

THE JOURNAL OF THE  **AMERICAN SAILING ASSOCIATION**

# AMERICAN SAILING

## MEMBER'S EVENT IN ST. PETERSBURG BOASTS FUN AND SUN FOR ALL

One of the big sailing summer kick-offs took place June 15-22, 2012, as the Renaissance Vinoy Resort in St. Petersburg, Fla., became ASA territory. Members and instructors from around the world descended for a week of celebrating the sailing lifestyle—meeting new friends, enjoying the sunshine and learning from the best!

With clinics in the mornings and open dock times every afternoon, there was no shortage of opportunities to get out and sail on Tampa Bay. The boats ranged from the big Leopard 44 catamaran, to Hunters, Catalinas, and Beneateaus as small as 27 feet and as large as 45.



*Photo by Susie Sanders*

*The sunshine, palm trees and sparkling waters of St. Petersburg, Fla., made the Renaissance Vinoy an ideal spot for this year's ASA Member Event.*

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## LIVING THE DREAM • PART II • THE TRAINING VOYAGE HOME

In Part I of our story we went from beginning sailors to sailboat owners! Here in Part II, we sail our new Beneteau, Chick A Lou, on a training voyage from St. Petersburg to her new home in New Orleans. For the real adventure from St. Petersburg to New Orleans, we made the decision to engage ASA instructors Jeff and Jean and Murray Yacht Sales to provide ASA 103 & 104 certifications while we served as crew and progressed through the material and tests.

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*Daughter, Annie & boyfriend, Reice*

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AUTUMN 2012



## ASA UPDATE - OUR NEW APP

We're thrilled to announce the release of the completely revamped ASA iPhone app—a 5-star rated, must-have utility for sailors! It's rich with fun and useful features, there are no loading times on videos or references, and it keeps you connected to ASA and the sailing lifestyle. So, just what can this app do?

**Digital Compass/Send Position:** The new digital compass shows your bearing, your latitude & longitude, and your speed in knots. It also allows you to email your position to anyone instantly, so you can tell your friends, "Look where I am!"



**Log Book:** Record the details of a voyage in as much or as little detail as you want. Great for building a sailing resume and preserving a memorable sail!

**References and Videos Built-In:** Video tips, knots, buoys, navigation lights—all kinds of handy sailing references are at your fingertips. And because they are built into the app, there are no loading times and no waiting for it to buffer!

**Online Resources:** Enjoy quick internet access to an extensive set of weather resources and sailing links, including ASA on Facebook and Twitter, as well as ASA schools, charter companies, and flotilla adventures. Don't take our word for it, though. Check out some of the reviews on the App Store:

"Complete and polished. Kudos!"

"The 'send position' is a terrific new feature. Added to the other content this is a must have for any sailor. I also appreciate how easily the videos play now – nice fix!"

"Strong upgrade! New design slicker and more appealing. Here's a sailing app to use often!"

To download the app, just open up the App Store icon on your iPhone or iPad. Click on the Search tab, and type in American Sailing Association. It should pop right up. You can check out sample screenshots and reviews before you download!

The app works on both iPhone and iPad. If you had the old version of the app, you'll have a free upgrade to the new one, and if you've never had it, now's the time to get on board! Once you've downloaded it, you'll get all future upgrades for free.

## The Charley Noble

As we approach the end of another great sailing season (except in those places where sailing season never ends!), I want to take this opportunity to thank you, our members, for making this a great year.

This has been an especially memorable one for us, with the release of our new book, *Coastal Cruising Made Easy*, some spectacular flotillas in St. Martin, Greece, British Columbia, and elsewhere, and a hugely successful member's event in St. Petersburg, Fla., which you can read about in this issue of the ASJ!



This year also marked the launch of our on-water sailing clinics at boat shows around the country. Hundreds of people got their first taste of sailing in Miami, Oakland and San Diego thanks to these low-cost classes taught by our instructors. All levels are welcome, with clinics tailored to brand new sailors, experienced cruisers and those looking to learn advanced blue water and catamaran skills.

The program has proved enormously popular, and we'll be looking to continue it at future boat shows. Make sure to keep up with us on Facebook and Twitter to find out when we'll be in your area!

Once again, thanks for being a member of ASA and supporting sailing. Thanks to people like you, the sailing lifestyle never ends, even if the warm weather does!

*"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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ASA members practice righting a raft in the Renaissance Vinoy's pool.

## FEATURE STORY

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Members got in some great crew-overboard and docking practice (including clinics for ladies only) and plenty of time to just handle the boat and enjoy the water.

Seminars were held daily, allowing members to learn from the combined wisdom of veteran ASA sailing instructors. And, of course, no gathering of sailors would be complete without some great parties. Aside from daily meals shared at the Vinoy's fine restaurant or in the local St. Petersburg area, many a cutlass was brandished at the ASA Rooftop Pirate Party, with the skyline of St. Petersburg and the waters of Tampa Bay for a backdrop. Read on for a full account of the idyllic lifestyle at American Sailing Week 2012!

June 15 -22, 2012 ASA Logbook:  
ASA Members Week aka Sailing Camp for Grown Ups.

Friday, June 15 Members arrived at the beautiful Renaissance Vinoy Hotel in St. Petersburg, Fla., and found their way to the docks of the resort marina where they spent the afternoon meeting other campers at the first activity of the week, the scavenger hunt. The hunt included climbing on board five different yachts and then filling out the answer sheet based on what was discovered. A summer rain shower put a damper on the dockside activities, but Capt. Dave Amann from Sailing Florida Charters made the best of it by serving up the Bud Light and rum drinks as the gang huddled under the tiki hut waiting for the rain to pass. Everyone was having such a great time they almost missed the welcome party. The rain let up and the kickoff party went off without a hitch. Introductions were made by the local hosts Jean Levine and Jeff Grossman as well as the ASA membership representative Kathy Christensen.

Saturday, June 16 This was the first full day of camp. It began with a morning seminar outlining a five-step plan to the cruising life and how ASA classes can help to

achieve that goal. In addition there was a formal presentation about the eight different boats (Catalina 270, 36, 44; Hunter 36 and 45 CC; Beneteau 32, Leopard 39 and Leopard 44 catamarans) that would be available to sail for the week and an introduction to all the ASA schools and staff (Flagship Sailing, Sailing Florida Charters and Simple Sailing); the captains and seminar speakers (Mary Maskal, John DeKeyser, Don Bentley, Jean Levine and Jeff Grossman) along with the award for the scavenger hunt winner. The prize awarded was a three-day, bareboat charter on a forty-plus-foot yacht from Sailing Florida Charters. After lunch the group headed out for a glorious sail, arriving back at the dock having made some new friends and ready to explore the many sidewalk cafés in search of dinner.

Sunday, June 17 The day started with a great breakfast buffet, and then members scurried back to their rooms to grab their bathing suits and catch the bus to the resort's golf course pool, where the Safety At Sea seminar, presented by TwoCanSail, was held. The focus of the safety seminar dealt with handling of the following: fire aboard, MOB, sinking, medical emergencies and heavy weather. West Marine donated prizes for the event which were raffled off and supplied safety gear for the show-and-tell portion of the seminar. Various campers were asked to role-play different emergency scenarios and demonstrate VHF procedures in the process. Then everyone got into the pool for a live, in-the-water demonstration of inflating, righting and boarding the six-person, offshore life raft provided by Winslow Life Raft. In addition a few campers got to don three different versions of the inflatable life jackets, jump in the pool and then flip over the life raft and climb on board from the water.

After the lunch break, picture-perfect sunshine and east breezes made for another fantastic sail. All the boats heading out together in a fleet was a wonderful sight to see on this chamber-of-commerce day in Tampa Bay. The local ASA schools went out of their way to provide many different kinds of boats, which gave the attendees an exclusive opportunity to sail a different boat every day, an experience not readily available in one location.

Monday June 18 "Weather for Breakfast" began the weeklong introduction to weather forecasting and the predictions for each day's wind and waves in the local area. After breakfast the group split up to attend the morning clinics. Included were a ladies docking class aboard the Catalina 270 provided by Flagship Sailing at the Harborage Marina and the landside clinic on basic navigation and using cool tools donated by Weems & Plath. After the lunch break and more sailing in the afternoon, guests returned to the dock in time for the 6 p.m. rendezvous with the pirates gathering on the steps of the Vinoy.

continued on page 10



## LIVING THE DREAM

*continued from page 1*

Preparations began in earnest as we received information on essential equipment in all categories (safety, mechanical, electrical, practical) from Jeff and Jean. Packages were shipped and orders were placed; weather was monitored. Excitement ran high!

Debbie met Jean a day early to completely inventory the boat and begin provisioning for the voyage. Under Jean's guidance, an inventory of all items, listed by location on the boat, was created and we were able to determine what items we lacked. Menus were made based on expected weather and seas and this indeed proved to be a blessing! Friday morning Jeff and Jean met us on the boat, and after stowing their personal life raft and offshore safety gear in the starboard lazarette, the provisioning marathon began.

Departure day dawned with much anticipation! The weather window necessitated changing the original route that would have stayed inshore until later in the voyage. Instead we headed straight offshore bound for Pensacola, Fla. As we progressed through the Gulf of Mexico, the ASA 103 lessons began in earnest. Navigation and safety rules and guidelines were thoroughly explained, discussed and applied. Jean developed a watch schedule while Jeff explained the log sheets that became an integral part of our routine. Battery voltage, engine filters, bilge conditions, weather and our coordinates were regularly checked, and all information logged. Prior to departure, we had given our family approximate dates and locations, and now underway, we set off SPOT periodically and our location was emailed to them.

Everyone began adjusting their bodies to the watch schedules. While on watch the second night, Jean and Robert noticed a significant return on the radar coming up from astern. Anxiously they watched as the blip gained on our small vessel. When Jean deemed it too close for her comfort level, she hailed the vessel on the VHF and discovered it was the USS Independence moving at a speed of 22 knots. They advised that they would alter their course. When dawn broke that morning as we entered Pensacola Bay, we found her alongside. She is a trimaran design and is the lead ship for the Independence class of littoral combat ships. Quite an imposing vessel!

Throughout the voyage, we worked on the ASA 103 and 104 coursework. Our instructors carefully and thoroughly guided us through everything, including, but not limited to: navigation, using our instruments, radio protocols and procedures, charts, choosing anchorages (wind, weather, bottom, location), and the ever-important rules of the road. While at anchor in Ingram Bayou off the GIWW near Orange Beach, Ala., we nervously took the ASA 103 test. Thanks to our diligent instructors, we passed!



*Along with instructors, Jeff and Jean, new boat owners, Debbie and Robert sail their vessel to its new home.*

The next day, we continued to motorsail westward toward New Orleans in the GIWW, anchoring off Cat Island, Miss., for a night. Thankfully, we had an uneventful passage from Alabama to Louisiana. Our only excitement was a boarding by the USCG in the Rigolets. Due to the fact that Jeff and Jean had impressed upon us the importance of ensuring that we carried copies of all our documentation for the sale and registration of the boat as well as the radio, etc., we received a perfect score and a goldenrod colored form which the USCG officer quipped, indicated that we were "golden."

While we crossed Lake Pontchartrain, we took the ASA 104 test and passed. Whew! Now it was getting dark and we had to finish crossing the lake, find our new slip in the marina, and manage to safely maneuver as the southwest winds howled at 25 knots. Thanks to the expertise and teamwork of our captains, the process was executed without undue drama. We were home safely! Jeff and Jean helped us get squared away in our slip and loaded all their safety equipment into the rental car for the drive back to Florida. With reassurances that any future questions were welcome, the Two Can Sail captains took their leave.

Chick A Lou was christened the first weekend our daughter was home from college. We are now weekend sailors and are becoming very familiar with our boat inside and out.

Throughout these last few months, the helpfulness, friendliness, and willingness to share knowledge that has been exhibited by all the members of the boating community has been absolutely overwhelming. The theme of respect for the weather and the sea resonates deeply during sailing discussions. With this in mind, we have begun reading and working on the material for our next ASA certification while enjoying Chick A Lou and our new friends.

## FEATURED SAILBOAT • PRECISION 18

Not many products that we buy today bear the label "Made in the USA." But the Precision 18 is just that, constructed by Precision Boat Works located in Palmetto, Fla., which has been in business since 1978. For thirty-four years, the company has focused on building only quality small boats. Brothers Richard and Bill Porter are very proud of the entire line of Precision boats from the P15 thru the P23, all professionally designed by Jim Taylor, eight-time winner of *Sailing World* and *Cruising World* magazines "Boat of the Year" awards.

The design goal of the Precision 18 is a sailboat with traditional lines, good performance and affordability for the family. Good things come in small packages, and the Precision 18 is a trailerable small boat package with a big boat look, capable of being towed by the family sedan. Unlike other trailer sailors, the cabin top does not carry all the way out to the beam making it easy to safely walk around the wide side decks and inboard shrouds. The interior cabin also gives you the feeling of a much larger boat with accommodations for four.

The Precision 18 is designed to be a lively, well-mannered sailboat rather than a floating vacation home, but the features described are noteworthy nonetheless. There is ample sitting headroom for four and a filler cushion that drops to form a six-foot, six-inch v-berth that is not broken up by the usual awkward mast support post. There are six-foot quarter berths port and starboard, not to mention a 48-quart cooler, provision for a portable head, and 12-volt battery. A forward hatch provides ventilation and an emergency exit, and the large companionway and four opening cabin windows contribute to the feeling of light and open space. The cabin is appointed with teak trim, fabric cushions and a covered cabin ceiling, giving it a homey feel. All of these features make it possible to weekend cruise at the location of choice at an affordable price. Imagine sailing in the Great Lakes in the summer then driving to Florida for Christmas vacation in the Keys.

Lightweight and easy to trailer anywhere, she is also easy to rig and sail. The Precision 18 with her fractional rig makes it easy to hoist the mast and set up right on the trailer. The rigging has both a forestay and backstay to support the mast without sweeping back the spreaders, allowing for better downwind sailing. Roller furling gear



*While easily trailerable, the Precision 18 provides a great deal of cockpit space. Below decks, it has the amenities of a larger vessel.*

is an available extra that can be added for easy deployment under sail. Proper deck hardware leading the sail controls back to the cockpit make the Precision 18 easy to manage with the family or just a couple. The cockpit is six feet, four inches long, comfortable and large enough for a family of four or to stretch out for a nap. The mainsheet trims aft of the cockpit and the lines; winches and cleats are well arranged, keeping the cockpit clear for uncluttered maneuvering while sailing. The sight lines from the helm are excellent and she is easily driven under sail with her ample sail area of 145 square feet.

The Precision 18 can also be driven under power by a 3.5 horsepower outboard; there is a sealed storage locker on the port side of the cockpit designed for the fuel tank.

The internal 350-pound, lead-ballasted keel centerboard design is built to allow stability without encroaching on the cabin floor, yet the centerboard can be lowered with ease for better windward performance; and at 65 pounds, it can be lifted without the use of a winch.

The draft can be varied from one foot, six inches with the board up to four feet, three inches with the board down. The pintle and gudgeon hung rudder is also adjustable, making this a great boat for exploring the Florida Keys or any shoal draft areas.

Best of all, a new Precision 18 can be purchased for around \$24,000 which includes the trailer and many standard features. It is a lot of boat for a reasonable investment and few worries in its simplicity of systems. Like that "Made in the USA" label unique in today's economy, the Precision 18 delivers great sailing fun, pure and simple.

*Article courtesy of Capt. Jean Levine.*

### *For more information*

*For more details on the Precision 18 and Precision Boat Works log on to [www.precisionboatworks.com](http://www.precisionboatworks.com).*





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## MEMBER PROFILE • JOHN COMMISKEY & SAMANTHA BEADEL

Whether it's hiking the Annapurna range in Nepal, skiing the backcountry, or surfing the Pacific Coast, John Commiskey and Samantha Beadel are always looking for the next big adventure.

A deep love of the outdoors naturally led them to sailing and to ASA school Seattle Sailing Club, where they earned their 101, 103 and 104 certifications. For John, these courses were his first introduction to sailing, while Sam has been sailing and racing all her life. Now, both certified up to Bareboat Charter, they're ready to explore everything the sport has to offer.

John and Sam hail originally from small towns in New York (Ithaca and Mexico, respectively) but now make their home in Seattle, Wa. John works in retail management at Amazon.com, and Sam is an intern architect with GGLO, LLC. They married this August on Orcas Island, in Washington's Puget Sound.

They say, "We are in the process of planning our honeymoon, and having recently completed ASA 104, a bareboat sailing adventure will most definitely be part of it! We are considering several options including a cultural sailing trip to the Mediterranean, a surfing/sailing vacation in Mexico and a relaxing cruise in the Caribbean. We welcome any suggestions or advice from other ASA members. Find us on Facebook if you have any suggestions!"

Sam's family took a bareboat trip to the British Virgin Islands when she was in college. However, she didn't have any chartering experience of her own until they took ASA 104 together. They know all of their favorite spots for other outdoor sports: Whistler for skiing and Neah Bay for surfing, just to name a few. But when it comes to sailing, they're just excited to discover new places together.

While sailing is relatively new to them, these two are no strangers to adventure. Over the last several years, some of John's favorite expeditions include a 10-day sea-



Whether hiking in the mountains or boating in a bay, John Commiskey and Samantha Beadel enjoy living on the adventurous side of life.



kayaking trip in Glacier Bay, Alaska; several week-long backcountry ski trips in British Columbia; skiing the classic Haute Route in Europe; and a three-week trek around the Annapurna Range in Nepal (with Sam). Drawn to the planning and execution of long outdoor trips, John has ambitious plans to pursue similar sailing trips.

Sam is a skier, surfer, gardener, yogini and an amazing cook (John vouches for this one). She also enjoys hiking, loves digging in the garden and exploring Seattle's amazing parks, cooking and taking long walks with her dog.

When asked about their ASA memberships, they say: "We both initially joined the ASA as part of the courses we were taking. However, as we get more involved in the sailing community, we look forward to utilizing the ASA as a resource as we plan more sailing adventures together."





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## PRODUCT REVIEW • WEEMS & PLATH HAND BEARING COMPASS

In my years of navigating, I have always used the typical pistol grip hand bearing compass. It has worked fine on my trips to and from Mexico and Redondo Beach, Calif. However, one day I was running a sailboat race with a group of volunteers on a race committee boat, and my friend Norm pulled out his Weems and Plath hand-held compass. It was shaped much differently and he encouraged me to give it a try.

When setting up a race course, we need to calculate the wind direction and then set a race start line 90 degrees to the wind marked by starting flags. I took one look through his compass, and I was sold. It was so much easier to read my bearing. With the pistol style compass you need to use it at arm's length, line up the V-notches in the sighting vanes on the compass with the object you are sighting and read the compass bearing as both the boat and compass roll. It can be quite difficult. The Weems and Plath hand bearing compass contains an infinity prism and works much differently. You can either hold it up to your cheek or look at it from above. You then sight the object, and the prism projects the bearing at the same time. In fact, the accuracy for this style is about one to three degrees while the pistol grip is usually accurate to about ten degrees.

The Weems and Plath model can be used for both day and night while the pistol style requires the purchase of an illuminated model for use at night. The Weems and Plath costs more but is significantly easier to use and is more accurate. I had a problem using the lanyard that came with the pistol style. It was not long enough for me to have it around my neck and still hold the instrument out far enough. I needed to create my own lanyard, and it was much more awkward than the hockey puck style to hang around my neck.

Hand-held compasses are typically used for navigation. Sailors take a bearing and then transfer this information to a paper chart and use this information to plot their location. A position fix is created by taking the bearings of two or more objects using a compass and charting these. These sightings should be more than 45 degrees apart. Your boat's location can be calculated where they intersect

### For more information

The Weems and Plath Hand Bearing Compass model 2004 retails for \$149.99. For more information go to [weems-plath.com](http://weems-plath.com).



(Top) The Weems & Plath hockey puck style compass allows for easier and more accurate sighting on the move than the pistol style compass pictured below it.

on the chart. Another use for a hand-held compass is to prevent collisions. If you see a vessel approaching your sailboat and are concerned that they may be on a collision course you can take a bearing and then check back every few minutes to see if that bearing has changed. If the bearing does not change, you are at risk of collision.

What I like best about this "hockey puck style" Weems and Plath model is the ease of use. On the race committee boat, we need to make decisions quickly, and it is clear to me that this compass is much more accurate than the type I have been using. I like the design of the rubber-armored case, and it is more comfortable to wear around my neck or stick it in my pocket ready for my next bearing.

*Carlos Debonis owns a Cal 25 sailboat that he has raced for many years. He is now actively running sailboat races as a race officer for King Harbor Yacht Club.*



## FEATURE STORY

*continued from page 3*

The pirates then invaded Cha Cha Coconuts at the Pier for a rooftop dinner party. Arrrrr!

Tuesday June 19 At 8 a.m. there was more weather training during breakfast followed by the landside clinic known as "Cowboy Skills." Taught by Capt. Jeff on the docks, campers got hands-on practice heaving dock lines, roping pilings and cleats, and, of course, knot tying. The morning docking clinics continued with four boats each circling in close quarters like they were about to joust with each other. Campers got lots of skill practice out of their comfort zone, practicing a "k turn," maneuvering in close quarters, docking alongside and pulling into a slip. Mary Maskal, The Yachting Gourmet, gave a presentation on provisioning for charter along with some helpful hints and, of course, recipes. With crystal clear skies, the group headed out for the afternoon sail, followed by a sunset sail, for those who just could not get enough sailing. Meow, the Leopard 44, with her large forward deck, front porch and extra large cockpit, easily took all 18 sailors for a romping sail across the bay at nine-plus knots, while they enjoyed appetizers and beverages with Capt. Pat at the helm.

Wednesday June 20 The morning's landside clinic was basic navigation, and the onboard clinics included

docking a catamaran and more docking practice with some man-over-board practice thrown in for good measure. The afternoon seminar was given by John DeKeyser of Yachting Vacations on ASA Flotillas, with a special presentation on the upcoming Pine Island and Croatia flotillas. Weather did create a short delay for the afternoon sail, but the fleet made it out for a boisterous cruise under mostly reefed sails.

Thursday June 21 The weather forecast predicted more storms for the afternoon, so the sailing was switched to the morning to assure everyone would get in a sail for the day. After lunch Capt. Don Bently presented a seminar on celestial navigation and how to take a sight using a sextant. The schedule change allowed Capt. Don to give a "hands on" chance at using a sextant to some participants while the rest of the group got one last chance at the dockside line-handling clinic. The final goodbye dinner party and awards banquet was held, along with a raffle of goodies supplied by ASA, West Marine and Weems & Plath. Toasts were made to new friends, future charter partners, and new sailing mates!

Friday June 22 The last breakfast together was eaten with final goodbyes and exchanging of contact information. Next year promises to grow with more hands-on clinics, the opportunity to sail a wide variety of different boat types and to provide new family members time out on the water.

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# SAILING DESTINATION

*The Great Barrier Reef & Whitsunday Island of Australia • By David Kory*



*Photo by David Kory*

*Year-round idyllic temperatures make the islands a pleasure to visit at any time.*

Said to be the world's largest living structure and the only one visible from outer space, the Great Barrier Reef is one of the seven natural wonders of the world.

Stretching over 1,400 miles in length across the Coral Sea, the Great Barrier Reef protects the Whitsunday Islands and coastline from huge ocean swells, providing the region with some of the safest sailing and cruising waters in the world. The Whitsunday region benefits from being the closest point off the Queensland coast to the Great Barrier Reef, which ensures it is the ideal hub from which to explore this aquatic wonderland.

The Whitsunday Islands, unquestionably one of the most breath-takingly beautiful places on earth, have a known history that started over 100 million years ago when catastrophic volcanic activity formed a mountainous region of terrain which was firmly connected to the mainland coast. After the last Ice Age (some 30,000 to 50,000 years ago), the once dominant mountains were partially engulfed by the rising sea level, creating the present day network of 74 islands.

Indigenous tribes are thought to have roamed the islands for 8,000 years before European settlement. One of the earliest recorded and most historically

dominant tribes was known as the Ngaro people, a nomadic group whose territory expanded across the entire island chain and some of the adjacent coastline.

### *The Islands' Naming*

The Whitsunday Islands' first documented European history began on June 4, 1770, when Captain James Cook sailed through the islands on his voyage up Australia's east coast. Naming the island chain collectively as the Cumberland Islands, the Captain then named the 'Whitsunday Passage' after the day on which he thought he had sailed through it – Whit Sunday. Only in the mid 1800s, after facing fierce opposition from the local

### *For more information*

*For general information, go to:  
[www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au](http://www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au)*

indigenous community, were the first island land leases granted to mainland farmers. Then, in the 1920s, the first simple galvanized huts were established to entertain cruise ship guests, then progressively, mainland day-trippers started to arrive. Now, the Whitsunday region, which encompasses the Whitsunday Islands (still officially charted as the Cumberland islands), attracts aquatic worshippers from all across the globe.

Azure to turquoise blue waters, amazingly colorful coral flowerbeds, pristine fine white sandy beaches, and lush landscapes characterize the area, with green-topped islands popping out of the sea. With beautiful scenery, easy access to the southern portion of the Great Barrier Reef, a tropical climate that's pleasant and warm year-round, protected waters and easy breezes, the Whitsundays are an ideal sailing destination.

### *Island Trivia*

Here are some facts about the beautiful Whitsunday Islands:

The Whitsunday Region is 70 percent National Park.

Whitehaven Beach is classed as one of the top five beaches in the world. The pure white silica sand is so fine, NASA uses it to polish telescope lenses. Even geologists are not sure where the silica sand comes from, although there are several unproven theories, including a sunken volcano.

Heart Reef, off the Whitsunday coast in the Great Barrier Reef is a natural formation of coral shaped like a heart.



*Photo by David Kory*

*(Above) A charming little reef fish nestles amongst the brightly colored tentacles of a sea anemone. (Below) With lush hills covered in verdant green rising up from the crystal clear waters and snow-white sand, the Whitsunday Islands are a traveler's paradise waiting to be visited. (Australian Tourist Board photo)*

The Whitsundays are situated on the same latitude as Rio de Janeiro and Tahiti, and therefore enjoy a tropical climate with daily temperatures varying little from month to month. The days are warm year round and evenings are sultry in summer but cooler in the winter, requiring only a light jacket or sweater. They are best described as beautiful one day, perfect the next!

The average water temperature in the Whitsundays is 80 degrees F.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park is the largest coral reef system in the world, covering 132,000 square miles in area, 1,400 miles in length and varies from 35 to 140 miles wide.

Only six percent of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park consists of coral reefs.

*continued on following page*





## SAILING DESTINATION

*continued from previous page*

The rest is made up of sea grass, mangroves, sand, algal and sponge gardens, inter-reefal communities and other habitats.

The Whitsunday region is home to:

- 1,625 species of fish
- 360 species of hard coral, and one third of the world's soft corals
- 5,000 species of mollusks
- 500 species of marine algae
- 630 species of echinoderm
- 17 species of sea snakes
- 215 species of birds
- 13,000 dugong, related to the manatee, and weighing around 900 pounds, it is the only herbivore marine mammal
- Six of the world's seven species of marine turtles (all listed as threatened)
- 30 species of whales and dolphins
- 133 species of sharks and rays

The different types of animals found along the Great Barrier Reef help make it one of the richest and most complex natural systems on earth. While much is known about some of the animals that make the reef home, vast amounts of information and species are yet to be discovered.

SCUBA diving is a popular way to discover all this marine life, but if snorkeling is more your style, then the warm shallow waters of the Whitsundays provide some of the most colorful fish and coral formations anywhere in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

While some of the Whitsunday Islands, such as Daydream Island, Hamilton Island, Brampton Island, Long Island, Hayman Island, South Molle Island, Hook Island and Lindeman Island have beautiful resort developments and small towns, the vast majority remain uninhabited and await your discovery.

### Exploring by Sail

So what is the best way to explore this paradise? On a sailboat, of course! A yacht charter in the Whitsundays allows for easy, relaxed exploration of the islands at your own pace. With line-of-sight navigation, calm seas and plentiful secluded anchorages, an Australian Whitsunday sailing vacation requires only limited previous sailing experience, making it ideal for anyone with an ASA bareboat certification. Contact [www.AVINautica.com](http://www.AVINautica.com) for help with bareboat yacht charters.

Getting there isn't too hard, either, although it is far from



*Heart Reef, part of the Great Barrier Reef, is a natural formation that has been delighting visitors to the Whitsunday Islands for years. (Australian Tourist Board photo)*

### ASA Australia & Great Barrier Reef Flotilla

*From March 19-31, 2013, sail the incomparable Whitsunday Islands and visit some of the 74 tropical islands protected by the Great Barrier Reef. Hike tropical forests with pristine white sand beaches, sparkling clear warm water, exotic wildlife and abundant sea life. Add in a few nights in Brisbane on the mainland, and a bonus day and celebration in Fiji, and it's the trip of a lifetime. For more info or to book, contact David Kory at [davidkory@gmail.com](mailto:davidkory@gmail.com) or call 925/787-6893.*

the United States. The charter base is located on Hamilton Island, which is only an hour flight from Brisbane, on the mainland. Brisbane, a large, modern city on the river, has plenty to offer as well, including a famous koala sanctuary, where you can hug a koala and feed some kangaroos, among many other native animals. Brisbane has a major international airport, with connections throughout the world. Sydney, although more famous, is a bit farther away, but also has some flights to Hamilton Island.

When you are ready to explore the far side of the world, swimming, snorkeling, wandering the pristine beaches and tropical jungles, indulge yourself in Australia's best sailing playground, the Whitsunday Islands.

*David Kory is a lifelong sailor, USCG 100-ton Master Captain, and former owner of Tradewinds Sailing School on San Francisco Bay. He is currently sailing his Beneteau Cyclades 51 along Brazil and Argentina. As a preferred charter broker for the Moorings, Sunsail, Footloose and LeBoat, he has been arranging individual, group and flotilla charter trips for the last decade, which allowed him, his wife and six kids to sail a variety of charter yachts in almost every corner of the globe. He maintains offices in California and Buenos Aires for his company, AVI Nautica.*

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**J**ust because we play with boats doesn't mean we're Daddy Warbucks, so keeping expenditures down on a bareboat charter is always important. Here are some suggestions to tame the costs for the charter of your dreams ... and leave something in the kitty for the next charter, too!

**Fly Cheap:** Night flights are often less expensive and save the cost of a hotel room as well. Before booking your charter, see what days are the least expensive to travel: midweek is often less and you may be able to arrange your charter to fit. Use frequent flyer miles for free seats. Watch for senior or student fares to reduce ticket costs.

**Pick Your Destination:** Thailand, Tahiti and Turkey may be appealing; but, for the cost of the airfare alone, you can have a week of chartering closer to home.

**Cut Hotel Costs:** Since you should arrive the day before your charter, see if your charter company offers "sleep-aboard" rates. This not only saves on a hotel, but allows you to unpack and become familiar with your boat before the check-out.

**Plan Your Cruise:** Take into account customs fees when you cross borders. Example: starting in the U.S. Virgin Islands and crossing to the British Virgins will add customs and immigration charges to your tab.

**Anchor Out:** In the BVIs, Seacure mooring balls run about \$25 a night, while marinas charge \$1.50 per foot and up. Anchor out and save.

**Be Fuelish:** Don't run at full throttle, but find an economical cruising speed when powering. Don't leave the generator running when you're not aboard, either.

**Shop Seasons:** By chartering just outside the high season, you can get savings as high as 50 percent, and you won't have the big crowds, either.

**Drink Aboard:** Enjoy happy hour on your boat. A shot of rum at waterfront bars in the British Virgins costs \$5 to \$8, a vast markup over the price of inexpensive local rum. Besides, you have a boat with a view that most tourists would kill for. Sightsee ashore, party in your own cockpit.

**Compare Costs:** Before you sign up for a charter, have a clear understanding of any add-on fees. Some companies charge extra for a dinghy or outboard, some don't include bed linens. These "extras" may add up to more



*Whatever the currency you are going to be paying in, using some helpful hints on how to save your pounds, euros, yen or pesos can make your trip seem like a whole lot more fun for a fraction of the cost on many expenses!*

than a seemingly more expensive charter that includes everything.

**Give Credit:** Pay with an airline credit card so you are accruing frequent flyer mileage that you can use for your future airline tickets. A credit card also gives you protection in case of cancellations or problems with your charter. In foreign countries, explore the benefits of paying in the local currency, which may give you a savings over the U.S. dollar even after the conversion costs.

**Take Your Toys:** Some charter companies include fins, masks and snorkels but, if they don't, fins alone rent for \$15 a week in the British Virgins, which is more than you'd pay to purchase them at home.

**Skip Staples:** Some charter companies charge upwards of \$15 per person for paper goods alone, which is far more than you'd pay for a week's supply of paper plates, paper towels and toilet paper from a local store. Condiments such as seasonings and spices can be brought from home in small Ziploc bags so you aren't throwing away expensive packages that have more than you need for your charter.

*This article is from the summer issue of CharterSavvy.com, the online magazine about bareboat chartering.*



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## INSTRUCTOR TIP

By Captain Lea Obermeyer

### Taking your Tool Kit Can Make all the Difference

**B**oats break. We all know it. Sometimes it's a minor inconvenience – a tear in the jib. Sometimes it's major – a dismasting. Even with diligent inspections and upkeep, rigging and mechanical failures can happen, on any size boat, in any weather. On cruising boats, you probably (hopefully) sail with a decent tool selection stowed in a toolbox or bag in an appropriate place. You may even have special use tools like a stuffing box wrench, and spare parts like belts, shackles and sail slides. But how do dinghy sailors and day sailors plan for repairs? With limited cockpit space and no cabin to stow a toolbox, where and how do small boat sailors avoid clutter on deck yet still be able to resolve breakdowns? If you lost a c ring off your shroud fitting could you jury-rig a temporary fix? (I once used a bobby pin for this.) If you lost a rudder pin what can you improvise with? (How about a heavy-duty zip tie?) A minimum number of tools and some ingenuity can make the difference in continuing a pleasant afternoon sail, or hours of frustration trying to get back to shore.

Having basic tools onboard can be easy with just a little forethought: Are you going to be lake sailing on a 16-foot catamaran? How about an all-in-one tool? Pliers, screw drivers, rigging knife in one compact case. But make sure it is attached to you or the boat with a cord. It won't do you any good lying at the bottom of the lake if the boat turtles. Are you going to be bay sailing on a 22-foot keelboat? Bring a few tools and fittings in a soft-sided tool kit or roll that has a float attached in case you broach.

Every sailor should have a rigging knife at hand, but I also carry pliers and zip ties in my sail bag. When space



*Having a set of tools in a small bag equipped with a float can allow sailors to make it back to the dock on their own when a problem occurs.*

and weight allow, I also bring: flat head and Phillips screw drivers, WD 40, cotter pins and rings, clevis pins, shackles, small hammer, wire cutters, sail tape, and polypropylene line.

Be creative when organizing – small parts can fit in a pillbox or baggie. I use a koozie when I work topside. I can stuff small parts in it, squish it under my foot or knee, and if it blows off-it floats! Be prepared to handle common breakdowns. You will be safer and have more fun!

*Lea Obermeyer is a charter captain and ASA Instructor 101-105 for SmarterSail in St. Petersburg, Fla. She is a USCG licensed captain with over 30 years of sailing experience throughout the Gulf Coast, Eastern Seaboard and the Chesapeake Bay.*