

THE JOURNAL OF THE  **ASA SAILING ASSOCIATION**

AMERICAN SAILING

BAREBOAT CRUISING MADE EASY • ASA'S ALL-INCLUSIVE CHARTER GUIDE

The American Sailing Association's brand new textbook, Bareboat Cruising Made Easy, has finally hit the press, and the ASA staff is thrilled to share it with schools, students and sailors nationwide. The updated manual of ASA's bareboat cruising standard is designed to help experienced sailors prepare for a bareboat charter or an extended cruise. The book has seven chapters and covers everything a sailor needs to know about skippering a boat in new waters, from what to wear to how to troubleshoot the bilge pump. When ASA first decided to rewrite the most important texts in the ASA collection, they knew they had to start from scratch.



continued on page 3 For sailors looking to visit and charter in exotic, tropical ports, the new ASA textbook, Bareboat Cruising Made Easy, provides an outstanding new resource for cruisers.

LIVING THE DREAM • THE RACE AGAINST ALS SPANS THE PACIFIC

On July 8, 2014, Charles Devanneaux and Fred Courouble set sail from San Francisco, Calif., to Kaneohe, Hawaii, in the Pacific Cup. Between the cup's nine divisions, their Beneteau First 30, Thirsty, was just one of over fifty other sailboats competing that July. However, Charly and Fred's journey was inspired not just by their love of sailing, racing, and boat optimization, but also by friendship, compassion and charity.

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George Leon

Gilles Galerne

AUTUMN 2014



ASA UPDATE

Flotilla Cruising

Flotilla cruising brings together a fleet of sailboats, each operating independently with its own crew, along with a lead boat and flotilla leader who knows the local area well. By joining a flotilla, you can enjoy the freedom of skippering your own boat but have comfort in knowing that support is on hand to help with navigation, logistics and local weather.

The flotilla leader is there to guide the boats to the area's highlights, help them avoid hazardous situations and offer tips on local conditions. That way, crews who are new to the cruising area or chartering in general won't have any problems or miss any local must-see. Regular skippers' meetings allow frequent interaction with the flotilla leader and other sailors.

Flotillas also broaden the social aspects of a cruise. You'll likely find yourself involved in an informal race or photo shoot while under way. You might host your flotilla neighbors on board for refreshments after a fine day's sailing, or dinghy over to swap CDs or dinner ingredients.

If sailing in a flotilla appeals to you, start your research on the ASA homepage! You'll find all the information on upcoming ASA-sponsored flotillas, so you can choose the best one for you. Explore the Abaco Islands, the hidden gem of the Caribbean, November 7-15. Sail in the best cruising grounds in the world, the British Virgin Islands, December 4-14, 2014. Journey through the unspoiled Exuma Islands aboard a small Sea Pearl sailboat April 4-11, 2015. Explore the amazing Northwest during our Victoria & San Juan Islands Flotilla, June 19-26, 2015. If you've always dreamed of Europe, our Spanish flotilla from June 27 to July 4, 2015 is the perfect one for you. Last but definitely not least, dive into Croatia's crystal-clear waters and fascinating culture September 5-12, 2015! Learn more about flotillas at www.asa.com.

The Charley Noble

As September comes to a close, the ASA staff is working around the clock to prepare for an exciting autumn. The heat dwindles, the leaves begin to turn lovely shades of orange, and the ocean is still the most beautiful part of our planet ... It's just a lot less crowded!

Whether you're looking to take your first sailing course, expand your cruising skills, or charter in new waters, fall is the perfect time to take the next step.



Vacation destinations in the United States and abroad are less expensive, and you'll escape the hordes of summer tourists. Visit Find My Charter's gorgeous new website at www.findmycharter.com to find your ideal boat.

Put your sailing skills to use aboard Arabella in January or March 2015! The Members Event in the British Virgin Islands is back due to popular demand. Learn more at www.arbellavacations.com/asa.

Catch us at the United States Sailboat Show in Annapolis from October 9 to 13, 2014. The ASA booth will be at spot D63.

Be the first to sail the brand new ASA First 22, the training boat created by ASA and Beneteau! Don't forget to check out the newly released *Bareboat Cruising Made Easy*, ASA's all-in-one chartering reference and ASA 104 textbook.

"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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Where You Can Find Bareboat Cruising

Bareboat Cruising Made Easy was released in August. For the first three months, the textbook will be available only through ASA affiliates and at the ASA store.

FEATURE STORY

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In order to create the best books in the industry, that's what they did. Bareboat Cruising Made Easy completes the reinvented core ASA curriculum, which also includes the award-winning Sailing Made Easy and Coastal Cruising Made Easy. On the most basic level, the text aims to help sailors acquire the knowledge necessary to pass the ASA 104 Bareboat Cruising course. The book elaborates further:

"We want to teach you how to sail to some beautiful places and have an immense amount of fun. Go to an island or up the coast to a picturesque secluded anchorage, drop your hook, make a wonderful dinner, chat and have fun with your friends, wake up in the morning, go swimming, go paddle boarding, explore with a kayak, read a book, weigh anchor, find a new place to dock in a charming little marina, go to dinner, have a party in the cockpit, get up in the morning, and do it all over again. You're on a sailing vacation! Taking this course is the first step toward living that dream. The barriers to entry have virtually disappeared. The world of cruising is now within your grasp. Today there are thousands of boats available to you in hundreds of places around the world."

Bareboat Cruising Made Easy is evidently not just a textbook. It is an all-in-one reference book that includes everything a cruiser needs to know, from general planning to technical guidance to actual sailing advice. Cindy Shabes, the president of ASA, speaks fondly of the new text: "Though the process took longer than we expected, I think it reflects the care that went into creating this book. The attention to detail allowed for an unparalleled final product that we are so excited to share with you."

The book was written with a broad audience in mind: ASA's hundreds of thousands of members, students, affiliates and instructors. ASA executive director Charlie

Nobles elaborates, "The whole point is to address everyone. People who are taking the 104 course, sailors who never took courses but want an excellent textbook and one-stop cruising reference, schools and instructors who want access to the best teaching materials available ... Bareboat Cruising Made Easy is for all sailors."

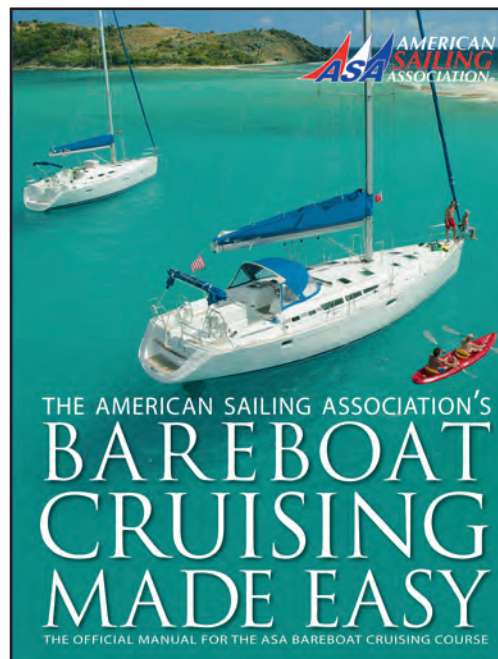
The new text builds on its predecessor, Cruising Fundamentals, with modern references and technology. From its four-color, high-end illustrations and photographs to its modern, easy-to-read design, Bareboat Cruising Made Easy is a beauty. More importantly, it reflects the fact that ASA is an association of sailing schools and instructors. Rather than representing one excellent sailor's take on cruising, the book was created by a team of expert sailors, writers, editors and artists who shaped the content together, making it the most helpful, accurate and all-inclusive chartering manual.

ASA's Outstanding Writers

Lisa Batchelor Frailey and Andy Batchelor were two of the most vital team members: the writers! After retiring from the Royal Air Force in 2002, Andy decided to live his dream and embark on a new career in sailing. Lisa was a navigator, meteorologist and oceanographer for the U.S. Navy until 2006, allowing her to cruise and race across the globe. Her passion for sailing is evident in the articles she has written for numerous nautical publications including *American Sailing Journal*. Andy and Lisa met at a regatta in Italy, and together they launched Sail Solomons School and Charters in Chesapeake Bay and the Caribbean. The school has since received ASA's "Outstanding School" award five times, and Andy and Lisa have received ASA's "Outstanding Instructor" award eight times between them. They are both USCG captains and ocean passagemakers. Andy's role as an ASA instructor evaluator and his extensive sailing experience as well as Lisa's expertise in marine consulting and charter brokering were invaluable in the co-writing of Bareboat Cruising Made Easy. After the Batchelor power couple completed the writing, a team of dedicated editors combed through the material to perfect it.

Experienced Editors

Jeremy McGeary, the senior editor at Good Old Boat magazine, has worked on all three core ASA books.



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LIVING THE DREAM

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Back in 2011, Charly and Fred competed in another popular race from California to Hawaii, the Transpacific Yacht Race. They sailed with five other friends aboard a Beneteau First 40 and finished second in their class. The next year, 2011 Transpac crew member and chef Gilles Galerne was supposed to be waiting for their Pacific Cup finish in Hawaii, Mai Tais in hand. Unfortunately, Gilles never made it to Kaneohe because he was already suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease, also known as ALS.

Gilles had been one of Charly's best sailing buddies since they first met in 2007. They shared at least two passions: sailing and good wine. Charly and Gilles sailed together in Hawaii, Mexico, the Sea of Cortez, and, of course, Santa Monica Bay, where Gilles now rests. He was the crew's Captain "bonne humeur," the funny, kind, and eternally optimistic Frenchman everyone loved. He was not only the best cook Charly and Fred had ever had aboard, but also the friend everyone dreams of having. Supportive in bad times, perpetually helpful, and always on deck for watch, making sure the crew was happy and well fed, Gilles was full of life.

Gilles' death at the hands of ALS, a currently incurable disease, inspired Charly and Fred to turn their 2014 Pacific Cup plans into something much bigger than just two friends doing what they love. They returned this past July not only with a new boat, but also a powerful motivation to raise funds and support ALS research in honor of Gilles and the wonderful memories they shared.

The Mission

Charly and Fred raced in the Pacific Cup to raise money for the ALS Association, an organization dedicated to treating and curing ALS through global research and advocacy. They seek to empower people suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease and help them live fuller lives by providing them with compassionate care and support. Sponsors sign up to pay a certain amount per mile of Charly and Fred's race across the Pacific, and donations go directly to the ALS Association Golden West Chapter. Though the race is over, you can still donate through the Sailing for ALS and ALS Association websites. Charly and Fred hope that their journey inspires others to continue fighting against ALS long after they celebrated their arrival in Kaneohe.

Lou Gehrig's Disease

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord. Motor neurons reach from the brain to the spinal cord and from the spinal cord to the muscles throughout the body. When the motor neurons die, the ability of the brain to initiate and control muscle



Charly and Fred communicated via satellite during the race, allowing them to post news of their journey on their website.

How You Can Help

Learn more about Sailing for ALS and donate at: www.sailingforals.com or learn more about the ALS Association Golden West Chapter at <http://webgw.alsa.org>.

movement is lost. Patients in the later stages of the disease may become totally paralyzed. The progressive degeneration of the motor neurons in ALS patients eventually leads to their death.

Roughly 6,000 people in the U.S. each year are diagnosed with ALS. There is currently no cure, but researchers are making progress every day, allowing ALS patients to live longer and more comfortably. The disease can be aggressive, as it was for Gilles, or work more slowly, paralyzing patients over the course of a few years. Unfortunately, the medical equipment and treatments that patients need can be very expensive, and even with medical insurance, the financial toll that the disease takes can rival the emotional one.

Charly and Fred both have a deep passion for sailing and sailboat racing. They even work in the sailing industry, allowing them to pursue their lifelong passion both on and off the water. Charly is a yacht broker and ASA school owner; he enjoys sharing his love of sailing with customers, students and friends alike. Fred is a naval architect and aerospace engineer. The two crewmembers raced in the Pacific Cup once again this summer because they yearned for the truly unique moments during the crossing. Crossing the finish line flying the ALS Association spinnaker in Gilles' memory was an emotional experience for both Charly and Fred. They are grateful to all their sponsors and supporters for helping them raise funds and awareness for such a worthy cause.

Author Isabelle Rossi de Leon is a Yale student and member of the Varsity Sailing Team. Originally from Honolulu, Hawaii, and Antananarivo, Madagascar, her passion for sailing, writing and social media led her to work for ASA.

MEMBER EVENT 2015 • THE ARABELLA

Shake off the midwinter blues with a week of sun, sailing and socializing around the Caribbean on the megayacht Arabella. Join us on one of two ASA Member Cruises for a special week of sailing in the British Virgin Islands. The Member Cruises will take place on January 18 to 24, 2015 and March 1 to 7, 2015. Each event will have a unique itinerary, so you can experience the British Virgin Islands again and again!

Arabella is a stunning 156-foot megayacht. She features three masts with staysail schooner rigging, teak decks, a jacuzzi, a gorgeous cushioned sun deck and a covered veranda. Her main salon is spacious and can seat up to 40 guests for dinner. The salon also features a beautiful varnished mahogany bar and a buffet station.

Below decks, Arabella has 20 staterooms and can provide overnight accommodation for up to 40 guests. Most staterooms have queen or double beds and some offer over/under single bunks. Each bedroom has its own shower, head and individual climate control. Sailing aboard Arabella is truly sailing in style.

The boat's classic beauty and luxurious amenities made this year's event so popular we had to bring it back in 2015! The two Members Events combine the ultimate Caribbean sailing experience with the luxury of a beautiful megayacht, making it an unforgettable experience.



Her stunning white sails filled with tropical breezes, the Arabella glides through the warm waters of the Caribbean carrying lucky guests. (Below) A passenger relaxes on the bow gazing at deep blue water ahead.



The British Virgin Islands are widely recognized as the best cruising grounds in the world. The water is a shimmering turquoise, warm winds blow consistently from the east, and white beaches invite you to run barefoot through the sand.

Here are some highlights: The Baths, an anchorage where you can jump in the water, snorkel, and walk through the incredible boulders ashore. Marina Cay is home to a great bar with a perfect view of the setting sun. Don't forget to walk to the top of the island and look out over Sir Francis Drake Channel! North Sound and the world famous Bitter End Yacht Club are a must-see, especially the refreshing spa. Jost Van Dyke, another fantastic island, features the renowned Soggy Dollar Bar and Foxy's Restaurant. Norman Island inspired a multitude of pirate novels and has an array of amazing caves for snorkeling.

If you've never been to the British Virgin Islands, you're missing the best part of the Caribbean. If you've already been, then you probably can't wait to go back!

For more information ...

To find out more or to book, visit www.arabellavacations.com/asa.



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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 Glorrietta 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

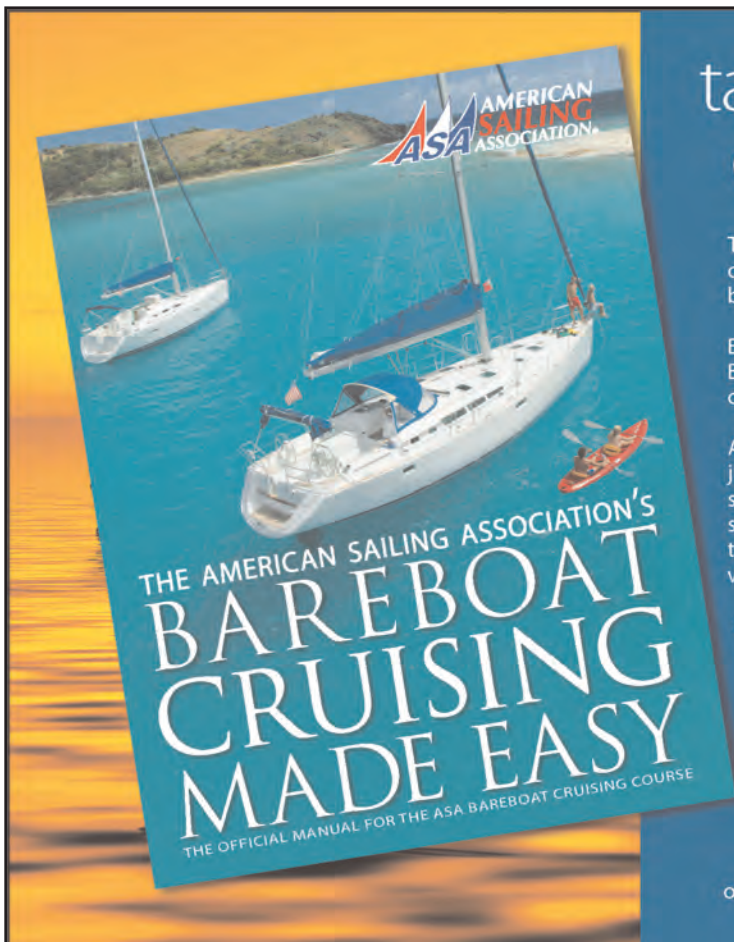


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take your **Education** on your **Vacation**

Teaching confident and safe 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.

Bareboat Cruising Made Easy and the accompanying ASA Bareboat sailing course are available exclusively through any one of ASA's 300 sailing schools worldwide.

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 and was created to cater to our members but serves all sailors in search of an unforgettable charter experience. We offer trusted and individualized attention specifically tailored to your vacation dreams.

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SAFETY AT SEA • STAY IN THE MOMENT WITH THE WIND

The overt signs of weather – temperature, precipitation, humidity, clouds – are important in varying degrees, but the wind is easily the most significant weather feature for sailors. Wind is our master: It provides our propulsion, pushes up the waves that pitch us about, and can rip our sails with a boom like a cannon shot if we are inattentive. ASA 119, Marine Weather Endorsement, explores the weather mechanics of heat, pressure and moisture. If an understanding of weather mechanics is useful for long-range (strategic) planning, then a working knowledge of wind mechanics is useful in the moment. We offer six important tactical tips to help keep your boat on the move and your crew on its feet.

1. Double the velocity: quadruple the force

It's true – the force of the wind varies as the square of the wind speed, which means that increase of wind speed from 15 knots to 30 knots increases the pressure on your sails by a factor of four. In San Francisco, where our summertime wind machine serves up a daily dose of 17-25 knots, we teach students to "Reef early and often," because repairing and replacing sails is expensive. A reefed sail plan provides a safer, smoother, and very often, faster ride.

Consider the expected overnight winds when planning your anchoring. Heavier winds put more strain on your ground tackle; they generate wind waves that thrust your bow up and pop the anchor flukes out of the seabed. Setting a second bow anchor increases your holding power, and simply increasing scope improves the holding power of your anchor, too. You should have a good idea about the strength and holding of your ground tackle end-to-end (and holding quality of the sea bottom) to improve the odds of waking up in the same place where you fell asleep.

2. Winds create waves – right now

How long does it take for the wind to create wind waves? Got your cup of coffee handy? Blow a light breeze across the surface of your cup and see what happens. How long did that take? That's how quickly sea states react to a wind blowing across the surface. How tall are the wind waves? That's a more complicated question because it requires examination of the wind velocity, the fetch and



As quickly as the wind comes up, swells begin to form on the water's surface. Being aware and prepared can mean the difference between safety and an uncomfortable sail.

the duration of the wind. But for organized waves (swell), the height is usually about one-seventh of the wavelength from crest to crest. When swells get much taller than that, they break and crumble.

New swells of a different height or from a different direction may be telltales of weather action in the distance. Because storm swells travel rapidly (35-45 knots) and weather systems aloft may move along at only 15-20 knots, the swells will arrive long before telltale clouds signal approaching weather. This gives you time to consider your situation and plans while you still have time and room to run.

3. If you hear moaning in your rigging, you're in a blow, bro

Many of us are familiar with (or should be familiar with) the Beaufort Scale, which uses visual assessments to estimate wind velocity. But what if you can't find the scale, or you need to do this at night? We can fall into a habit of using just our eyes, to the exclusion of our other senses, and that limits our ability to maintain situational awareness. Your vessel's stays and shrouds will vibrate due to the wind and will ultimately emit a hard-to-place moaning hum. You should know the apparent wind speed when this occurs.

Remember that it's not usually the bad decisions that bring grief in sailing – those are often readily apparent and quickly corrected. It's the no-decisions – those situations that we didn't recognize or consider in time – that can bring on a really bad day.

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FEATURED FACILITY • ISLAND CRUISING

While discussing the secret of happiness, Philosopher Dan Dennett said, “Find something more important than you are and dedicate your life to it.”

Driven by this philosophy, Larry and Sharon Meyer embarked on a mission to achieve their dream of being able to enrich the lives of others who share their passion for sailing. Originally from South Africa, Larry and Sharon moved to Vancouver Island in 2008 where their dreams became reality and they had the opportunity to invest in a well-established sailing school – Island Cruising Yacht Charters & Sailing School.

Island Cruising is nestled in the beautiful coastal community of Sidney by the Sea on Vancouver Island. With two bases on Vancouver Island, one at Port Sidney Marina and the other at Comox, Island Cruising offers a portal to some of the best sailing and cruising grounds in the world. With access to over 2,100 islands, these cruising routes cover Desolation Sound, the Gulf Islands, the San Juan Islands and the entire Sunshine Coast.

The Gulf Islands are a well-loved playground for sailors, where binoculars and a camera are a must, as the chances of spotting a pod of Orca, Humpback or Pike whales is almost certain. Sea lions, bald eagles, an abundance of waterfalls, mountains, lakes, fjords and anchorages are all waiting to be discovered. The mild climate allows fishing, hiking and golfing in the southern coastal areas even in January!

With their main base at Port Sidney Marina, it is just a short drive from Victoria International Airport or Schwartz Bay Ferry Terminal; and Island Cruising offers shuttle service to and from either location. Full service amenities at Port Sidney Marina provide travelers with an excellent starting point with everything they might need within easy walking distance.

The newest addition of a 2014 Leopard 48 brings the Island Cruising fleet to a total of 19 yachts ranging from monohulls and catamarans to power yachts. Island Cruising has no desire to become a large charter company. “Small is beautiful,” says Meyer.

This belief is fostered by the high standard of personal service offered to each individual yacht owner. It is



Island Cruising Yacht Charters & Sailing School's offices can be found at the entrance of Port Sidney Marina.

obvious by looking at the fleet that each of the yachts chartered by Island Cruising is maintained and cared for by a very knowledgeable technical team and staff who take pride in their work. Meyer comments, “Something that differentiates us from many other charter companies is that we treat each of the yachts in our fleet as if it were our own.”

If guests are interested in learning to sail or just want to brush up on their skills, they can choose from one of Island Cruising's many scheduled classes or arrange for a customized private Cruise & Learn. As the only sailing school in Canada to offer ASA certification, Meyer comments, “It only makes sense to offer ASA certification to our students. ASA programs are well recognized by the charter business around the world, including our own international partner, Sunsail. We want our students to have the freedom to enjoy sailing experiences anywhere they may choose.”

Once they have successfully completed a sailing class, sailors might want to experience the pride and joy of yacht ownership. Coastline Marine, a subsidiary of Island Cruising, can guide them through the process of selection and purchasing. With direct access to Sunsail's International Yacht Listings, and as a Canadian Leopard dealer, yacht ownership can soon become a reality.

When asked about the future of Island Cruising, Meyer comments, “Our successful course so far is the direct result of the hard work and dedication of the Island Cruising team and the strong bond of trust we have formed with our guests. It is because of this bond that we have grown and become better and now continue our efforts to expand our horizons with new and innovative sailing services of premium quality.”

For more information ...

Contact Island Cruising Yacht Charters and Sailing School at 250-656-7070 or info@islandcruising.com or visit their website at www.islandcruising.com.

FEATURED SAILBOAT • BENETEAU OCEANIS 41

A couple of years ago, Penny and I decided that we would be replacing our Hunter 37 with a new sailboat. So each year when we attended the Annapolis Boat Show, we always spent time climbing on board numerous boats and evaluating them for use not only for our family of two married daughters and our four grandchildren, but also for use for our ASA 104 Bareboat Cruising and our ASA 106 Advanced Coastal Cruising. In addition, we had done many charters ourselves in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean with SunSail who always seems to have a large selection of Beneteaus for their clients' use. With this as background, we finally chose a Beneteau Oceanis 41 for our replacement boat.

Inside are three large, private cabins to accommodate up to four clients plus myself as captain and instructor. We also decided that we needed to have an additional berth by having the dinette table convert into another large sleeping area especially for the grandchildren. For everyone's convenience we opted for two heads with showers.

The new Oceanis 41 has a super L-shaped galley on the port side just at the bottom of the companion way stairs (ones which allow everyone to walk down them like a normal set of stairs – not a ladder). In the galley is a two-basin stainless steel sink including a foot pedal that can pump fresh water from the tanks or, while on an ocean passage, salt water. The gimballed propane stove has two burners and a large oven with a grill. Our boat also includes a front-loading refrigerator and a large top-loading freezer. Since we chose to have three house batteries, we can operate both 24/7 with just the normal amount of battery recharging.

For auxiliary power, the Oceanis comes with a 40-horsepower Yanmar diesel sail drive. Having never operated a vessel with sail drive before, I was unsure of this feature. The sail drive delivers great power and almost no prop walk in reverse. I merely need to position my boat in the proper attitude to enter my slip and begin to reverse into it. Since the beam is 13 feet nine inches and my slip is only 15 feet, this is a definite advantage.

With numerous pieces of electrical hardware on board, Beneteau has installed lots of designated batteries for them. All are Absorbent Glass Mat (AGM). For electronics, I chose a B&G chart plotter, radar, AIS, VHF radio and autopilot. On all the charter boats that I have used, Beneteau has used Ray Marine electronics. I am unsure why they made this change, but so far, I have been very pleased with their performance. With the dual helm, the operator has a great view of the jib's sail trim. All lines lead back to the cockpit and hoisting the mainsail and reefing becomes an easy matter with the standard electric winch on the cabin top. The boom is positioned very high



For sailing with their daughters and grandchildren or taking out clients, the Renolls love their new Beneteau Oceanis 41, At Last.

For more information ...

Contact Beneteau at www.beneteau.com.

off the deck, so you will need to use the mast steps in order to reach the head of the sail for attaching the halyard – one of the major trade-offs. As the captain you will definitely want to rig the main before departing from the slip and will need to flake and stow the main after returning to the slip or after anchoring.

Speaking of anchoring, it becomes a simple matter to set and retrieve the anchor with the windlass. Her standard anchor is a Delta plow. With the twin bow anchor rollers, it is easy to store a second anchor for easy deployment along with ample storage space in the cockpit lockers for additional anchors for any heavy weather situations.

The roller-furled 130 genoa is easy to set as well as to reef and stow. With full sails and a nice 12-15 knots of wind, the Oceanis will cruise along at a steady seven and a half knots on a gentle 10-15 degree heel. Last weekend after our christening, we had two groups of 12-13 friends and relatives on board for a brief sail. With this nice heel, everyone was comfortably seated in the huge cockpit.

Finally, preparing to launch the dinghy is a simple matter. You lower the large swim platform down to water level, remove the dinghy engine from the stern pulpit, and place it on the dinghy. Passengers will step directly into the dinghy without climbing down swim ladders.

We are extremely satisfied with our new Beneteau Oceanis 41 named At Last. We can't wait to share her with our clients for the ASA 104 and ASA 106 classes.

Captains David and Penny Renoll own and operate R&R Charters and Sail School on Kent Island in Maryland. You can contact them at www.randrchartersandsailschool.net or 570-690-3645.

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SAILING DESTINATION

Balearic Islands of Spain • Story by Jean De Keyser

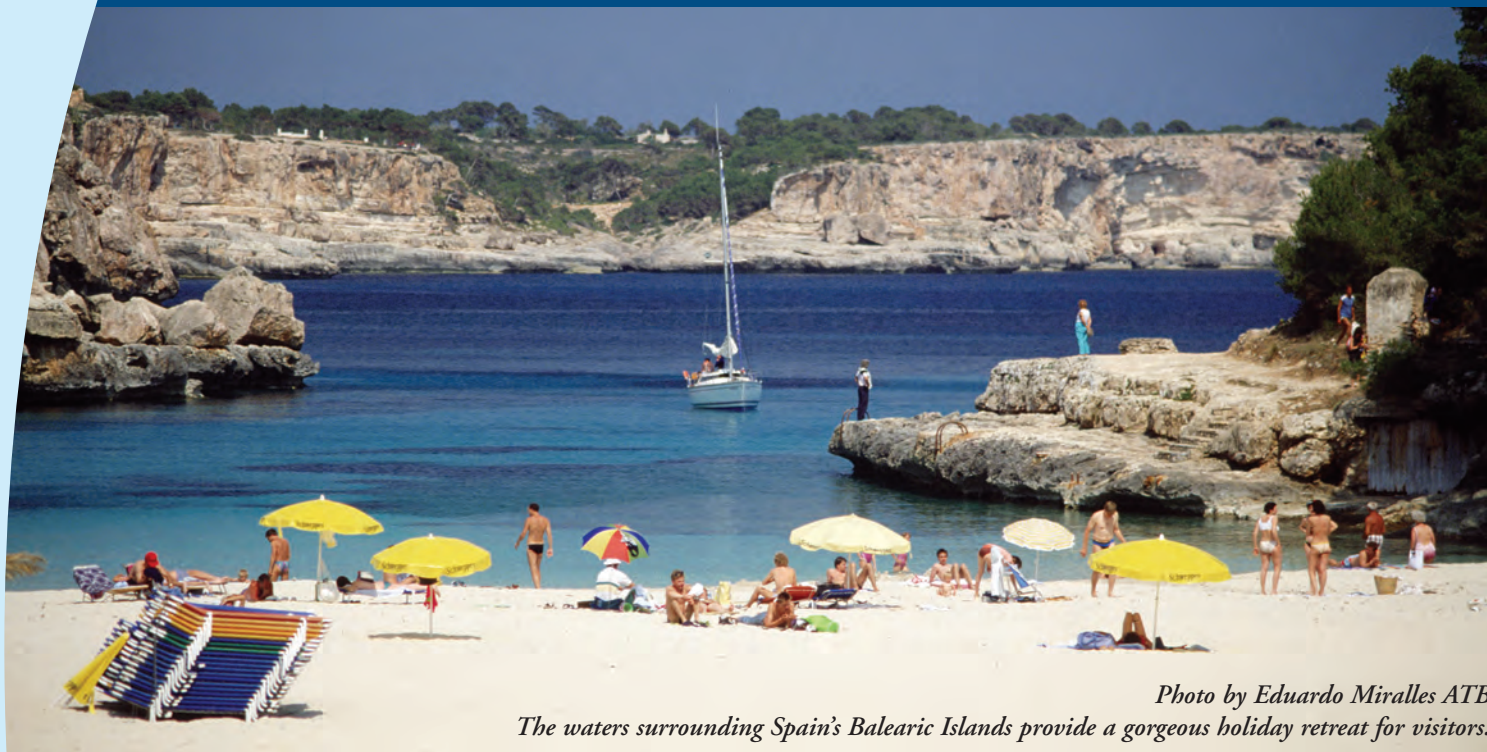


Photo by Eduardo Miralles ATB

The waters surrounding Spain's Balearic Islands provide a gorgeous holiday retreat for visitors.

Some ninety miles south east of Barcelona, the capital of the province of Catalunya, lies the Balearic island of Mallorca with its historic city of Palma.

After an overnight seven-and-half-hour ferry trip from the mainland, the stunningly beautiful cathedral welcomes the visitors to the port city of Palma.

The Islas Baleares, of which Mallorca is the largest, have been inhabited by humans since the Stone Age and many cultures have, at one time or another, influenced their history. Greece, Carthage, Rome, the Moorish Caliphate, France, Spain and others have left their imprints on the rich history of these islands, which occupy a strategic location in the Mediterranean.

Ibiza, about sixty-one miles southeast of Palma, is definitely “party central” for the European jet set. Hundreds of resorts, bars and restaurants cater to

the eclectic tastes and wishes of their clientele.

Just south of Ibiza the quieter island of Formentera juts out of the Mediterranean. White sand and a relaxed atmosphere make this an attractive destination for sun worshippers, with most of them preferring the clothing-optional beaches.

Mallorca, with its major city of Palma, is a favorite of many European tourists. Like many cities located on the water, Palma de Mallorca is a lively place with a huge number of bars, restaurants, great nightlife but also with a rich history and culture. Spanish food is some of the best in Europe and one can easily gain a few pounds in a week of enjoying the great variety of delicious tapas and other specialties. For those interested in history and culture, the island offers plenty of fascinating places to visit. The imposing cathedral of Palma, the Royal Palace of La Almudaina with its Moorish influence, the Bellver Castle and, further inland,

the caves of El Drach, the mountains of Serra de Tramuntana and the wooden train of Sóller are only a few of the main tourist attractions.

A favorite destination for sailors leaving Mallorca is the island of Cabrera with its popular and beautiful mooring field. Archeological finds show traces of human activity dating back to the Stone Age and an abandoned cemetery is a sad reminder of the days when the island was a prison for thousands of French Napoleonic soldiers, the majority of whom died of disease and malnutrition. It is a hauntingly beautiful place guarded by a centuries-old fortress that is a popular hiking destination for visiting sailors. There are also several sea caves that can be discovered with a dinghy. The Blue Cave in Cala Santa María is worth a visit. Eight smaller uninhabited islands lie between Cabrera and Mallorca but they are off limits to visitors. Permits are required for a buoy at Cabrera, and the charter companies can take care of that. Anchoring is prohibited.

For more information

The Spanish Flotilla will take place from June 27 to July 4. Be on the lookout for details that will also be published on the web site. For official travel information on the islands, visit www.illesbalears.es/ing/balearicislands/home.jsp.

It is about 10 miles from Cabrera back to Mallorca's southernmost point, Cap de Ses Salines; and from there our preferred itinerary brings you along the southeast coast of the island. This side of Mallorca counts a large number of calas or anchorages with crystal clear waters, small beaches, caves and charming ports. Although you can sail around Mallorca in one week, you might prefer to just hopscotch along this coastline and visit the ports of Porto Cristo and Porto Colon where you can get a buoy for the night. It is only a short dinghy into town for a nice dinner in one of the many typical restaurants. The seafood is excellent and fresh and the local wines will definitely contribute to keeping you in the vacation mood.

Although the many picturesque calas invite you to spend part of the day at anchor for swimming or snorkeling, I do not recommend spending the night on the hook in most of them. The backside of Cala Magraner, of Cala Barques and Cala Mitjana offer nice overnight anchoring, but you should always think twice when a southeasterly blows.

Further north, Cala d'Alcúdia and Pollensa are worth a visit. On the way south back towards Palma, a night at anchor near Colonia de Sant Jordi is a nice experience, but here again, beware of the southeast wind.

The last major island of the Balearic group is Minorca, northeast of Mallorca. I have not had the opportunity yet to discover this island but, according to charter companies and friends who



Photo by Manuela Muñoz ATB

(Above) Archeological masterpieces draw tourists in from around the world. (Photo below by Gaspar Monroig ATB) Vessels hang peacefully at anchor below towering stone cliffs that rise out of cerulean blue waters.

have cruised around the island, it is definitely worth discovering. The city of Mahón and the many calas along the rocky coast are on my Balearic bucket list for 2015.

There are several good charter companies in Mallorca, but most cater to German and Austrian tourists. The quality of the yachts is very good, and they are well equipped. The infrastructure is not as developed as in Croatia as this is a totally different sailing destination. It is, however, becoming more popular and even Sunsail has put a few boats in the yacht basin of Palma.

Jean "John" De Keyser was born in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1949 and moved to the United States in 1981. He is fluent in English, French, Dutch, Spanish and German. Jean and his wife, Mila own and operate Gulfcoast Sailing and Cruising School in Punta Gorda, Fla. Jean is an ASA instructor and USCG 100T Master.



CHARTER TIP • CHOOSING THE RIGHT BOAT FOR CHARTER

Sailors thinking of buying a boat face an almost bewildering number of choices, especially when they include used boats among the possibilities. Choices when chartering are much simpler, as the charter companies select boats that are fun to sail and comfortable to live aboard. A charterer basically has to decide on the number of crew to sail with, the price range, and the size and type of the boat – monohull or catamaran.

Size Matters

Sailboats that are available for bareboat charter typically fall in the range from 30 to 55 feet, and the primary question a bareboat charterer must ask is, “How big a boat am I comfortable handling?” As we’ll see in Chapter 3 of *Bareboat Cruising Made Easy*, the bigger the boat, the greater the forces the crew must handle when sailing it and the bigger the sail-handling gear. Training and experience will get you through even the most challenging conditions when sheer muscle isn’t enough. Maneuvering a larger, and therefore heavier, boat under power also takes more skill and practice, again because the boat’s momentum and inertia defy muscle power. Crew must be careful when working with anchors and dock lines. Size, of course, is related to the number in your party. A crew of six will need a bigger boat than a crew of four. Tip: For your first charters, when you are learning about running a boat and organizing its crew, consider taking the smaller boat so you have less boat to handle and fewer crew to deal with.

Boat Selection

Choosing a boat to charter basically comes down to accommodating yourself and your sailing companions – and staying within what your budget allows. Charter companies, for the most part, offer modern series-produced sailboats, both monohulls and catamarans, from the half dozen or so larger manufacturers. Bigger charter companies tend to use boats from one builder to ensure uniformity of service and maintenance. From a charterer’s point of view, the boats differ little other than in styling and details. They are mostly sloop-rigged (one mast with mainsail and jib) and have fin keels and spade rudders, so they are responsive under sail and relatively easy to handle. Below decks, the typical arrangement suits couples and families. The cabins have double berths and often each has a private head compartment. The saloon is designed for entertaining, with the galley integrated. On deck, the cockpit is also laid out for après-sail relaxing around large tables. Most boats longer than 36 feet have twin steering stations that allow for easy passage from the cockpit to a swim platform carved into the transom. Sail handling is done mostly from the



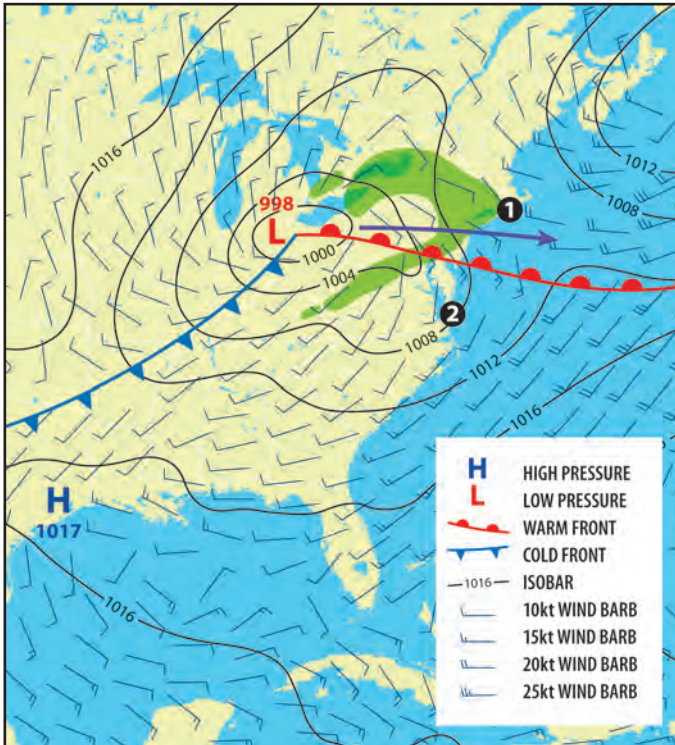
When choosing a charter boat, sailors will have to decide what size is needed and how big of a boat they can handle.

cockpit so, under normal sailing conditions, it’s rarely necessary to leave the cockpit when under way, other than to find a spot to sunbathe. Tip: Sailors looking to charter an older or “character” sailboat can seek out smaller companies, but must be ready to accept tighter living quarters on board and fewer “hotel” amenities. Extra research will pay off when choosing an older boat.

Features

Bareboats are furnished with a variety of features to ensure customers enjoy the sailing and living-aboard experience to the fullest. Most charter companies list their standard features, and it pays to compare them. Does the boat have a spray dodger and Bimini sunshade? Is the mainsail “classic” or does it furl into the mast? Some companies offer extra features at additional cost, so consider your requirements carefully. Do you want docking assistance from a bow thruster, air conditioning, or a flat-screen TV? The list is long – but important. Balance your “needs” with the “nice to haves.”

continued on page 17



SAFETY AT SEA

continued from page 8

Your anemometer may fail, but keeping your ears tuned to your vessel's rigging will keep you dialed in.

4. The wind will show you where currents are

We search the surface of our water, usually looking for more wind or even some wind. All of us have seen what we thought were wind streaks on the water, patches of wind chop that we interpreted as an area of stronger wind. But currents whose set is opposed to the wind direction will also show wind chop, albeit at a lower true wind speed. This makes sense if you think in terms of apparent wind – an opposing current will feel a faster wind on its surface than a current setting with the wind. If you're in a race and can read this chop correctly, you may be able to turn a two-knot current knock into a two-knot push by moving to more favorable water based on what you are seeing. And even if you're just out for a coastal sail, observing and taking advantage of a favorable current with this technique just might get you back to port before the harbor pub closes.

5. A wind shift is usually preceded by a lull

When studying weather mechanics, we learn that frontal passages are heralded by a rising barometer, cooler air, and a sudden veer (wind shift) of about +90 degrees. I was sailing on San Francisco Bay on a damp December day, without a barometer, when I noticed that our fresh southeast wind had just died. After a five-minute lull, the wind picked up again, but out of the southwest. It was a bit cooler, there were no fair weather cumulus

clouds (yet), and I couldn't look at a barometer. Clearly the front had passed, but I was curious about the lull.

I consulted other sailors, especially fine ocean racers, who said that they were always alert for a wind shift whenever they encountered an unexpected lull. They also said that they usually didn't encounter a wind shift without an accompanying lull. In other words, the lull and shift can occur one without the other, but not usually.

6. There's just no excuse for not having the wind forecast

The weather information from our national agencies is so rich and accessible that ignorance is not an acceptable excuse. You can obtain six-hour forecasts via internet, via weather fax, via VHF and SSB National Weather Service (NWS) and Ocean Prediction Center (OPC) voice broadcasts, and/or arrange to have these and other weather products emailed to you automatically (even at sea). The best place to start is with the Marine Forecasts portal page, www.nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/home.htm. From here, one can navigate to zone or point forecasts, to offshore and high seas forecasts in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, to real-time buoy observations, and so forth.

An additional source of real-time weather information includes private weather stations. For example, Tradewinds Sailing (where I teach) and nearby Richmond Yacht Club both have weather stations that display on their webpages.

And although this is decidedly old-school, but perhaps in keeping with the tenor of this article, you may always look skyward to assess the cloud deck. Wispy clouds high aloft indicate strong upper level winds and, often, this translates to stronger surface winds. Puffy cumulus clouds promise fair weather and higher pressure with less wind.

I highly recommend ASA's Marine Weather Endorsement Class for a detailed understanding of basic marine weather mechanics, but we don't have to be experts to use weather information that is freely available. Our eyes (and our ears) are two of the most valuable tools in our weather tool box if we remember to use them – look at the clouds and the water surface, listen to your rigging, be aware of lulls and shifts and remember the relationship of wind velocity and force. Using your eyes and ears will allow you to spend less of your sailing time reacting to conditions and more of it being in the confluence of wind and sea and vessel – in the moment.

Captain Larry Myers is a licensed USCG master and an ASA-certified senior instructor at Tradewinds Sailing School and Club in Richmond, Calif. Among other assignments, he teaches the ASA 119 Marine Weather Endorsement course.

MEMBER PROFILE • GEORGE LEON

I've always loved the water. Growing up, I enjoyed canoeing and row-boating with my family on the placid lakes of southern New Jersey and later kayaked many of the shady, cedar-lined rivers of the Pine Barrens. In 2001 I fulfilled a lifelong dream of having a place right on the water by purchasing a small summer cottage on a tidal creek of Barnegat Bay. Paddling my kayak through the scenic and briny streams and salt meadows of the Forsythe Wildlife Refuge, literally out my back door, provided many hours of blissful communing with nature.

Then one day, I decided to cross the bay to Long Beach Island, a surprisingly quick and smooth 45-minute journey. But the return trip became a hard lesson in wind direction and current: two and a half hours pushing against swells that grew into white caps as the afternoon progressed. I needed to turn the wind to my advantage out here, I quickly realized. And that's what launched my interest in sailing. Following the advice of a friend who sailed, I first became U.S. Sailing certified on a Sunfish at Cooper River Yacht Club in Camden County, New Jersey. Things happen fast on little boats and by necessity – meaning not going into the drink – you become very sensitive to wind direction and speed as well as balance.

The next big step was joining ASA and taking ASA 101 at BaySail School in Havre Degrace, Md., where their 22-foot Capris seemed tame compared to a Sunfish. And so after taking ASA 101 and sailing once thereafter with my former classmates, this over-confident sailor purchased a 1981 Mainsail 21, one of six sailboats built by powerboat manufacturer Henriques in Bayview, NJ. I soon learned that single-handing a keelboat introduces a whole new set of complications. The hanked jib and main configuration required me to climb up top and out to the bow to hoist the sails – not exactly a safely controlled condition with a six-horsepower outboard left to steer itself. Adding a roller furling for the jib and extending the main halyard to the cockpit along with a pull-down line for the main made all the difference: tricks of the trade I learned from neighboring sailors. Learning when and how to reef was also critical on Barnegat Bay where the winds tend to kick up strong in late afternoon, and learning to heave-to provided welcome relief from the wind for moving about the boat or taking a lunch break. Docking is still a challenge single-handed with a stiff breeze blowing off the dock and a typical three-knot current in the tidal creek, so I've gotten pretty good at lassoing pilings from the cockpit!

In the summer of 2012, I took ASA 103 with a friend at Liberty Sailing School in Philadelphia, fulfilling a long-time desire to learn how to operate a larger boat and sail



The author, George Leon, has enjoyed sailing everything from a tiny Minifish up to the 160-foot luxury cruiser, Arabella.

the Delaware River. But I also began to miss small boat sailing and couldn't resist buying a used Minifish – a slightly smaller version of a Sunfish – for \$100 at a yard sale. That was in October 2012 – about two weeks before my neighborhood became ground zero for Hurricane Sandy. Most of my neighbors pulled their boats out of the water before the storm, but I had no choice but to tie up my Mainsail 21 the way an old merchant marine once showed me “how to tie up a boat for a hurricane” – very long lines on both the bow and stern to allow vertical movement with the surge while keeping the boat close to the dock. After securing the lines, I felt fairly confident that the boat would stay put unless the surge exceeded six feet and the wind blew in from the southeast. A day later, seven feet of water came over the bulkhead with a 90 mph southeast wind, driving the boat up over the dock and onto my deck. By some miracle, it made a three-point landing with the bow resting between two pilings and the stern on the upper portion of the deck – essentially sitting level and undamaged except for a missing mast-top VHF antenna/wind-indicator, which of course I had just replaced earlier that season, but I wasn't complaining.

The Minifish, tied to a bollard on land next to the house, was somehow right where I left it – also undamaged! I only wish that all my neighbors had been as fortunate with their boats, but alas the storm wreaked much damage on our community.

2014 marked another milestone in my sailing career: the ASA Member Cruise in the BVIs aboard the Arabella. What an incredible vacation on such a beautiful boat! I can't say enough good things about the experience of cruising the islands, the quality of the accommodations and the treatment we received from the crew. And yes, some of us had a turn at the helm, and taking the 160-foot Arabella through a tack was the sailing thrill of a lifetime. I've already signed up for the March 2015 cruise and highly recommend the trip to all ASA members!

CHARTER TIP

continued from page 14

Age and Condition

The age of the yacht, by itself, is not as important as how well a boat has been used and maintained – but you might have no way of determining the latter before you sign up. Generally speaking, newer yachts will cost more than older yachts but will show less wear and tear.

The Cost

Cost will naturally be a factor in your choice of yacht. Size, quality, features and amenities all play a role, and so do location and season. Establish up front if and how your group will share the charter and incidental expenses.

Remember: if a deal seems too good to be true ... it probably is. Don't risk your precious vacation time on a cheap charter.

Accommodations

When looking at the size of boat you think best suits your wishes and budget, consider how many cabins and heads you'll need. Most production charter yachts under 40 feet have two or three double cabins and a single head. A double cabin is intended to sleep two adults.

For more information ...

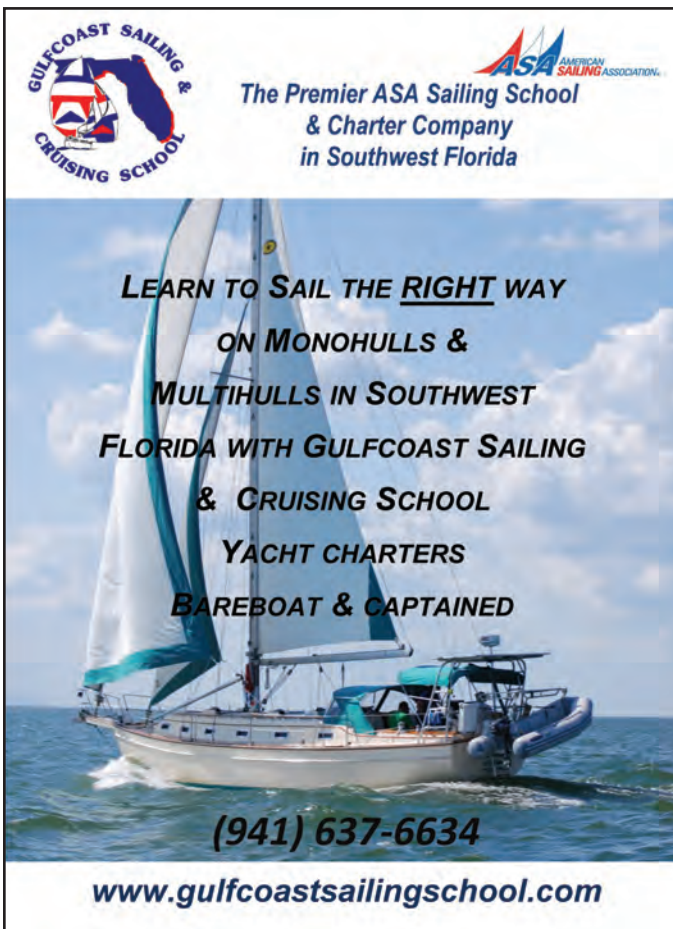
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The berth will be about the size of a standard double bed but with less headroom. If your crew prefers a private head for each cabin, you'll need to look at yachts in the 40- to 45-foot range. Yachts with four cabins are typically 45 feet and above. For a week on a boat with four to six adults who don't normally share a household, the need for space and privacy becomes very important indeed, so make sure all your crew can be comfortably berthed. Avoid using the saloon as a sleeping cabin for any cruise that will be longer than a weekend.

Catamarans

While usually more expensive to charter and operate, catamarans offer roomier living accommodations and more privacy than monohulls. Cabins are separated in the hulls and the large saloon and cockpit are great for socializing. The stability from the widely spaced hulls means cats heel little under sail and don't roll at anchor. A catamaran, though, is much bigger than a monohull of the same length and requires different sailing skills.

Excerpt from Bareboat Cruising Made Easy.



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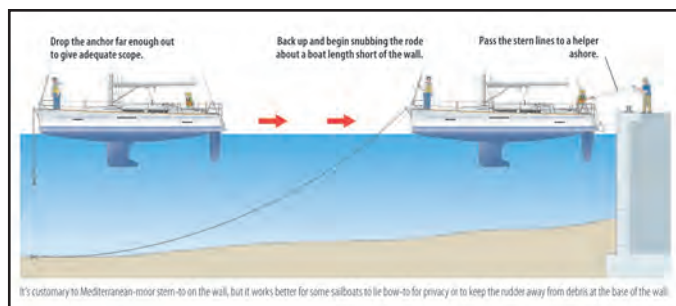
continued from page 3

ASA sought to utilize the strengths of the key team members from previously successful textbooks, so McGeary was an easy choice for editor. He specializes in designing sailboats and writing for sailing magazines, leading him to work in the editorial department at Cruising World magazine before moving to Good Old Boat magazine. His current position as senior editor keeps him in touch with sailors while allowing time for other writing and editing assignments. He worked closely with Amanda Lunn Publishing, an international design and production company. McGeary's passion for and extensive experience in writing, editing and sailing allowed him to fashion the Batchelors' words into a work of art.

Peter Isler, one of ASA's founding board members and two-time America's Cup winner, was deeply involved in the editing process. As a passionate, world-renowned sailor with a strong connection to ASA, Isler wanted the book to exceed ASA's highest standards. He served as a technical editor for this book as well as many other ASA textbooks, but the title does not do his role justice. Though he credits McGeary for most of the hard work, Isler's contributions greatly shaped Bareboat Cruising Made Easy.

The first step in his editing process was simply to reread the Standard, which in this case is ASA 104 – Bareboat Chartering. This particular Standard has a fun body of knowledge that makes it easy to imagine yourself on the deck of a beautiful cruising sailboat on your way to another idyllic anchorage in the British Virgin Islands. After studying the Standard, Isler had in-depth discussions with the ASA staff in order to fully understand how ASA schools are teaching ASA 104. Once he got a feel for the kind of boats generally used, the most popular course structures, and the most common teaching methods, Isler was finally able to delve into Bareboat Cruising Made Easy's text. He put himself in the reader's shoes, the sailor who is ready to bareboat charter or cruise in new waters for the first time, and made sure all the necessary information was present and clearly conveyed.

Once the text and photographs were laid out on the pages designed for print, Isler read every word, captions and all. He came up with pages of notes for McGeary, who made the final changes based on input from the other technical editors and the ASA staff. Isler states, "This book has been especially fun to work on because you can almost feel the excitement of the sailor learning about their first bareboat charter. It's a fun process, and I get the easy job: Reading the material and asking questions. All in all, I'm proud of the team ASA has put together to produce this new line of books, and



Text from the new Bareboat Cruising Made Easy contains information designed to make cruising throughout the world possible for readers.

Bareboat Cruising Made Easy is going to be a great one."

Lenny Shabes served as the final editor of Bareboat Cruising Made Easy. As the founder of ASA and chairman of the board, he wanted to preserve ASA's standards while also improving and expanding the material presented. Shabes has worked as a boat broker, sailing instructor, and charter-boat captain. He has owned a sailing school and charter company and has been involved in the marine industry for over 35 years.

He and his wife Cindy own a J-100 that they race and day sail in Marina del Rey, Calif. Shabes, like Isler, was instrumental in structuring the vision of the book as a one-stop reference for people who want to charter. He shares, "I melded all the great input we received into a cohesive book. It was one of the hardest things I've ever done, but it was worth it. Reading it makes me want to go cruising!"

Artwork and Illustrations

One of the most striking aspects of the new text is the design, artwork and photography. Billy Black, the head of photography, worked in the New York fashion industry before discovering his love for action, traveling and capturing the magic of light and the spirit of people. He sailed his Ericson 39 into Newport for the start of the 1986 BOC Challenge and moved to Rhode Island in 1991. Black specializes in publicity work for all kinds of boats, but also enjoys destination and adventure-sailing photography. He is known among sailors and photographers alike as the best in the field.

Finally, Bareboat Cruising Made Easy would not have been possible without Peter Bull, a freelance illustrator with over 25 years of experience. His studio has produced illustrations for a multitude of sailing manuals. Bull works from his studio, Peter Bull Art Studio, which is based at his home in Wadhurst, England. His team of illustrators and designers produces artwork for publishing and advertising companies across the globe, and his sailing illustrations are unequaled.

Story by Isabelle Rossi de Leon.



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In the last American Sailing Journal, we looked at navigation applications for smartphones or tablets. Now, let's look at how portable devices and applications can work further in your shipboard routine.

Capabilities and Limitations

Smartphones or tablets, even without internet access, have real computing power. While conventional marine electronics (chart plotters, etc.) do more than any pocket device (control autopilots, display radar, show depth), much of that additional ability comes from these systems being connected to external sensors and other gear, not more basic power in the device itself. A Smartphone with good apps in your pocket adds important abilities, backs up built-in gear and helps you navigate and stand a better, safer watch.

What is the most basic definition of navigation? "Using all available skills, info and tools to safely sail a vessel and its crew from place to place."

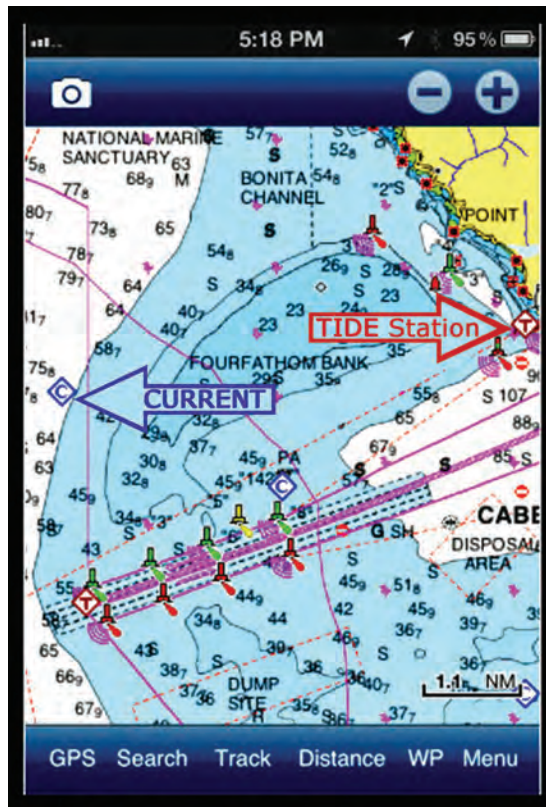
When primary gear fails, having a backup ready is priceless.

True Sea Story

I delivered a boat from Los Angeles to San Francisco a few years ago. The owners had only sailed inland waters. Their new boat was 50 percent bigger than anything they had ever sailed. "New Boat Fever" made them replace all their electronics with the newest, whiz-bang plotter and gear before delivery. Short of time, they signed the papers and wanted to leave immediately. We provisioned and sailed north. California's coast between L.A. and San Francisco is not all treacherous, but can be a bit forbidding with limited sheltered areas. Seamanship and careful planning are all-important. The crew had also never sailed at night. More adventure!

Nobody had time to read multi-volume manuals for all that new gear, so using it proved too complex. The owners brought three iPads aboard with a hodge-podge of nautical apps they downloaded, but they hadn't read the instructions nor practiced using them. Their plan? "Learn enroute." The owners said navigating below decks on iPads was unsatisfactory but wouldn't bring their

slippery, fragile, and expensive devices unprotected into the cockpit. Bottom line, my Smartphone, in a zip plastic freezer bag, stayed in my foully jacket pocket or on the cockpit table the whole trip. (A 12v charger outlet in the cockpit kept my device running.) Having this capable tool available and working reliably let us lay out our legs, quickly make course adjustments, monitor course deviations and easily correct them. We could also anticipate landmarks. The portable device provided all the info for the autopilot without direct connection. It was all we needed to navigate. We also maintained a paper DR track (but that is a another topic).



I love traditional navigation, GPS convenience, and the constant flow of info from radar plus all the other bridge gear. But, that little Smartphone and the Avionics app worked with efficiency and style, a balance between "Super-Luxe Everything" and solid usability.

How else can a portable device and apps make sailing simpler and more secure? Compare real needs and tools to meet those needs. Many sailors install radar to scan crossing vessels at max range, thinking this makes them safer. Usually radar is best used for finding marks and crawling in fog and rain to obscured channel entrances. Sailors confuse celestial navigation's best values and never learn it. Another awareness tool for the kit is the Automated Identification System (AIS).

AIS, only recently popular with recreational boaters, has unique value. AIS takes vessel info and transmits it on VHF frequencies. Larger vessels must have and use AIS; it is optional for all others. Vessels with AIS receiving ability use the data to call other vessels bridge-to-bridge by name, using individual MMSI/DSC codes. AIS data can display other vessels' positions and motions on a chart plotter. Chart plotters also use AIS data plus your own GPS data to compute the CPA (Closest Point of Approach) and TCPA (Time of CPA). Some radars even integrate AIS info onto their own screens. A few compact VHF radios now have built-in AIS receivers that display DSC, vessel name and collision avoidance info from AIS signals on their own small screens. Installing an AIS transceiver (or, at a minimum, an AIS receiver) is now almost a must for newer, well-equipped vessels. How does a portable sailing device fit?

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While a modern AIS transceiver installed with a dedicated antenna is best, it is a big investment in hardware, integration and setup. Your vessel, or ones you sail on, may not yet have one. A portable device can help fill the gap.

A Little Background

Both USCG and volunteer AIS receiving networks around the globe collect real-time AIS signals locally and upload to servers via the internet. With a suitable portable app, this data is usable by anyone. You “see” boats around you, know their name, size, heading and speed, sometimes their cargo and last port of call, plus – importantly – their MMSI number so you can call directly on the VHF using DCS. These apps retrieve AIS data (over WiFi or cell phone networks) and display it on a local chart of your area or any area you choose on your device. Touch a boat icon and a pop-up box gives you the data and, often, a picture. I hear you ask: “Will this work out in the mid-Pacific, en route to Tahiti?!” It won’t – unless you have onboard WiFi from an expensive satellite source. But be patient, new services for Satellite-AIS will be here soon.

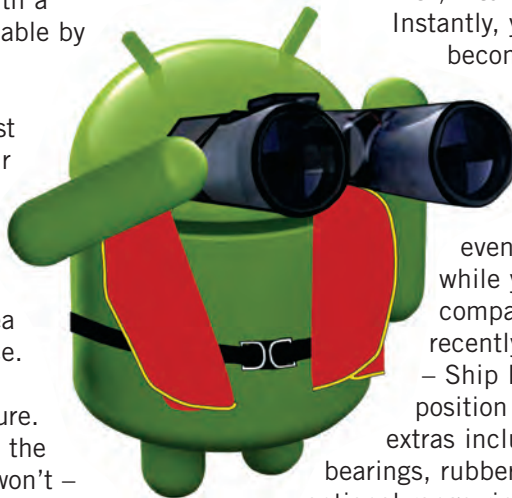
Also consider that the greatest threat from marine traffic is often within crowded shipping channels, busy harbors, on close near-coastal shores or bays where a mix of commercial, recreational, military, law enforcement and other vessels can make sailing challenging. Picking out that one mystery ship at sea may be nice – and fun – but sorting a huge mob of moving boats, in close quarters, provides more safety.

One current stellar AIS app is Marine Traffic (\$4.99 on Google Play Store). It is stable and has a simple interface. It displays your position and all vessels whose AIS signals are on their servers. Each vessel type is color-coded. You select which ones you want to see, whether to show ship names on-screen, and whether to use a satellite photo map or Google Maps. The info box is well designed and shows available boat photos by default. Your own vessel’s position is displayed with an icon updated from your GPS. The “My Fleet” option creates a group of vessels to view such as flotillas or clubs. The newest add-on option offers on-screen, compass-directed “Augmented Reality” for \$3.99 extra. Marine Traffic is the industry leader with the largest network of receivers worldwide. In February, TV fake news pundit, Stephen Colbert told a newspaper

interviewer that Marine Traffic was his favorite app because, “I love shipping. I’m a train spotter but with boats. This app is fantastic.”

Another solid choice is Boat Beacon (\$9.99 also in the Play Store). Both apps have similar chart displays and ship detail lookups. Both show your position. So, why would you buy Boat Beacon at twice the (still rather humble) price? Because, Boat Beacon also does some very clever, extra tricks. Activate their “I’m On My Boat” feature and Boat Beacon adds your real-time GPS position plus whatever boat info you input, including MMSI, into the database on their server.

Instantly, you and your Android (or iOS) device become a virtual AIS ship, visible to all other users of the Boat Beacon app. Boat Beacon plots bearings to AIS targets and calculates – in the background – both CPA and TCPA. Collision and SART functions can even be set to run in the background while you use the device for other apps. By comparison, Marine Traffic has only recently posted a free Beta program, “mAIS – Ship Position Reporting,” which posts your position after a bit of set up. Other cool BB extras include a pop-up compass ring for bearings, rubber-band-style distance ruler, and optional range rings.



Limitations of AIS

There are two clear limitations for any Internet-AIS system: First, since you don’t receive AIS signals directly, AIS info is dependent on the available receiver network; some areas may not be as well covered as others worldwide (although major U.S. and world boating areas are well covered). Second, it is unavoidable that you need either cell or WiFi coverage to use an Internet-AIS service. Consider though, navigating in a crowded harbor (where cell and/or WiFi are most likely available) is when you are most vulnerable. Boat Beacon has a provision to accept “Local AIS” receiver signals via a USB/direct wired link but that was not tested for this article.

Finally, remember: no gadget replaces prudent seamanship.

In upcoming issues of ASJ, we will look at other inexpensive electronic apps to make your sailing safer and more comfortable. If you have comments or suggestions, your input is very welcome. Fair Winds!

Captain Lan Yarbrough is a USCG master and an ASA instructor for 25 years. He has sailed throughout the U.S. and Mexico, and in the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas. He has published sailing articles and helped write the ASA 101 and 103 textbooks.



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