

THE JOURNAL OF THE  AMERICAN SAILING ASSOCIATION®

AMERICAN SAILING

ASA'S MEMBER EVENT • A SPECTACULAR TIME ABOARD THE ARABELLA

If you're a salty sailor, beginning greenhorn or sailor wannabe, you can relate to this. A magnificent yacht sails gracefully into the harbor. You watch her and say to yourself, "Wow! I would love to go on something like that one day."

During ASA's BVI members' event, a group of lucky sailors got to do just that on board the mega-yacht Arabella. It was a spectacular, relaxing, amazing week for everyone on board! A little about the Boat: Arabella is a 156-foot, three-masted schooner built at famed shipyard Palmer Johnson. She has teak decks, a Jacuzzi that fits six people, a cushioned sun deck and a salon with seating for up to 48 guests.



Classic lines, snow white sails and a waterline that makes gliding through the oceans of the world an unrivaled pleasure, Arabella was enjoyed by ASA members in the BVIs.

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LIVING THE DREAM • MELANIE MAXWELL REDISCOVERS JOY OF SAILING WITH FAMILY



I have had many opportunities in my life, or so I try to persuade myself! My dad was military, so as a kid I traveled a lot. Our family was stationed in Puerto Rico, Panama, and lots of places in Florida, including Key West. I have three brothers, and I was the only girl in the family. I learned very young to be as active and competitive as my brothers. It seemed wherever we lived, we were on or in the water more than on land; camping on beaches, snorkeling, sailing, scuba diving, deep sea fishing!

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Jimmy Wood

*ASA Member
Melanie Maxwell*



ASA UPDATE

With summer sailing season getting ramped up, our thoughts naturally turn to finding new challenges and interesting places to explore. ASA's FindMyCharter.com has some insider tips on what types of charter vacations you should be looking for right now.

Last-Minute Mediterranean Charters

It's the place every sailor's got to see before they go to Davy Jones' locker. Your options for destinations are broad, and last-minute deals can be had across the Med in summertime.

Three classic Mediterranean destinations are Italy, Greece and Croatia. Italy's west coast offers boundless opportunities for sailing, from the Cinque Terra in the north; to Capri, the Amalfi Coast, and Sicily in the south. On the eastern coast, the Adriatic Sea gives access to the stunning seaports of Venice, Brindisi and Ancona. Meanwhile, the Greek Islands hold an unparalleled place in sailing lore. Finally, Croatia is Europe's rising hotspot for sailing.

Early Holiday Booking

The Christmas/New Year's holiday season is one of the most popular times to charter in the warm weather of the Caribbean. Book now to ensure you get the boat, destination and dates that you want.

The Florida Keys and the nearby Bahamas are a treat for sailors of every level, while the British Virgin Islands are great for a first charter. Easy sailing conditions, beautiful scenery, and good services for charter sailors have made this a wildly popular place to sail – and people keep coming back, year after year.

Spring Break 2015

That's right – it's not too early to look ahead almost a full year to that Spring Break trip. It doesn't matter if you're only in the early stages of planning, with maybe just the kernel of an idea. We can help you choose a destination and a boat that's right for you. The pages of FindMyCharter.com are packed with information on where to go, how to prepare, and even who to bring with you!

The Charley Noble

The best time of the year is here for sailors! It's sailing season all across the U.S., and that means we at ASA are busy issuing new certifications to thousands of sailors.

Whether you're earning your first certification this summer, beefing up your resume with higher levels, or just practicing your sailing skills, this season is shaping up to be a great one. ASA has everything you need to get the most out of your summer.



First up, our new book *Bareboat Cruising Made Easy* is being released. This companion text for ASA 104 (Bareboat Cruising) will be your guide to taking that dream charter vacation anywhere in the world.

ASA's FindMyCharter.com is ready to make finding and booking that charter a cinch. Check out the site, search boats and read up on destinations. Then let our Charter Specialists take care of all the details. Find more on that in the ASA Update on the left side of this page and the feature on page 8!

Finally, we have a number of great flotillas lined up for summer and fall, including the San Juan Islands, Croatia, and the British Virgin Islands.

So, as long as you're living the sailing lifestyle, it doesn't matter if you're staying home and sailing on your local bay or lake, or heading off for a grand, exotic adventure. This summer will be a great one!

"Charley Noble" is the old time nautical name for the smokestack over a galley ... So I'll try to keep any "hot air" in the American Sailing Journal confined to this column.

THE AMERICAN SAILING JOURNAL

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FEATURE STORY

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Below decks, Arabella has 20 staterooms accommodating up to 40 passengers. She blends the beauty of sailing with the luxury of a mega yacht.

She has a rich and interesting history, once being owned by Kelly McGillis of *Top Gun* fame. McGillis sailed her across the Atlantic Ocean, a passage she talked about on *The David Letterman Show*. Arabella has hosted numerous famous and infamous guests including Dos Equis' "Most Interesting Man in the World." He held a private dinner party aboard "his" yacht last year in Manhattan!

Now Arabella is the flagship of the Manhattan Sailing School & Yacht Club and has ties to high profile sailors such as Dennis Connor and Gary Jobson. Arabella will be based in New York Harbor during the summer where she will serve as a clubhouse for members. In winter, she will return to her home in the British Virgin Islands.

We Have Arrived

We met Arabella's aptly named tender, the "Retriever" on an overcast and rainy Sunday morning. ASA representative Kathy Christensen coordinated getting everyone together and presented everyone with festive flower leis marking the beginning of a great adventure. Many ASA members were already having breakfast at Village Cay Marina and looking forward to the short dinghy ride to the Arabella who was anchored in the bay. Our luggage was transported first, passengers second. As we made our way to the yacht, she looked magnificent and huge. I had never sailed on a ship this large before, and I was really looking forward to it. We carefully made our way from the dinghy to the gangway where the crew was waiting to help us aboard.

Once onboard everyone located their cabins, unpacked and checked out their cool ASA goody bags. Thanks, ASA! A muster was called in the cockpit of the Arabella.

A great group of grinning ASA member sailors gathered and were eager to start their adventure. Captain Debbie, who has been on the Arabella for 10 years in various crew positions made us feel welcomed and in good hands. She introduced first mate, Frank; engineer, Stevie; and the rest of the crew. We were briefed on the schedule for the week, safety procedures, man-overboard drills and, most importantly, food. As the crew weighed anchor, and we motored out of the harbor, I wondered if we were really going to sail or if the sails were just for show. I was thrilled to see the crew ready to raise sail, all eight of them! With a combination of hydraulic and manual winches, the sails on the three masts with staysail schooner rigging unfurled easily. We



Members pulled into gorgeous, blue anchorages, the envy of the boats around them, to enjoy the lush, green hills of the islands.

watched as mainsails, topsails and various headsails easily caught the Caribbean trade winds on our starboard side as we prepared to tack up the Sir Francis Drake Channel.

Our first stop was The Baths at Virgin Gorda. We anchored outside of Spanish Town. From there, we took the Retriever to shore and boarded an open air taxi to the Top of the Baths. It's a short walk down to the beach and the entrance to The Baths and Devil's Bay. Known as one of the highlights of a visit to the BVIs, The Baths is one of the most popular attractions on the island. The Baths are made of giant boulders or batholiths which were brought to the surface by volcanic eruptions thousands of years ago. They are scattered about forming beautiful grottos and tranquil pools. No matter how many times I have visited the Baths (and it's well into the double digits), their beauty never ceases to amaze me. Once through The Baths and back to the top, we grab a Piña Colada to-go and catch taxis back to Spanish Town.

It's a short sail to Marina Cay, a small picturesque island with an interesting history detailed in the book *My Island Paradise* which was later turned into a film. That night dinner was served onboard with rum drinks for everyone. It was quite a day! Later was the first of many nights spent star gazing or relaxing somewhere on deck or in the fresh water Jacuzzi. The weather had cleared, and so many stars were splashed across the sky.

After a peaceful night, we awoke to a wonderful breakfast with fresh fruit, pastries, eggs, bacon – the works! After breakfast, the crew weighed anchor and Arabella began her sail upwind. We anchored in North Sound near the world-famous Bitter End Yacht Club with all the other grand mega yachts. I have to say we were the prettiest sailing yacht in the harbor!

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LIVING THE DREAM

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Then my own life came into play; and I lost touch with that part of myself: college, marriage, a daughter, work. As time moved along, I realized how much I missed those days of youth, energy, fun and relaxation. I would often find myself dreaming of a time in my future when I could relax again and not have to worry about deadlines, commitments, decisions, bills and life's responsibilities. I grew more and more determined to reclaim the part of my life that was missing, and my motto to "Work Hard, Dream Often" eventually became "Work Hard, Play Harder."

A year or two ago, I finally decided to stop dreaming; that now was the time to actually participate. My daughter was getting ready to graduate high school, and I decided we should spend our summer together sailing. Then came the research. What was the best way to help my daughter learn to sail and help me to regain my sailing experience? After months of making calls, combing the internet, and getting advice from family and friends, I decided to take the ASA 101 Beginner's Sailing Class through a local marina. Once we registered for the class, it was not long before we received our ASA 101 training textbooks. My daughter and I were so excited that we also scheduled an eight-session personal instructor sailing class. It turned out our personal instructor was a very experienced, ASA-certified instructor. It was then that I realized how much I missed the thrill and relaxation of sailing, and, unbeknownst to me, my daughter was falling in love with sailing too!

Together with ASA, we learned sailing safety, the correct names and parts of a sailboat including lines and sails, basic knots, how to use the wind with the sails, and so much more. It did not take long for my previous sailing experience to come back to me and for me to realize how much of real life I had missed. My daughter and I completed ASA 101 with flying colors and a renewed comfort and confidence with sailing. That summer and fall, we rented every type of sailboat you could imagine. We had a blast! Even my husband was starting to look forward to sailing.

Then came winter. With plenty of time to think about it, my daughter and I decided we wanted our own sailboat! That way we could go out whenever we wanted, where we wanted, and with whom we wanted. Okay, so now more research – all winter long! What would be the most affordable, comfortable, reliable and safe sailboat for our family? We decided on the International Marine West Wight Potter 19 Sailboat, complete with sails and trailer built by Ken Lange in Inglewood, Calif. Less than the price of a new car, very safe and stable, trailer-able (so no dock fees; I park it in the yard), easy to put in the water and take out, with all the comforts needed for a



The International Marine West Wight Potter 19 Sailboat was just what Melanie Maxwell was looking for and found. Now, living the dream can be a daily reality for her and her family.

day trip or weekender. Not only that, it represented an opportunity to "Live the Dream."

We went to the 2013 Spring Annapolis Sailboat Show to check out the selection, and right before our eyes was our sailboat. It was just like in the movies when the light glows in the background giving a heavenly image of your sparkling new future in the foreground, and a voice tells you, "This is the one!"

And now, yep, I am living the dream! I spend my time relaxing on the water with the wind in my sails and in my hair (and I don't care if my hair is a mess). My most stressful decision is deciding which restaurant I will sail into for a delightful meal and drink. (They don't mind shorts, t-shirts and sneakers.) When sailing I am often found reading a book, dropping a fishing line, or just listening to my favorite music in the fresh, open air. I sail wherever the wind takes me.

And I must mention the people, the wonderful Sailing Folk! Remember the times when people would stop and lend you a hand, and you could trust them to help in your time of need? Well, guess what? They are still here! Every time I go out sailing, I meet the most charming and helpful folks in my life. Sometimes it's just to chat or discuss sailing experiences, share a cold beverage, or see a newfangled sailing gadget, but more importantly everyone offers help when it is needed. There really are good people in this world, they are called sailors, and they too are living the dream.

Now I'm getting ready to take the next levels of ASA training. Each level of ASA exposes me to more opportunities and knowledge with sailing. Maybe someday I can help to train other new sailors. I have enjoyed "Living the Dream" with sailing so much that I am also hoping to work with another group of sailors to build up my sailing community. Beautiful isn't it? An opportunity to "Live the Dream" and help others "Live the Dream," too!

MARINE TECHNOLOGY • MY LITTLE GREEN NAVIGATOR

Sailing should be easy and natural, but good sailors still need to manage some details to keep things smooth. Need reliable crew to help with navigation? Luckily, a little green genie called *Android* is available.

(Note to Apple fans: iPhone & iPad are indeed technical marvels that helped create the market and demand for this type of application. You love them and will never change ... I understand. Most articles on sailing apps have focused on Apple Apps. Android users need a little love so this offers them a new tool. This Android app is also on iTunes so, read on and enjoy.)

As a tech junkie, I have tried a dozen navigation apps: some great, some okay, some awful. Those that didn't perform got uninstalled quickly. Here is my favorite nav app to make day-sails and passages easier and safer.

There are scores of charting and piloting apps. Some are free, others charge. Free ones most often use open-to-the-public NOAA digital charts from the web; they display charts and offer some plotting and piloting tools. Some are much easier and more versatile than others. After much trial and error, I picked Navionics.

For good reasons, it's the largest selling Android (and iOS) charting software. It has clear, detailed charts and an easy interface. You can plot courses, instantly check distance and bearings, and watch your vessel progress onscreen using the built-in GPS. The charts are filled with POI (Points of Interest) ... marinas, info on marks, and services with addresses and telephone numbers. You can make and store your own markers and routes for future reference. This "local knowledge" can be shared, if you allow, with Navionics which pushes it back to everyone on the next update. (Navionics receives 2,000 user tips a day.) Want GeoTagged photos as a trip log? Done. You can also view articles and text guides.

What won't it do? It won't run your autopilot, make coffee for your next watch or clean the head. Buying a program rather than using a free "hobby" program is a personal decision but, for me, quality, reliability and ease of use made this a clear winner. To save limited memory space, Navionics includes usable but less detailed reference charts. It is easy to download detailed vector charts of

any waters you plan to visit: Zoom in on your destination and tap "Download Charts." Assuming you are online, detailed charts for that displayed area are quickly downloaded/stored for offline use. This clever compromise gives full depth, POI, tide and current information, marks and more for your new cruising grounds while providing planning-only chart coverage elsewhere. Navionics has different ways to deliver their product:

Navionics Marine & Lakes: USA includes the whole U.S. in one download from the Google Play Store (\$9.99 for the basic smartphone version or \$49.99 for the HD tablet version with more data and details)

Navionics Marine & Lakes: US & Canada HD covers the U.S., Canada plus Northern Mexico for \$54.95

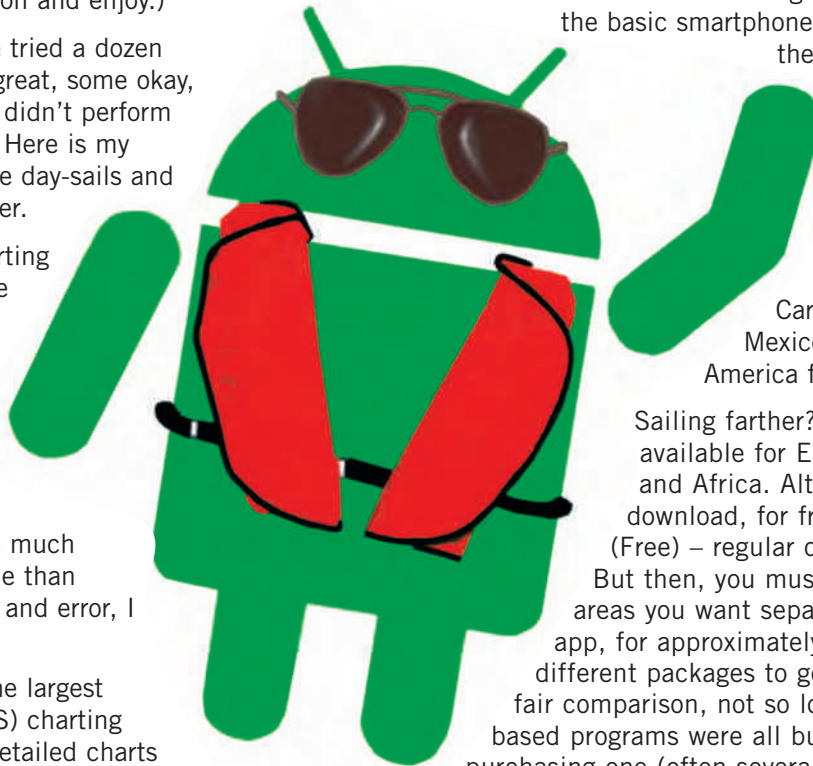
Carib & S. America HD Mexico, Caribbean and S. America for \$54.95

Sailing farther? Similar packages are available for Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa. Alternatively, you can download, for free, Navionics Boating (Free) – regular or HD tablet versions.

But then, you must buy whichever chart areas you want separately, from inside the app, for approximately the same cost but in different packages to get the needed detail. For fair comparison, not so long ago, \$500 laptop-based programs were all but useless without purchasing one (often several) digital chart sets at significant cost to cruise anywhere. Two HD apps above, give detailed coverage from Barrow, Alaska, to Cape Horn for just a touch over \$100 including software and free updates. That is quite a bargain. If your needs are more limited, you get smartphone coverage of U.S. waters for \$9.99.

This is just the start for Android apps. Other affordable software gives you AIS support, GRIB forecasts, real-time NOAA weather buoy data, an electronic recording hand-bearing compass, GPS speed and heading display, wind and tide predictors, weather radar, celestial tools and references, anchor alarms, measurement conversions, race timing, knots, ship's bells, and nautical reference books. Your little green sailing buddy is ready to help. Watch this space for future tips. Fair Winds!

Captain Lan Yarbrough has been an ASA instructor for 25 years. He has sailed in the U.S., Mexico, Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas. He helped write the new ASA 101 and 103 textbooks.



START BAREBOATING THIS SEASON!!

Private Live-Aboard Sailing Programs

Do you dream of chartering a new beautiful sailing yacht in the Caribbean or reaching south to Mexico and beyond aboard your own voyaging yacht? Since 1989, it's been a reality for many of our students and it can be a reality for you too when you learn to sail from one of our ASA certified sailing instructors. Our sailing program is designed for those who are seeking the skills required to Bareboat Charter from an international company such as The Moorings or Sunsail; or are interested in private sailboat ownership. Through our sailing program you can become certified to expand your own sailing experience. Our sailing coaches are USCG licensed Yachtmasters and certified sailing instructors. We have been to many charter bases around the world, both professionally and as customers. We can tell you firsthand about different locations and fleets of sailboats around the world and help you plan your dream bareboat charter, or give unbiased advice on acquiring a family sailing yacht.

If you fly to San Diego, an SDSA.com instructor will meet you at San Diego's Lindberg Field and bring you to Shelter Island Yacht Basin. Upon arrival, you'll board one of our beautiful 30' sailboats. All are limited editions specifically purchased and outfitted to teach the art of sailing. All running rigging is color-coded and labeled. All of our yachts are equipped with all the gear sailors need to prepare for chartering including Stackpac mainsails, roller furling headsails, rigid boom vang, custom deck layouts, Yanmar and Universal inboard diesel engines, wheel steering, self-tailing winches, propane stoves, and BBQ's. There are also full linens and towels on board for your comfort. Just show up and sail. Unlike other sailing schools, our private courses do not exceed two students.

After docking each evening, your instructor departs the boat and students may stay aboard to begin experiencing the fun, privacy, and thrill of life aboard a yacht.

The seven-day 103/104 ASA Basic Coastal Cruising/Bareboat Chartering certification is our most popular program. A typical day might include a 15-mile close reach in the ocean to Mission Bay, or you may set sail for South San Diego Bay where Glorietta Bay is located. You'll learn new skills like piloting, and sailing a yacht using a chart, the buoys, and the hand-bearing compass. You'll get practice at steering in waves, and gybing in the ocean. Heaving to, reefing, man overboard recovery, docking under sail and power are all taught in this class. Students will practice planning a sailing trip on the spot with various wind and tide conditions and pick the best locations for the day. Late in the afternoon, students will dock and the instructor departs the boat.

At the end of this class, students get to bareboat on their own for two days. You'll leave with an ASA Bareboat Chartering Certificate, two days of logged bareboat time and a confidence that can only be gained through experience.

email: sailing@SDSA.com

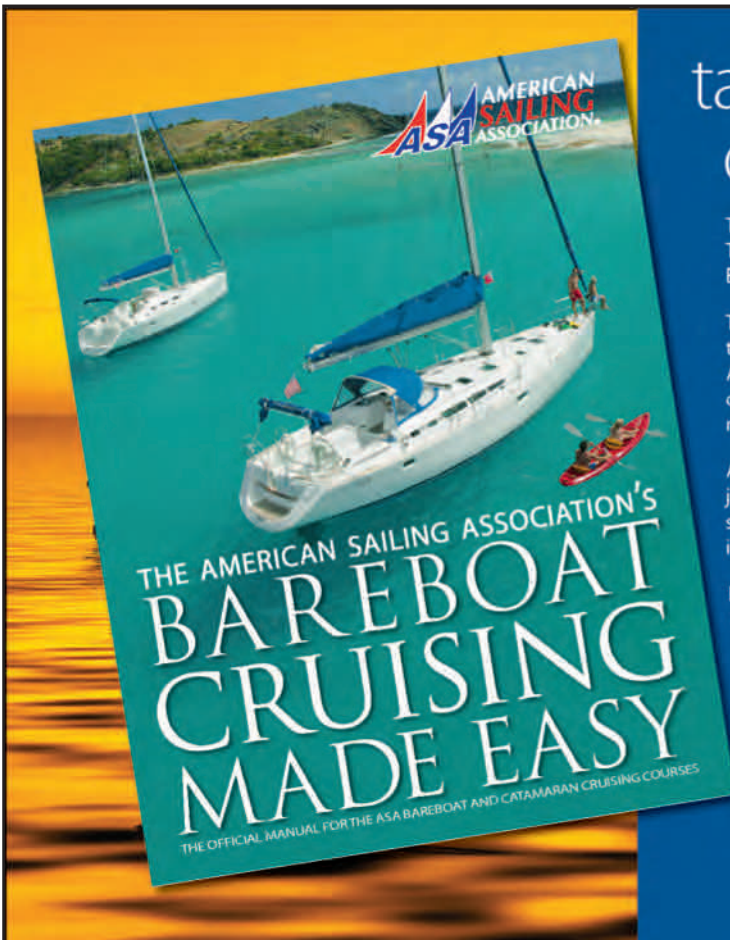


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Prices indicated are for TWO (2) STUDENTS, GROUND TRANSPORTATION AND PRIVATE LIVE-ABOARD PRIVILEGES!			
ASA/Certification Cert Levels	3-Day	5-Day	7-Day
101/103 BS/BCC	\$2,850	\$3,050	\$3,550
101/103/104 BS/BCC/BB	CHALLENGE CLASS \$2,750	\$3,250	\$3,750
103/104 BCC/BB	\$2,650	\$3,150	\$3,650
104/105/106 BB/CN/ACC	\$3,450	\$3,950	\$4,550
104/105/106 BB/CN/ACC Catalina 42	\$4,450	\$5,200	\$6,050
YES! These prices are for two people, NOT per Person! There are no additional charges associated with our course!			
***For the best learning experience, take the 7-day, 5 days of instruction, followed by two beautiful days of solo bareboat sailing.			

Check out our specials page and save hundreds!

www.sdsa.com



take your **Education** on your **Vacation**

Teaching confident sailing has been ASA's passion for over 30 years. That's why we are so excited to introduce our latest book; Bareboat Cruising Made Easy.

This quintessential resource is perfect for any sailor looking to take a bareboat charter sailing vacation with family and friends. Accompanied by our Bareboat Cruising and Catamaran Cruising courses, Bareboat Cruising Made Easy will prepare you for a safe and relaxing trip whether your dreams have one hull or two.

And when you're ready to plan your vacation, the perfect boat is just a click away. FindMyCharter.com is ASA's full service charter site created especially for our members. We offer trusted and individualized attention specifically tailored to your vacation dreams.

Buy a book, take sailing lessons, charter a boat in an exotic location or around the corner, just remember...

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LET ASA BOOK YOUR NEXT CHARTER!

Everyone has his/her own reasons for becoming a sailor. Some are drawn by the history and lore, some by the dynamic elegance of the sailboat itself, and some by the call to adventure—distant islands, sandy beaches, and exotic ports. What every sailor has in common is a yearning for the particular feeling that sailing can elicit, a combination of freedom, exhilaration, and peace.

However, the practical side of taking a sailing charter can often seem daunting. There are so many places in the world to go, so many boats to choose from, and a seemingly endless array of decisions to make! When the point of taking a charter vacation is to experience freedom, exhilaration, and peace, it can be discouraging to feel like you have to navigate a logistical maze first.

That's why ASA created FindMyCharter.com, a specialized charter service designed to walk you through the entire chartering experience, from choosing a destination, to the reservation process, to actually stepping aboard your boat.

FindMyCharter.com is not just a service for booking your charter (though we will do that for you!), it's also your one-stop shop for information on every aspect of chartering—and all of our resources are free.

Here's a look at some of the great resources available on FindMyCharter.com:

Charter Destinations

We profile dozens of the world's most sought-after sailing destinations, helping you make an informed choice about where you want to go. In addition to highlighting local landmarks, we offer a sample itinerary, insider tips on prevailing weather, wind, sea conditions, and currents, as well as advice on the best time to go.

Our Charter Destination pages cover all of the globe's sailing hotspots, including the Caribbean, from the BVIs down to Grenada, North America, including Use our pages as an introductory "cruising guide" to help you decide on a destination. There will be plenty of time for in-depth research as you're anxiously awaiting the date of your charter!

Charter Tips

Once you've selected a destination, it's time to get into the details of preparing for your charter. FindMyCharter.com's Charter Tips tab will have you up and running in no time.



We give you all the parameters you should consider when choosing a destination and time of year for your charter, empowering you to make the best decision possible. We help you plan an itinerary—and also show you how to deviate from it when you want to (after all, this vacation is all about freedom!). We even offer advice on choosing who to bring with you! Depending on whether it's a trip with family, friends, co-workers, or someone else, we walk you through all the factors you should consider.

One of the most important decisions you'll make about your charter vacation is the boat. Should it be a monohull or a catamaran? Both have their advantages, depending on the location, the nature of your party, and the conditions. What size should it be? Too small and it might be cramped, too big and it might be unwieldy for your crew to handle. We'll make sure you pick a boat that suits your needs perfectly.

Our Charter Tips also cover provisioning (stocking the boat with food, drinks, and supplies), explaining your options and helping you choose between provisioning the boat yourself vs. having the charter company do it for you. In addition, we have a thorough checklist of what to pack, including specialty items you may not have thought of, but that may be necessary in certain climates.

Finally, we'll walk you through what to expect when you check out your boat at the charter dock, and give you a complete overview of the booking process.

Search for Boats

Use our powerful, built-in search tool to search a

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FEATURED FACILITY • SAIL SOLOMONS

Sailors of all levels find safe harbor at Sail Solomons. “You don’t just take a class there; you open the door to a new life on the water,” says Mark Ramsdell, one of Sail Solomons’ first students and a proud boat owner.

Located at the mouth of the Patuxent River on the Chesapeake Bay, Sail Solomons offers a full range of ASA certification courses, tune-up sessions, and tailored “On Your Own Boat” training. Basic Keelboat graduates can join the dynamic sailing club for ready access to the Sail Solomons day-sailor fleet, and racers participate in local races and national-level regattas. Cruisers select from a world-class bareboat yacht charter fleet and Caribbean flotillas. Owners Lisa and Andy Batchelor proudly claim, “We are dedicated to providing an exceptional sailing experience!”

Andy and Lisa moved to Solomons, Md., after retiring from careers in the Royal Air Force (Andy) and U.S. Navy (Lisa). Fully immersed in the middle-bay sailing community, the couple recognized the need for quality sailing and cruising instruction, and launched Sail Solomons in early 2007.

Both USCG captains and ASA instructors with extensive coastal and offshore experience, Andy and Lisa were the sole instructors and operators for the first few years. They now have a staff of six instructors and offer ASA certification courses and tailored instruction throughout the year. Sail Solomons has expanded to include a popular sailing club, yacht charters on the Chesapeake, and charter brokerage across the globe.

The club began as a cost-effective way for new Basic Keelboat graduates to rent day-sailors and build skipper time, but has taken on a life of its own. Members enjoy monthly barbeques and special sailing events; many have formed close friendships and now sail and travel together throughout the year.

In the winter, Sail Solomons moves south to conduct courses and flotillas throughout the Caribbean. Students and club members are engaged in year-round sailing and have an opportunity to try a variety of yachts in exotic locations from the Virgin Islands to Grenada.



The Drum Point Lighthouse and skipjack Dee of St. Mary’s are Solomons icons. (Below) The faces on these Basic Keelboat graduates express the joys of sailing.



Simply Outstanding

While Sail Solomons is relatively new, it is the most celebrated ASA facility on the Chesapeake and has been awarded “ASA Outstanding School” each year from 2008-2012. The focus on professional, quality sail training is evident in every aspect of the school and is applauded by their loyal students. ASA noticed, too, and selected Lisa and Andy to write ASA’s new *Bareboat Cruising* text. Andy’s role as an instructor evaluator means continuing education for all instructors, ensuring consistent, quality training on pace with evolving sailboats. Sail Solomons’ instructors have been recognized as “ASA Outstanding Instructors” from 2007 through 2013.

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FEATURED SAILBOAT • BAVARIA YACHTS' VISION

The new Vision 42 from Germany's Bavaria Yachts has quickly established itself as the standard-setter for premium construction quality, luxurious comfort, and easy handling in the mid-size cruising class.

Following the highly-touted introduction of the Bavaria Vision 46, the second in the new line, the Vision 42 delivers the luxury, performance, and innovation of the Vision Series in this 42-foot design. The Vision 42 has been available in the U.S. since the spring of 2013.

The Vision Series was designed, from the start, to embody the cruising sailor's wish list. The development process for the Vision started in 2011, with an intensive process of consulting hundreds of cruising sailors from around the world about what would make their perfect sailing cruiser. Bavaria then combined the expert power of Farr Yacht Design and the exclusive British design firm, Design Unlimited, to deliver the ground-breaking Vision Series.

"What is striking about this boat is the attention to detail and the endless list of thoughtful features, some high-tech, and some are just common sense, executed simply and elegantly," remarked Bavaria Yachts U.S. CEO Kenny Feld, "And, of course, the signature German quality construction and finish that makes Bavaria the best-built boat in its class."

The collaboration between Bavaria Yachts and Farr Yacht Design has delivered a hull design and sail design that provide remarkable ease of sailing on all points of sail. The simple but powerful sail plan combines a very slightly overlapping head sail, with a large main, wastes no effort and offers easily managed lines and loads.

The unique cockpit design with offset companionway allows for a large cockpit table for dining with guests, foldable for intimate couple dining, and lower-able for day/lounging area for two, while always providing easy access to the interior – an innovative living cockpit design, not yet seen in the production cruiser class. The Vision 42 combines elegant interiors, with poise and control in both close quarters and long passages, and refreshing ease-of-sailing.

Bavaria Yachts' unique factory-direct sales and service model offers premium support levels, directly from Bavaria Yachts, no matter the owner's sailing waters,



Bavaria's Vision offers yachts built to an owner's specifications. Here wood lends an air of tradition to a boat equipped with all the modern amenities one could ask for.

For more information ...

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throughout the entire ownership lifecycle. And, as always with Bavaria Yachts, each boat is built to an owner's specifications, including an array of wood and upholstery options to choose from.

Fully equipped sail-away prices for the Vision 42 will range from approximately \$300,000 to \$370,000, depending on options selected. In addition to the Vision 42 and Vision 46, Bavaria Yachts also offers six models in its Cruiser Series, ranging from the Cruiser 33 to the Cruiser 56. Visit www.bavariayachts.com for more information.

Specifications

Naval Architect Farr Yacht Design
 Interior Design Design Unlimited UK
 Length Overall 42'
 Waterline Length 37'5"
 Beam 13'3"
 Short Draft 5'4"
 Deep Draft 6'9"
 Displacement 21,605 pounds
 Headroom in Salon 6'6"
 Water Capacity (max) 96 gallons
 Engine 40 HP Volvo-Penta
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SAILING DESTINATION

Narragansett Bay, the Cape and the Islands • Story by Rob Lawnsby



*Photo by Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce
The sun sets over a traditional way of life coming to its daily close.*

Lobster dripping with fresh butter, eaten looking over the harbor where your sailboat gently rests at anchor; or how about wandering through gilded rooms in a 100-year-old grand mansion built by a railroad magnate; or let's finish up a day's sail nestled in a quaint harbor in a quiet New England village with the church bells ringing on the hour. All this is possible in a day's sail or less from the central hub of Newport, Rhode Island. The winds are steady and predictable, the harbors are many and varied, and the sailing can be easy or challenging depending on where you choose to go and explore.

Rhode Island may be the smallest state in the union, but it boasts more shoreline per capita than any other state; and Cape Cod and its islands are only a day sail away. Welcome to one of the best cruising destinations in the world. Plus the July/August average temperature for

the state is a high of 82 and low of 64.

Rhode Island is made up of a large bay in the middle of the state that encompasses 35 islands. The one "big" city is Providence at the head of the bay, and at the mouth of Narragansett Bay sits the town of Newport. Right in between is the delightful town of Bristol. Fascinating history is everywhere. Rhode Island has a history of very independent-minded citizens that historically think less government is better. They were the last colony to sign the Declaration of Independence.

That said, Rhode Islanders were also serious shipping moguls with fleets of square riggers going all over the world for trade. Rhode Island has always had a large boat-building industry with a penchant for innovation. Even today not only are there a number of production sailboat manufacturers in

this small state, but probably the largest concentration of composite manufacturers (and supporting industries) in the world.

Cape Cod and Islands

Nearby Cape Cod and its many islands are also rich in history and have their own story. Geologically it is a Terminal Moraine. That means a glacier stopped moving 10,000 years ago and left a curved mound of debris which makes up this lovely area – so much history. Before the Pilgrims set up camp in Plymouth in 1620, there was a settlement on both Provincetown and Cuttyhunk Island. But Plymouth's claim to fame is it was the first "permanent settlement." New Bedford and Nantucket were two of the largest whaling ports on the east coast in the early 1800s bringing unheard of wealth to some individuals. Everyone has heard of Martha's Vineyard as the

For more information

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playground of presidents and the summer destination of all who like beautiful beaches and lobster. Nantucket, standing out to sea, has a personality all its own that is hard to describe. Remote, smallish, independent and stately, without being stuffy.

Fly into Providence Airport and you are a short drive to several bareboat charter operations. What you will find is a half dozen entrepreneurs with 10 boats or so that each have organized a fleet of locally owned sailboats. The owners share their boats with charter folks with the charter company acting as middleman. Bluenose Yacht Charters, Narragansett Sailing Charters, Bareboat Sailing Charters, and Swift Yacht Charters are the bigger players in the area. All are located in Narragansett Bay, although Swift Yacht Charters has some boats in other locations. So let's say you've picked your boat, loaded up your supplies, and are ready to go. Where to go and what to see?

Narragansett Bay

Summer winds are almost always southwest which is right up the bay. Tides are about four feet, and currents are relatively light in the bay, except in a few constricted areas. Narragansett Bay is about 20 miles by 12 miles and broken up into three passages by the islands; east passage, west passage, and Sakonnet River to the far west. West Passage is the main shipping channel. Providence itself is a large commercial port and generally not a big draw. As you head south down the west passage and get right in the central area of the bay, you will find the most quaint harbor and town of Bristol.



Photo by Orme van der Wal

(Above) A day of strong winds lends excitement to sailors racing along in a beautifully varnished traditional 14-meter yacht. (Below) The church spires rise above the sailboats masts, but cannot compete with their lure.

This harbor is a must see, and many like it better than Newport as it is not a tourist area. It has wonderful restaurants, a fascinating maritime museum, plus a gentle feel to it. There are town moorings for rent without launch service, or call Bristol Marine who has moorings and a launch for \$40 per night. Quito's is a small seafood market and restaurant on the water with unpretentious, reasonable and excellent fresh seafood; or there is Dewolfe's Tavern, elegant with an interesting menu, located in an 18th century building used to store cargo during the triangle trade era. Plus there are a dozen other restaurants that will delight. Not a big tourist town, but it has nice art galleries and antique shops. The Herreshoff Marine Museum tells the story of wooden boat building history in Bristol in the late 1800s up to 1950. All this is located on the waterfront, and there is lots of room to easily anchor 100 boats.



Photo by Orme van der Wal

continued on following page

SAILING DESTINATION

continued from previous page

Right across East Passage is Potter's Cove on Prudence Island. A charming and quiet place surrounded by a nature preserve, where tranquility will seep into your soul. From here you can cross over to East Passage and visit the quintessential New England village of Wickford, head down to Newport, or sail down the Sakonnet River passing vineyards and rolling hills. There is a good anchorage at the end of each passage before you leave the bay for the sound. Near the end of West Passage is the large harbor of Newport with every facility, marina, mooring, store, restaurant, and fudge shop that you would ever want; and across from it, the quiet village of Jamestown with moorings and a gentle main street with several nice restaurants, large hardware store and the like.

Newport is a unique blend of commercial fishing boats, megayachts, cruising boats, racing machines and all sorts of interesting vessels and people. There is an adequate anchorage, but it fills and getting enough scope out can be a challenge with the crowded conditions. The harbormaster is friendly and can be reached on channel 9. Oldport Marine has many transient moorings on a 'first come first served' basis for only \$45. That includes launch service. Give them a call on 68 as you enter the harbor. There is so much to see and do here it is hard to know where to start. Fort Adams tour, harbor tour, sail on a magnificent schooner, Museum of Yachting, and entrepreneurial teenagers selling newspapers, baked goods, raw bar, trash pick-up, and giving local knowledge are all part of the experience. And the boats ... your jaw will drop. But it is busy, busy, busy. Interesting, but not serene.

The Cape and Islands

So now you have poked around Narragansett Bay for a few days and "The Cape and Islands" beckons. You will be going to a cruising area that is challenging and not for the inexperienced. Currents get much faster. Fog is part of the picture. And, if you make a navigational mistake, you hit a rock (compared to Narragansett Bay where you generally hit sand or mud.) There is Block Island 15 miles directly upwind, but 20 miles on a broad reach will bring you to Cuttyhunk which is the gateway to this spectacular area. Cuttyhunk is special – 50 moorings in a completely protected harbor for \$35.

Walk the village, buy seafood at the dock, or from the travelling raw bar that will come to you.

From Cuttyhunk you *must* consult your current tables and plan your departure accordingly if Martha's Vineyard is your destination. Buzzards Bay not so much. Most folks are drawn to Martha's Vineyard. It would take a book to cover the Vineyard, but the three harbors with the siren's song are Menemsha, Vineyard Haven, and Edgartown. There is Oak Bluffs, but it is crowded and noisy, and there is little privacy on your boat as they raft boats at the moorings.

Menemsha is a sleepy harbor with a very friendly harbormaster and complete protection, but it is small. 16 new transient slips were just added, and a bulkhead

where boats are tied up. Vineyard Haven is the big commercial harbor of the Vineyard. If you get there early enough, you may get a mooring behind the breakwater – excellent shuttle service all around the island, or you can rent transportation here. This is where the big ferries come in. This is also the main shopping area.

30 sailing miles from Vineyard Haven is Nantucket. Those 30 miles are in shallow Nantucket Sound and most of it is upwind. Fog is common. This is only for the most experienced, and it is a long trip from Narragansett Bay to Nantucket and back in a week. It is generally not recommended. A note about the trip back – any good sailor wants current with them, and when leaving Martha's Vineyard, you must plan for current of two-plus knots in Vineyard Sound. The southwest winds build

up in the afternoon and oppose this current. It can be a brutal ride down that sound towards Narragansett Bay with 20 knots of wind opposing that kind of current. Try to do it in the morning before the wind builds, or as the current is changing.

So if you are looking for comfortable summer temperatures, good predictable winds for sailing, a multitude of pleasant and interesting anchorages, and lots of activities for diversion; this is the place. Come enjoy our little bit of sailing heaven!

Rob Lawnsby is owner of Narragansett Sailing School LLC and Narragansett Sailing Charters LLC. A lifelong sailor with extensive cruising experience, he keeps coming back to his favorite cruising area described above. He lives aboard year round in Rhode Island on his 35-foot Southerly, Mon IIe.



*Photo by the Rhode Island Tourism Division
The down-east charm of the area is exemplified
in its lovely lighthouses like the Castle Hill
Lighthouse and traditional schooners.*



Staff enjoy a beautiful day at Sail Solomons waterfront office at Zahniser's Yachting Center.

FEATURED FACILITY

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For more information ...

Visit Sail Solomons at www.sailsi.com, Sail Solomons Facebook page, or directly at info@sailsi.com or 410.326.4917.

Every Sail Solomons instructor is ASA certified and USCG licensed. Life-long sailors with varied cruising or racing backgrounds, all have a passion for sharing the sport with others. Instructor Jeff Carlsen notes, "After enjoying two years of full-time, live aboard cruising with my wife and four children, I have first-hand experience to share with students and families learning the cruising lifestyle."

Fleet and Courses

The Sail Solomons fleet is ideal for training sailors at all levels. Most of the students are adults exploring the possibilities of the cruising lifestyle, and Sail Solomons helps them achieve that goal. Introductory and Basic Keelboat courses are taught on Catalina Capri 22s outfitted with roller-furling jibs, classic mainsails and outboard motors. These boats are then available to ASA 101 graduates for rental or club membership, allowing them to build their experience as skippers in a comfortable environment. Coastal Cruising students step up to a Beneteau 32, building experience on a larger boat with an inboard diesel engine, jiffy-reefing and cruising amenities. Bareboat Cruising students sail one of the 40-foot Jeanneaus, heading off to explore the Chesapeake on a top-notch cruising boat. Having a continuum of boats for each course builds skills and confidence at each level and gives the students a visible, tangible goal.

With a fleet of eight boats, Sail Solomons is a small school, by design. The size allows more personalized

instruction, tailored charter service and attention to detail. Instructors are always available to clarify technical points and suggest next steps in the sailing continuum. Students, club members and charter guests keep coming back because "clients" become more like family and enjoy the friendship and camaraderie of the Sail Solomons community. Instructor Charlie Schmitz, who attained his certifications specifically to teach for Sail Solomons, explains, "It's so much more than a school; it's a place to get a lifestyle lift!"

Andy and Lisa cruised for two years on their own 47-foot boat, making four ocean passages between Solomons and the Caribbean, and training students along the way. The experience they gained in selecting and preparing the boat, passage making, and live-aboard cruising has been invaluable and is very much in demand by consulting prospective cruisers. Andy relates stories of clients who are now cruising their own boats, from the Chesapeake to the Caribbean. He notes, "It's so gratifying to help our students achieve their dreams and to share in their success stories."

America's Happiest Seaside Town

Located just an hour's drive south of Annapolis and the Washington, D.C., beltway, Solomons, Md., has been named one of "America's Happiest Seaside Towns" by *Coastal Living Magazine*. Lisa notes, "We're close by, but a world away – and we love living and sailing here."

From a sailor's standpoint, Solomons offers deep, sheltered water, plenty of space to sail, idyllic anchorages and premier marinas. Not to mention an assortment of fabulous restaurants and the world-famous Tiki Bar! Sail Solomons enjoys a well-cultivated synergy with their host marina, the beautifully appointed Zahniser's Yachting Center. With full access to marina facilities and atmosphere, new sailors are readily enticed into the sailing lifestyle. Marina slip holders have trusted, onsite assistance to help bring their own sailing to the next level.

Solomons enjoys a rich maritime history, serving as a shipbuilding port and oyster capital. Lisa and Andy are both captains of *Dee of St. Mary's*, the 81-foot, oyster-dredging skipjack newly owned and operated by the Calvert Marine Museum as an educational platform. Besides getting to sail an iconic treasure, it's one way the couple give back to their community.

The folks at Sail Solomons are building and nurturing a sailing community that has brought hundreds of new sailors of all ages to the sport and sailing lifestyle. If only that magic could be bottled and distributed, the world would be a happier place.

MEMBER PROFILE • JIMMY WOOD

My wife, Shirley, and I live in Sumter, S.C., and are members of Wateree Sailing Club and sail on Wateree Lake in Camden, S.C., as often as possible. After 25 years without sailing, I introduced Shirley to sailing on our honeymoon in the Bahamas on a resort Hobie Cat and then bought an AquaCat 12.5 shortly after returning home. Five years later, we realized we wanted something larger and more comfortable, so we bought our first keelboat – a 1986 Hunter 23 and named it Palmetto Moon. We now own a 1999 Hunter 260 and have renamed the 23 Carolina Moon and renamed the 260 Palmetto Moon.

One of the best things my mother ever “made me do” was to take sailing lessons at Wateree Sailing Club when I was 12. I’m now the acting commodore of the club. It has been quite the learning experience for me since the club is an all-volunteer organization. I have to balance time spent on keeping the club active and viable with my work as a professional photographer. Anyone who has been involved with volunteer work knows the feeling. This is not always easy since sailing is more fun than any job – no matter how much you love what you do for a living.

Even though sailing came back easily to me, I knew I needed instruction on keelboat sailing. Enter Brian Adams and Lanier Sailing Academy. Brian interviewed me on the phone and determined I needed instruction on the water, but knew enough terminology that I could skip the day of classroom work. I passed the practical exam easily (man overboard wasn’t so easy) and made close to a perfect score on the written exam. With the course came my first year’s ASA membership and a subscription to *Sailing* magazine. Other than sailing skills, the most important thing I learned from Brian was, “Relax, Jimmy. Sailing is supposed to be fun.”

I took the course seriously and wanted to learn everything I could to keep Shirley and our guests safe. I still hear Brian telling me to relax when I find myself getting too wrapped up in proper sail trim.

We take many day trips on Wateree Lake and have spent several nights on the boat. Our favorite destinations are Lake Wateree State Park for ice cream and The Retreat restaurant for lunch. Wateree Lake has many sheltered coves that are perfect for swimming and grilling while at anchor. Our sailing club sponsors several group sails throughout the year along with covered-dish social



Photo by Shirley Wood
The author, Jimmy Wood, has apparently learned the lesson, “Relax, Jimmy. Sailing is supposed to be fun,” as he smiles and teaches Molly and Lucy Yarborough.

gatherings. My favorite group sail was when one of our members encouraged us all to bring water guns. I take water gun fights just as seriously as I take sailing. He and his wife had no idea we had found the perfect water guns. We took another club member on our boat who was just as determined to win as we were. Great times.

I love flags, and state flags in particular. I always fly the national flag and our state flag. I also try to fly the state flag of any out-of-state guests we have. So far I’ve flown the New York and Texas flags from Palmetto Moon. Speaking of state flags, the name Palmetto Moon comes from the South Carolina state flag. Learning to fly a spinnaker was a goal of mine, so Santa Claus brought us a custom spinnaker with the South Carolina state flag design. I’ve learned a lot about flying it, but it’s still quite the challenge. We’ve had power boaters drive up and compliment us on it. Mission accomplished.

Wateree Sailing Club is a small, family-oriented, all-volunteer club. We have wet slips and dry storage available along with a private launch ramp. Although our main focus is on sailing, we have powerboat members, too. Check us out at www.watereesailingclub.com.

Power boaters often tell me that sailing looks like too much work. They’d rather just get in their boat and get where they’re going quickly. I never can understand what the hurry is. Would they rather be on the boat or get to their destination? With sailing, the boat *is* the destination. I just tell them my favorite things about sailing are the sound of the wind, the splash of the waves and the smile on Shirley’s face.

ASA CHARTER

continued from page 8

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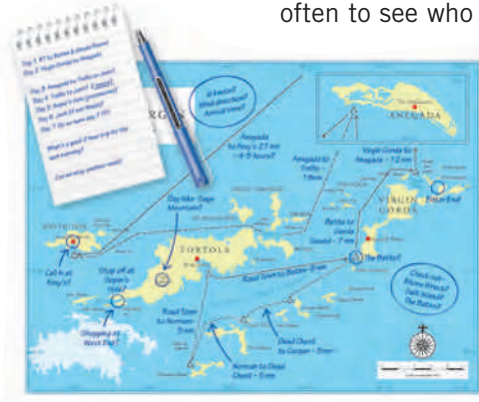
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FEATURE STORY

continued from page 3

On the sail over, Captain Debbie passed around sign-up sheets where we could schedule a massage or facial, go on a snorkeling excursion or scuba dive. There were standup paddle boards and kayaking – all part of Arabella's selection of toys. After a fabulous massage and walk around the Bitter End Yacht Club, it was time to go back to "our yacht" and get ready for dinner ashore. Since tomorrow was a "play" day and no sailing, first mate, Frank, told us we didn't have to be home anytime soon. He would leave the light on!

The next day was play day. Choices of spa treatments, snorkeling, scuba – anything or nothing! Just make sure you're back in time for the Pirate Party and Happy Arrrrh with Michael Beans. Michael's been sailing these waters for over 35 years and is famous for his one-man band and pirate show. We told the crew to pick us up L8arrrrh! Fun was had by all, and many of the crew dressed for the occasion with eye patches, hooks, hats, swords and even a parrot on a shoulder or two!

Continuing the Sailing Adventure

The next morning, is it Wednesday already? We set sail to Cooper Island, about twelve or so miles from North Sound. As we left the last lighted red buoy on our port side I asked Captain Debbie if I could take the helm. "Do you want to use the joy stick or steer by the wheel?" she asked.

I opted for the wheel which was a bad choice. With a yacht this large you would need a huge wheel in order to turn the rudder. Arabella's wheel was similar to what you might see on a sailboat less than 40 feet. As we were being pushed toward the reef on the port side, I turned the wheel about twenty times to starboard, but the boat didn't respond. Apparently, I was the only one concerned about this. I decided the hydraulic joystick was the way to go, and Captain Debbie quickly engaged it. Now with a simple tilt of the stick, the boat was bearing to starboard. Once I had the feel of the helm, I was even more in love with Arabella. I kept the helm all the way to Cooper on a nice downwind run. This was the highlight of my week!

Cooper was a lunch and snorkel stop. Stevie, the engineer on Arabella, is also a master on the barbeque, where he grilled hamburgers, chicken and more. The snorkeling was great – lots of sea life to see, including squid, turtles and tarpon, oh my!



The famous Bitter End Yacht Club offered a fantastic spot to explore, while (below) Michelle Steger and Ben Bazer enjoy a day under sail.

After lunch we sailed to Soper's Hole, located on the West End of Tortola. This was our evening port of call with lots of choices for dinner and some great shopping. On the way, I was asked to talk to our group about chartering in exotic places, flotillas and taking the "next step," whether that's advanced ASA classes, becoming

an instructor, buying your own boat or preparing for your captain's license. It's always interesting to hear how sailing is changing people's lives in some small or large way.

Thursday morning – it must be Jost Van Dyke. After a nice sail over to Jost, we anchored off White Bay, home of the Soggy Dollar Bar and Ivan's Stress Free Bar. For a true Caribbean experience, the tender anchored off the beach and we jumped in the water and made our way ashore. This is how you get your dollars soggy! The sand beaches are an unmatched brightness of white, and you can stand waist deep in the warm water and sip a frozen drink or lounge in a

hammock or both. Later that afternoon, we headed one bay over to Great Harbor. After sunset cocktails on deck, we boarded the Retriever and headed for shore. We had our choice of restaurants for dinner, including the famous Foxy's. After dinner the DJ played great tunes and we danced late into the evening. As a rare treat, Foxy himself was on the dance floor with us!

The next morning, we had a leisurely start, eventually sailing to Norman Island. With the wind on our nose, Arabella gracefully tacked up the channel between Little Thatch Island, Tortola and St. John.



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OFFSHORE PASSAGEMAKING • JIM PANTTAJA

My wife and I have always enjoyed water sports. Seven years ago, we moved to San Francisco. Our new apartment was directly across the street from a marina, and we decide to take sailing classes. We have now taken a number of classes, and sailed (not as often as we would like) on San Francisco Bay, and on one trip to the British Virgin Islands. When we travel on business, (if there is a spare day), we try to find a place to charter a boat for a day.

We have always been cautious but comfortable when sailing. San Francisco Bay is a great place to sail. If you are willing to take on a variety of experiences, you can sail year round. And the variety is what makes it fun. We have learned where to hide when the wind comes up on the bay, where to head that is more likely to be sunny, and what currents are going to make it impossible to sail west through Raccoon Straits at the end of the day.

After several years of sailing on the bay, I wanted to add some offshore experience. I still don't have any plans for a crossing, or extended trip, but I wanted to gain knowledge and experience that would prepare me for bigger adventures – and make me even more comfortable when day sailing on the bay (or perhaps on my next trip to the British Virgin Islands). I was also intrigued with the idea of learning celestial navigation.

My wife and I moved away from the marina, and although we were still in San Francisco, we decided to look for a new sailing home. We found it in Modern Sailing in Sausalito. The weekly club sails introduced us to many new friends and gave us an inexpensive way to sail. We also started taking classes with Modern Sailing, so it was the obvious place for me to take Celestial Navigation and Offshore Passagemaking. I had previously taken other classes from Stan Lander and was pleased to have him as my instructor for these two classes.

The Celestial Navigation class increased my anticipation for the upcoming Offshore class, but also added valuable knowledge. I found that the celestial navigation class reinforced my coastal navigation skills. I also appreciated the history lesson – learning techniques that are little



Jim Panttaja was looking for a way to get more experience and a better handle on longer sailing situations. The Offshore Passagemaking class beginning in San Francisco was just the ticket.

changed in 150 years. Celestial Navigation is perhaps becoming a bit of an anachronism, but the history lesson alone was worth it. And knowing that I have a skill that provides a confirmation of and backup to electronic techniques is comforting (and my sailing friends are in awe of my newfound skill).

The Offshore Passagemaking class started with one night in San Francisco Bay, and then out the Golden Gate toward Drakes Bay to anchor for the next night. My fellow students and I were all comfortable sailors and were eager as we headed out the Golden Gate. Except we couldn't see the bridge. The fog had settled in overnight (as it often does), and we were sailing out – through a major shipping channel – with limited visibility. We finally saw the bridge when we were perhaps 1,000 yards from it. So one of our first lessons was in the use of radar. We spent a surprising amount of time sailing and motoring while watching the radar carefully.

Overnight sailing was incredible. First – it was a great realization that we could literally make decisions minute to minute (ok – probably hour to hour), with respect to where to go and what to do. We were completely self-contained, with food, fuel and water enough for several days at sea. Or we could head to a harbor (even though that harbor might be 12 hours away). The weather was beautiful (if foggy). As a result, overnight, each of us tended to be on watch two hours and then four hours off.

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OFFSHORE PASSAGEMAKING

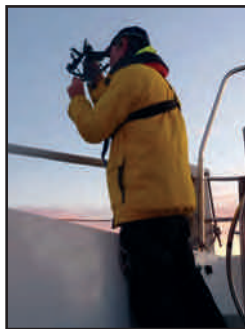
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This meant, with our small crew, that you were on deck, by yourself, with nothing but the sounds of the radio (tracking approaching and departing ships into and out of San Francisco Bay), the glow of the radar, and the meager controls at your disposal (helm, sheets and autopilot). And the occasional lights of a ship in the distance. Some nights were under power, but most were under sail – that was the best. Periodically you had to go below – to check your location – and check and annotate the chart. Then that solitude is broken up by the next watch waking up and coming up on deck. You chat for a few minutes – letting him know the status, heading, and targets you are monitoring, and then you head off to sleep.

One afternoon, I was at the helm, rounding the Southeast Farallon Island, which was totally lost in the fog, with minute-by-minute adjustments of my heading determined and delivered by one of my fellow students (under the watchful eye of our instructor). We eventually saw the other vessel that was clearly visible on radar and finally heard the waves crashing on the island. However, we kept a safe distance and never did see the island.

We did get to practice our celestial navigation – though not as much as we had hoped with fog and cloud cover. But we did get to practice some sun, star and planet sights.

One time, as the students all went below to reduce our sights, Stan was left alone on deck for more than an hour. We heard him wandering around above us, making



The author uses a sextant on a clear day.

adjustments. We went back on deck to relieve him of the watch. He had clearly been enjoying himself – sailing. He had trimmed the sails so well that we didn't believe him when he said the autopilot was off.

A highlight of the trip happened just after passing the North Farallon Island. A grey whale crossed our bow. We were under sail, and he passed in front of us, seeming not to notice us. But then promptly reversed direction and crossed our bow again – checking us out.

Our trip was not without incident. One morning during our routine check of the engine (I learned and practiced many great habits during the week), we decided that the belts weren't right. So the compartment was opened, and one of the students adjusted all of the belts. Another day, the head needed to be disassembled and put back together (fortunately, Stan did the honors).

The Offshore Passagemaking and Celestial Navigation classes greatly increased my confidence as a sailor. It added over 360 miles to my experience, and significantly increased my night sailing experience. The radar was an essential tool for this trip, and I am now studying radar. I am amazed by how many of the essential techniques I learned about radar during the class. I recently purchased a sextant on eBay – and will be heading out to the beach to practice sun sights. I am getting ready for my next sailing adventure.

Jim Panttaja lives in San Francisco, and sails on San Francisco Bay when he gets a chance.

FEATURE STORY

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Anchored in the bay at Norman, we learned of the legend and history of the island. Tales of pirates and treasure caves and perhaps the most famous legend of all, that Robert Louis Stevenson wrote his epic novel *Treasure Island* about Norman. There is great snorkeling at the Caves, one of the island's main attractions. The other is the boat the William T. Thorton or Willy T. It's a floating bar frequented by everyone at least once. Caution – leave the kids on the boat! Late night revelers have been known to fully embrace the spirit of the Caribbean by shedding their clothes and jumping into the water from the upper deck!

Dinner our last night was on board. Afterwards there was a drawing for prizes and giveaways, compliments of ASA. Everyone, including the crew, joined in. We all thanked

Captain Debbie and her crew, who not only took care of our every desire, but also kept us safe and gave us an experience we will remember for years to come. Later that night, anchored in the bight of this virtually uninhabited island, I gazed at the light from the many mast heads swaying on the sea and the millions of stars above, the perfect ending to a perfect week.

The next morning, we left early and motored the short distance across the Sir Francis Drake Channel to Tortola. Here we disembarked and bid the crew adieu. Now that I'm home, I'm dreaming of my next sail on the Arabella. Look for ASA's member events in 2015 for your passage on the Arabella.

Captain Valerie Weingrad is an avid sailor, traveler, ASA sailing instructor, and flotilla leader as well as a charter broker. She holds a 100T USCG Master's license and owns Custom Sailing Worldwide, LLC. You can contact Valerie at valerie@customsailing.net.



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