

THE JOURNAL OF THE  **AMERICAN SAILING**

AMERICAN SAILING

THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM • STORY AND PHOTOS BY CAPTAIN BERT COHEN

Living the Dream – It's an expression we sailors often see and hear, whether we see it in magazine ads enticing us to some far off paradise or hear it after the latest regatta winners tell their tales as if they just won the America's Cup. At today's boat shows, you see and hear it at every turn – you can't escape it!

As an ASA instructor, delivery and charter captain, I spend much of my time on the water and have always enjoyed sharing my love of sailing with others. Whether it's working with new students or sailors working to advance their skill set, helping an owner deliver his boat to its destination, or hosting groups on day sails or weeklong jaunts to the

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With modern technology and boat building, sailors with disabilities are able to experience the thrill of coming across New York Harbor at sunset under the eyes of Lady Liberty.

LIVING THE DREAM • HEATHER AND DAVID NISSEN ENJOY THE SAILING LIFESTYLE



Heather and David Nissen

Living near Newport Beach, California, the Pacific Ocean is something we see almost every day. For years we had kayaked in Newport Harbor, rode bikes up and down Pacific Coast Highway, sunned ourselves on the beaches, but only gazed upon the sailboats dancing on the deep blue water.

Often we would think “Oh, how grand it would be to sail out on the ocean with the wind as our playmate.”

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WINTER 2015



Photo by Billy Black

ASA UPDATE

In 2016 ASA will be releasing the fourth book of its much-lauded educational series, *Cruising Catamarans Made Easy*. ASA's new book is being introduced at the perfect time, as cruising catamarans have become the fastest growing segment of the sailing market. The new book is thorough and comprehensive. In addition to teaching the art of sailing a big cat to a newbie, the book will serve as a resource for all catamaran sailors.

The new book was written as the textbook and curricula for the ASA Cruising Catamaran course, ASA 114. The book utilizes the same writers, editors and photographer used in our last critically acclaimed book, *Bareboat Cruising Made Easy*. We have made two excellent additions to the team; Charles Devenneaux, who grew up sailing, has completed three transatlantic crossings in cruising catamarans and is one of the largest cruising catamaran dealers in America; and American world champion, Cam Lewis, America's first long-distance catamaran racer, and winner of the America's Cup on Dennis Conner's *Star and Stripes*, the first catamaran to defend the Cup. Expect great writing, stunning photography and beautiful illustrations throughout this book!

The majority of topics presented in *Bareboat Cruising Made Easy* – cruise planning, emergency procedures, navigation, weather and most boat systems, are the same regardless of whether one is sailing a single-hull or multi-hull boat. We decided not to repeat all of these topics in this latest book and only cover the material that is different when cruising a catamaran, particularly topics pertaining to the boat and its handling characteristics. The Cruising Catamaran book focuses on the nuances and differences that sailing a catamaran presents. The resulting book is a valuable resource for anyone with little or no experience sailing a catamaran.

If you've been certified through Bareboat Cruising Standard but never taken ASA 114, 2016 is definitely the time to do so with our new best-in-class text!

The Charley Noble

While pretty much every business has a social media presence these days, we've taken ours to a whole new level in the quality and frequency of our original content. If you haven't done so lately, take a few minutes to visit ASA's newly-improved blog, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Remember to follow/like us so you can enjoy future content; and, since social media is all about sharing, we encourage you to share our content through your blog and social media channels.



We know that we are doing something right since the number of our Facebook followers has increased tremendously from under 10,000 to over 50,000 with most of the growth coming from organic/referral growth.

In addition to some great articles, we've added a new "knots made easy" video series, a new "docking made easy" video series, and we will soon have a new 3-D sailing game that's great for new sailors to learn the points of sail.

Now that the winter's here, we hope you'll take time to look through our ever-growing content library on our website. Let us know what you think and what you'd like to see more of; and we're always open to publishing your content if you have a good sailing video, a well thought out sailing tip, or a story about your latest sailing adventure.

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

THE AMERICAN SAILING JOURNAL

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FEATURE STORY

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Caribbean and beyond, I am fortunate to say that I am living the dream, every day.

With that in mind, nothing could compare to the experience I shared when the sleek 60-foot catamaran pulled up to the entrance of Newport Marina on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River. As Captain Will expertly guided the vessel into its slip assignment (with only a few feet to spare fore and aft), one could see that this was no run-of-the-mill cat. The boat is called *Impossible Dream* (ID) and is a universally accessible vessel. Built for a British adventurer who became wheelchair bound after a skiing accident, the boat was designed to be singlehanded by someone in a wheelchair.

As I saw the *Impossible Dream* pull in, I could see the crew was a mixture of both able-bodied sailors and sailors with disabilities who worked seamlessly to get the boat tied up and shipshape after the long five-day journey from Miami. They were clearly excited to be in the New York area. This was to be the first stop in the boat's northeast goodwill tour to help educate and promote Shake-A-Leg Miami's adaptive sailing programs. Their mission was to raise awareness of this and other special programs on the east coast.

New Sailors Come Aboard

The next afternoon, we picked up eight wheelchair-bound guests, along with some family members and caregivers at the North Cove Marina to take them on a tour of New York City Harbor. This was the first tour in a full schedule arranged with the NYC Mayor's Office of Disabilities, which included guests from Mount Sinai Rehab, the Christopher Reeve Foundation, BIGVISION (who works with 'at risk' teens) and others. Once all of the guests were safely aboard and welcomed by the ID's founders and hosts, Harry Horgan and Deborah Mellen, we set out into the busy harbor. Most of the guests had found their way forward to the wide foredeck where they could enjoy the afternoon sun and sea breeze – the joy was quite evident on their faces. When Capt. Will asked, "Who wants to help sail the boat?" their smiles widened even more!

One guest was given a remote to raise the mainsail while others helped with unfurling the jib on accessible electric winches. Another guest-sailor was asked to take the helm and, since I had been given the task of guiding the helmsman, I gave him a mini-lesson on the finer points of sail and helm control. Soon, with just a little bit of coaching, the new crew was sailing the boat as we headed towards the Statue of Liberty. After the obligatory photo shoot at the Lady, we sailed around the harbor and enjoyed a lovely sunset, then headed back to North Cove.



Guests and crew on board ID enjoy a sparkling day at sea going by the historic Statue of Liberty as the wind moves them along.

The energy on the boat was very positive and I think those aboard felt a kinship from the experience. I remember I had noticed one young lady by herself on the starboard side and was concerned that no one was with her, but after checking on her, I saw that she was overjoyed at just being where she was, taking in as much as she could. It was really special to be able to help others "Live the Dream" who otherwise might not have had the opportunity.

Each and every sail on the *Impossible Dream* tour turned out to be a unique and exciting experience for all – hosts, sponsors, crew and their guests. After sailing New York Harbor, the boat headed up into New England with stops in Newport, Martha's Vineyard, New Castle, NH, and Kennebunkport, Maine. Here the *Impossible Dream* sailed with former President George H.W. Bush, who signed the ADA (American with Disabilities Act) into law 25 years ago. Heading south again, ID made stops in Cape May, Annapolis, Baltimore, Norfolk and Charleston before heading back to their home base in Miami, Florida.

Become Part of the Dream

It was a powerful experience, and I urge you to check out the *Impossible Dream's* website www.impossibledream.us. Once back in Miami, the "Dream Team" will continue their mission over the winter months: cruising South Florida to raise awareness for adaptive sailing programs and develop sponsorships.

In 2016 a voyage is being planned to be a part of the Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Perhaps you'd like to support them and Shake-a-Leg Miami, www.shakealegmiami.org, in some way or maybe start or help an adaptive sailing program in your area. Then you too will be part of the dream!

For details on the boat, Impossible Dream, turn to page 22.

LIVING THE DREAM

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But alas, we never took it any further than just a “what if ...” That was until we got invited by some friends of ours to take the ferry to Catalina Island and sail back with them to Marina del Rey.

Our friends had a beautiful 40-foot Beneteau, and we stayed with them for a few days moored in Cherry Cove before sailing back to Marina del Rey. We had so much fun staying on their boat that weekend and living the sailing lifestyle. This event planted a seed in us that sailing could be a wonderful hobby and pastime for us to get immersed in. However, it wasn't until several years later that we had enough water thrown on this seed to make it grow.

Two years ago, we spent New Year's Eve with our same friends and some of their sailing comrades in Marina del Rey. The next morning, after watching the Rose Parade on TV, we all hopped in their boat and went for a sail on a beautiful New Year's Day. The wind was blowing around 15 knots, and we were having a blast taking turns at the helm. This is when our interest in sailing really started to take hold.

We started talking to everyone on the boat, and they all recommended that if we really were having fun and wanted to learn to sail the right way, we should find an ASA sailing school and get signed up. And to further entice us, our friends told us that if we learned to sail, they would plan a trip with us to the British Virgin Islands. My wife and I looked at each other and said, “We have to learn how to sail!”

A few days later, we went to the ASA website and found the Newport Beach Sailing School, which was conveniently located just a few miles from our home. We checked out the classes online to find out what was taught in each course. As sometimes happens, our work and our social schedule got busy and months went by, the summer came and went, and we were no closer to taking sailing lessons. We talked about it every once in a while, but never totally forged ahead. Then one day, I came home from work and my loving wife said, “Guess what. We have our first sailing lesson on Saturday!”

I was pleasantly surprised by the news and was even more excited when she presented me with the *Sailing Made Easy* textbook for ASA's 101 course for basic keelboat sailing. We both sat down on the couch and started reading through the book to see what was in store for us.

At first, we felt like we were learning a foreign language.



Thanks to the suggestions of friends and then ASA courses, David enjoys sailing into the sunset with wife and fellow sailor, Heather.

We had never heard of terms like “luff,” “clew,” “outhaul,” “cunningham,” and “boom vang.” However, we soon felt we were able to speak enough “sailing” to get us through our first lesson, thanks to the way the ASA textbook presented the material in a logical, linear fashion. Each chapter was interesting to read, and we had fun quizzing each other on the review questions at the end of the sections. Practicing tying the knots in the book was fun, too.

For our 101 basic keelboat course, we were sailing a Schock Harbor 20. Even though the Harbor 20 is only 20 feet long, it seemed a lot larger when we were first getting to know the standing and running rigging. Our instructor was very patient with us as we tried to absorb all of the techniques of preparing the sailboat for leaving the dock. Once we cast off from the dock, the wind hit our sails, and we were sailing. It had taken us a few years to get to this point, but we were finally learning to sail! Needless to say, after our first ASA lesson, we really caught the sailing fever. We completed the 101 course and within a month or so, signed up for the ASA 103 Basic Coastal Cruising course.

Moving up from the Harbor 20 to a Hunter 33 didn't seem like a big step until we went aboard for our first lesson. We didn't realize 13-feet could make such a dramatic change in the size of a boat! Luckily, we had rented RVs before, and when we realized a sailboat is like a floating RV, the electrical and plumbing systems, as well as the engine, were easy to understand. We really liked being in the larger sailboat because we could get out of the harbor and set sail on the open ocean.

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PRODUCT REVIEW • TORQEEDO 1003 S

Once the ASA First 22 was designed and built, ASA knew some would require auxiliary power for the utility and flexibility a kicker motor provides. Rather than simply choosing any old outboard, we thought it was an opportunity to see what's new on the market and, more importantly, what would best suit the needs of the boat and, if possible, reflect the philosophy of ASA. Through these efforts, all roads led towards the Torqeedo electric outboard, made in Germany.

Initially, what attracted us to the Torqeedo were its more obvious characteristics – its weight, its green factor and its silence. Coming in at around 25 pounds and fully detachable, the Torqeedo 3 HP (model name 1003 S) is easy to take on and off the boat, then store or travel with. It's nice to not have to worry about leakage in the car or deal with the smells that most outboards emit. This motor is as clean as a countertop and easily dismantles, so traveling with it is a non-issue. Gone are the days of locking the outboard up and worrying about theft or straining your back bending over the transom to yank it out of the water, not to mention the walk up to the car.

Coming from a lifetime of two-stroke motors, it's been so nice to look down into the water and see no leakage coming from the outboard. Of course since the advent of four-strokes, this isn't as much of an issue, but we really like the idea that when the ASA First 22 is out sailing, we are in the zero carbon footprint territory. One of the elements of sailing I've always loved is that it is a non-polluting affair. From that standpoint, the Torqeedo is aligned with our general frame of thought. It's also great not to have to carry around gas cans or, God forbid, premix!

Besides the ecological benefits the Torqeedo brings to the table, it's just nice to not have to hear a motor when you're out sailing. For so many, sailing is a time for quiet and communing with nature. The outboard has always been a necessary evil in that respect. It's been a strange and pleasant phenomenon for me to be powered along by a motor and hear nothing; what a perfect fit for the sailing experience.

Torqeedo 1003 S Specifications

- Stepless forward/reverse drive
- Manual tilting device with grounding protection
- Four-step manual trim device
- Completely waterproof (IP 67)
- Integrated battery with 530 Wh Lithium-Ion
- Total weight 13.4 kg
- Shaft length: short 62.5 cm / long 75 cm
- Equipment included: Travel 1003 with battery and charger
- Warranty: two years



The Torqeedo 1003 S is an option on the ASA First 22. With its light weight and clean electric running, sailors will have advantages not available in a traditional outboard.

Okay, these are all good things, but we know the inherent drawbacks of electric motors ... or should I say drawback – range, or what they call “range anxiety.” This notion of a battery dying and having no recourse but to sit and wait while it recharges (if you even have that option) is not wonderful. Fortunately, Torqeedo isn't hiding their head in the sand or making believe these realities are not what they are.

The motor has an integrated GPS system that calculates speed and distance, thereby keeping the user aware of what they have in the “tank.” Granted, that's not much of a consolation if the screen reads four-miles and you have nine to go, but at least it allows sailors information to make decisions with. For smart phone users, Torqeedo also has an app that interfaces with Google maps displaying a circle that indicates where you can go within your given range. As an accessory, the company offers a foldable solar panel that is designed to work with the smaller models. We have yet to test the combination, but it's encouraging to think the motor could exist with little or no plug-in charging and the obvious range benefits.

All in all, we're happy with how the Torqeedo has performed on the ASA First 22s. I should mention that we mostly use the motor to power away from a dock and then we turn it off and get to sailing. We haven't asked much of it in terms of range testing. For our purposes of simple auxiliary power used rather sparingly, it's a perfect fit. That said, I do think the Torqeedo would be a solid choice for most situations where a small kicker motor is required.

To find out more about the Torqeedo, visit www.torqeedo.com/en, or to find a dealer near you: www.torqeedo.com/en/stores. Article courtesy of Lenny Shabes.

START BAREBOATING THIS SEASON!!

Private Live-Aboard Sailing Programs

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

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

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

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

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

email: sailing@SDSA.com



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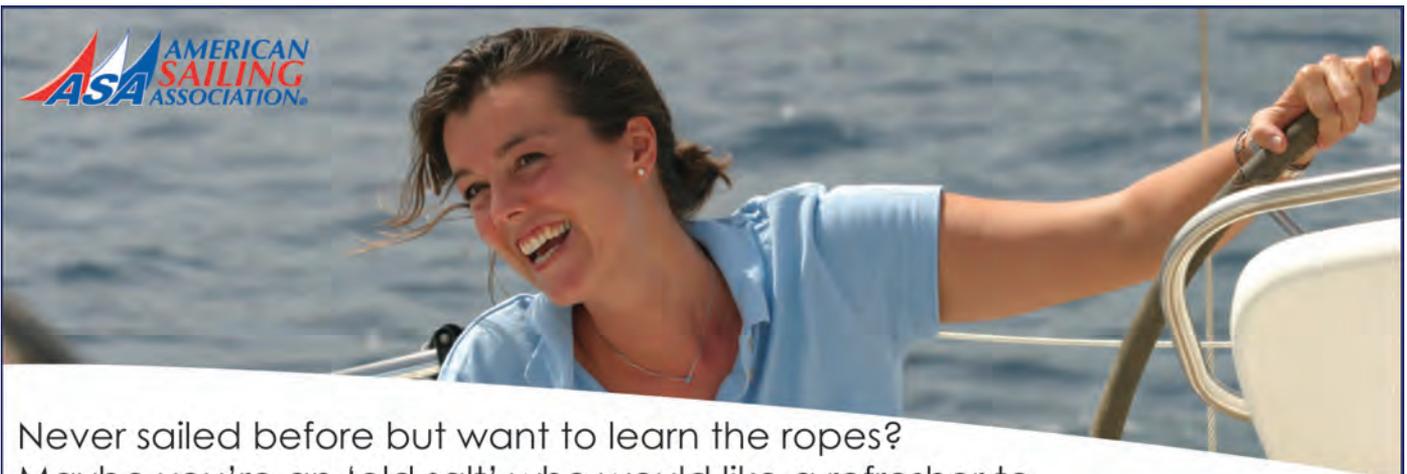
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OUR SAILING WORLD AROUND US • KEEP THE CARIBBEAN BLUE PART 2

We head back down to the Caribbean with Sailors for the Sea's Tyson Bottenus as he shares with us some of the incredible innovations taking place to protect the region's incredible marine environment.

Whether going scuba diving to check out some of the western hemisphere's best coral reefs or sailing a regatta in turquoise waters, environmental groups are working with local organizations to ensure that Caribbean waters will be enjoyable for many years to come.

Save the Coral

On the island of St. Croix, in the United States Virgin Islands, Kemit-Amon Lewis recalls a noticeable difference between coral reefs in the timespan between when he graduated from high school in 2000 and from when he returned to his home island after defending his graduate thesis in 2006 from Savannah State University.

"[In high school,] I recall hoping that I wouldn't get injured by urchin spines as my dad and I snorkeled along the west coast of St. Croix," says Lewis, coral conservation manager for the Nature Conservancy's Caribbean Program. "I remember seeing more coral, more fish and less algae."

Some species of coral reefs have seen an almost 80 percent decline in the Caribbean, says Lewis. To combat the problem, the Nature Conservancy is leading a renaissance rebirth of elkhorn and staghorn coral reefs in the Caribbean. Today the Nature Conservancy has 10,000 corals centered in nurseries across the U.S. territory, and over 6,000 corals in nurseries across the Bahamas.

Coral nurseries, oddly enough, are tended to in a manner very similar to nurseries you'd see in a greenhouse. The corals that make their way into nurseries are those that have broken off in the wild and would otherwise perish. But if folks like Lewis can harvest the coral fragments, they're hung off of PVC



Junior sailors head out to the race course with a hopeful future sailor looking on from the beach! (Below) With waters and scenery this beautiful in the British Virgin Islands, it is easy to be motivated to protect them.

"trees," grown for a full year and then transplanted back to a local reef. The program touts a high rate of survivorship, thanks in part to a growing base of volunteers from the community.



But there are still threats to the coral reefs that can't be fixed with PVC tubes and volunteer divers. On that end, Lewis and the Nature Conservancy are engaging the public and supporting local government efforts to educate people on how they can increase the resiliency of coral reefs.

"The three main threats to coral reefs globally are climate change, overfishing, and land-based sources of pollution such as run-off," says Lewis. "We recognize that coral restoration is just one tool needed to help reefs recover. But we also believe that if we proactively address the local threats that we can control, we can create the conditions where reefs will be better able to adapt."

In twenty years, Lewis says he hopes that children on St. Croix will be able to dodge the long-spined urchins that he remembers so well when he was younger.



Photo by John Brooks



Photo by David Arnold

For more information ...

The Nature Conservancy – www.nature.org
Sailors for the Sea – www.sailorsforthesea.org

By that time, The Nature Conservancy hopes to have planted more than one million corals across the Caribbean.

“There is no alternative to our restoration work,” says Lewis, “as it’s impossible to imagine the Caribbean Sea without coral reefs.”

Sustainable Sailing

Getting sailors to be stewards for a healthier ocean is paramount to keeping the Caribbean vibrant for years to come. And what better way to impact sailors than to work collaboratively with the regattas they sail at year after year?

Sailors for the Sea, an ocean conservation organization based in Newport, Rhode Island, is navigating the way toward a cleaner Caribbean by offering pragmatic solutions and support for sailors to reduce their environmental impact and heal the ocean. As the only certification system for water-based events, the Clean Regatta program offers Bronze, Silver and Gold level status to regattas that comply with 25 best practices such as on-the-water recycling, composting, and limiting carbon emissions.

“This is our playground,” says Judy Petz, director for the BVI Spring Regatta and Sailing Festival on Tortola. “And for sailors, if we don’t keep this water as clean as possible, someday our playground won’t be as fun to play on anymore. It’s just our responsibility.”

Petz says education about ecologically conscious practices, such as recycling, is one of many challenges the Caribbean faces in its path to becoming more sustainable.

Every year, Caribbean regattas bring in thousands of tourists and have a sizable influence on small island economies. In 2014, studies estimated that the St. Thomas International Regatta (a bronze-level Clean Regatta certified through Sailors for the Sea) brought in over \$1.1 million dollars of revenue to the island of St. Thomas in the U.S.V.I. But this growth means very little if it endangers the natural beauty that the Caribbean holds for so many.



Recycling bins at the BVI Spring Regatta encourage “pitching in.” (Top) Photos of Buck Island in St. Croix taken 16 years apart show reef bleaching.

“This year we’re going so far as to have volunteers stand next to the cans labeled glass, aluminum and trash to make sure it all gets separated,” says Petz. “The island hasn’t embraced recycling and other practices that are commonly found in the United States. It’s very odd when people come and try to recycle but find that they simply can’t.”

In 2014, under Petz’s leadership, the BVI Spring Regatta (a gold-level Clean Regatta) required vendors to only use compostable materials, such as paper and cardboard. In addition, they also supplied each sailor with a reusable water bottle and raised \$3,000 in funds to offset their carbon footprint.

“When you’re looking for solutions to run a sustainable event in a place like the Caribbean,” says Hilary Kotoun, social impact director for Sailors for the Sea, “invention and ingenuity are very important traits to have.”

Tyson Bottenus is the sustainability director for Sailors for the Sea. Unattributed photos are courtesy of Sailors for the Sea.

CHARTER TIP • CRUISING CHOICES

Reprinted from chapter 1 of Bareboat Cruising Made Easy

Sailors have many pathways by which to fulfill their dreams of cruising to beautiful places. Sailing with friends who own boats is one way. Owning a boat is another, but that requires a serious commitment of time and resources. Bareboat chartering offers an end run around the obstacles presented by both of these choices as well as opening up a world of destinations.

The Bareboat Alternative

“Bareboat” is a term that dates from the era of sailing merchant ships and means what it says. The vessel is fitted out for normal operation, but the charterer provides the captain and crew and also provisions the vessel and equips it for the voyage. Today sailboats are available for bareboat charter (and not so very bare at that) in many popular cruising areas.

The Bareboat Crew

When you charter a bareboat, you, as the charterer, can be the skipper. The goal of this book and the ASA 104 course is to teach the basic skills needed to skipper or crew a sailboat competently and confidently so that, when you are good and ready, you can take on either of these roles yourself. If you have come to this course by way of the ASA 101, Basic Keelboat, and ASA 103, Basic Coastal Cruising courses, you have already skippered a sailboat while daysailing. You have experienced the fun of sailing under your own command and felt the satisfaction of bringing a voyage, however short, to a successful conclusion. You are also aware of the responsibilities that go along with being in charge of a boat on the water. ASA 104 builds on that experience and introduces the more advanced skills needed when taking a boat on a more extended cruise. While some of the subject matter presented in this course is slanted toward bareboat chartering, all of it is essential knowledge for anyone who desires to become an accomplished sailor. You will use the basic navigation methods and seamanship skills, and put into practice all the guidelines for living aboard a sailboat whether you charter, sail on your own boat, or sail with friends and family on their boats.

Tip: When you have earned ASA certification, you will be welcomed as a member of any crew, and you will feel more comfortable any time you are on a sailboat – or any boat.

Cruising Knowledge

Cruising in all its many forms, from camping in an open boat with a boom tent for shelter, to crossing oceans to visit far-flung islands, has many common factors. It



Photos by Billy Black

As winter rolls through much of the northern hemisphere, perhaps the time has come for that charter to the warm southern islands.

requires planning, preparation, an itinerary (the more flexible the better), and as much knowledge of the cruising area as can be gained through research or experience. Boat's rig and systems must be in seaworthy condition, and the crew must be capable of operating them and ready to handle unexpected situations. Living aboard a boat is in itself an acquired art, especially once the last dock line is cast off and the connection to the shore is finally severed. This chapter provides guidance on how to choose a charter company and negotiate the contract. You'll also learn what to expect from charterboat checkout procedures and briefings and how to prepare for the return and check-in process. You'll be ready, in other words, to go have fun in the sun. A scene like this figures in the dreams of many a sailor, and on a bareboat charter it can become a reality.

Entry Points to Cruising

Little more than a generation ago, the only way to become skipper on a cruising boat was to buy a boat. Charters were available but usually required a professional captain and crew to be aboard. Sailors have several more options.

Your Own Boat

For a great many sailors, owning a boat is the ultimate expression of their love for sailing. When you choose to own a boat, you can buy it and equip it to suit your own sailing aspirations and, of course, have access to it at any time. Along with all the benefits of boat ownership comes a significant commitment of time and resources. You incur the cost of dockage, insurance, and upkeep whether you use the boat every day or only once a year.

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SAILING DESTINATION

The Bahamas Out Islands – The Last Real Virgin Islands



Small open boats give sailors the feeling of skimming the waves of this paradise.

The Bahamas are familiar to us. A chain of islands that's first on our radar once we plunge into boat ownership or just a nice little chain to pass through on our way south. It's a stepping stone, as we see it, to the real goal of sailing the Caribbean or ports beyond. We have, from the books and articles we've read and the stories we've heard, an idea of what sailing there would entail. Or do we?

I've always been the type of sailor that goes port when everyone else goes starboard. So, thinking the Bahamas would be overrun by newbie cruisers, cruise ship passengers, mega resorts and Florida weekenders, I avoided it. Familiarity led me to make assumptions, which it turns out, were totally different than what I found once I actually started spending time there!

First, the Bahamas is huge. It has more than 700 islands, islets and cays covering over 180,000 square miles of ocean. If you had to overlay the Bahamas onto the United States, the

islands would run from Washington, D.C., to Jacksonville, Fla. Up until a few years ago, if you didn't own your own boat, there weren't many options for you to explore beyond the hub locations where there are mega resorts, tourists and cruise ships. Now with charter bases opening up in Abaco and Nassau and Florida-based charter companies more willing to let you cross the Gulf Stream, one can get a taste of the Out Islands without owning a boat and investing the time it takes to get around this huge archipelago. Let's go through some of my favorite out islands.

The Islands of Bimini

Cracked conch, dazzling watercolors, snorkeling, Hemmingway's footsteps

The first time I landed in Bimini, my eyes were dazzled by water I couldn't fathom was actually that color blue. The Bimini Islands are closer to Florida than any of their other sister islands, and it's amazing how different the landscape is from Miami! Even being so close to Florida, Bimini is considered one of the Out Islands and its culture reflects not only its isolation

from the greater Bahamas but its storied history with the U.S. and South Florida. One could write a whole volume on Bimini, as it has so much to offer from recreation to history to food culture. Bimini is changing now with the new resort opening up along Bimini Bay; it has day-trippers from Florida. But Bimini has expanded and contracted many times from the blockade runners of the civil war, wild days of Prohibition and Hemmingway's bar fights. It goes all the way back to Ponce de Leon, who found some lifesaving freshwater springs on south Bimini, local legend says, and called them the Fountain of Youth. Today's changes to the island are just another chapter in its long and storied history.

I will just say, go! Bimini is a great starter-out island. It has plenty of little local restaurants and conch shacks. The Barefoot Beach Bar has the greatest piña coladas I've ever tasted. Owner Eric picks the coconuts from the tree just outside. CJ's next door has the best cracked conch and lobster. It has two roads, King's Highway and Queen's

Story by Captain Edana Long

For more information

Check out upcoming ASA flotillas in the Exumas January 30 to February 6 hosted by Sailing Academy of Bahamas and the unique Sea Pearl/camping flotilla February 20 to 27. For more information on flotillas, visit asa.com. Also, visit the Ministry of Tourism site at www.bahamas.com.

Highway; and a stroll along the oceanfront, up along the ridge is a must-do way to start your day. Take a walk or, if you're hard up, rent a golf cart and head down to Stuart's Conch Shack about a mile and a half from the marinas. It's the best, but watch out for the local rum punch. There are plenty of stops along this island chain. Gun Cay, Cat Cay, Honeymoon Harbor and even South Bimini will give you that perfect, quiet tranquility with fantastic water to snorkel and an amazing collection of marine life.

Barry Islands

Little visited archipelago with blue holes, cliffs, and stunning crescent beaches, celebrity past

Getting there: it's the next stop from Bimini heading east, or heading south from Grand Bahamas. It is doable if starting from Florida, but I would recommend a 10-day itinerary. It is easiest with a Nassau start and works better with the prevailing winds. Distances: 75 miles east of Bimini, 55 miles southeast of Grand Bahama, 35 miles northwest of New Providence. The only really accessible stops and marinas are Chubb Cay and Great Harbor Cay, so take ample provisions and fuel. Be prepared to spend almost every night on the hook and dinghy ashore.

Most cruisers just rush past it, I know I have. Or we've only visited Chubb Cay en route across the banks to and from Nassau and spent a rolling night on the hook, cursing the next morning, vowing not to come back. The Barry's 30 cays and islets are mostly uninhabited.



Photos courtesy of the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism

Both the people and the costumes of the Bahamas are a colorful blend of many influences. (Below) While many picture the Bahamas as simply a cruise ship port; lovely, natural spots like this one hide themselves away.

These islands provide all the peace, tranquility and beauty you would ever want, so slow down and enjoy! You will probably be the only boat in the anchorage. The swimming and snorkeling is sublime and the beaches are miles and miles long. Most famous is Flo's conch shack on Little Harbor Cay. Begun back in the 1930s, it has withstood the test of time and hurricanes! Hoffman's Cay has one of the Bahamas' most spectacular blue holes; it's a short hike, but amazing. Make sure to bring your snorkel mask!

Great Harbor Cay is one of my favorite Bahamian ports of call for several reasons. First, it's one of the most secure in all the Bahamas, great for weathering any storm. It has great anchorages outside the harbor and a fantastic marina – priced right with great service. Second, it's an interesting place.

continued on the following page



SAILING DESTINATION

continued from previous page

Like so many islands of the Bahamas, wealthy developers have, after experiencing the islands, both diamonds and dollars signs in their eyes. They raise money, start their five-star resort projects, and inevitably go bust. In the 1960s, Great Harbor was such a project, luring more millionaires per capita than any planned community of that era due to the island's unspoiled beauty and perceived isolation. The residents and their guests read like a who's who of that era. From Cary Grant to Jack Nicklaus, the privileged elite, those who could have and go anywhere they desired, picked Great Harbor Cay. It's that beautiful. What's left now? The wonderful marina, some fascinating ruins and still, quiet, unspoiled beauty. The Barry Islands are a destination all on their own. Don't just rush by.

I found out that Nassau isn't just Atlantis. Naturally when you hear the chorus of cruisers' complaints about 'having' to stop in Nassau, you'd get a mental image. It's the only 'real' city in the Bahamas, with the associated problems. So you write it off and only plan a brief stop to get the necessary done and then get the heck out. Well, guess what, you are throwing the beer out with the bilge water.

Nassau is the capital of the Bahamas and its financial and cultural center. It does have the usual maladies that plague any city, but honestly far less than where you've probably just come from. Yes, it's a busy harbor; it's also a really great harbor, with deep water, buoyed channels and all around protection! And finally, yes, there are mega resorts and cruise ships, but it has a fantastic new international airport and some really wonderful markets for provisioning.

Now let's change lenses. First, Nassau, or more accurately New Providence Island, is really, really interesting. Colonial architecture, both revived and fading, line the downtown streets and shops. And if you venture out on Bay Street, you'll see the old manor homes with their gorgeous lawns extending to the turquoise waters, like a Caribbean version of Newport, Rhode Island, with castles and forts and colonial plantations. It's got a burgeoning local products market from distilleries like John Watling's, local artists and painters, a thriving, locally-sourced restaurant market, chocolatier, cigar factory and farmers' markets. This is real, for both locals and tourists alike. My all-time favorite, partly for the history, is Greycliff Manor, a five-star restaurant, chocolatier and inn. It was founded in 1740 by the famous captain and pirate Howard Greysmith, whose legendary ship, the Greywolf, wreaked havoc on the Spanish treasure fleet. When you walk around the manor and grounds, the history seems to be



The fantastic swimming pigs of the Exumas make an interesting background for the photos your Facebook friends are sure to enjoy.

transcendent, vibrating in the old wooden floors and the sound of the palms and bamboo. It makes one just want to move in to one of the lofty rooms and become a writer!

I've spent a lot of time in sailing around Nassau, and I can say it deserves more than a rush through. There are some really great anchorages and really fantastic snorkeling on uninhabited Rose Island just three miles east of Nassau. West Bay is an all-time favorite anchorage with great protection, snorkeling and great holding. Along the northern shore, Goodman Bay is a beautiful spot, although with a little busier traffic. A sail along the southern shore is full of beautiful coral and great for fishing. Nassau has also stepped up its game as far as marinas go. Now there are offerings between the uber-exclusive marinas like the one at Atlantis and Lyford Cay and the somewhat run down ones. Bay Street Marina in downtown is really wonderful – just watch the current – and my new favorite is Palm Cay in the southeast side, where Nassau's only charter fleet is now located.

Eluthera

Bahamas oldest village, pink sand beaches, Devil's Backbone, home of Bahamas fishing fleet

Most sailors have heard of Eluthera and its glimmering pink sand beaches of Harbor Island. Eluthera is definitely at the top of the list for many travelers when in the Bahamas, but reaching its fabled waters under sail you're in for a treat. Located about 50 miles northeast of Nassau, it's an aggressive day to reach the beautifully protected banks south of Royal and Russell Islands and the safe harbor of Spanish Wells, but it's doable if you leave early.

You'll find several wonderful lee anchorages here, good holding and a super all-around protection inside Royal Harbor where we've sat out a few nasty cold fronts.

If you desire more nightlife and maybe a stroll around town, head into friendly Spanish Wells, the home of the Bahamas' only commercial fishing fleet.

Here is where I get into a short history lesson. Back when the fledgling American Colonies were plotting independence, many colonists with strong ties and loyalties to mother England decided to uproot again and find more hospitable ground to tend their families and businesses. They sailed to Bermuda and to the northern islands of the Bahamas, like Abaco, Nassau and Eluthera. Actually Spanish Wells is one of the oldest settlements in the Bahamas dating back to the early 17th century. Its colorful homes and European facades will remind you more of New England than the Caribbean. The people as well are practical, sturdy, industrious and famous for their hospitality.

Exploring the charming, colorful town is a must by foot, bike or golf cart. The Shipyard Restaurant right out on the point is a favorite, but there are many local eateries and ice cream shops in town. Something about Spanish Wells reminds me a little of Gloucester, Mass. It's not a tourist town, but a busy little fishing port with clean, neat homes with lovely gardens. This is a local village, and most of the outsiders come via sailing. The waters around Spanish Wells are stunning as you stroll or ride around the western tip of the island. The waters protected behind Eluthera's extensive reef system are great for a variety of water sports including kite boarding and snorkeling. Spanish Wells is great from a cruising perspective as it has all around protection, cheap fuel, good water, provisions and most any marine service you might need.

If the conditions are favorable, you have the opportunity to run the Devils' Backbone! Probably one of the top ten challenging passages in the whole of the Atlantic, the Backbone is an extensive reef system with a very small, very intricate channel to go from Spanish Wells to Harbor Island. Hiring a pilot is a must, and there are several professionals operating out of Spanish Wells that, with notice, will lead you through the two-hour passage. It is advisable to have the pilot onboard both directions as, even with setting your track, if you do wander off, the likelihood of hitting a coral head is a definite possibility!

Once in Harbor Island, your challenging passage is softened by a wonderfully protected harbor, anchorages, and marinas of the utmost quality. It's like a Bahamian version of Nantucket, very high-end dining and shops, but understated and casual. There is no flashiness here, just subtle beauty and sophistication. The beaches are sublime, the color caused by the broken insides of pink shells. You'll find miles of beach combing and snorkeling



A blue sky painted in wisps of white provides a stunning backdrop for this startingly green lagoon area placed far from the crowds.

along the beach and some lovely places to duck out and get some shade and cocktails as well. Dunmore Town is a place where cruisers, locals and the occasional celebrity mingle harmoniously. The Bahamas has a way of leveling the atmosphere of class and status, as we are all in awe of her beauty.

The Exumas

Bahamas Crown Jewel

In terms of a tropical beach setting, its beauty is unrivaled. The centerfold photos in our sailing magazines are those perfect anchorages – clear water, uncrowded, peaceful and pristine. You dream of this during long days at the office, but assume it's far away. It's actually closer than you might think, and now with a small fleet of charter boats in nearby Nassau, it's perfectly accessible. That dream can become a reality. The shades of blue are almost unimaginable to even an artist's eye. The Exumas once had a reputation of being a remote and challenging chain of islands due to the lack of accurate charts, the numerous coral heads and the swift currents. Naturally only the more experienced, and maybe more adventurous, cruisers would sail these waters. With Explorer Charts, the navigation is now superb, and with collaboration with Garmin, we have the same accuracy on an electronic format.

Getting there: The northern Exumas lie only 28 miles southeast of Nassau, an easy day sail. There are more than 360 small islands and cays. Most of the islands have only minimal habitation, and many are completely private. There are only a few marinas for fuel and water, about one bar or restaurant per island, and a few small stores for provisioning along the whole 120-mile island chain to Georgetown.

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ASA MEMBERS HELP CARIBBEAN KIDS • BY TOM AND HARRIET LINSKEY

For the fourth year in a row, ASA sailors have warmed our hearts by opening up their hearts and wallets to bring access to brand new books and a lending library to Caribbean children. By embracing the ASA/Hands Across the Sea Caribbean Getaway Sweepstakes, ASA members raised \$27,000 this year for our Massachusetts-based 501 (c)(3) nonprofit charity, which is dedicated to raising the literacy levels of Caribbean kids in pre-school, primary school and high school. And of course, two lucky ASA sailors won awesome prizes.

We started Hands Across the Sea from the deck of our 46-foot catamaran while cruising the Eastern Caribbean back in 2007. We couldn't help but notice that books were scarce in the region. Very few parents could afford to buy books, and schools were drastically underfunded. Seeing children who were growing up without learning to read deeply disturbed us, and we vowed to do something about it. But we doubted that two people could make a real difference in the child illiteracy problem in the Eastern Caribbean (Antigua, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Grenada). Still, there was no way we could ignore the problem, so we approached it at a "mom and pop" level, going from island to island building bookshelves and painting rooms to create school libraries. But we knew that the issue was much bigger than the two of us – there were over 500 schools in the region, and we could bring meaningful change to only a few at a time. We decided to broaden our mission, and started to raise funds from family and friends to buy more and more books.

Then along came the American Sailing Association with an idea: let's hold a nationwide sweepstakes with great prizes that can raise money for the cause. The success of the sweepstakes would depend on the generosity of ASA members and whether they believed, as we at Hands do, that every child should have the chance to grow up reading. Well, you already know the answer: the sweepstakes has been a huge success. ASA members are indeed generous, and they believe strongly in the power of books and reading to change the life of a child. ASA members also like the chance to win a Caribbean bareboat charter or a one-week resort vacation in the Caribbean! So, who got lucky this year? Meet the winners.

Scott Crislip, First Prize Winner

Sunsail Charter and Live the Dream! Sailing
ASA-certified instruction

"I am so excited about winning first prize in the sweepstakes that I'm having trouble sleeping!" says Scott Crislip, a longtime aerospace leader with General



Hands Across the Sea continues to bring the joy of reading to students throughout the Caribbean with new books brought to their schools.

Electric and Rolls-Royce, a retired Air Force colonel, and most of all, one of the most enthusiastic novice sailors you'll ever meet.

Scott, 58, a native of Tallmadge, Ohio, has traveled to 34 countries and spends his free time in Maine and more recently the Florida Keys, and he is "looking forward to getting introduced to the Caribbean." Scott will be enjoying a Sunsail catamaran in sunny Grenada, and will receive ASA-certified instruction from LTD Sailing during the one-week charter. Scott will be



Scott Crislip

bringing his fiancée and his sister and brother-in-law along for his first-ever cruising experience on a catamaran – he's eager to see what sailing on two hulls is all about. Scott also plans to meet up with the Hands literacy link for Grenada, Olivia Phillip, and visit a few of the Grenada schools and meet the children that his donation to Hands is supporting. "I really love what Hands Across the Sea is doing, getting brand new books to Caribbean kids," he says. "I know that books and reading mean the world to me.

And I know that for a lot of self-made, very successful people, it all started with reading."

Scott's long-term sailing plans include getting his ASA certification and buying a cruising boat (right now he's lusting over the bevy of classic Downeast beauties, including Hinckleys that are swinging on moorings in Northeast Harbor and Southwest Harbor in Maine). Scott is also building his navigation skills to an offshore level (he's taking ASA navigation courses and recently bought a sextant), and plans on doing plenty of bluewater

cruising (“I’d really like to do a transatlantic passage, and go on from there.”) In the meantime, Grenada, Sunsail, and LTD Sailing will stoke Scott’s cruising dreams. “I am as thrilled as I can be. I can’t wait!”

Kathleen Haigood, Second Prize Winner

The Verandah Resort & Spa, Antigua

“We are taking the whole family!” said Kathleen Haigood, after finding out she’d won Second Prize: a one-week, two-room vacation at the luxurious, all-inclusive Verandah Resort & Spa on Antigua. “We are going to spend all day, every day on the beach and in the water.”



Kathleen Haigood and Family

The only challenge for Kathleen and her husband, Harry, is to successfully juggle their kids’ school schedules (son Harrison, 20, is in college, and daughters Samantha, 17, and Caroline, 15, are in high school). After that, watch out, Antigua: this family is into nonstop snorkeling, sailing (flying a hull on a Hobie Wave was mentioned), and soaking up the Caribbean sun. Kathleen and Harry are ASA-certified sailors, having completed an ASA

For more information

Visit Hands Across the Sea’s website at www.handsacrossthesea.net to find out more about what they are doing and how you could help to support this program that is bringing learning and literature to the Caribbean islands.

Coastal Cruising class in Oyster Bay, New York, back in 1993 (“This was pre-kids!” notes Kathleen). This was also back in the days when the couple lived in New York City and worked on Wall Street – Harry put in 22 years on the Street, Kathleen put in 15 – and before they made their big move to California.

Now the Haigoods live so close to the bay that they feel the legendary smoking summertime seabreeze and can watch the bay’s famous fog roll in through the Golden Gate. They love San Francisco’s rugged charms, but Kathleen, Harry and their kids are looking forward to Antigua’s 85-degree, crystal clear water and white sand beaches, too, and the all-inclusive food, drink, and watersports of The Verandah. During their stay, the Haigoods also plan to visit the children and the school library of nearby Willikies Primary School, which was adopted by the resort through Hands Across the Sea. “I can’t believe we won,” says Kathleen. “I just can’t believe it!”

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CHARTER TIP

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Still, ownership is very rewarding for those who like to be involved in every aspect of boating as well as the sailing. Choosing a boat to own is a personal decision that is colored by many factors from cost, to aesthetics, and to the kind of sailing you expect to do. While we like to think we're capable of making practical decisions, boats do have a way of working on our emotions. A student taking this course will gain experience and perspective that will help in making a well-thought-out and reasoned choice.

Club/Fractional Sailing

Sailors who don't want to own and maintain a boat by themselves can join a fractional-ownership program or a club in which boats are owned by the club or jointly by its members. Many ASA affiliates run such clubs. Club programs vary in how they are structured, but the basic idea is to share the cost of boat ownership and upkeep among the club's members. Typically, a private company manages the yacht or yachts on behalf of their owners. Either way, you have a short-term financial commitment with many sailing benefits, and minimal involvement in repairs and maintenance. In some hands-on clubs, members share the upkeep of the boats as well as the fun of sailing them. By joining such a club you can learn about boat systems and maintenance — knowledge that will be of great value should you one day buy your own boat.

Bareboat Charter Savvy

Chartering allows you to effectively rent a yacht for an agreed-upon time period and sail it yourself with your crew. As the charterer, you are responsible for the boat and for maintaining it during the charter period. By chartering, you can try various sizes and styles of yachts, which is especially valuable if you plan to buy a boat. Best of all, you can also explore cruising areas almost anywhere in the world.

Tip: When you're new to chartering, or when you charter in an area that's new to you, consider hiring a local skipper for the start of your charter (most companies make them available). It's a great way to learn about the yacht and the locality at minimal cost and risk.

Private Rental

Sailboats are also available for rental from private owners

through "peer to peer" websites similar to those that promote vacation-home rentals.

Bareboat chartering is a popular way for sailors to experience cruising on boats of different types and sizes in a great variety of climates, cultures, and geographic surroundings.

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 the hazards, and offer tips on local conditions, which is helpful to crews who are new to chartering or to the cruising area.



Whether renting or sailing your own, a sunset on the water is spectacular.

Regular skippers' meetings allow frequent interaction with the flotilla leader and other sailors — a great way to compare notes and swap sea stories. 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. Friends made on a flotilla often become new cruising partners, or even marriage partners.

Flotillas are often assembled around a theme or by a sailing club, but you can also join one independently. If your idea of a perfect cruise is complete seclusion and autonomy of schedule, then a flotilla is not a very good choice. But for those people who are interested in expanding their social horizons while sailing, a flotilla might be the perfect option. In addition, for first-time charterers, a flotilla offers a great way to learn the ropes.

Finding a Flotilla

If sailing in a flotilla appeals to you, a good place to start looking for one is the ASA website. You'll find ASA sponsored flotillas and links to charter companies and affiliated schools that arrange flotillas in a variety of cruising areas.

This article is an excerpt from ASA's Bareboat Cruising Made Easy pages 14-16. For your own personal copy of the book, go to ASA.com.

FEATURED FACILITY • MONTEREY PENINSULA YACHT CLUB

For nearly fifty years, the Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club has maintained an energetic and vibrant youth sailing program. Our Junior Program has three components: Summer Sailing Camp for youth ages eight to 17, our Junior Sailing Team for middle and high school students, and our Summer Sailing Camp Instructor corps comprised of Junior Club members aged 14-21 who have become ASA-certified instructors. Our instructional team is led by a certified lead instructor and principal instructor. Growing up to become a summer sailing camp instructor is the dream of many of our summer campers!

Although we're a smaller yacht club, with around 200 active members, our annual summer sailing camp has introduced more than 2,500 young sailors in elementary grades up through high school to the sport of sailing. Many of those young sailors moved on to our Junior Sailing Team and have continued to be life-long sailors after that.

This year, our first as an ASA affiliate, summer sailing camp was led by our team of seven ASA-certified instructors and supported by dedicated volunteers. The clubhouse and docks hummed with the high energy and enthusiasm of more than 163 junior sailors participating in one or more of our eight one-week sessions. During their week at sailing camp, young sailors were divided into three fleets: Sharks (beginners), Orcas (intermediate), and Dolphins (advanced). Sharks and Orcas learned basic boat handling skills and developed confidence on Bics and Optis, while Dolphin-class sailors extended their skills in FJs. Instructors focused on small group and individual coaching, moving young sailors between fleets as their sailing skills progressed. Instructors met at the end of each day to review and set goals for the next day. They were regularly observed and evaluated by the program director and principal instructor with a focus on constantly improving coaching skills. With our focus on small group and individual coaching, instructor training and increased emphasis on safety, our program is stronger than ever!

At the end of the summer season, our instructors hosted an end-of-summer regatta and fun sail, followed by a



Monterey Peninsula Yacht Club's youth sailing programs provide instruction for all levels of young sailors, including those who have become ASA-certified instructors.

spaghetti dinner and awards. Thirty-nine Juniors, ages eight to 15, participated in the regatta and fun sail, and more than 150 juniors, family and friends enjoyed the spaghetti dinner and end-of-season awards afterwards.



Our junior program is actively supported by MPYC members and by the Monterey Peninsula Youth Sailing Foundation. The foundation was established for the purpose of funding sailboats, equipment and activities for young sailors from the Monterey Peninsula area. The foundation funds our Junior Sailing Team, provides support for youth sailing needs and provides scholarships to juniors who would otherwise not be able to attend the summer sailing camp program.

As we move towards the 2015-2016 Junior Sailing season, many of our summer sailors are returning to join the Junior Sailing Team and continue their skill development throughout the year. More than 25 young sailors have joined

the team so far! With our continuing focus on youth sailing, we also hope to offer basic dinghy sailing classes to middle and high school students throughout the year. We're already in the planning stages for the 2016 summer sailing camp, and are looking forward to another fabulous season on the water with the kids!

For more information on MPYC, visit www.mpyc.org.

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SAILING DESTINATION

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This isn't a place for rowdy nightlife and Caribbean dive bars, this is a place of beauty and relaxation. I've asked many experienced travelers and world cruisers for their take on Exuma, and most say it's by far one of the most beautiful places in the world.

One of the classic stops is Highbourne Cay. If you dock at the marina and have access to the beach on the eastern side of the island, it's one of the most beautiful in the Bahamas, and has almost pink sand like Eluthera, along with shallow coral heads for snorkeling.

Exuma Land and Sea Park is a must stop and, for many, a multi-day stop. Just sitting in the picturesque horseshoe mooring field is an experience all by itself. Lots and lots to do here, and when you get in the water with your mask and fins, you'll see coral as healthy as any in the world. The caverns of Rocky Dundas, once revered sacred by the Lucayan Indians, are a must do as well. But be prepared to swim against some current and take your camera.

Compass Cay is a private oasis with a marina, small store, very expensive beer, tame nurse sharks and legendarily good hamburgers. There are miles of hiking trails, an open-air gym made of natural materials and an underwater runway. It's just cool, with a beach that is absolutely my favorite, ever. It's again, all nature, and it's



Beyond the resorts and marinas, one can also find amazing creatures like this tiny crustacean peeking out from behind shells and coral to watch the strange creatures in masks and snorkels.

totally amazing.

Staniel Cay environs, the swimming pigs and Thunderball Grotto are another must stop. Staniel Cay yacht club is a legend. The food is great and not too pricy, the drinks are wonderful, the setting is perfect, and you'll meet some fantastic folks. Staniel Cay is one of the only Exuma islands, besides maybe Georgetown, where you'll see other tourists who didn't arrive by boat. The waters just around Staniel and many of the sights, which can be easily accessed from your dinghy, have much to offer.

Many of my sailing students have come back again and again and sailed the same itinerary. There are so many small islands and coves in the Exumas, you could almost say it's a lifetime of exploring. There is so much to see here, you'll be eager to return. For many, the simple life and quiet atmosphere results in a relaxation that few can remember feeling.

Each of these locations is a separate itinerary unless you plan to take your boat down for the whole winter season, and many people do! Try as we might, western commercialism has not been able to change the Bahamas nor the warm hospitality of the Bahamian people. Sometimes I think that maybe we've decided it's so perfect and so beautiful that it's best to leave it be.

Captain Edana Long, owner and instructor at Sailing Academy of Florida and Sailing Academy Bahamas is a former classical musician/business entrepreneur turned professional sailor. Coupled with a love of the environment, a passion for sailing and a wanderlust for travel, she conducts ASA courses and expedition-style sailing adventures from the Florida Keys to New England. Visit her at www.learntosailbahamas.com.

Chartering and Sailing School Information

ASA Schools with bases in the Bahamas:

- *Abaco Sailing: www.abacosailing.com*
- *Cruise Abaco: www.cruiseabaco.com*
- *Sailing Academy of Bahamas: www.learntosailbahamas.com*

U.S. based ASA Schools offering programs in the Bahamas:

- *Blue Water Sailing School: www.bwss.com*
- *Florida Yacht Group: www.floridayacht.com*
- *Island Dreamer Sailing School: www.island-dreamer.com*

Additional Charter Companies:

- *Dream Yacht Charter: www.dreamyachtcharter.com*
- *Moorings: www.moorings.com*
- *Navtours: www.navtours.com*

ABOUT THE BOAT • IMPOSSIBLE DREAM

The Impossible Dream is a 60-foot by 28-foot catamaran that was specifically built for use by a disabled person. It was designed by British architect Nic Bailey (who also was a co-designer of the London Eye Ferris Wheel) in 2002 and built in England by MultiMarine for Mike Browne, a British businessman who was paralyzed in a skiing accident in 1998.

The maiden voyage took Mike and three other crew across the Atlantic and back. Other trips were taken in the Atlantic and around the Caribbean. Another British Yachtsman, Geoff Holt, who became quadriplegic after a diving accident, became the first sailor with a disability to single hand across the Atlantic. He was accompanied by his nurse who helped him with his daily needs but did not assist in sailing the vessel.

The boat features a wide wraparound deck and handrail, which allows wheelchair access from the stern to the bow and back again. Getting on and off the boat is handled by an aft lift and foldaway ramp on both port and starboard sides. The salon/cockpit area is also maximized for wheelchair access with strategically placed sail controls, light switches, stove, sinks and refrigerators. Large windows offer an almost unobstructed 360-degree view. Access to the lower deck level, where the berths and heads are located is performed by a platform lift or stairway.

And let's talk about those sail controls! All of the sails are on hydraulic furlers, with the main furling into the boom. All lines lead into the main cabin where the winches are located. An industrial strength hydraulic



Impossible Dream is truly a dream of a boat with its spacious decks, hydraulic furlers and luxurious interior. Thanks to careful planning and design, it took sailors with disabilities across the Atlantic.

system operates both the sail furlers and winches with redundant rocker switch controls on the main control panel and near the winches. Raising and lowering sails, reefing, trimming and easing sails are all done with just the touch of a button.

The main helm station is arranged in a wide semicircle with a central wheel. Two helm chairs mounted on a matching semicircle track on the cabin sole can be adjusted for the various navigation and trimming needs. Flanking the wheel, engine and hydraulic controls are a full complement of the latest nav gear, including dual, multi-function display/chartplotters, autopilot, AIS, radar, VHF, satphone, and a state-of-the-art digital switching system. There is even an onboard remote camera system.

LIVING THE DREAM

continued from page 4

Since our ultimate goal was to learn how to sail so we could charter our own sailboat for a cruise to Catalina Island and go with our friends in the BVIs, we launched right into the ASA 104 Bareboat Cruising course as soon as we could.

Taking the 104 course was a lot of fun. We got to spend three days at Catalina Island's Isthmus Cove where we got to practice anchoring, picking up moorings, navigating the coastline, managing the water and electrical systems, dingy setup and use, as well as cooking on board, and of course ... relaxing! Our instructor was very thorough and patient as we learned how to use the charts, the chart plotter and radar to navigate to and from the island. We had perfect weather and such a wonderful time in our

104 course that we knew we had really found a fun activity which we could do as a husband and wife team for years to come. All we needed now was a sailboat.

The Newport Beach Sailing School got us in touch with a fractional ownership program offered by SailTime. Now we are sailing on a regular basis on a Hunter 33 that we are leasing, and we are loving it. We have already been back to Isthmus Cove by ourselves and have planned two more trips to Catalina Island before the end of autumn. We love taking our friends out for day cruises up and down the Southern California coastline, watching them get a thrill out of sailing as we do. As for our goal of sailing in the BVIs, we are in the beginning stages of picking dates and looking at charter companies for some time next year. Thanks to ASA, our dreams of dancing on the deep blue water with the wind as our playmate have finally become a reality.



Thinking about your next sailing course?

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Take your next ASA course with SailTime and put your skills to use all season long with a SailTime membership.

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"THE NEXT SPORT WE COULD DO TOGETHER"

After almost twenty years of skydiving together we wanted to find the next sport we could do together that would be exciting and fun. We "fantasized" about learning to sail but never took ourselves seriously until some friends encouraged us to look into ASA.

Since then, we've turned our dreams into a reality thanks to the excellent courses and instructors we discovered through our local ASA sailing school. In the last eight months we have completed the ASA 101, 103, and 104 courses and have bareboat chartered to Catalina Island for a wonderful 3 day sailing trip. Next we are planning a bareboat vacation with our friends in the British Virgin Islands.

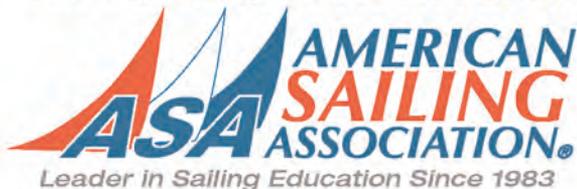
Thanks to the fantastic learning programs we found by enrolling in the ASA courses, we are truly living the dream!



Heather and David Nissen
SailTime - Newport Beach, CA

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