as lemon grass rather than expensive coffee. The dried peel from an organically grown orange (never sprayed) makes an excellent tasty tea that lowers cholesterol. Cut out soda and instead get a good canteen or stylish water bottle. Money is well spent on an excellent water filter."

"Pack a lunch when you leave for a day's outing. The incredible views are still free. If you forget, buy a hand of bananas and get your daily quota of potassium."

"We all seem to be weight conscious, so try and weigh yourself weekly. Local markets have scales than can handle you. As you consume a good healthy diet in modest portions, you will slim down."

"After a usual week, try the new approach of cooking, carrying a lunch on your excursions, drinking water instead of sodas, and walking instead of taking taxis. Compare the weekly totals. Your pocket will still have money and you will still have great memories (maybe more memories if you cut out or lessen the grog!). The biggest money-saver from a healthy, self-cooked cruising season is the reduction in medicine and doctors' bills. Get healthy, and live to cruise longer!"

Economical Health Care

Melody Pompa says, "Price shop for prescription drugs. We buy everything in the islands — different manufacturer, same ingredients, no huge markup as seen in the States."

"The same goes for medical care, especially if you do not have medical insurance or your policy carries a

large deductible. My annual physical came to less than US\$375 and included a physical examination, full blood test, mammogram, Pap smear and ultrasound. Many of the doctors and dentists in the English-speaking islands have taken training at medical schools and facilities in the US, the UK or Canada, and are highly qualified. Having said that, like choosing a doctor at home, ask around for references before you book. (Contact the Caribbean Safety and Security Net via their website, www.safetyandsecuritynet.com, for an extensive list of doctors, dentists, specialists and veterinarians, recommended by cruisers.)



Catch of the day: red snapper. "Eat more fish! Troll a line everywhere you go and make a habit of leaving one over the side whenever you're on board at anchor"

Bust the Bar Bills

Phil Chapman advises: "To avoid dehydration in this climate you need to drink a lot, but alcohol is a no-no when it comes to dehydration. Although a cool beer might seem good, it will not rehydrate you as well as you might think. Water is the answer, though a little boring. This can be made more enjoyable by adding powdered juices to the water, Liveand and C-Light being a couple of makes that are really good."

—Continued on page 31

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—Continued from page 26

This way you can carry gallons of good-flavoured "juice" aboard with no weight or storage problems. Of course, once the heat of the day has passed, it's time to get out the rum and watch the sun go down!"

Pauline Dolinski says, "Don't be a wine snob. The French islands have *vin ordinaire* in big plastic bottles and some boxed wine is quite drinkable. At happy hour in the bar, order a glass of water as well as your



CHRIS DOVLE

See what the locals buy at the market. Ann Vanderhoof on Receta says, "Become a locavore! Buying island-grown fruits and vegetables in season definitely stretches the cruising kitty

drink and alternate between them. As an added plus, it will keep you sober."

Ralph Trout: "More than anything, cut down — or cut out — the booze. It has cost me a few outboard props that hit reefs that should have been visible. I've also lost a few shoulder bags in bars, not to mention literally thousands of dollars at 'money-saving' happy hours that lasted well into the night."

Shirley Hall concurs: "The main money-saver is to either imbibe alcohol only on the boat, or cut it out entirely. Alcohol is absolutely the biggest money waster. Inebriated, after you consume more food, buy more alcohol even after you're tanked, and break or lose more valuable items. Been there and done that! If you

do go out for a dose of the local rum, catch happy hour prices and fill up with water before you set foot into the dink. Prove me correct by keeping a weekly tally sheet of where your money went. Boat maintenance is *numero uno*, but drinks run a close second."

That's Entertainment

Marcie Connelly-Lynn: "To give the kitty a break when eating out, make it lunch at a place the locals frequent, instead of dinner at a tourist spot."

Pauline Dolinski: "Check out local school concerts, contests and other performances, both for the entertainment on stage and the chance to mingle with the local people. The community Christmas programs at the village of Ste. Anne in Martinique, for example, were fun to see. Community events, church programs, and other shows are often announced by posters or newspaper ads. (You do read the local paper occasionally, don't you?) Also watch for the arrival of cruise ships, as some places provide welcome dancing or musical entertainment for the disembarking passengers, which you, too, can enjoy from a nearby perch. Some hotels have evening entertainment that can be enjoyed from the bar for the price of a drink.

"Happy hour in the cockpit can be an inexpensive way to spend an evening. Ask everyone to bring their own drinks and some nibbles to share. If you don't have enough glasses, instead of buying disposable cups, have people bring their own glass or mug with them."

Chuck Cherry on *Cherry Bowl* admits: "Whether I had 1,000 or 10,000 dollars a month to spend, I'd run out by the end of the month. The real killer of budgets on my boat is entertainment. My suggestion is to take a hike. Generally speaking, you have a hard time spending money while hiking through the woods. From the Rincon and other waterfalls in Trinidad, to Mérida and the Grand Savanna in Venezuela, to the lost city near Cartagena, Colombia, to the volcano in Panama, to the cloud forests in Honduras, to the trail

around Lake Atitlan in Guatemala, hiking is cheap, healthy and will enhance your time in any country around here."

Shoreside Transport

Aside from hiking for fun, Shirley Hall says, "Save money by walking rather than taking taxis or buses. Always wear a hat. Splurge for great walking shoes — they will save your feet."

Mandy Thody notes: "Car rental is cheaper by far on St. Croix than on the other Virgins, from around US\$40 a day. There are also public Vitran buses at one dollar from Christiansted to Frederiksted, and the privately run dollar-bus taxis (which here are mini-vans, not the open Safari-style trucks with benches of St. Thomas).

Angelika Gruener says, "In Trinidad we normally use only the government bus. Although the privately run maxi-taxis to Port of Spain pass Chaguaramas nearly every ten minutes, they cost TT\$5 per person each way, which makes a round-trip for a cruiser couple TT\$20. In contrast, the government bus goes only once an hour, but it costs only TT\$2 per person — a TT\$8 round trip for two. For the difference of TT\$12 you can get one freshly made traditional 'bake' with an outstanding filling in the vegetable market's entry hall. This fills you up for the whole day, so you save the cost of lunch, too."

Talk is (or can be) Cheap

Phil Chapman has useful knowledge: "Where an internet connection is available, Skype is great, but when travelling through the islands the cost of mobile-phone calls is very expensive. Buying a local chip reduces the costs, but only in that island; one needs then to dump that chip and buy one in the next island to avoid roaming charges. Roaming charges can be unbelievably expensive. Those who have an Iridium sat phone will sometimes find it much cheaper to use that. An alternative is a GYMSim card. This is available for cruising people and all info can be found online at www.gymsim.com. It is a sim card that can be used in all countries in the world without roaming costs. You never need to buy a local sim card at each island stop-over, plus you always have the same phone number, which is convenient for friends and family."

More Money-Savers

Ruth Lund suggests: "Sew your own canvas and clothes and do simple sail repairs. A sewing machine on board will save you lots of boodle. Learn how to splice and whip rope."

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FORWARD THINKING

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—Continued from page 31

Ellen Sanpere on *Cayenne III* says, "One thing I found that saves money, provides a creative outlet and is just plain fun: I use MS Publisher on my laptop computer to design greeting cards, flyers, stationery, brochures, boat cards, invitations, announcements, etcetera.

"The biggest money-savers are boat cards and greeting cards. I purchased business card stock (perforated), regular card stock and 'invitation' envelopes at an office supply store, and I already had the computer, a good color printer, and software: Microsoft Publisher (it came with MS Office Suite) although there is other software available.

"I create greeting cards using my own photos or free clip art downloaded from the internet. MS Publisher offers many layout schemes and verses that I can use or adapt to my own tastes. Once the design is just right, I print the card on letter-sized card stock (it is heavier than copy paper but goes through a printer without jamming), fold into quarters, sign and send.

"When the greeting card shop in Christiansted, St. Croix, closed unexpectedly just before the June graduation/wedding/anniversary season, my panic lasted only as long as it took to set up the printer. This is the third year I've made our customized holiday greeting cards for a fraction of the cost (and twice the fun) of store-bought. No extra charge for having our name imprinted, and how many Chanukah or Christmas cards (I make both) have you seen with cayenne peppers on them?"

Pauline Dolinski advises: "Live elegantly with cloth napkins rather than paper. Make a different ring of shells or colored string for each of you to tie around your napkin to keep so you won't need a new one each meal. English country homes used to have a variety of silver napkin rings, and each person put their napkin back in the ring at the end of breakfast to reuse it at lunch. If it's good enough for the gentry, it's good enough for a cruiser."

If the captain needs "casual engine-room wear", the kids are growing out of their T-shirts before you know it, and the ship's bookshelf needs restocking, Mandy Thody has a hint: "Second-hand goods are in short supply on many islands, but St. John, USVI has a Women's Shelter shop in The Lumberyard complex at Cruz Bay. St. Thomas has the Animal Shelter shop at Bovoni, on the dollar-bus route, with lots of clothes, household stuff and a huge book section (open one weekday morning and part of Sunday). St. Croix has

the Animal Shelter shop behind Golden Rock Pueblo supermarket, with very cheap clothes and books, and household stuff galore (open Wednesday through Saturday, 9:00AM to 2:00PM. Also the Women's Coalition Shop, two blocks north of CostULess at Peter's Rest, mid-island, same but slightly better quality.



BARBARA JOHNSON

"Season your meals with island chutneys that you have concocted from mangos, pommecytheres, or tamarind"

"There is book-swapping at Turtles Deli, and Java Coffee on Strand Street, Frederiksted, and the bookshop in Gallows Bay near St. Croix Marine has a special arrangement where you can bring in good second-hand books and exchange them or get credit for new ones." There are book-swaps also in many other islands; ask around.

And Tony Sanpere has these words of wisdom: "If grounded in Tobago Cays, don't let 'help' help you before setting the price."

Funds of Information

Phil Chapman points to the internet: "Local knowledge is the key to most places, so when you get an opportunity Google the country or island concerned, and use key words like 'cruiser', 'sailing' or maybe a boat name that you know to have done some local traveling. If all else fails, Google 'chaser2!'"

Angelika Gruener emphasizes social networking: "Don't be shy. Always greet your neighbours, introduce yourself, and come aboard other boats for small talk. You can find out where to go out for a good meal, which car rental is the best, maybe get an answer about which upholsterer does the best work. Always talk to other cruisers and discuss your problems with them. Don't expect they will do the work for you, but experienced cruisers have more ideas to solve problems than you'll ever think of. Even we 'old hands' always talk to each other about solving our problems. Things in the Caribbean change quickly, therefore information is everything. We are all in the same boat, and we depend on each other. Remember: having nice conversations will save you thousands of dollars."

Ralph Trout has a reminder: "Life in the islands has become more costly for the local population, too, especially those on a limited budget. Every cruising kitty saving tip is taking money from the islands' economy. Cruisers are expected to spend — I think that's why they let us in. If we scrimp too much, we could increase an economic depression that starts a downward spiral of fewer jobs, fewer services, less tourism, more crime, more bad stories on the Net..." Therefore, it's important to not become a miser, while spending wisely. Meloyde Pompa says, "Although it probably won't save you any money, we've found it helpful to patronize the local boat boys. Many of them are supporting families and our purchases give them the opportunity to make an HONEST living."

Pauline Dolinski adds: "Don't let economizing make you miss those 'big deal' places. Go ahead and stay overnight at the hotel in Trinidad and watch the turtles lay their eggs. Not all expensive activities are wasteful; some will be your most treasured memories. Yes, it is easy to spend too much money when friends suggest going to the movies, stopping for a drink, eating out, or going touring. But if you never take part in these activities, you may as well stay home. Friends are what cruising is all about."

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For Maximum Cruising Time, Become a Minimalist

by Tina Dreffin



"That'll be forty dollars," the pretty barmaid said to my new cruising girl buddy, Lyla, who rumbled around in her knapsack for the required funds. I handed over my share: two dollars for my Diet Coke. Inside the Happy People café, watching the colorful crowd come and go, we'd been sharing our cruising yarns about crossing the Anegada Passage with our husbands for the first time. New to cruising, their crossing had been a particularly bumpy one, but with her spirit being like that of an eagle, I knew she'd adapt well, although her cruising adventure looked as if it might be a short one. So far, her consumer habits seemed more appropriate to a working woman than a cruiser.

"How long do you think you'll be out cruising?" I asked Lyla.

"About a year, when the cruising kitty goes," she replied.

As a bluewater cruiser for nearly 30 years, I've heard the same tale over and over again. New cruisers embrace the new cruising life as high rollers during their first year or two. They eat out in expensive restaurants, buy things they don't need, and generally throw money around like it grows on trees. After a year or two, they are forced to return to the workforce, and end up selling their boat. Such a short time for a dream that took years to arrange. My husband and I relish our new cruising friendships. We'd like to see them stay out longer.

Here are a few tips to first-timers. My husband calls it "becoming a minimalist". It may require adopting a Buddha nature to learn to become unattached to STUFF, but with diligence and self-discipline, you'll find the end result is worth it.

1) Eat aboard more often, and save the restaurants for special occasions. Use new spices and produce grown on the islands to create zest in your food preparation.

2) Invite friends over for a potluck. In every new port,

Above: The Dreffin family aboard Scud. A bluewater sailor for 30 years, mom Tina has discovered ways to extend a cruise 'just a little bit longer'

Right: Champagne at the Ritz, or coconut drinks on the beach at Guanaja? You decide!



we try to arrange either potluck sundowners or dinners, where everyone brings their own favorite dish and beverage. Being the host and doing clean-up duty afterwards is my part in bringing new friends together, which they greatly appreciate.

3) Another option is to arrange a picnic on a sheet next to a brook in the rainforest or on the beach. It's fun, and rarely practiced anymore. Friends say, "That was a great idea!"

4) Shop in farmers' markets instead of supermarkets. It's far more fun to chat up a produce merchant in the market stalls. Often, the vendor is a grandmother or mother who enjoys passing along family recipes to prepare the new foodstuff you've just bargained over.

5) Cut down on alcohol, an expensive item, or at least moderate your intake. If you add up your weekly booze bill, you'll find it may have become higher than the food bill, simply because partying is such a part of the cruising culture. It doesn't have to be. Adopt measures

and stick by them. You'll be far healthier in the end.

6) Never grocery shop on an empty stomach. I've seen myself buy out the whole store, when half starving to death. Eat before you go. You'll be shocked how low your bill can get.

7) Always take a list to the marine stores. Ask yourself, "Do I need this or do I just want it?" Put back the "want" on the shelf and forget about it. The "but, but, but" can go on forever.

8) Take a bagged sandwich on island tours, along with a liter of water; otherwise, you'll find yourself picking your pockets for another unanticipated meal out. This works especially well with children. You can better control their diet — they're always hungry. A granola bar and a sandwich is much healthier than fried chicken from a road stall.

9) For repairs, try to have them done in ports where you know the tradesmen are well-trained. Ask around. Often, you can be stuck hauled out, waiting for marina repairs that don't seem to ever come. We've known of friends hauled out on the hard for two months, while waiting for repairs to START. Talk to a cruiser who has

hauled before at the same boatyard, who can attest to the yard's integrity. Confirm the time and date that work will commence. If it hasn't begun within a sensible time frame, don't hang around.

10) Invite family and close friends from home to visit you, instead of you flying out to visit them. Your boat has to be safe and cared for at a marina or on a mooring, further reaching into your pocket, if you depart. When your loved ones visit, take them grocery shopping on the first day and split the bill. Putting them up during their stay is an act of grace, but assuming all expenses is not expected or necessary. All our old-time cruising friends have adopted this practice after their first years of agonizing monetary pain, seeing their cruising budget diminish in a very short time by hosting loved ones. Once your family understands the practice of visiting on your boat, they'll visit more often, freeing you up to not only enjoy their stay more, but allowing you to remain cruising just a little bit longer.















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VISITING TRINIDAD'S PITCH LAKE

by Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal

This is a tale of a lake that cannot be sailed. Located in the village of La Brea on the southwestern peninsula of Trinidad is the Pitch Lake. To locals and visitors alike, the Pitch Lake at first glance is not very exciting or much of an attraction. Let's face it: it looks like a huge parking lot. Despite this it is a tourist attraction with approximately 20,000 persons visiting it annually. But why is the Pitch Lake so important? And what is a pitch lake?

Pitch or asphalt lakes are also referred to as tar pits or more correctly asphalt pits. They are formed when subterranean bitumen leaks to the surface and accumulates, forming a pit or lake of asphalt. The Pitch Lake at La Brea in Trinidad is one of four known worldwide. The others are those in McKittrick, California, the La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles and Lake Bermudez in Venezuela. You might notice that two out of the four lakes contain the word "La Brea." This is because *la brea* is Spanish for "the tar". So why is it also referred to as the "Pitch Lake"? This is simply because "pitch" is an old-fashioned term for tar.

At the mention of tar you would assume that walking in the lake would be impossible, but you are actually walking on the lake. As the tar hardens upon reaching the surface, it forms a skin that prevents the tar from sticking to one's shoes. As I mentioned before, although Pitch Lake looks like a harmless parking lot, it is advisable



Tour guides will show you where to walk — and where not to!

to get a guide. Parts of it are quite soft, especially near the centre, and a car can quickly sink into it.

The lake covers an area of 40 hectares, and if you were to slice the lake in half you would see that it is shaped like an inverted cone with a centre that is reported to be 75 metres deep. It can be thought of as a slow-motion black hole, which pulls things into itself. There are also underground channels or "veins" of pitch which stretch outward for several kilometres from the main lake.

But how did the

Pitch Lake form? It is theorized that it was formed at the intersection of two faults that force oil from a deep deposit. At the surface, the lighter elements in the oil evaporate leaving behind the asphalt. This also contains petroleum due to the bacterial action on the asphalt at low pressures.

So, as the lake is made of fossil fuels, would it not make an excellent source of fuel, instead of being used for road construction? Well, this was attempted in 1820 by Governor Sir Ralph Woodford who used it to light a beacon in the tower of the Trinity Cathedral in Port of Spain, Trinidad. However, the strong smell proved unbearable and the idea was abandoned. The lake also emits gases and a strong smell of sulphur.

There is also folklore associated with the Pitch Lake by the Chaima Indians who believed that it was formed as a punishment by their winged god who caused the earth to open up and emit pitch that swallowed up the entire village. This was because during celebrations after victory over a rival tribe they cooked and ate the sacred hummingbirds that were believed to hold the spirits of their ancestors. The locals also claim that during the dry season, ospreys drop freshly caught fish on the lake's surface to cook.

Besides tar, lighter distillates are also visible on the surface of waterholes as well as a cream-coloured substance referred to as "mother". It is also believed that the rainwater that collects in nooks and crannies on the lake has healing powers. It is claimed to be good for arthritis and joint pain, among other ailments.

As for importance, these pits hold great archaeological significance: they are excellent localities to excavate bones of prehistoric animals that fell in and were unable to escape. There is a small museum which contains Amerindian artifacts found at the lake.

The asphalt is mined and exported for high-quality road construction, with mining taking place at the south and east rims of the lake. Since mining started in 1867, ten million tonnes have been mined. But this is not its only use, as it was immediately put to use caulking Sir Walter Raleigh's ship when he discovered it in 1595.

At present there is a visitor facility operated by the La Brea Pitch Lake Tour Guides Association. The facility opens daily from 9:00AM to 5:00PM and admission includes a guided tour. Admission rates are (approximately) US\$5 for adults and US\$2 for children from six to 12 years. Children under six years enter for free — and keep a good eye on them! Groups of 20 persons or more get a 20 percent discount. There are special rates for students and teachers of local schools.

Tour guides can be easily identified by their red T-shirts from Monday to Friday and by orange T-shirts on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays. However, one must be cautious for there are also unlicensed tour-guides that hang around the facility offering tours to visitors. But they are easily detected by their lack of uniform.

All in all, this large "parking lot" is quite useful and a visit makes a unique outing. So the moral of the story is: don't judge a book by its cover, especially when it comes to the works of Mother Nature.



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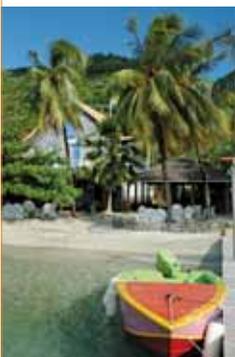
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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2009



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. 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!

January	20	0726	8	2340	
DATE	TIME				
1	1549	22 0906	10	0035 (full)	
2	1631	23 0957	11	0124	
3	1714	24 1046	12	0211	
4	1800	25 1135	13	0258	
5	1849	26 1221 (new)	14	0344	
6	1943	27 1305	15	0431	
7	2034	28 1348	16	0519	
8	2148	29 1403	17	0609	
9	2255	30 1513	18	0659	
10	2359	31 1557	19	0750	
11	0000 (full)	February	20	0840	
12	0102	DATE	TIME	21	0929
13	0158	1	1644	22	1016
14	0249	2	1735	23	1102
15	0337	3	1831	24	1145
16	0442	4	1931	25	1228
17	0507	5	2035	26	1312 (new)
18	0552	6	2139	27	1356
19	0638	7	2241	28	1442

—Continued from previous page

Maintenance

Modern high-tech boats can be "delicate", needing expensive parts and skilled technicians. Yachting has become a luxury tourist industry and one has to travel far afield to avoid the US\$50 per hour work rates, and then can you even find what you need? Not too many contemporary navigators are ready to accept four (exceptionally five) knot average speeds and tacking through 120 degrees in an old-fashioned cruising yacht. So, the basic price of cruising has been multiplied by ten in the past four decades. I hear people talking about maintenance costing ten to 15 percent of the price of their boat per year.

Gadgets

Try to keep your boat simple. It is a constant battle not to buy such appealing items as radar-watch instruments, spinnakers and the gear that goes with them (used once a year perhaps?), a folding prop to gain 0.1 knot of speed, a second autopilot just in case, etcetera. And once bought, you have to maintain them in working order.

Tools

Apart from the weight and encumbrance, you just can't have too many tools. Fixing things yourself is a sure way to save a lot of time (otherwise spent hunting around for the right person, if he is available) and cash. I think every boat should be equipped with a solid vice mounted (and dismounted if necessary) somewhere convenient. A workbench is a great asset. If you don't have a generator, try for sufficient battery power to run an inverter (you can start the diesel if necessary) of at least 800 watts. This will enable you to use modest power tools (up to 600 watts) such as drills, grinders, planes, jig and circular saws, etcetera. It isn't always easy to find low-powered tools of reasonable quality. I bought a good quality 12-volt portable drill, and when the batteries gave out after two years' use, I connected it directly to the yacht's batteries (using a 15-amp fuse with a 5m cord. It gives excellent service and avoids having to charge the other one (via the inverter) for three hours when the batteries are low.

Sails

Look after them well and make the proverbial "stitch in time to save nine". Always use UV covers when at anchor. Sails are very expensive to replace.

Antifouling

I am not even going to get involved in the quagmire of discussing relative performance after the demise of TBT (where location, usage of the boat, number of coats, and price make a big difference). Suffice to say there are very few bargains, so ask local advice.

Haulouts

Ask around and try and find satisfied owners belonging to your price group. You may sometimes get e-mail replies to your questions about cost, and there is good information in Chris Doyle's Guides (and *Caribbean Compass*, but no prices). Earlier this year I sailed from Martinique to Grenada, then back up to Tyrrel Bay in Carriacou, stopping at every boatyard for information. I came back to Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout, but they don't have much space. Organize the work (and parts!) first and try not to stay too long.

It used to be true that the farther north you sailed, the bigger the bill (up to the Dominican Republic, anyway). I think the south is catching up.

Who wants to live in such a hand-to-mouth fashion today? And is it possible?

Food

If you want to live inexpensively, only buy food readily available locally. Do not insist on Kellogg's cornflakes, substitute christophenes or breadfruit for potatoes, buy canned tomatoes when local shortages push the price of fresh tomatoes up to six euros a kilo (as happens in Martinique), and try local specialty foods when they are inexpensive. If you must drink beer and wine (they certainly improve one's view of life!), look for promos in the French islands or Venezuela and stock up.

Have you ever noticed how much you throw away? Most leftovers make good soups, and even lobster shells (if you are so lucky) can be boiled to make a delicious lobster bisque. Maybe you have enough for tomorrow, but no space in the fridge (or no fridge)? If you boil the leftovers in a pressure-cooker and leave it sealed, you can keep them overnight. Adding an onion, other condiments, or a little hot sauce transforms them into a new meal.

Eating Ashore

Make sure you know the price of what you buy. (I have seen ads and posters for a three-course meal in the Saints for around 10 euros, but when you get the bill it is nearer 14 because the lower price is only valid at lunchtime and not for dinner; this not specified anywhere.) Be aware that in some places, prices seem to take a leap at national holidays and Christmas.

There are many excellent cafés or local bars with cheerful company and good food — that's why the locals go there. Personally, I can't resist taking people to have a drink at the Cotton House at Mustique when I am there. A sundowner costs US\$10, but the decor and the view are unbeatable. Luckily I don't go that way too often, as mooring charges, etcetera, are pricey, too! The rest of the week I eat soup.

Everyone has their own views in these different fields, but there is just no substitute for personal experience. Next best is to talk to your neighbours.

I am still cruising after 40 years, so things can't be that bad. However, I am coming round to my French friend's view that it is difficult to envisage cruising in the Caribbean on less than US\$1,000 per month for two people (preferably \$1,500), and this will mean some solid discipline as far as expenses are concerned.

I would like to have other opinions — for example, what are today's best Caribbean cruising destinations, taking prices and pleasure into account? Or aren't you telling?



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Fun Food: Feeding the Cruising Kitty on St. Thomas

By *Jacque Milman*

My husband, Chris, and I have noted during our cruising that many cruisers work — for a season, a year, or longer — to keep the kitty full and continue cruising. Some Canadian friends are working for a Canadian company in the Dominican Republic. A Mormon friend works for that church, also in the DR. Americans in search of employment tend to head to the US Virgin Islands, cruise capital of the Caribbean. Tourism reigns here and jobs are plentiful in a variety of venues — working in the stores and shops, dispatching tours from the cruise ships, working for a charter company, crew on any of numerous tours. One friend even sells art for a local artist.

We once smugly reveled in the fact that we didn't need to work, our retirement carrying us adequately. But alas, along came some unanticipated (and expensive) problems with the boat. We spent excessive amounts, in Trinidad and St. Lucia, before all was well again. Our boat repairs complete but our pocketbook empty, we decided we should work temporarily to pay off the credit cards and build up a reserve again. So we put out the word among the cruisers in Long Bay at St. Thomas that we were looking for jobs. Within only a few days, we had several possibilities to follow up. Logically, having been professors on Guam before retirement, we thought of adjunct teaching at the University of the Virgin Islands, but the semester had already begun, so that would become an option for later.

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Yeah, we know — it's a grueling job, but somebody has to do it. The author pours samples of local rum for disembarking cruise ship passengers in the US Virgin Islands

The first possibility was working with a tour company. Some friends knew that the owner was desirous of having someone take over for him while he went to the States for transplant surgery. So we called him and arranged to meet for coffee at The Deli Deck at the cruise ship mall, Havensight. He and a friend, a former partner, met with us, along with their dive coordinator. He needed a tour dispatcher to meet the tour groups coming off the cruise ships and take them to the appropriate tour operator(s). He and Chris agreed to go together the following day so Chris could see what it involved.

In the meantime, I had been alerted to a vacancy at the tour desk at the Marriott Hotel. I arranged to meet with Beth, who handles hiring for The Adventure Center, the company subcontracted as the concierge for the Marriott. Beth and I hit it off personality-wise, and I was hired.

—Continued on next page

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Then I stumbled onto what I think is the most unique and fun job of all. At the same time I had learned of the Adventure Center job, I also learned that another cruiser friend would soon be giving up his job — serving free samples of the flavored Cruzan Rums (a product of the US Virgin Islands) from a little cart in Havensight five hours a day, whenever there is a cruise ship in port. Pay for this prestigious position was almost double that of the tour desk job, plus tips, so I let it be known I wanted it when he left. About a month later, the job was mine. I spoke with Beth and she graciously consented to allow me to continue working at The Adventure Center on the days there were no cruise ships. Pouring free tastes of rum and talking to people from all over the world — what a wonderful job!

So we had jobs almost immediately. Unfortunately, the low season was approaching and the number of cruise ships was decreasing as the summer hurricane season approached. This didn't affect The Adventure Center, and only minimally affected the rum cart, but the number of tour dispatches dwindled drastically. The Adventure Center owner suggested Chris get his Captain's License since he needed captains to drive a ferry between the Marriott and downtown Charlotte Amalie. So Chris attended the necessary classes and finally, through MUCH bureaucratic delay, obtained his license. Another captain had been hired in the meantime, so Chris filled in as crew on snorkel-tour boats occasionally, captained a dive boat from time to time, captained the ferry once a week or twice a week, and drove another unique tour boat, *The Duckaneer* (an amphibious vehicle), on occasion. When "The Season" arrived once more, he began driving the ferry four days a week and "The Duck" on weekends.

Now, aside from putting badly needed funds in our bank account, there are also other benefits from working in the tourist industry. One of the duties at the tour desk is booking restaurant reservations. While we don't get "comped" to eat at these establishments, we do get invited to free tastings for the staff. One of the restaurants at the Marriott is called Havana Blue. It is presented as having a Latin fusion menu.



While Jacque tends the rum cart, Chris drives a shuttle ferry from a beach resort to downtown Charlotte Amalie

We had our choice of drinks — wine or whatever we wished — then six appetizers and five entrees, followed by a fabulous dessert platter, coffee and/or liquors, etcetera. We were so stuffed we could hardly move.

Another tasting was at Lotus, an Asian-themed restaurant at American Yacht Harbor in Red Hook. We got a ride to Red Hook with a friend off *Jolly Mon*. The food was good but, not being fans of Asian food, it was not the sort of place we would choose. However, the drinks were fabulous and we got to meet some new people more than just Adventure Center staff were included. Afterwards, the entire group went across the street to Phat Boys, a bar and grill that is associated with Lotus, and had after-dinner drinks. It was a marvelous evening for only the cost of tips and US\$4 for the safari bus back home. Other restaurants have lavished their fare on us as well.

Then there are the tours. All staff members are encouraged to take as many of the tours as possible so that, when describing them to guests, we have a firsthand knowledge of the tour. And these ARE comped. We have gotten to go parasailing, ride the Skyride, take a sunset dinner cruise on a 60-foot catamaran, do a sail and beach barbecue on a different catamaran, race on a 65-foot Farr, visit the Butterfly Farm, kayak and snorkel in the mangrove ecological center, and visit the British Virgin Islands.

And, staying in one location for a prolonged period of time, we have gotten to know about special offers that allow us to eat out inexpensively from time to time — Friday-night half-priced burgers at The Shipwreck, beat-the-clock pizza at Paradise Gate (Monday through Thursdays, between 5:00 and 7:00PM, your pizza cost is the time you place your order. If you order at 5:06, your pizza is US\$5.06), all-you-can-eat shrimp at Hooter's, and "down-home cookin'" on Sundays at Hook, Line and Sinker in Frenchtown.

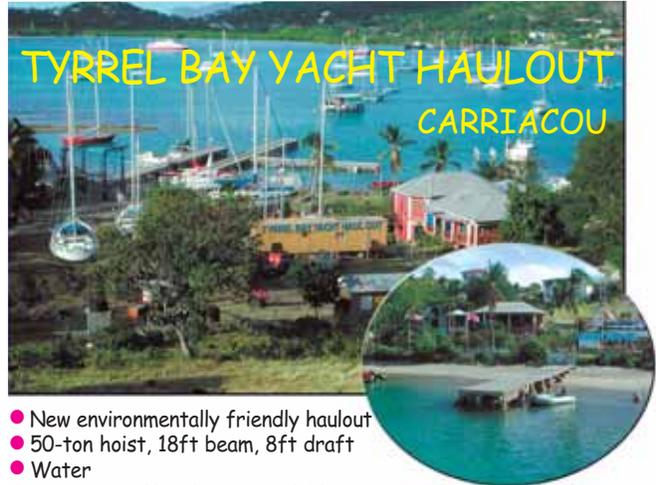
Temporary work is an excellent option for meeting cruising expenses. We are enjoying ourselves immensely, the debts are decreasing and the kitty is refilling. And once it is, we will be off to our next destination.

Keeping it Legal

Like the Milmans, many American cruisers find temporary work in the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico — red-tape free, because they are US citizens and the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico are part of the US. Similarly, French cruisers find employment on Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Martin or St. Barths, and Dutch sailors have no problem working in Curaçao, Bonaire and St. Maarten.

But please note that visiting (non-citizen) cruisers cannot legally work for payment in most Caribbean countries. Not only are fines considerable if you are caught, but when cruisers make money by doing jobs that locals also do, it creates hard feelings. To work legally on most of the formerly British islands in the Eastern Caribbean, for example, a non-citizen must apply for and receive a work permit, usually under the auspices of a prospective local employer.

It's tempting to say, "We'll make some money by picking up a few charters here and there." Don't count on it. You also need a license to do this legally, and really need to make it a serious long-term business — with marketing, references, boat-show appearances and possibly even an agent — to be remotely successful. And remember the danger: if you make chartering a full-time business, you're not cruising anymore!



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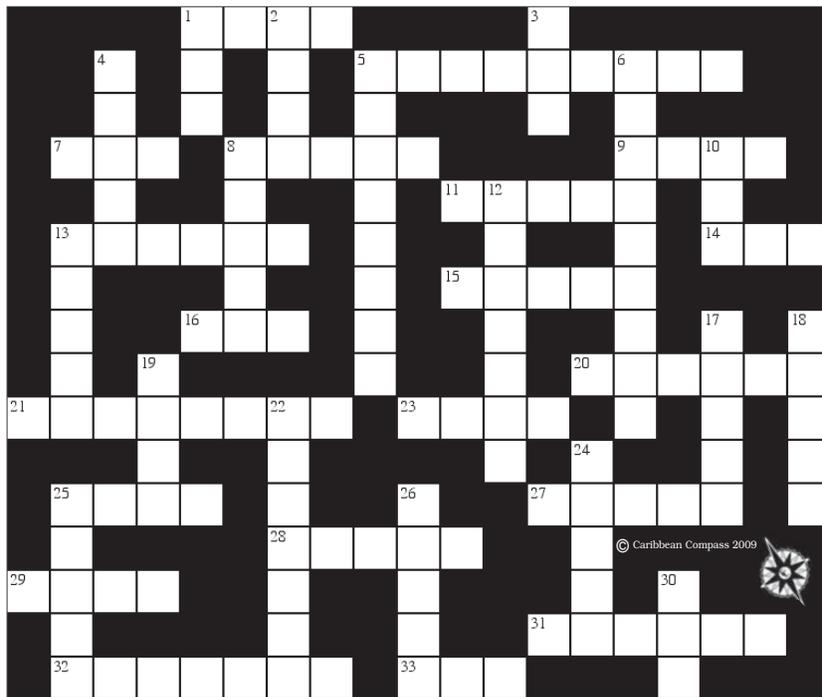
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Compass Cruising Crossword



'ANCHORS'

ACROSS

- 1) Starboard 15 Across + 20 Across
- 5) Place set aside for ships to 20 Across
- 7) Shoal or bank in river mouth
- 8) Bar at upper end of 20 Across's shank
- 9) To drop or let go
- 11) Forger of an iron 20 Across
- 13) 20 Across that is smaller than 15 Across but larger than 26 Down
- 14) Some 1 Down 20 Acrosses weigh one
- 15) 20 Across used at bow and in regular use
- 16) To release, ___ go
- 20) Device for attaching vessel to seabed
- 21) 20 Across used as resistance in sea with no bottom
- 23) There's usually good 25 Across-ing in this
- 25) What a 20 Across should do
- 27) Arm to ease 20 Across away from hull
- 28) ___ weigh: not 5 Down
- 29) Nickname for 20 Across
- 31) Wedges to hold 20 Across in place when stowed
- 32) U-shaped device used to secure 20 Across to chain
- 33) Hole in 20 Across's shank where ring is fixed

DOWN

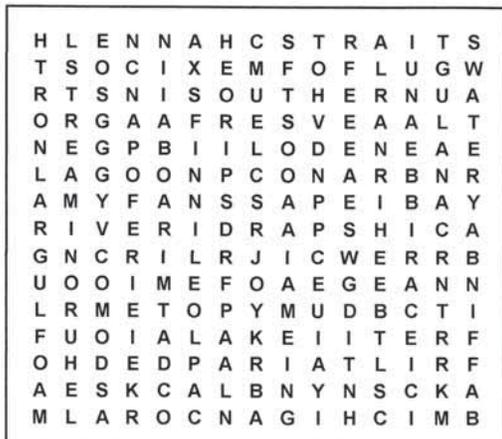
- 1) Large
- 2) To place securely
- 3) A Dutch fishing boat uses a ___ 20 Across
- 4) Shank
- 5) On the 20 Across
- 6) Act of 10 Downing + 20 Across
- 8) Extra
- 10) Make sure 20 Across has secure 25 Across-ing
- 12) Fixed 20 Across you tie onto
- 13) Not 1 Down
- 17) 13 Down + 20 Across used in heavy weather to ease boat stress
- 18) Bar of metal, bent at each end, on 20 Across's shank
- 19) 12 Down has one to mark its spot
- 22) After much practice, 6 Down will see this
- 24) Quarter ___ : kept on deck while 5 Down in harbor
- 25) Iron bindings of 20 Across + 8 Across to the shank
- 26) 20 Across used to warp a ship from one angle to another
- 30) Another kind of pick?

Crossword Solution on page 39

GOT WATER ON THE BRAIN? EXERCISE YOUR MIND WITH THIS WORD PUZZLE!

Word Search Puzzle by Pauline Dolinski

SEAS, OCEANS AND WATERWAYS



- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| AEGEAN
ARABIAN

BAFFIN BAY
BALTIC
BASS
BAY
BISCAY
BLACK SEA

CANAL
CARIBBEAN
CASPIAN
CHANNEL
COMO
CORAL
COVE | ERIE
GULF
GULF OF MEXICO

HURON
ICW
INLET
IRISH

LAGOON
LAKE

MEDITERRANEAN
MICHIGAN

NILE
NORTH | OCEAN

PACIFIC
PARIA
POND

RED
RIVER

SEA
SEA OF JAPAN
SOUTHERN
STRAITS
STREAM

TIMOR
WATER |
|--|--|---|

Word Search Puzzle solution on page 43



JANUARY 2009

♈ ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)

Communications will be a bit murky this month, so decision-making could be a real slog to windward. Put the small decisions in the "later locker" for now, and only deal with the ones that can't wait until you recover from the holidays.

♉ TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)

You will have a full cargo of options to choose from this month. No need to rush; take your time and don't sweat the small stuff.

♊ GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)

Your love life may seem to be flowing away as the fluky winds of communication wait to and fro, but only during the first week. After that, it's clear sailing!

♋ CANCER (22 Jun - 23 Jul)

The first three weeks will be filled with contrary currents. Rely on your sailing friends to divert you until it's time to say "ready about!"

♌ LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)

Problems in communication will backwind your creativity. Best to put boat projects aside and enjoy the New Year's spirit until aspects improve.

♍ VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)

Your love life may cross tacks with your business in the first week. Concentrate on your creative energies to sail you through the New Year.

♎ LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)

Squalls of misunderstanding abound this month, while your romantic interest sails over the horizon. A good time for a solo sail!

♏ SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)

Romance will stimulate your imagination. Look for a surprise to sail your way around the 19th.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)

The aspect bringing good news for others will cause choppy seas for your love life, especially around the 19th. Otherwise, it's fair skies.

♑ CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)

This month will seem to be just one head sea after another, and no amount of talking will help. Concentrate on boat business and stay away from the temptation to argue; it will only lead to misunderstanding.

♒ AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)

Inability to express your feelings will only increase counter-currents in your love life. Don't let it get you off course; things will improve during the New Year.

♓ PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)

Shipboard love and romance will make this an emotional month, especially around the 19th. Don't resist, just let the winds of love blow you away!

Real Men Never Say **ROGER**

Island Poets

The VHF is a wonderful tool,
But it's ever so easy to sound like a fool.
Never say ROGER or OVER AND OUT,
You can always say nothing if you're in doubt.

Six eight and sixteen are not for chat,
It's amazing how many people do that.
Move to a channel to talk to your mates,
To sort your bookings and arrange your dates.

When you're asked to switch channels, confirm that you've heard
By saying the channel to which you're referred.
You'll get lost in the ether and sound far from cool,
If you choose to forget this invaluable rule.

Never keep calling a station in vain,
If they don't hear with two calls it's terribly plain
That you're filling the air with superfluous noise,
And take it from me you're not one of the boys.

American channels are numbered the same
As some international ones I could name.
You just cannot use the two systems as one.
If you try to do it you're in for some fun.

There's another piece of advice you should hear.
Remember this and you've nothing to fear.
For voice, channel 70 won't work at all.
It's solely for making a digital call.

Signal strength of "seven by ten",
Means nothing at all, you'll be quite wrong again.
Listen to Eric he'll give you the line
The best RST signal's just five AND nine.

If you carry around a neat hand-held set,
You're asking for trouble, I'm willing to bet.
The transmit button is easily pressed:
To block channel 16 you'll be doing your best.

And finally think of a sensible name.
Some of the boat names are simply insane.
Rumpleeaser of Connecticut looks great on the stern,
But to spell it phonetically is a concern.

So when you get hold of the radio mike,
And press the button as hard as you like,
Cut out the jargon, and just keep it short,
'Cos we're listening too and getting quite fraught.

— John Lytle

parlumps marooned



Crossword Solution

ACROSS

- 1) BEST
- 5) ANCHORAGE
- 7) BAR
- 8) STOCK
- 9) CAST
- 11) SMITH
- 13) STREAM
- 14) TON
- 15) BOWER
- 16) LET
- 20) ANCHOR
- 21) FLOATING
- 23) SAND
- 25) HOLD
- 27) DAVIT
- 28) UNDER
- 29) HOOK
- 31) CHOCKS
- 32) SHACKLE
- 33) EYE

DOWN

- 1) BIG
- 2) SEAT
- 3) TOD
- 4) SHAFT
- 5) ANCHORED
- 6) ANCHORING
- 8) SPARE
- 10) SET
- 12) MOORING
- 13) SMALL
- 17) SHEET
- 18) CROSS
- 19) BALL
- 22) NATURAL
- 24) WATCH
- 25) HOOPS
- 26) KEDGE
- 30) ICE

THE

Christmas school holidays had come around once again and the St. Lucian boy Trevor was back in Barbados with his cousin Ernie. So there he was in the little cottage set on its foundation of coral blocks up the hill from Sweet Bottom and overlooking the wild Atlantic coast. It was just as well that Uncle Solly had kept the boys' last adventure of the racecar theft from Aunt Josephina or else she would have grounded the two boys for a year! As it was, Solly's sister, a strange old lady who had no time for children and so never saw her nieces or nephews (most of them lived off-island anyway), suddenly phoned and stated that she would take Ernie and his little sister Nyna for a weekend New Year treat. When she heard that cousin Trevor was visiting, she replied: "One more child makes little difference."

What was the treat? Madam Cinta would not say. She simply told her brother Solly to deliver the children to her big, old-fashioned home on the outskirts of Bridgetown at nine o'clock the next morning, with their sleepwear. "I'll see to all their needs for two days — and let it be understood that this is a one-time treat only!" And Madam Cinta banged the phone down.

Aunt Josephina tutted and went about her business of feeding the chickens, but the children couldn't stop talking about what the treat could be and asked Uncle Solly what he thought.

"Nothing good," he frowned. "The only times I've been in her house were when she needed something fixed or painted, and I can tell you it's no place for children." Then he sighed and went on. "I might as well tell you all about Madam Cinta so you'll know what you're up against." The children were all ears. "Cinta is the eldest and she married a very wealthy old man when she was just a teenager. When the old boy dropped dead from a heart attack about a year later, Cinta was far from heartbroken because now she could live the life she

and before Uncle Solly could follow, she said rudely, "Madam Cinta says she doesn't want to see you today," and shut the door in his face.

When the sour-faced maid led the children into Madam Cinta's dark parlour, Trevor, for the first time in his life, lost his tongue. Ernie and Nyna just stood together trembling.

"You're not sleeping here tonight," Madam Cinta said by way of a greeting, and then she turned to her maid.

"Here, Jameson, take the children to that swimwear place down the street, buy them whatever they need for the beach and then walk them across the road where they can swim and play. Get them ice creams and whatever children like to eat and deliver them back here at three o'clock."

Jameson sucked her teeth in answer and pushed little Nyna in the back making her jump with shock. "Well," she growled, "you heard her. Get moving."

The three children quickly recovered their spirits when they got out the door and stood in the bright sunshine, and it wasn't long before they agreed that this was a special treat. While Jameson stood in the store looking grumpy, Trevor and Ernie raced around choosing the fashionable swim shorts that came down to their knees, super-sized T-shirts they thought were ultra-cool, great big beach towels, masks and snorkels. Nyna got a bikini that Aunt Josephina would snatch away the moment she got home, a tie-dye wrap-around, a cute beach bag and a big, pretty beach towel. She didn't want the mask and snorkel because she was frightened of putting her head under the water.

Once the purchases were made Jameson paid for them, hurried out of the store and, looking both ways, crossed the busy road to the beach, the children running beside her.

"Now listen to me," Jameson said to the children sternly. "I'm not going to sit here all day looking after you. I have my own business to do. So, make sure you don't drown each other and I'll be back here at a quarter to three to get you." She looked hard at Nyna for a moment and said: "You look like the most sensible of the lot. I'll leave this money with you." She thrust a handful of notes into Nyna's new bag and strode off.

"Thank goodness the old witch is gone!" Trevor smiled and, dropping the towel at Nyna's feet, he punched Ernie's skinny upper arm, something Ernie hated, and raced off into the shallow turquoise water. Ernie helped Nyna gather up everything and they walked closer to the water where a tall she-oak made a pool of shadow in the white glare of the coral sand, then he followed Ernie into the water.

The children had a wonderful time at the beach, eating ice creams and hot dogs from beach vendors and drinking lots of fizzy drinks that encouraged Trevor and Ernie to see who could belch the loudest.

Then it was back to Madam Cinta's to hear about the rest of the treat.

"I'm taking you to stay at the Hospice Inn for the night," Madam Cinta told the children when they stood before her. "It was once an old hospital and is said to be full of blood-spattered ghosts who scream all night. So, my young friends, you'll have lots of fun when the lights are out!"

To be continued in the February issue of Compass.

TREVOR AND ERNIE GET SPOOKED!

Part One

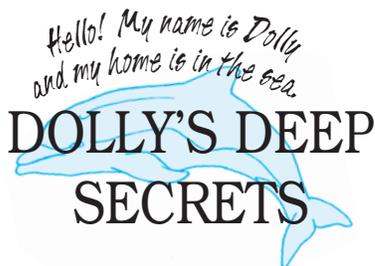
by Lee Kessell

'Buy them whatever they need for the beach and then walk them across the road where they can swim and play'

wanted and not have to look after an old husband. With all the money she has, you would think Cinta would be generous, but not a bit of it. I think she'll have her money buried with her."

The next morning came around, as all mornings do, and Uncle Solly was at Madam Cinta's home exactly at nine o'clock. He knocked on the door, and when the maid answered, he presented Trevor, Ernie and Nyna. The maid pushed the children inside

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY PETIT ST. VINCENT RESORT



by Elaine Ollivierre

Do you remember how many orders of sharks there are? Last month, we looked at eight orders of sharks, classified according to particular features on their bodies. Now let's look at the families and species within each order. Here's a table which shows the huge variety in both sharks and their family names.

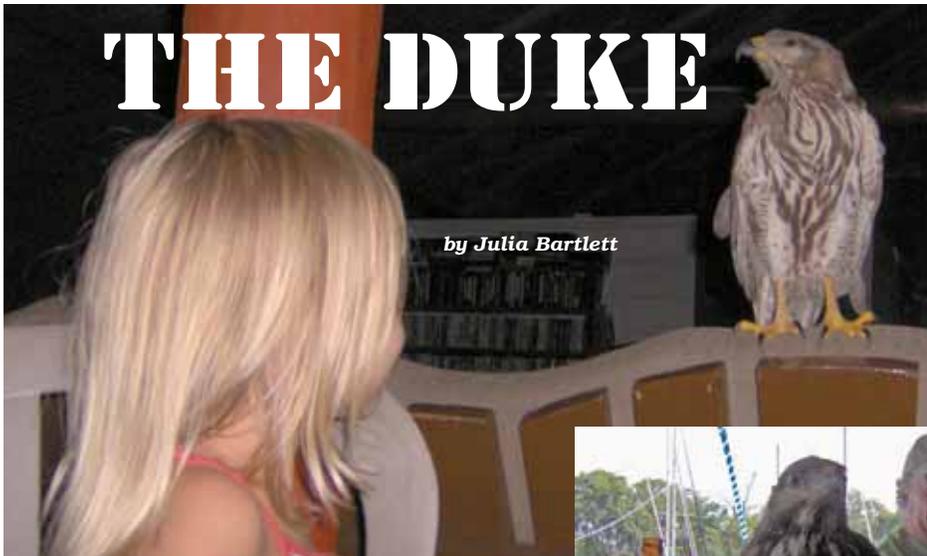
Common name	Order	Families	Number of Species
Angelsharks	Squatiformes	1. Squatinidae (angel sharks)	13
Sawsharks	Pristiophoriformes	1. Pristiophoridae (saw sharks)	5
Bullhead sharks	Heterodontiformes	1. Heterodontidae (bullhead sharks)	8
6-7 gilled sharks	Hexanchiformes	1. Chlamydosela (frilled sharks) 2. Hexanchidae (sixgill & sevengill sharks)	1 4

Common name	Order	Families	Number of Species
Dogfish sharks	Squaliformes	1. Echinorhinidae (bramble sharks)	2
		2. Squalidae (dog sharks)	70
		3. Oxynotidae (rough sharks)	5
Mackerel sharks	Lamniformes	1. Odontaspidae (sand tiger sharks)	4
		2. Pseudocarcharidae (crocodile sharks)	1
		3. Mitsukurinidae (goblin sharks)	1
		4. Megachasmidae (megamouth sharks)	1
		5. Alopiidae (thresher sharks)	3
		6. Cetorhinidae (basking sharks)	1
		7. Lamnidae (mackerel sharks)	5
Carpet sharks		1. Parascylliidae (collared carpet sharks)	6
		2. Brachaeluridae (blind sharks)	2
		3. Orectolobidae (wobbegongs)	6
		4. Hemiscylliidae (longtailed carpetsharks)	12
		5. Ginglymostomatidae (nurse sharks)	3
		6. Stegostomatidae (zebra sharks)	1
		7. Rhincodontidae (whale sharks)	1
Ground sharks		1. Scyliorhinidae (catsharks)	92
		2. Procyliidae (finback catsharks)	6
		3. Pseudotriakidae (false catsharks)	1
		4. Leptochariidae (barbelled houndshark)	1
		5. Triakidae (houndshark)	34
		6. Hemigalidae (weasel sharks)	6
		7. Carcharhinidae (requiem sharks)	48
		8. Sphyrnidae (hammerhead sharks)	9

How many species are there altogether?
Answer on Page 45

THE DUKE

by Julia Bartlett



stood around waiting for him to fly away. The Duke fluttered up to the top of a chair and looked down his nose at them all. He liked being admired. He felt strong and powerful and very different to the frightened little creature the giant had rescued. Everybody looked at his powerful beak and claws and treated him with great respect. He came and went as he pleased, sometimes circling high above the giant's castle and sometimes swooping in to see his old friend and protector and enjoy choice titbits of raw meat.

Occasionally in the evenings he'd watch DVDs with the giant's little girl and he would socialize with the giant's guests when he felt like it and then off he would go for several days at a time soaring high above the forest and hunting for his

Left: The Duke liked to be admired

Below: Occasionally he would socialize

The Duke was already in residence when I arrived. His was a fairy story come true: a variation on the Ugly Duckling, only with a sad ending. It goes like this.

One day a giant was walking through his slimy, green swamp, in Guatemala, when he came across two little elves teasing a small brown bird which was so young that it had hardly any feathers and couldn't fly away.

"Whoa!" cried the giant, "That's no way to treat a defenceless baby bird." The two cruel elves stopped and looked up at the giant. They couldn't understand him but they knew he was talking about the bird.

They squeaked, "Es nuestro pajarito. Él quiere nuestro pájaro. Nosotros lo encontramos."

The giant shook his head, he didn't understand Elvish, and he reached down for the little bird but one of the elves grabbed it and they both started to run off.

"Hey," called the giant and the elves turned and caught sight of the glint of gold in his hand. They stopped to see what the giant was going to do.

The giant knelt down and held one hand out with the coin and the other for the bird. The elves tiptoed close and while one snatched the coin the other dropped the bird into the giant's hand. Then they scampered off to snoop.

The giant looked down at the tiny scrap in his hand. "My, you're an ugly little critter," he said. "I wonder what sort of bird you'll turn out to be."

"Look what I have bought," said the giant when he got home. Everybody crowded around to see. The giant's little girl, his little boy, his wife, the cook, the watchman and all the servants, they all came to look. They weren't impressed.

"How much did you pay for that thing?" his wife asked crossly. Everybody turned away, disappointed with the giant's purchase.

The giant found a cage and popped the little bird inside. "You'll be safe in there," he said. "When you have enough feathers to fly I'll open the door and you can go and find your own kind. They will welcome you and you'll know that you belong."

Every day the giant fed the little bird and it grew and grew. Its face turned haughty and aristocratic, its feathers sleek, and fierce claws grew at end of its handsome yellow feet.

"I shall call you The Duke", said the giant as he opened the cage door. "You remind me of my hero, John Wayne, except he didn't have the yellow legs. But he sure did have spurs."

That was when I arrived on my way to somewhere and met the giant and The Duke, and the little girl, the little boy, the wife, the cook, the watchman and all the household. By now The Duke was so handsome that everyone was interested in him and they



own food. People went to visit the giant just to see and admire The Duke when he flew in.

On one of The Duke's visits to the castle, the little elves who had first found him saw him and they were jealous that the ugly little bird they had sold the giant had turned into such a handsome creature. They picked up big sticks and ran at The Duke yelling as fiercely as they could in their squeaky voices. The Duke looked down his nose at the horrid little elves and ran towards them flapping his wings and jabbing with his beak. They didn't see me lying in a hammock but I saw the elves turn round and ran away as fast as their spindly legs could carry them. They were cowards, like all bullies, and I hoped that they heard me laughing.

Now the elves were angry and bitter. Every day they lay in wait, hidden in the vines of the swamp, waiting their chance to see The Duke on his own, with none of the giant's household around. Each of them had a slingshot and a pocket full of nasty pointed stones. Sometimes I would catch sight of them sneaking around, but it didn't cross my mind they were lying in wait for The Duke.

One morning the giant found his friend waiting for him on his favourite chair, but one side of his head was swollen and that eye was closed. The Duke was mortally wounded and had come to say goodbye. The giant was heartbroken and couldn't understand what had happened to his friend. He couldn't understand who would want to hurt a creature as beautiful and wild as The Duke.

I miss The Duke and sometimes I think I can still hear him calling from way up in the clouds.

The elves have gone, too — but nobody, except me, seems to have noticed.

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Red Hot Invaders

by Tina Dreffin

It was my turn. Peter, my husband, was snorkeling below our dinghy. I like to go in last, just so he can tell me if Jaws is lurking about. Once given the thumbs up, I plunged in and saw below me fuchsia-tipped sea anemones wriggling in crystalline, turquoise-blue waters, and a dwarf sea horse shimmying along the skinny branches of a purple gorgonian that undulated in the current.

Then I began to relax. It had been a fast and furious ten-day passage from Florida to the Virgin Islands. We had sailed together onboard *Scud*, our St. Francis 44 catamaran. Suddenly I was snapped out of my musings when Peter's eyes went wide inside the frame of his face-mask. With his forefinger, he gesticulated at a gargantuan coral head, 20 feet below us on the sea floor, and then motioned for me to free-dive down. I was taken aback, but then, upon further reflection, he was the one clutching the spear. Snorkeling in the Virgins is always an adventure, and today looked to be unlike any other.

Feeling apprehensive, I peered around me and then down into the busy reef for possible signs of trouble. A foolishly smiling parrotfish grazed on elkhorn coral and a large turtle darted by in alarm, its flippers flapping fast, obviously upset by our intrusion. My hackles rose, but I still couldn't find what gave rise to Peter's concern. All appeared happy and content to me on the Caribbean Explorer Channel. Yet something was there.

"There!" he mumbled into his snorkel, words coming out garbled, like his mouth was loaded with wet marbles. Tiny bubbles whirled from his mouthpiece. I finned down for a closer look, bypassing myriad tropical fish that resembled sparkling jewels in the brilliant sunlight. In a dark void beneath the colossal coral head, I peered to see not one, but two of the most voracious predators of the sea, *pterois voltians* — the fearless red lionfish. Like lightning, I swirled backwards, whirling into a reverse turbo-charged spin. "Geez!" I gulped, heart pounding in my ears. These guys definitely required respect.



Look, but don't touch!
The invasive red lionfish

Lionfish are stunning to watch, but don't touch. "You'll want to die," hoarsely whispered my Caribbean friend Diane, over a lunch of conchburgers at the Red Hot Mama the next day. Surely she was kidding, I thought. Then, with bulging eyes, she leaned in towards me, and described how she had been stung while shelling off a remote sandbar. Bent double in pain, she chewed on wood, as her sister poured hot water over her foot, the recommended treatment for drawing out poison. "I found a magnificent shell though!" she beamed at me. That's the spirit of the islands here.

It's not only humans who regard the formidable lionfish warily. Armed with 18 bilowly fins, lionfish paralyze their prey with venomous spines, then suck them down in one violent gulp — fins, scales and all.

With an alien face, the lionfish resembles my grandmother's hatpin cushion, shredded by a rogue Rottweiler. Slight comfort to know they don't eat humans. No one has perished from lionfish stings, either.

Where did they come from? Lionfish are native to warm Indo-Pacific waters. It's believed they were accidentally swept into the Atlantic 13 years ago from aquariums when Hurricane Andrew ravaged Florida. Others were intentionally released by well-meaning private aquarium owners after "Finding Nemo" hit the box office. Few are aware of the negative impact an invasive species can cause on native fish like lobster, grouper, and snapper.

Lionfish are rapidly expanding into the Caribbean at an alarming pace. And governments are very worried. Possessed of a voracious appetite, a single lionfish can devour up to 20 juvenile fish in a half hour. On one experimental reef, juveniles were reduced by 80 percent in five weeks. Often, these are native fish species critical to tourism and fishing industries.

Lionfish also display an impressive reproductive rate. An adult female can release a pair of eggs sacs five times each month, laying as many as 30,000 eggs several times year-round. Veteran dive operators have warned that it could be the worst ecological disaster the world has ever experienced. One expert compared the lionfish to "a plague of locusts."

As a result, many recreational divers are removing lionfish from the reef. Like, "killing them on sight?" I asked Diane. She happens to be a naturalist, working to protect her island's natural marine resources.

"You have to! Grouper are only now beginning to recover from the over-fishing of the 1970s and '80s," she insisted. I gulped. I'm a real chicken when it comes to squaring off with a lion.

"People eat venomous fish in Southeast Asia. Maybe it tastes good!" I questioned my dear friend, hoping she'd let me off the hook of scoring a lionfish. "Skinning a pin cushion would be fun to see," Diane laughed with a glint in her eye.

Today, I'm off to hunt the fearsome predator of the deep, clad in a full wetsuit, hood, and gloves. I'm hesitant. I follow the Buddhist practice of abstaining from harmful acts against nature. So, upon reflection, I think I'll just snap a photo. Maybe the lionfish will establish harmony with the reef, and become a creature to be respected, instead of feared and destroyed.

This may already be happening. The stomachs of several groupers have been found containing remnants of lionfish, establishing hope that "native grouper species are beginning to prey on red lionfish with some regularity", as reported by Simon Fraser University's Tropical Marine Lab recently.

BOOK REVIEW BY BOB BERLINGHOF

The Sea Wolf, by Jack London, ISBN 0-486-41108-7, Dover Publications, 244 pages.

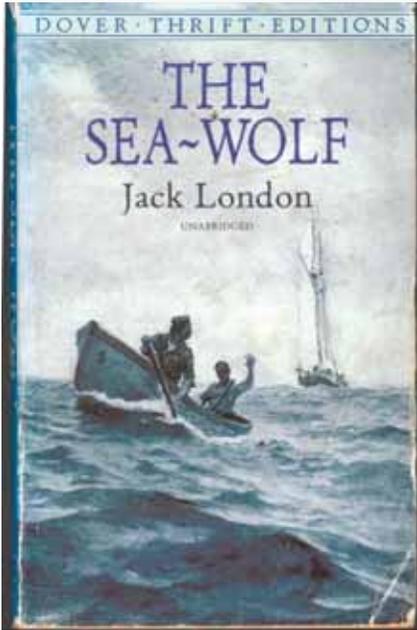
This classic sea yarn was based on London's experience aboard a seal-hunting schooner, trolling the waters off Japan for pelts in 1893, when he was seventeen. The novel's strength is the creation of Captain Wolf Larsen, an amoral, brilliant bully. In many ways, Larsen's background and strictly materialistic views echoed London's, which gives this villain his weight and impact. Larsen has superhuman strength and a remorseless view of life as one in which the big fish gobble the small fish. He also devours books and possesses a huge library on board, ranging from the classics of literature to the latest scientific tracts and philosophic treatises.

The novel's narrator is a deliberately effete and physically lacking man of letters, Humphrey Van Weyden. In the opening chapter, he is plucked from the sea by Larsen's schooner after a tragic ferryboat accident. The descriptive power of London's prose is evident as Humphrey describes the foggy night, the

dered him. Though Humphrey despises Larsen's brutishness, he learns to cope with the rigors of sea life. When Mugridge threatens him with a kitchen knife, Humphrey makes a show of carrying a sharpened marlinspike and lets Mugridge know that he will use it if necessary. After being told of Mugridge's theft, Larsen gambles with the cook and wins the entire amount, then laughs at Humphrey when Hump suggests the "right" thing to do would be to return it.

Humphrey realizes he is being toyed with, but the two get along fairly well until a series of violent events explode on board and harden Van Weyden's hatred of Larsen. Then the *Ghost* rescues a small boat with American survivors of a shipwreck near Japan's coast. Larsen impounds them as crew, but there is one hitch—there is a woman among them. She is Maud Brewster, and from the point she is introduced, this fine novel goes downhill. Maud is a poet whose works Humphrey has reviewed (what a coincidence!), and the two conspire to leave the *Ghost* after Larsen tries to brutally rape her. He only fails because of a repeat of one of his migraine-like headaches. These headaches are the Achilles heel of an otherwise perfect anti-hero super-

BAD CAPTAIN



foghorns, his ferry being run down and split in two, the women's screams, and how his lifejacket kept him from drowning — Van Weyden cannot even swim. As he drifts away from the ship's rubble, he has little hope to live for long in the icy San Francisco Bay, but before he dies from hypothermia he is brought aboard Larsen's ship, the *Ghost*. He is rubbed so hard that he suffers bruises, and the cockney cook, Mugridge, gives him dry clothes but steals his money.

The first mate is in an alcohol-induced coma, and despite Van Weyden's pleas to be taken ashore, Larsen has other plans for him. He must replace the first mate by becoming cabin boy and allowing the rest of the crew to move up in rank. Van Weyden witnesses a distressing lack of ceremony during the mate's sea burial, when no one in the crew can produce a Bible and the captain can only remember the line, "And the body shall be cast into the sea." And so it is done.

Humphrey is called "Hump" and derided until Larsen invites him into his cabin and they begin to discuss literature and philosophy. Van Weyden is floored that Larsen is so well read and a lively debater. It is obvious that Wolf enjoys locking horns with Hump, and Larsen endeavors to show his protégé how weak his pampered upbringing and sentimental outlook on life has ren-

dered him. One wonders why no one in the crew ever murdered Larsen during one of these blackouts, since he is so universally loathed. Humphrey considers it, but cannot bring himself to kill a defenseless man.

The introduction of Maud and her "pure" relation with the narrator underscores London's fear of writing frankly about sexuality. He writes beautifully about the violence of man and nature, yet he could not scratch the surface when it came to sex. Perhaps this is due to the fact that he was afraid that his readers would be shocked in the early 1900s if his characters consummated a relationship out of wedlock. His avoidance of the subject renders Humphrey's relationship with Maud ridiculous and dates this otherwise fine novel as a product of post-Victorian era prudishness.

I found the description of life aboard the seal hunting schooner to be fascinating, powerfully written, and brutal in its realism. The dangers to the seal hunters in small boats was underscored when a sudden storm ambushed them, and Larsen and Humphrey had to maneuver the *Ghost* shorthanded to pick them up. These passages are among the finest in the novel. After nearly being swept overboard by a wave while attempting to heave to, Humphrey regains his balance and brings the jib around. The *Ghost* picks up their first boat with three men aboard after great difficulty, and Humphrey goes back aloft. A second boat is spotted, and though it is capsized the men are saved by Larsen's deft sailing skills in the raging storm.

This time I remained aloft, and Wolf Larsen succeeded in heaving to without being swept. As before, we drifted down upon it. Tackles were made fast and lines flung to the men, who scrambled aboard like monkeys. The boat itself was crushed and splintered against the schooner's side as it came inboard; but the wreck was securely lashed, for it could be patched and made whole again.

Once more the Ghost bore away before the storm, this time so submerging herself that for some seconds I thought she would never reappear. Even the wheel, quite a deal higher than the waist, was covered and swept again and again. At such moments I felt strangely alone with God, alone with him and watching the chaos of his wrath. And then the wheel would reappear, and Wolf Larsen's broad shoulders, his hands gripping the spokes and holding the schooner to the course of his will, himself an earth-god, dominating the storm, flinging its descending waters from him and riding it to his own ends. And oh, the marvel of it! The marvel of it! That tiny men should live and breathe and work, and drive so frail a contrivance of wood and cloth through so tremendous an elemental strife!

A final ludicrous coincidence brings Larsen back into the lives of the almost lovers, but the balance of power has changed. Larsen is dying of a brain tumor. But Larsen's power, though diminished, remains rebellious and unfettered to the end. He is one of the great characters in sea literature. It is interesting to note that London signed his letters "Wolf" in his most intimate correspondences; he obviously found his demonic captain far more interesting than the gentleman writer that was Humphrey Van Weyden.

Editor's note: Caribbean Compass usually reviews only books that directly pertain to the Caribbean. This one slipped by me in a moment of weakness, and I hope you enjoy it as much as I did!

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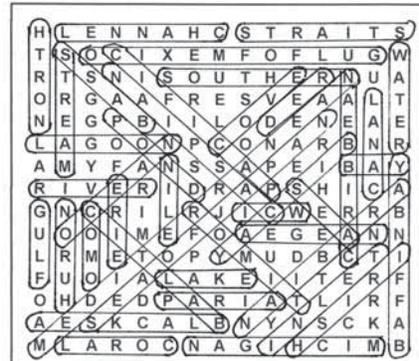
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by Ross Mavis

SOUP IS COOL!

I remember the first time I had soup on a very hot day. It had been a month that went from sweltering to downright scorching, day after day.

I had moored my Thunderbird sloop in the harbour to travel some 40 miles inland to visit an old friend. I decided to pay him a surprise visit. The early morning bus I caught left in a grinding of gears and a blast-furnace belch of blue smoke mixed with dust, grit and oil. Two hours later I was deposited in front of the town's bus-and-freight depot on the village outskirts. Just down the road was what looked like a small café. I was thirsty beyond belief, and all thoughts of finding my friend were put on hold.

I was sure the café would have a cold beer or even a cold soda pop. I could almost feel the chilled glass in my hand as the condensation trickled down and tickled my dusty palm. I knew that my first sip of the icy contents would seduce me into drinking almost all of it in one enormous gulp.

I hurried across the road and entered the café. Three scarred leatherette stools stood empty along a short counter covered in old-fashioned battleship grey linoleum. I flopped down on the first stool and was ready to order what I hoped would be the coldest, most refreshing beverage of my entire life. An attractive woman in a remarkably white blouse, flowered skirt and apron sauntered out from behind swinging kitchen doors. She was older than I was, but in those days most people were, or seemed to be. Her complexion was flawless. Her skin had an incredible milk-chocolate hue. When she leaned on the counter in front of me, I could smell the spicy muskiness of her perfume. She smiled at me and I instantly fell head-over-heels in love. That's the way it happened then. What foolishness. Love on this stifling hot day? What happened to my thoughts of tall, refreshing, cold beverages?

I somehow regained what little composure I could muster and asked for a beer — a cold one.

"No got," she said. Now I really was starting to sweat. She was looking directly at me with incredible dark eyes. I couldn't think of any other beverage or drink to ask for.

"You hot?" she asked. Now, if I'd had the chance to reply to a question like that many years later, my answer might have gotten me into lots of trouble.

"Yeah," I mumbled.

"I get soup for you," she said, turned and vanished into the kitchen through the swinging doors. What had she said? Soup? I wanted a cold drink. Soup? Had this conversation really occurred? Was I suffering from heat-stroke, or was she? I barely had time to ponder any of this when out through the swinging doors she returned holding a bowl on a plate in one hand and a spoon and crackers in the other. The woman was mad. It was indeed soup she had brought.

The bowl was placed in front of me before I could make any excuses or slide off the stool.

"Taste. You like it. Salad," she said with a smile. I was totally confused, intoxicated from the liquor of love and baffled about the bowl of soup. It was only after I looked from the bowl to her and back to the bowl again that I realized this was no ordinary soup. It didn't even appear to be hot. In fact, the bowl was cold to the touch. I looked back at her again and then picked up the spoon. A tentative, somewhat hesitant taste of the thick, red liquid, flecked with pieces of green vegetable was the start of a remarkable friendship. Gazpacho. The refreshingly cold, hot-weather soup hailing from the Andalusia region of southern Spain was indeed an uncooked soup of pureed salad makings. Fresh tomatoes, basil, peppers, onions, celery, cucumber, garlic, olive oil, vinegar, salt and pepper and all thickened with breadcrumbs.

I became a life-long lover of Rosa's Gazpacho. For those hot, humid days we have in front of us, try a cold soup. The ingredients can be kept in the cooler beforehand if you wish, or simply make the soup well before you want to serve it and keep it iced down until ready to put into chilled bowls. Here is a simple version:

- Easy Gazpacho**
- 3 pounds ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
 - 1 large sweet green pepper, cored, seeded and finely diced
 - 1 large English cucumber, finely diced
 - 1 red onion, peeled and chopped
 - 2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely minced
 - 1/4 Cup vinegar
 - 3 Tablespoons olive oil
 - 1/4 Cup tomato juice (optional)
- Blend all these ingredients briefly in a food processor or blender. Depending on the ripeness of the tomatoes, a small amount of tomato juice may be added if you wish. If it seems too thin, use breadcrumbs to thicken.

Spinach, Caribbean Ways

The Caribbean has two varieties of spinach, both somewhat different from the kind grown in Europe or North America, that make easy additions to a cruiser's diet. Caribbean spinach can be a shrub that grows close to the ground or a red-stemmed vine that grows six feet tall. Like most kids, I never enjoyed cooked spinach. Today I eat it because women need iron and spinach is one of the world's most nutritional foods.

Spinach belongs to the same family as beetroot. It was first cultivated in southwestern Asia over 2,000 years ago. Arab traders carried spinach to Persia, now Iran. Irrigation was necessary to grow this green leafy vegetable in their hot dry climate. Centuries later, Arab traders spread spinach to Europe and to China, where the name still translates as "Persian green".

The Italians take some credit for civilizing spinach. When an Italian countess, Catherine de Medici, was married to the King of France, she came with her own cooks who prepared spinach "her way". Since then spinach dishes have been referred to as "à la Florentine".

In the cartoons Popeye gets extra strength by consuming spinach. In reality spinach protects against heart disease, arthritis and some types of cancer. One Cup of fresh spinach has only 40 calories and over twice the daily requirement of vitamin K. This vitamin is essential to keep human bones healthy.

Spinach is also a great source for vitamins A, C, magnesium, and folate. Eating this green prevents cholesterol from blocking arteries causing heart attacks or strokes, and reduces high blood pressure. Spinach may rival carrots for benefiting eyesight by keeping the eye muscles strong and reducing the incidence of cataracts. One Cup of boiled spinach provides a third of the daily requirement of iron necessary for bone growth.

Always wash leafy greens well before using them.

Garlic Spinach

10 cloves of garlic, minced
2 Tablespoons olive oil
1 Tablespoon butter
1 1/2 pounds spinach, trimmed
Salt and spice to taste
2 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Mix minced garlic and olive oil. In a large skillet, melt the butter and heat this mixture, adding spinach until it is just beginning to wilt (4 or 5 minutes). Place spinach in a bowl and mix with salt, spices and lemon juice, and serve.

Curry Spinach

2 Tablespoons vegetable oil
6 cloves minced garlic
1 pound fresh spinach, trimmed
1/2 teaspoon turmeric powder
1 teaspoon coriander powder
1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
1/4 Cup water
Salt and spices to taste

In a large skillet, heat oil. Add garlic and stir over medium heat for two minutes. Add all spices, stirring constantly. Stir well, add water and spinach, cover, and reduce heat to low. Cook for five minutes. Serve warm.

Spinach Pie

1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves of garlic, minced
2 Tablespoons olive oil
2 pounds fresh spinach, trimmed
4 eggs
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1/2 pound feta cheese
3/4 Cup whole milk
Salt and spice to taste
One pie shell

1/2 pound grated Cheddar cheese
In a large skillet, cook onion and garlic in oil until just browning. Add spinach until it wilts. Blend in remaining ingredients except cheddar cheese and pie shell. Pour into pie shell. Bake at 350°F for half an hour. Cover with grated cheddar and return to oven for five minutes. Serve warm or cold.

Spinach Rockefeller

2 pounds fresh spinach
2 Tablespoons olive oil

3/4 Cup breadcrumbs
1/2 Cup butter
2 cloves of garlic, minced
2 small onions, minced
1/2 Cup grated Parmesan cheese (Cheddar may be substituted)

1 small hot pepper, minced
2 eggs, beaten
1 large firm tomato, sliced
Salt and spice to taste

In a large frying pan, sauté spinach in oil until it wilts, add breadcrumbs, butter, garlic, onions, 1/4 Cup of the cheese, pepper and spices. Stir to keep mixture from sticking. Cook for half an hour before removing from heat.

Arrange tomato slices in a large baking dish. Spoon spinach mixture onto each slice. Cover with remaining cheese and bake for 5 minutes at 350°F. Serve immediately.

Spinach Potato Torte

2 large potatoes
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves of garlic, minced
2 Tablespoons butter or margarine
2 pounds fresh spinach
2 eggs

1/2 Cup grated Parmesan cheese (Cheddar may be substituted)

1/2 Cup breadcrumbs
2 sweet peppers (preferably red) cored and sliced
2 nine-ounce packages prepared and sliced smoked turkey breast

1/2 Cup Mozzarella cheese (Cheddar may be substituted)

1 Tablespoon olive oil
Salt and spice to taste

In a pot, boil potatoes until just tender. In a large skill-



et, sauté onions and garlic in butter. Then add spinach until wilted. Drain all excess liquid before adding beaten eggs, cheese and 1/4 Cup of the breadcrumbs.

Grease a large baking dish with butter and dust with remaining breadcrumbs. Slice the potatoes and cover the baking dish's bottom. Spread the spinach mixture evenly over the slices. Then spread half of the peppers, turkey and cheese. Repeat again beginning with potato slices, spinach, peppers and turkey. Top with a layer of potatoes brushed with olive oil and seasonings. Bake at 400°F for half an hour. Serve hot or cold.

For the Gardener

Spinach grows in most climates where there is sufficient water, especially in sandy soil. Fork a row about ten inches deep and six inches wide to make a four-inch mound. Plant the seeds a half inch deep. Thin the sprouts to six inches apart. Keep watered so the soil remains damp and spinach should mature in three to four weeks. Fertilize with a high nitrogen mixture every ten days.

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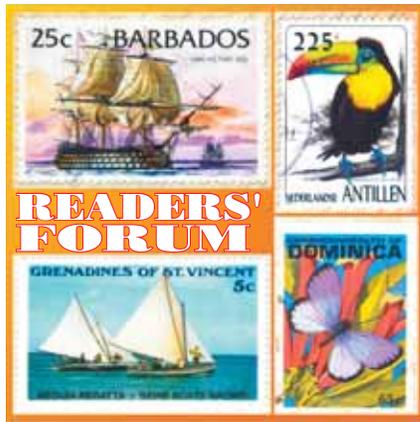
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Dear Compass,

On page 16 of the October 2008 issue of *Caribbean Compass*, in the Regatta News department, there is a picture of some classic yachts anchored in Phillipsburg, St. Maarten. In the left foreground is what is almost certainly an Alden schooner. I would like to discover its name and owner, as it is extremely like a very



Has anyone seen La Goleta?

famous Alden schooner called *La Goleta* that I owned from 1966 to 1980, during which time I restored her to her original finish. She was built in England for an American called R. St. John Pevery to an Alden design for the second "Ocean Race", now called the Fastnet Race, which she won. It was the first bad-weather Fastnet and only two boats finished.

I was forced to sell her in 1980, as I was emigrating to California, but I know she came out to the West Indies and was based in Antigua; she was possibly doing charter work in 1996. I am now planning to write a book about my time with her and am very keen to track her down. I have taken a ten-day bareboat charter from The Moorings at Marigot Bay, St. Lucia, for the last eight years but only ever cruised around the Grenadines and have never seen her.

Any information would be greatly appreciated.

Christopher Lawrence
 The Oaks, Burghill
 Hereford, HR4 7RJ
 England
 clawrence798@aol.com

Dear Compass,

We are currently (December 2008) moored in the Tobago Cays. After reading several letters in recent issues of *Compass* about the newly installed mooring balls here, I thought I would report my findings.

The cost of a mooring in the Tobago Cays is EC\$45 per night. You can also still anchor for free. Although most of the good anchoring spots in ten feet of water are now occupied with mooring balls, there are plenty of other good places to anchor.

The majority of the mooring balls surround the roped-off area for the turtles. During my three days here, it seems that the majority of the boats — both charter and private — are using the moorings. In fact, most people we talked to said they feel that it's easier to use the moorings than to anchor and that using the moorings protects the turtles' environment.

The balls are close together, however, and you will have problems if you have a vessel longer than 55 feet. (No length limit is marked on the balls.)

The mooring balls do interrupt the beauty of the Tobago Cays if there are no boats in the anchorage area. However, since there always seem to be 20 or more boats at any given time, the balls are not that bothersome to the eyes.

The Tobago Cays Marine Park entrance fee is still EC\$10 per person per day. But do be watchful of some of the Park Rangers' math skills. When we arrived, a Ranger charged us EC\$85 for the mooring and two people for one day. After reviewing the receipts, I saw

that it only added up to EC\$65. I had to track down the Ranger and get my EC\$20 back.

**Sign me,
 Enjoying the Breeze in the Cays**

Dear Compass,

I have read several articles and news blurbs in the *Caribbean Compass* about the "eSeaClear.com" system — and still cannot determine what it really is and what island countries are associated with it. I went to the www.eSeaClear.com website and viewed a single page of a lot of words with no information containing actual facts.

Medodye Pompa's letter in the December 2008 Readers' Forum admirably discusses the reality of check-in/out procedures and eSeaClear, but again does not mention that any Caribbean island countries actually use or are tied into this system. The editor's note mentions St. Lucia and the BVI but does not specify how and what eSeaClear actually does for cruisers wanting to enter/exit these countries. It would be nice if the *Caribbean Compass* editorial staff checked to see if this outfit really exists and really does something useful.

On the eSeaClear webpage there are no links to a home page; contact us; or any active links to anything other than a "registration" page. The "help" link does nothing but bounce you back to the initial page.

Personal observations over seven years in the Caribbean about the various check-in/out procedures on the various island countries indicates that virtually none of the Customs/Immigration facilities that we use have computers and are linked to the internet. If the local officials do not have computers, what use is this system? I have seen notebook computers being used by officials in Grenada (and I hear in Martinique there are computers) but they are not tied into any internet systems.

The basic questions — the Who, What, When, Where and How — of journalism seem to be sadly missing in regards to eSeaClear. Who are they? Who are the principals? What do they actually do today with the information they gather? When is the system going to be of any use? Where are they located (a company, an individual in his basement, a NGO)? How can this system operate in the real world today and tomorrow? Without hard facts and data we can only make two assumptions: one, the operation is a scam; or two, it is a pipe-dream of well-meaning people who are smoking some of that "funny stuff".

**Jim Graham
 S/V Osiris**

P.S. The country of Grenada has a simple one page check-in/out form you can download from the internet and then print out on standard 8.5 x 11 inch paper, which is perfectly acceptable by the officials. (Just select "Page scaling — Fit to printable area" in your Adobe Reader.) Make five copies and take them ashore when you check in/out to really shorten and streamline the process. The form is available at www.grenadagrenadines.com/boat_customs.html.

P.P.S. Thanks to a very prompt and informative e-mail from the *Caribbean Compass* in response to the letter above, I learned that Keats Compton, President of the Caribbean Marine Association, made an announcement of introduction of eSeaClear back in July. It is a program that is part of a collaboration between the Caribbean Marine Association (CMA) and the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council (CCLEC). The CMA appears to be an association promoting "the yachting industry within the Caribbean basin". That seems to translate to a (sort of) lobbying arm of the businesses servicing the yachts of wealthy/important people.

CCLEC is an NGO feeding off the government bureaucrats involved with the Customs administrations of the Caribbean islands and others. Having worked with very large organizations and interfaced with the political and bureaucratic minions of power, I can understand the structure of the CCLEC and its purpose to provide a forum for the various administrators of Caribbean islands involved in Customs/revenue and some great parties at their annual gatherings. There they can compare notes and seek ways to improve their departments. However, neither organization — CMA or CCLEC — has any power beyond lobbying and information exchange.

Most interesting is that using the search function of CCLEC website to locate any references to "eSeaClear" results in zero results. Stepping through their various pages also reveals no references to "eSeaClear". A Google search resulted in a news release from CCLEC discussing the program under the name "PAN Pilot", which describes the functions of the system and the eSeaClear website. Searching for "PAN Pilot" results in a bewildering list of 114 results talking about everything but eSeaClear. "PAN" is not a good label for any program, as the word is used in millions of ways to denote "spanning", as in Pan American, etcetera.

CMA does not have a search function on their website that is available to the public, and what little information is available makes no references to eSeaClear.

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Reading what is available leads me to the second assumption I mentioned above — eSeaClear is a good idea, but not realistically of any value to the average cruiser. It seems to be slanted to enabling mega-yachts to streamline their movements in the BVI and St. Lucia. (I humorously rate the mega-yachts by how many huge data/satellite domes are mounted on the yacht. I have seen as many as five huge satellite domes on yachts in Antigua. Who needs that many data/voice links?)

In the real world of the average cruiser moving from one Caribbean island to another — as Melodye Pompa pointed out — the introduction of eSeaClear is a non-event and only adds an additional layer of complexity to our process of check-in/out, and then again only in St. Lucia and the BVI. And given the absence of any current references to the program on the active websites of the originators, I can only infer that the program is dormant or forgotten.

Dear Compass Readers,

For those of you who missed it, in our August 2008 issue we reported the following:

"Keats Compton, President of the Caribbean Marine Association, reports: The Caribbean Marine Association (CMA) and the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council (CCLEC) are pleased to announce the introduction of electronic clearance for yachts traveling within the Caribbean.

"The system was launched on July 1st with a pilot project in St. Lucia, which permits yachts entering and leaving St. Lucia to submit the relevant documentation either on computers at the Customs office on arrival, or remotely, via the internet at www.eSeaClear.com. You must still report at Customs upon arrival, but Customs can access the notification information to process your clearance more efficiently — without the need for you to fill out the declaration forms by hand.

"The system is scheduled to be launched in the British Virgin Islands shortly, with progressive roll-out around the region. Yachts must, of course, continue to adhere to each country's specific rules of reporting.

"The electronic clearance system, known as eSeaClear, was developed by CCLEC, a union of some 35 Customs entities, including the EU and US, as part of the Regional Clearance System, which was set up to facilitate the processing of yachts traveling around the region. The use of eSeaClear is completely voluntary, so that yacht skippers with a preference for existing paper documentation will not be forced to clear electronically. Yachts departing from countries that do not subscribe to eSeaClear will need to use existing paper-based procedures, but the developers are confident that the system will win converts quickly, because of its intrinsic utility.

"Registered users can access the system to enter and maintain information about their vessel or vessels, crew and passengers. Once all Caribbean countries are aboard, prior to arrival at a new country the vessel operator simply ensures the information is accurate for the upcoming voyage and submits a new notification: you won't have to fill in declaration forms by hand at each country you arrive in... To register for electronic yacht clearance visit www.eSeaClear.com."

So, what benefit is eSeaClear for the average yachting? In a nutshell, here's what one recent user told us: "I filled out the form on my laptop, in the comfort of my boat, using the WiFi in Admiralty Bay (Bequia). When I got to Rodney Bay (St. Lucia), the Customs guy called up my form on his computer and printed it out. All I had to do was sign it (and pay the clearance fees, of course). I was back out the door in a few minutes."

Please keep in mind that the use of eSeaClear is COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY. Also, it is a pilot project, and as such welcomes feedback from potential real-life users, like Melodye, Jim and all those who have written to Compass about it in the past or will as the project goes on. Feedback can be sent to eSeaClearSupport@cclec.net or support@eseaclear.com, or you can phone (758) 453-7705/2556.

Meanwhile, as this issue of Compass goes to press, eSeaClear has been rolled out in St. Kitts & Nevis and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. We'll have a full report on eSeaClear's progress so far in next month's Compass. CC

Dear Compass,

As reported by Susan Bruce in the December 2008 Readers' Forum, in Admiralty Bay, Bequia, we have been floating in a lake of cheap diesel for the last three months.

These days, it appears that the main income of the Venezuelan fishing boats isn't the fish they catch (because the sea is empty) but transporting cheap diesel to Bequia every week. This makes the ferries happy, as it reduces their running costs dramatically. Sometimes, though, there is water in it and this has to be pumped out. Unfortunately, some diesel gets pumped out in the process. Also, these fishing vessels are not properly equipped to transfer diesel from their boat to the next, and during the process another number of gallons of diesel spill into Admiralty Bay.

We run a charter boat and our guests would rather not stay in Admiralty Bay anymore because of the stench of diesel while they are trying to enjoy their din-

ner aboard. Swimming from the boat is not possible unless you want diesel as your new body lotion.

On numerous occasions we have complained at various official places about this, but on an island where everyone is family it is not easy to address the problem, let alone solve it. Upon approaching the Coast Guard in St. Vincent, it seemed that they either were not really interested in the pollution problem or they did not know how to approach it.

The availability of cheap fuel is not the issue (except perhaps for the Shell station), the problem is that spillage is damaging Bequia's tourism economy and its environment.

So, are we all going to bow our heads and give up, or do we really feel that this should stop?

**Sign me,
Fed-Up Charter Captain**

Dear Compass,

This is in response to the letter from Susan Wales, M/V Roamer, in last month's Compass asking for recommendations from other cruisers about international medical insurance. Roberta and I are very happy with Generali Worldwide's "Medis" plan. Information is available at www.international-health-insurance.net.

**Tito Figueroa
S/V Alleluia!**

Dear Compass,

The letters that have been appearing in recent issues of Compass regarding the breaches in protocol on the various Immigration/quarantine laws/acts pertaining to the islands in the region really need to be addressed by a qualified person and results published to establish the protocols for the thousands of private/chartered pleasure craft that ply these waters.

In the interest of attracting the tourist and the tourist dollar, I would put the onus on the authorities to clarify their procedures accurately in writing, rather than have it "hearsay" via phone conversations. This publication and All at Sea are freely available in most Customs/Immigration offices, so we can assume that the officers themselves read them frequently.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) quite clearly states the Laws therein, but, as we know, each sovereign state then has its own laws and acts. In general, the clearance laws/acts allow 24 hours on arrival and 24 hours on departure, for good reasons. Vessels arriving are given 24 hours refuge and, providing no Immigration or quarantine laws are broken, are allowed to leave without any further ado during that 24-hour period, e.g. they don't need to check in.

It seems pointless for masters of vessels to be told they have to report "immediately" on arrival anywhere unless Customs has the office open 24/7/365, and what chance is there of that happening?

Quarantine areas and buoys are there for quarantined vessels, not for arriving or departing vessels. In other words, vessels with disease or infections aboard are held in this area until properly cleared by qualified persons, normally a doctor. Those without disease are allowed to anchor/tie up as normal but, by law, have to display the quarantine flag until cleared.

I have been to dozens of countries all over the world and never heard of all vessels having to go to a quarantine area until cleared. Quite the opposite, as authorities normally want quarantine areas clear (and for good reason) should an infected vessel arrive, so I suspect the authorities that are enforcing this are somewhat lacking in knowledge of protocols.

The Immigration/quarantine laws/acts apply to all persons involved. If the crews of vessels have to abide by these laws and are punished if they don't, then the authorities need to look at their own citizens' behavior as well. If crews of uncleared vessels are not allowed ashore because of the laws, then the citizens (read boatboys) of the countries are also by the same token not allowed to approach said vessels either. In other words, the vessels are given the same protection as the citizens and NO exceptions, as strict and heavy fines/imprisonment are involved — as we have witnessed in some letters displayed here.

I very recently witnessed the actions of a Customs officer aboard a Customs vessel who boarded arriving vessels to clear them. To be honest, the officer in charge didn't know what he was talking about. Some of his statements regarding the law were total garbage and, to my mind, he was just talking off the top of his head to justify his actions, which were, to be polite, "way over the top" and an excessive abuse of powers invested. One poor man who thought he was doing the honest, correct thing was ordered to town and summarily charged EC\$75,000 at the whim of said Customs officer and others escaped by the skin of their teeth, owing to the intervention of a local business owner who made noises at all levels asking for clarification of various points that no one in authority seemed to have answers to.

Yachts need to abide by the laws and officials need to know the laws and apply them equally to all parties concerned.

**Billy the Boatboy
Yacht Twaka**

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page

Dear Compass,

Recently we found out there is a lot of misunderstanding about the meaning of the phrase "Port of Entry" on the island of St. Vincent.

As of this writing, more than ten boats in addition to ours have been fined, because we were anchored in the wrong bay before clearing in. The fine was EC\$500 (a bit less than US\$200), and if you don't want to pay if your passports are confiscated. You can buy those back in Kingstown the next day or, if you are unlucky, after the weekend.



CHRIS DOYLE

Cumberland Bay is popular, but NOT a Port of Entry

Cumberland Bay is not officially a Port of Entry, but it does have navigation lights at the entrance of the bay. A yacht skipper might think he can safely sail in there and spend the night after a long haul. Wrong.

Just north of Cumberland, Chateaubelair Bay is an official Port of Entry, but when you go there the police will advise you not to stay overnight as it is not safe. Wallilabou Bay, just south of Cumberland, is also a Port of Entry, but Customs officers are seldom found in their office there.

After being fined that one time, being a good boy, I went to Chateaubelair the next time around, where my dinghy and another yacht's dinghy were stolen.

Trying to get the story right, I called Mr. Da Silva from SVG Customs and told him what had happened. I explained that everyone assumes that you have 24 hours to clear in, as long as nobody leaves the boat before it has cleared Customs. Wrong, very wrong: after clearing out, you have 24 hours to leave the country.

Meanwhile, yachts are permitted to moor at Young Island cut (also not an official Port of Entry), and then the skipper can take a bus or taxi to the airport and clear Customs, then take the bus or taxi to Kingstown and show the passports to Immigration. (For some reason this cannot be done at Immigration at the airport. Imagine an airline pilot hopping on the bus to town to clear in his passengers!)

Mr. Da Silva informed me that SVG is losing "millions" because yachts do not clear in. This seems strange to me, because how can you clear into St. Lucia or Grenada, for example, without proof of where you are coming from?

It is a pity that it seems that the St. Vincent Customs officers are more bureaucrats than seamen and somehow miss the feel for the yachtsmen visiting St. Vincent for a nice vacation and a friendly approach. St. Vincent & the Grenadines is spending millions to attract tourists to the island by air and sea, to boast the economy and employment. I am sorry to see that at the same speed yachts are being chased away from

St. Vincent by Customs regulations.

We have been "hanging in there" for 15 years, and are surprised time and time again.

Please sign me, Confused and Frustrated

Dear Compass,

I am very sorry to tell Chris Doyle that all his effort to write a cruising guide for Trinidad & Tobago is only for Trinidadian boaters. And most of them know all the anchorages anyway. For visiting cruisers, the variety of anchorages listed in his cruising guide is only for fantasizing.

Further to Jim McConn's article in the September 2008 issue of *Compass*, telling about his experiences in Tobago with an officious Customs officer and onerous regulations, I can add my experience.

I recently asked a Customs officer in Trinidad about the check-out procedure for sailing from Chaguaramas to Tobago. We wanted to wait in Scotland Bay for one night or two, then sail to Maracas Bay and stay there overnight, before moving on to Tobago. We had done this some years before, without any problems. Aren't we sailing between two islands belonging to the same country?

I was told that we were not allowed to anchor anywhere else but Chaguaramas. And in Chaguaramas, visiting yachts can anchor only if all marinas are full. We were absolutely forbidden to anchor in Scotland Bay.

And what about Chacachacare?

No, only Chaguaramas. To anchor anywhere else you need permission from Customs, and that you don't get!

But to sail to Tobago, we'll need to overnight in Maracas Bay.

It is forbidden — the whole north coast of Trinidad is forbidden for foreign yachts.

But if we check out here for Tobago, we have to stop somewhere for the night — we can't go in one trip to Tobago in daylight.

Okay, you can stop in Maracas Bay for two to three hours, but not longer! And if you check out here, you have to check in at Scarborough the same day.

I did not understand the whole situation. I was shocked — did the officer speaking to me think we had either a racing powerboat or a helicopter? Was he joking with me? So I tried again:

But out at Chacachacare and Scotland Bay there are always yachts on anchor, and on weekends it is full of Trinidadians.

Trinidadians are allowed to anchor everywhere, but not foreigners. You have to stay right here in Chaguaramas. But what about the other foreign yachts anchored out in the bays?

Are there others out on anchor? Thank you for the information.

We were stymied by these impossible restrictions, so we decided to give Tobago a miss. Meanwhile Customs was going around in the bays, asking all the foreign-flagged yachts to move back to Chaguaramas.

Next was the ordeal of international check-out from Trinidad, which has already been mentioned quite often in the *Compass*. We checked out at 3.15PM. On our bill was an additional TT\$100 for overtime. Because it was not a holiday, and the official working hours finished at 4:00PM, I asked what the overtime charge was for. The officer explained that we had to leave immediately, but by the time we reached the

border to international waters it would be after 4:00PM — therefore I had to pay overtime!

It is obvious that foreign flag vessels are not really welcome in Trinidad & Tobago.

Nowhere else in our travels around the world have we felt punished for being foreigners. I think I have to mention, that we are coming as tourists with a certain financial background and not as beggars. We don't take jobs; instead, we bring employment. We have our own income, our own health insurance, etcetera. It is quite possible that cruisers and charter boats bring more money into the country than tourists coming by airplane, staying for a short time at an "all inclusive" resort which is paid for in advance in the home country.

I know, we have not been ordered to come. So, wherever we are not welcome, we will simply leave and apologize for intruding. But wouldn't it be better and easier for such countries' governments to be honest, and declare, "Visiting sailors, we don't want you — please stay away?" Things would then be absolutely clear.

Customs and Immigration officers are the first and the last people in every country we cruisers and tourists meet. They represent their country and are the mirror of the population. Customs in Trinidad made us feel unwanted. Do the people of Trinidad really not want us, either?

Please sign me, Jeanne Lafitte

Editor's note: Compass requested responses from the Customs and Excise Departments in St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Trinidad & Tobago, respectively, to the two preceding letters, in an attempt to clarify the current Customs regulations applying to yachts in these two countries. Unfortunately, no replies were received by press time.

Dear Compass,

We thought we'd write something positive about Antigua for a change. We left Bahia Redonda Marina in Venezuela on November 1st, and by the time we made it to our anchorage at Isla Coche, we had transmission fluid in the bilge. Not a good thing. Our original plan had been to sail to Les Saintes, spend a couple of weeks, and then head up to Antigua. We decided to head straight to Antigua as we felt parts and services would be easier to get, and we spoke the language. Well, it was the week with no winds, so after being becalmed more than we anticipated, we were in sight of Antigua seven days later.

We had sailed off the anchorage, but I was extremely stressed about dropping the anchor under sail. Let's just say that my husband has much more confidence in my abilities than I do! I called on VHF channel 68 just after the weather report, asking for anyone in English Harbour for assistance in anchoring. Sunsail Charters answered and told us to give them a call when we were ten or 15 minutes away. We did, and Sylvan and Clive were there in dinghies to act as our motor. They guided us to a spot in Freeman's Bay, helped us set the anchor, and off they went. Thank you so, so much to the two of them and to the Sunsail office for being there.

After getting everything straightened up we headed into Customs, Immigration and the Port Authority. Our *zarpe* from Venezuela said Guadeloupe, but no one gave us any problems.

—Continued on next page

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The two gentlemen from Customs and Immigration and the lady from the Port Authority were so helpful and friendly, and all welcomed us to their island and said they hoped we would enjoy ourselves. We're still waiting on parts, but enjoying our time here in English Harbour.



CHRIS DOULE

'We're enjoying our time in English Harbour. Our experience in Antigua has been very positive'

We've wandered all over, taken the bus to St. John's and Jolly Harbour. Both times we've asked directions from someone local, they've told us to hop in the car and they'd take us there.

Our experience in Antigua has been very positive and we're happy to be here!

Dennis and Allayne Coon
S/V Audrey Paige

Dear Compass,

We discovered a great way to provision with meat and seafood while in Trinidad. Our local hangout suggested we try the place where they buy their meats, so we went to the source that restaurants use: Artie's Patties. Artie's Patties has been in business for over 30 years in Trinidad. They provide US and New Zealand meat, already frozen. You can buy individual steaks or an entire roll of meat. They'll cut to any style you want and even vacuum pack it, or you can do it yourself. They have steaks, hamburger, chicken, pork, lamb chops, sausages, shrimps, scallops and other seafood. (The shrimps are to die for. They have eight or nine count per pound.) Pretty much anything you want that is meat, they have. Plus they have the selection and quality you don't find in the local grocery stores. You will need to have a car or take a cab because it's a bit off the path from the maxi-taxi route. They are located close to Chaguaramas at Morne Coco Road, Diego Martin. Their phone number is 637-7264.

Happy grilling!

Don Pitchford
S/V Liquid Courage

Dear Compass,

With all the lightning in the 2008 rainy season, it brings to mind some interesting strikes we have experienced. The family was at dinner on our 58-foot steel cutter, *Karen*, in Castries Harbor, St. Lucia, some years back

when there was an appalling crash, and while we all sat there totally stunned, there was the noise of something falling on deck.

This turned out to be pieces of a large porcelain "egg" insulator from the top of the insulated backstay. The lightning bolt had struck the 72-foot masthead, where

there was a steel cap with the usual fittings to carry fore- and backstays and the cap shrouds. There were also diamond stays. All major stays terminated at chainplates on the steel topsides.

You would have thought that all these would have been enough to carry the shock to ground but it also passed through the egg insulator on the backstay, blowing it to bits, and then jumped from the lower insulator above deck level and went horizontally to the stern pulpit where it burned a neat half-inch hole in the top stainless steel tube on the side facing the backstay.

Needless to say it didn't do the radios any good! Before that, in fact some years back, we were looking after a small wood sailboat in Rodney Bay. The boat was strip-planked, a building method that seems to be disappearing unless used with complete resin coating after and during the strip laying. (Monocoque is the best way to describe the finished hull construction.) In this case it was built before resin coating become much used and was, as normal in this method, edge-nailed (vertically) into timber strips about two inches deep laid horizontally.

At the time, the boat was sitting in a steel cradle and when the mast head got hit, the strike ran down the rigging and in trying to get to ground ran through the planking from nail to nail, and completely blew the planking apart in four rough vertical lines from chainplates to the legs of the cradle.

As we found out later, on another boat we had that was built using the same method, it is very difficult to do a good repair to damaged strip planking.

Then, to round off these shocking tales, we were sitting in our house in the Maracas Valley in Trinidad, built deep in a valley under the shade of El Tucuche, the (almost) highest mountain in Trinidad. We had heard a rumble or two and one of the children asked if we would ever be struck there. "No way!" said I. "Any lightning

would hit the high hills all around us!"

No sooner said than there was an almighty crash. The TV antenna fell off the roof and we saw bright sparks running from the roof around to the six-inch steel pipes holding up the roof structure.

Next time someone asks, "Can we be struck by lightning?" I will keep my mouth shut.

John Kessel
St. Lucia

Dear Compass,

Have you parsed (Provisional Anchorage Rating System Equation) your anchorage?

I have heard many different opinions offered about the same anchorage. Throughout the Caribbean there are many different types of anchorages, from open roadsteads to sheltered bays to creeks in mangrove swamps. All of these offer a different degree of shelter to a visiting yacht. In the various pilot books there is only a brief description as to how sheltered an anchorage is. I devised this rating system to give an easily determined rating to an anchorage, with a high rating being very sheltered and a low number being exposed and rough. Perhaps somewhere a list could be established for the ratings.

The method of determination is very simple, and the equipment needed should be available on most yachts. All that is needed is a fixed weight and a pair of scales. The weight could be anywhere between 100g (a small glass of water) to 10kg (a diving weight belt). The scales need to be appropriate to the weight used — a set of kitchen scales for the 100g or fishing scales for the 10kg. The scales and weight are placed midway out to the beam of the boat, at about the fore-and-aft centerline. The weight is placed on the scales and the reading observed for a few minutes. The maximum and minimum weights are noted. The mean value of the weight is divided by the difference between the maximum and minimum weights noted. This will give the rating figure for the anchorage.

$$R = (\text{Max} + \text{Min}) / 2 / (\text{Max} - \text{Min})$$

It is inevitable that different results will be obtained by different boats, and that these will change with the weather, but a good anchorage will show consistently higher values than a poorly sheltered anchorage. Also other factors that affect the anchorage, like unwelcome commercial activity (such as jet skis and fast speed-boats), could be factored in.

I have values for two anchorages so far: Mindelo in the Cape Verde scored 7 and Carlisle Bay in Barbados scored 10.

I hope that this simple method will allow an easier determination of where one can get a quiet night's sleep!

Mike Dorsett
White Princess

Dear Compass Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

Please include your name, boat name or shoreline address, and a way we can contact you (preferably by e-mail) if clarification is required.

We do not publish individual consumer complaints or individual regatta results complaints. (Kudos are okay!) We do not publish anonymous letters; however, your name may be withheld from print at your request.

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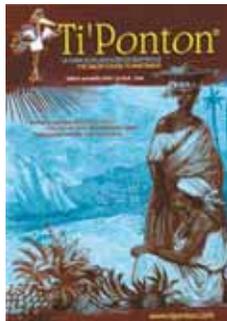
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Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

A Tale of Two Charter Yacht Shows
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WHAT'S ON MY MIND

The Light Brigade versus the Heavyweights

by Don Street

It is January. The transatlantic yachts have pretty much all come across on their tradewind passages. They are all in the Caribbean, at various anchorages or marinas, reminiscing about their passage and its highs and lows, and comparing notes on the degree of comfort or discomfort experienced, and the speed or lack of it they encountered. Happy hour chats usually end when the bars close, but the debate on "the light brigade" versus "the heavy brigade" for cruising boats will go on forever.

Andrew Bray, an editor at *Yachting World* magazine, is certainly a member of the light brigade. However, reading his recent article about his crossing the Atlantic in the tradewind route aboard a lightweight boat in 2001, one realizes it was not a pleasant trip. Not a fight for survival, certainly, but — with difficulties cooking, eating, and moving around the boat — not an enjoyable crossing that one would happily remember or look forward to doing again.

In contrast, ten of the 12 transatlantics I have done were on "heavy brigade" boats that had properly ballasted, gimballed stoves. Cooking three meals a day was no problem, and these were served in civilized fashion on a properly designed gimballed table.

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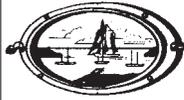
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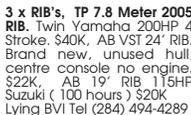
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RIB. Twin Yamaha 200HP 4 Stroke, 340K, AB VST 24' RIB. Brand new, unused hull, centre console no engine. \$22K, AB 19' RIB 115HP Suzuki (100 hours) 320K Lying BVI Tel (284) 494-4289



2007 INTREPID 300 Open. Twin 250 HP Evinrude ETECS. Every available option including T-Top, custom center console with head, bow thruster, dive door, Northstar Color GPS, AutoPilot, Depthfinder, live bait well and much more. Boat and Engines are like new with less than 300 hrs. This boat has been captain maintained since new and is located on St. Thomas, USVI. If you want the best 30' center console this is it. Owner has new Intrepid on order. \$150,000. Tel (610) 251-9135.



31' (9.35M) MURIA 1992 Bermuda sloop. Popular So. Africa design by Oswald Beckmeyer, built by Z-Craft in Durban, S.A. Yanmar 2GM20. Zetus manual windlass, many extras for cruising. Berthed at Grenada Yacht Club. Contact Selwyn Tel (473) 435-4174

CATALINA SLOOP with everything. Owner relocating. For inventory E-mail s.v.curvaceous@gmail.com Patrick Tel (473) 406-8888



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GREAT LITTLE 25' WEEKENDER '77 F.G.
w/8H.P. Yanmar I.B., rigged in 05, lying in Grenada \$13K USD. Tel: (473) 440-7525

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Selden mast with rigging for 40 footer, winches, engine parts, winches, diesel stove, sails, and lots more - ask for complete list E-mail destsl@candw.lc (758) 452 8531

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2 stroke outboard, ran 5 hours. 1800 US\$. Aries lift-off vane gear self steering device, 1000 US\$. HF transceiver IC-735-tuner, 500 US\$ more info: E-mail: elliemaebayas@hotmail.com Tel: (473) 404-0274 or (784) 495-0826

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E-mail: destsl@candw.lc

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New in Original Box. 24 VDC near 240 AC /50Hz., 4000 Watt real sine wave charger 240 VAC 50/60Hz near 120 Amp 24 VDC load-stroom. Price US\$3500 E-mail janvanroekel@hotmail.com

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BEQUIA, Lower Bay, Bells Point House and Land. Serious buyers only. Sale by owner. Call (784) 456 4963 after 6pm. E-mail lulley@mvincysurf.com



BELLEVEU, CARRIACOU, GRENADA, 16 by 32 feet, solidly built with hardwood and baked enamel tin roof. Fence, plus gate, plus latrine and a 400-gallon water tank with gutter system in place. Southern panoramic view with a breeze, 5-10 minutes walk to secluded black sand beach. Tel (902) 648-0165 or go to <http://www.carriacou.net/listings/WoodenHouseBelmont/>

BEQUIA PROPERTIES A classic Belmont villa in 1 acre 2,000,000US\$. The Village Apartments Business 1,890,000US\$, Admiralty Bay 900,000US\$, Spring Villa 1,750,000US\$, Lower Bay 1,600,000US\$, Friendship 320,000US\$, Moonhole 750,000US\$, relax & enjoy Bequia life. Tel (784) 455 0969 E-mail grenadinevillas@mac.com www.grenadinevillas.com

RENTALS

Sapphire Resort Marina - St. Thomas Safe-Private-Convenient, Long & Short Term Rentals 65 ft Max. \$1,200.00 monthly. Adjacent Apartments also available. E-mail: lvc99@aol.com Tel: 787-366-3536

Sapphire Village St. Thomas Studios and 1 Bedroom Apartments. Short & Long Term Rates. Starting @ \$1,100.00 month. Boat Slips also Available. See photos at [#106617](http://www.vrbo.com) tel: 787-366-3536 or Email lvc99@aol.com

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TORTOLA - ARAGORNS STUDIO looking for 2 employees. Welder/Workshop manager and shop assistant required at our busy Art Studio in Trellis Bay. BVI ideal candidates are a couple

with artistic inclination living on their own boat and looking for shore side employment in a US\$ economy. Still interested to hear from a lone welder! Info contact Aragorn Tel (284) 495-1849 E-mail dreadeye@surfbvi.com

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New Year

to all our Readers

and Advertisers

ADVERTISERS INDEX

ADVERTISER	LOCATION	PG#	ADVERTISER	LOCATION	PG#	ADVERTISER	LOCATION	PG#	ADVERTISER	LOCATION	PG#
A&C Yacht Brokers	Martinique	MP	Curaçao Marine	Curaçao	6	John Cawsey	Bequia	MP	Salty Dog Sports Bar	Bequia	46
Admiral Yacht Insurance	UK	21	Diesel Outfitters	St. Maarten	49	Johnson Hardware	St. Lucia	13	Santa Barbara Resorts	Curaçao	7
Anjo Insurance	Antigua	34	Dockwise Yacht Transport	Sant Martinique	19	Jones Maritime	USA	21	Savon de Mer	USA	MP
Art & Design	Antigua	MP	Dockyard	Trinidad	MP	KNJ Mariner	Trinidad	MP	Sea Services	Martinique	17
Art Fabrik	Grenada	MP	Dominica Marine Center	Dominica	MP	KP Marine	St. Vincent	47	Seminole Marine	Guadeloupe	9
B & C Fuel Dock	Petite Martinique	22	Dopco Travel	Grenada	8	Lagoon Marina	St. Maarten	37	Ship's Carpenter	Trinidad	MP
Bahia Redonda Marina	Venezuela	36	Douglas Yacht Services	Martinique	MP	L'Auberge des Grenadines	Bequia	46	Sling's Upholstery	Carriacou	MP
Barrefoot Yacht Charters	St. Vincent	41	Down Island Real Estate	Carriacou	MP	Le Phare Bleu	Grenada	12	Soca Sails	Trinidad	MP
Barrows Sails & Canvas	Trinidad	MP	Doyle Offshore Sails	Tortola	3	Le Ship	Martinique	MP	Soper's Hole Marina	Tortola	37
Basil's Bar	Mustique	44	Doyle's Guides	USA	42	Lennox	Trinidad	MP	Spice Island Marine	Grenada	9
Bequia Music Festival	Bequia	26	Echo Marine - Jotun Special	Trinidad	11	Lulley's Tackle	Bequia	35	St. Maarten Sails	St. Maarten	11
Bichik Services	Martinique	MP	Electropics	Bequias	MP	Maranne's Ice Cream	Bequia	43	St. Thomas Yacht Sales	St. Thomas	51
Boat Shed Brokers	Tortola	50	Electropics	Trinidad	35/48	Marc One Marine	Trinidad	MP	Supervind	Germany	34
Bogles Round House	Carriacou	45	Errol Flynn Marina	Jamaica	10	Marigot Hill Laundry	St. Lucia	MP	SVG Air	St. Vincent	20
Budget Marine	Sint Maarten	2	Falmouth Harbour Marina	Antigua	24	Maritime Yacht Sales	St. Thomas	MP	Technick	Grenada	MP
BVI Yacht Sales	Tortola	51	Fernando's Hideaway	Bequia	MP	McIntyre Bros. Ltd	Grenada	49	Tikal Arts & Crafts	Grenada	47
Camper & Nicholson's	Grenada	5	First Mate	Trinidad	MP	Mid Atlantic Yacht Services	Azores	MP	Trade Winds Cruising	Bequia	51
Captain Gourmet	Union Island	45	Flying Fish Ventures	Grenada	MP	Namvica	Venezuela	20	Trans Caribes Rallies	Guadeloupe	MP
Caribbe Grooment	Martinique	MP	Food Fair	St. Kitts	45	Nevich	Trinidad	MP	Turbulence Sails	Grenada	9
Caribbe Grooment	Martinique	33	Fortress Marine	St. Kitts	16	Northem Lights Generators	Tortola	32	Tyrral Bay Yacht Haulout	Carriacou	37
Caribbe Yachts	Guadeloupe	51	Fortress Woodworking	Trinidad	MP	Old Fort Estates	Bequia	MP	Vemasca	Venezuela	36
Carrenantilles	Martinique	MP	Frangipani Hotel	Bequia	23	Perkins Engines	Tortola	18	Venezuelean Marine Supply	Venezuela	MP
Carene Shop	Martinique	MP	Fred Marine	Guadeloupe	14	Petit Breton Antilles	Martinique	MP	Voiles Assistance	Martinique	MP
Carene Shop	Martinique	34	Gittens Engines	Trinidad	MP	Petit St. Vincent	PSV	40	Volvo	Martinique	31
Caribbean Marine Electrical	Trinidad	MP	Gourmet Foods	St. Vincent	44	Piper Marine	Bequia	MP	Wallace & Co	Bequia	35
Caribbean Propellers Ltd.	Trinidad	MP	Grenada Marine	Grenada	8	Port Marine Supply	Venezuela	MP	Wallillou Anchorage	St. Vincent	23
Caribbean Woods	Bequia	MP	Grenadines Sails	Bequia	22	Porthole Restaurant	Bequia	MP	WIND	Martinique	MP
Carriacou Silver Diving	Carriacou	MP	GRRPro-Clean	Martinique	MP	Power Boats	Trinidad	MP	WIND	Martinique	MP
CIRExpress	St. Maarten	MP	IGON Hulls	Bequia	48	Pro Marine	Trinidad	MP	Xanadu Marine	Venezuela	36
Clipper Ship	Martinique	MP	IoIaire Enterprises	UK	21/43	Psychic Readings by Diana	Antigua	MP			
Cooper Marine	USA	50	Island Dreams	Grenada	MP	Quantum Sails	Trinidad	MP			
Cuba Travel	St. Lucia	42	Island Water World	Sint Maarten	56	Renaissance Marina	Aruba	25			

MP Market Place pages 52 to 54

What's New at Island Water World

HAPPY NEW YEAR!
January

WHAT WE ALL NEED: Alternative Energy

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DuoGen DO80040 - 12V
DO80041 - 24V
Kiss KS00001 - 12V
Air X SW00021 - 12V
Air Breeze SW00041 - 12V
Aero4gen DO90412 - 12V
Aero6gen DO90612 - 12V

KYOCERA SOLAR PANELS



KY00130 - 130 watts



KY00085 - 85 watts



KY00065 - 65 watts



BRUNTON SOLARPORT 4.4



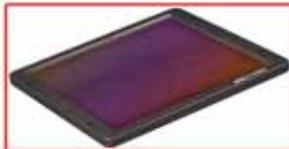
BRUNTON

4.4 watt Foldable Solar Charger
GB10044

BRUNTON SOLARFLATS



GB10018 - 1.8 watt



GB10050 - 5 watt



GB10150 - 15 watt

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