See the world from 
a different perspective

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Introduction
Take flight from the everyday…
Turn your sights to the south

“You do not ask a seagull why it needs to disappear from time to time toward the open sea. It goes, that’s all.”

Bernard Moitessier
SOLO AROUND-THE-WORLD YACHTSMAN

Welcome aboard the third edition of the Great Southern Route Cruising Guide!

GSR, as its known, is compiled and published by Ocean Media – also the publishers of Ocean magazine – from our golden Australian shores. For those special yacht owners and captains who look beyond immediate horizons to voyages far beyond the norm, the GSR will help guide you every step of the way to the Antipodes, from either of the two globally prolific, and crowded, cruising grounds of the Caribbean and Mediterranean.

The two great canals are the eastern and western gateways of the extensive coverage provided in The Great Southern Route cruising guide. This third edition includes updated contacts and cruising advice on some 80 *“stepping stone”* destinations along the way, so that undertaking such an exciting voyage is no more than a series of steps – cruising from destination to destination. This third edition of GSR has been thoroughly updated over the last year and will be current for 2012-2013-2014. Spinning the compass from the easterly direction of travel presented in the prior two editions, which previously commenced with Suez, this time we set our sights towards the setting sun on our great voyage of exploration, starting with the Panama Canal passage emerging from the Pacific West Coast of the Americas. GSR cruises the length of the West Coast of the Americas from Alaska to the tip of Chile, and for the most adventurous of all private yachts, beyond to the frozen natural wonderland of Antarctica.

We then turn our bows west, setting course to cross the great expanse and amazing natural destinations of the island-dotted Pacific Ocean, en route to the Great Southern Land of Australia – the island continent – and the exotic spices of Asia and beyond across the Indian Ocean to Africa, the Middle East and Suez. Along the voyage, nation-to-nation, port-to-port you can chart your own course and speed, setting sail to visit some of the most exotic destinations imagined. It’s not only the tropical warmth that
WELCOME FROM OCEAN MEDIA

will have you spellbound but also the hearts and smiles of the island peoples of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, little affected by the worries of the western world beyond.

Now five years on from the original GSR, launched to the yachting world at Monaco Yacht Show in 2007, this latest version of “GSR” is much more than a superficial update. The second edition, current for 2010/11, dramatically expanded the range of great southern destinations to include the East and South African coast, northeastern Asia, and the entire west coast of the Americas. The third edition updates all key contacts in every destination and refreshes the first-hand cruising advice, from captain-to-captain, so vital to the master of any vessel. Feedback from prior editions suggests that up-to-date Captain’s Log features are well read by their peers, so we have added and refined many such editorials to relate their most valuable experiences and advice. In doing so we have retained many excellent Captain’s Log features from the original editions, but by and large have changed the view, providing new insights from a spectrum of regarded yacht captains cruising such diverse waters.

The Great Southern Route originally came about as a direct response to the enquiries of so many owners and captains of large yachts with whom we had spoken.

“We would love to visit Australia and the corals of the Outer Great Barrier Reef”, they said. “I hear that the Sydney Harbour New Year’s Eve fireworks are the best in the world!”

“Is it true that if every day you were to visit a new island in the Asian archipelagos it would take the rest of your life?”

“I’ve heard that New Zealand is described as the whole world in one country. I’d like to see that!”

“The romance of the South Seas, how I’d love to cruise the Tahitian or Fiji Islands? And it goes on...”

In recent years there has been great interest in voyaging further afield, south of the Equator, with a tenfold increase in yachts visiting these regions, once considered beyond the cruising horizon. As superyachts have become larger and more capable of long ocean passages, so too has there been ever greater interest in exploring the Southern Hemisphere.

But such a voyage is not only an option for large yachts with ocean crossing range. There are various yacht carriers serving the Pacific from America and opening up southeasterly routes across the Indian Ocean from Europe, bringing even the furthest and most exotic cruising destinations well within reach of smaller motor and sailing yachts.

Whether previous copies of the Great Southern Route are on your nautical bookshelf, on the chart table or in the study, this latest edition will open your eyes to a whole new world of unexplored cruising opportunities. The extensive information available to you through these 300 pages is thoroughly researched, providing key contacts with superyacht experience in every listed destination, spanning two-thirds of the globe. The firsthand advice, captain to captain, on what to expect when contemplating a cruise to some of the most isolated destinations on Earth you will find invaluable.

With over 6,000 superyachts cruising globally, with the vast majority of these yachts still just sailing the familiar waters of the Mediterranean and Caribbean, this guide will help you see the world from an entirely different perspective.

As an old sea dog who has been around “the block” (the world) a few times related to us recently, often in life it is not what you have to live through but how you live through it that matters. So, we encourage you to escape the familiar. Set a new course beyond the everyday. Seek out new destinations and experiences, and the very act will reward all aboard, owners and crew, forever changing the way you see the world around you.

Anthony Twibill
PUBLISHER / DIRECTOR

Hillary Buckman
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF / DIRECTOR
I HAVE great pleasure in again presenting to you the third edition of Great Southern Route (GSR). GSR has earned its place as the indispensable handbook for Masters of Superyachts charged with undertaking a voyage to any part of the great expanse of the world that lies west of the Caribbean and east of the Mediterranean. It is not a periodical; GSR is an indispensable nautical publication that now resides in its proper place on the bookshelf in the superyacht’s chartroom or captain’s office. This unique publication fills a niche so desperately needed in this day and age when Superyacht Masters are tasked with taking their vessels to the far regions of the world to places they and many others have perhaps never before been. From the moment a superyacht owner instructs his captain to prepare to take his yacht to a far distant land, a superyacht captain faces the daunting task of very quickly providing to his owner some confident guarantee that his yacht can in fact make the voyage, that there are suitable services and facilities available at the destination and that once there, he can provide his owner with the quality experience he is expecting.

GSR is his first ‘go to’ tool that provides that captain with instant reference to the main information he will be looking for; distances between ports, marinas, fuel, superyacht agents, and crucially, expert local knowledge from other captains who have sailed that area before. In this edition we have reversed the order and now start our presentation of the Great Southern Route countries with the Panama Canal and Pacific before moving westward to Suez. We cover issues such as transiting the canals, preparing for pirates and anticipating the arrival formalities in many countries. We showcase the cruising regions, the best ports and marinas and provide you with a link to the necessary service providers that will support you throughout your journey. Each port has been researched and compiled by experienced superyacht captains for superyacht captains. GSR features articles by different superyacht captains who have travelled the route. They have commanded some of the world’s most significant yachts, and many of whom will be known to you personally.

These captains have blazed the Great Southern Route for you; they have discovered the best places, made the best contacts, and learned who are the best suppliers, agents, marinas and ports. They have learned the tips and tricks that only firsthand experience can provide. These professionals have faced the same challenges and had the same requirements and expectations as you: to deliver a very high level of service to their owners and guests. And now they are passing on their lessons and local knowledge to you, exclusively in the Great Southern Route.

Happy Sailing!

Captain Richard Morris
MASTER MARINER
Richard@AustralianSuperyachts.com.au
have an enormous importance for patterns encountered on a voyage of regional and seasonal weather. We take this opportunity to recognise the support of Jeppesen, a global leader in electronic charting technology. The Jeppesen marine charts have been modified and customized by the editors of The Great Southern Route to best illustrate and ease of communication.

Global electronic charts of Jeppesen are exclusively sourced from marine charts appearing in The Great Southern Route also benefits from the comprehensive guidance aiding safe and efficient global navigation, which the publishers of GSR gratefully acknowledge. Visit Weather Routing Inc. at www.wrinc.com.

Anthony Twibill

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When I looked to change from a career to yachting and then again when seeking to upgrade my qualifications. With this as background when I received an email from Richard asking if I would provide some words for the GSR3 I was very flattered. I was also somewhat amused at the timing.

Flattered, of course to have the very captain who introduced me to my own career ask me to write an introduction to this latest edition of GSR.

Amused, as when the email was received I was thumbing a well-worn copy of GSR edition 1. This was in aid of route planning to take a recently delivered 96-metre yacht through a two-year Indian and Pacific Ocean traverse. This planning was work, hard work, but work I was very pleased to be undertaking as I knew if presented well I would not be squeezing into the well-worn anchorages all readers of this guide would likely be familiar with. Some famous ports you will not see in this GSR edition 3 include - St Barths', Tobago Cays, English Harbour, Virgin Gorda, Pampelonne Beach, Golfe Juan, Cap d'Antibes – all of which I have jostled amongst many other yachts for space in the past six months alone. It is important that before continuing I disclose two important points about my own situation. I am a European resident, though Australian by birth. I also spent the first formative nine years of my Maritime career in South East Asian and Pacific waters spoken of in GSR 3. It may be the hues of time that make me view this period in sepia light but with many more years at sea since those first nine I am yet to encounter anything close to the wonders that I greet with familiarity through the pages of GSR 3.

To introduce the GSR I have made some assumptions. I have assumed that you, the reader, has an interest beyond the casual in actually planning and executing a voyage. I have assumed, as this is a professional guide, that you are either decision maker (Owner) or operator (Captain). I have also assumed that on first picking up GSR 3 there are already some well-formed views on worldwide cruising.

In indulging these assumptions I am going to begin with a rebuttal against some well-worn dinner table arguments against any form of extended cruising and then end this introduction with a note for each of the readers that I think most benefit from the GSR 3.

To begin with, let’s look at some of the standard arguments against attempting a long voyage:

To enter the Indian or Pacific Oceans is too far away?
Away from what? I can truly say I have not seen a change in the traditional yachting areas in ten years. I think missing a summer (or two or ten) in the Mediterranean will not be to miss out on any new experiences. A true foray into the Southern Hemisphere should be across a minimum of two calendar years, with three to five being favoured. To shorten is to dampen the experience and not give the value it deserves. Come on! Tear your calendar open for a couple of years.

It costs too much in fuel?
I have modeled many yachting programmes to present detailed budgets for demanding yacht owners. I generally use the terms ‘single season’, “dual-season’ and ‘on-call’ to define the different approaches. If you operate a dual-season programme then largely it does not matter where you sail. There are only so many days in any year and so many miles you can cover when you take into account port, anchorages and maintenance.

You are going to spend the same on fuel regardless, so go somewhere special with your steaming miles.

There is no logistic support?
As you will see in these pages the support is everywhere. Indeed I would argue that the level of support away from the yachting hubs far outweighs that which is provided within.

There is something to be said for being a unique and a sought after client. Something you will not feel in certain well-frequented ports and maintenance centres.

What if the yacht requires maintenance?
I refer to the above note and back this with my own very humble experience of having had very successful and substantial works undertaken in many far-flung places including: Northern Australia, Auckland, Singapore and Hawaii. There are many other equally good facilities that you will find through these pages that truly ‘want’ your business and have the skills and resource to execute.

Security is a problem?
Yes. Security is a problem, yet this is a global issue. The current situation emanating from Somalia is a blight and will continue to be so for some time. A transit through these waters must be approached with diligence and by following best practice. Fortunately there is exceptional support from UN forces working in the region and their best practice guidelines are the first reference for anyone attempting this transit.

In further acknowledgement of the likely readers of GSR 3 I will complete this introduction with a personal note, a plea to the readers.
Dear Yacht Owner,

Welcome to the Great South Route Edition 3. This guide is to tempt you to take your yacht into some of the most wondrous destinations in the world. It is to cajole you to break the shackles that seem to want to keep your wonderful world-capable yacht confined to an evermore crowded and evermore mediocre circuit of over-stuffed ports and anchorages within the Mediterranean and Caribbean.

GSR 3 is to remind you why you bought a yacht in the first place. Wasn’t it to take your experiences beyond what you could gain by other means? Wasn’t it to engage with the marine environment in a way that just staying in a coastal resort does not allow? Wasn’t it to wake up somewhere totally new and just stand in awe at the wonder around you?

I am going to be bold here and say I don’t think you bought your yacht to anchor a long way from an overused dock and be frustrated by the wake of passing tenders. You did not buy your yacht to be told yet again by your captain he could not gain dockage where and when you wanted it.

The guide is to make you look at your yacht differently. Possibly viewing your yacht the way you did when it was only an idea. When your passion was not dulled by the endless talk of maintenance periods and crew turnover. When you saw your yacht as a means to adjust your own way of life. Didn’t you once mention that you might just take that year off and sail with the yacht? If you didn’t say it I am sure you thought it. While thoughts are the place where dreams begin. To embark on any of the many and varied itinerary options shown within GSR 3 should be done with open eyes. You will need to acknowledge your yacht will operate differently when anchored in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands than when in front of Cannes. You will behave differently and your crew will relate to you differently, and you may drive that tender you always wanted to. You might kick around in some crew uniform with the chefs as they check out the local market in Tioman.

Your calendar must soften, airports do not operate on the daily schedules of Nice and St Maarten and you may be offline more than once. You will need to spend more time on your yacht and do so at a less hectic pace than what you are used to. Are these so bad?

I know as you are reading this that the thought is already in your mind. I know that already you are thinking maybe it is time to trade the hard fought reservation at Eden Roc for the solace of a fire pit sunset beach BBQ in Kota Kinabulu. If my assumption is correct Dear Yacht Owner then I do hope our paths cross somewhere on The Great Southern Route. Maybe we can view a fire sky sunset together and just for a moment think on what Oskar Speck and Joshua Slocum might have thought if you had kept your wonderful yacht and crew tethered and not allowed them their need to live the pages of GSR 3.

Captain Brendan O‘Shannassy

MY VAWA II
Dear Captain,

Welcome to the Great Southern Route Edition 3. This guide is for you too. Each page should awaken and embolden your passion; that same passion that brought you to yachting in the first instance, the passion that somehow as been eroded through multiple seasons crabbing your way around well-trodden anchorages. Like your yacht owner you too began this career dreaming of the ‘far away’ cruise where you would learn of worlds far beyond your own experiences.

GSR 3 should provide inspiration and information for your route planning and it should also comfort you that yes, you too can take a yacht around the world.

Enjoy the images, but don’t stop there. Read in detail the stories of Captains just like you as he cruised exotic, distant waters and know that like you there was a first day into the unknown. Read the weather routing information and use this as a platform to start your learning. When you embark on a world cruise you are no longer looking to Meteo France and their 5-day forecast, you are now back studying Meteorolog 101 on a Global Scale. Seasons and cycles matter again, with those giant monsoons that Weather Routing Inc. speaks of now part of your daily awareness.

Use this guide to be cheeky. When you are next blocked out of an anchorage in the Mediterranean or Caribbean (you choose where), drop the hint to your yacht owner that it wouldn’t be like this in Palau. When he says Palau what? Make sure you have your iPad ready with ‘the photo’ of this wonderful group of islands and mention that you took the liberty of bookmarking GSR 3 and it’s on his office desk.

As a colleague I hope you have the chance to take your yacht to just some of the destinations covered in this incredible guide. If you are so lucky then I hope that you then share this with the next generation and ensure that these wonderful, most seaworthy yachts that we are privileged to command are given their chance to break their endless cycle of featureless Mediterranean and Caribbean ports and anchorages.

In conclusion, I wish to introduce a couple of old friends. Two friends that due to my own limitations, I thought to draw upon for support.

Dear Reader I wish to introduce Mr Oskar Speck and Captain Joshua Slocum.

Germany in 1932 was grim. Unemployment was high and the civil unrest that would lead to the worldwide conflagration of WWII was becoming visible. In this unsettling climate the 25-year old Oskar Speck took to his folding kayak named Sunshine (Sonnenschein) and decided to paddle the Danube (Donau) to Cyprus to seek employment. Cyprus was reached but Oscar was not satisfied; seven years, three kayaks and 50,000km later he arrived in Australia. Of course he was interned on arrival as War had broken out. Young Oskar did not stop moving through Asia and his tortuous route only sought to embolden his passion for travel. He spoke warmly that by coasting through Asia he was received “above first class” at every stop, even in the sun bleached rags that he wore in his kayak.

Captain Joshua Slocum needs no introduction. His voyage could arguably be the defining endeavour that has since shaped adventure sailing. His wit remained sharp and his energy boundless. You will unlikely sail his routing, but you can sail in his spirit. With GSR 3 as your guide and the ageless Captain as your muse take your yacht, your career and your owner to new grounds.

Captain Brendan O’Shannassy
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A SHORT HISTORY OF CIRCUMNAVIGATION

Exploring the Antipodes

By John Julian
"Bali Ha’i will whisper
In the wind of the sea:
‘Here am I, your special island
Come to me, Come to me.’”

Oscar Hammerstein’s evocative lyrics, which accompanied the 1949 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *South Pacific*, conjured up the most picturesque and romantic visions of life among the South Sea Islands and the show went on to win the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1950. In addition to some other memorable songs (*Happy Talk, Some Enchanted Evening, Younger than Springtime* etc) the musical told a bittersweet tale of love and loss in the Pacific theatre of the Second World War, which was a raw and recent memory for those involved. The show, derived from James A. Michener’s 1948 novel *Tales of the South Pacific* (itself a Pulitzer Prize winner), featured a number of islands including the fictional Bali Ha’i, which was modeled upon Ambae in Vanuatu (formerly Aoba in the New Hebrides).

You can still see evidence of the terrible waste of young lives around the Pacific, from Palau and the Marians in one direction to the Hawaiian Islands, far away on the other side of the International Date Line. You can find the remains of crashed bomber aircraft and dive on wrecked warships; you can visit museums and graveyards and wonder at the toll that turmoil took on the people of these islands. But you can also look further back at the routes taken by the pioneer flying boat pilots and the ships’ masters, to the story of the Bounty mutineers and the circumnavigations of Captain James Cook, and to the navigators that preceded them all: brave souls in open boats who followed wave trains and the paths of migrating birds on their long voyages of discovery. And you can still experience the charm and the colour of the islands and the welcome and warmth of their inhabitants and you can easily understand what it was that drew artists like Paul Gauguin and writers like Robert Louis Stevenson to Tahiti and Samoa at a time when travel on that scale was not easily undertaken.

Yachting came relatively late to the Pacific, however, although by the time Captain Joshua Slocum (pictured above) returned to Newport, Rhode Island on 27th June 1898 having taken more than three years to circumnavigate the world alone in a modest, 36’ 9” sloop-rigged fishing boat named *Spray*, the Brassey family’s adventures aboard their large yacht *Sunbeam* had already been documented for two decades.
A SHORT HISTORY OF CIRCUMNAVIGATION

Annie (later Lady) Brassey’s account, named A Voyage in the Sunbeam was published in 1878 and was widely read, and her description of life on board with her husband Thomas, their four young children and 34 crew members is as lively and entertaining as her stories of their encounters with local people.

“I took a bag full of beads, knives, looking-glasses and pictures for barter and presentswww and with these preparations we set off to make our first personal acquaintance with the islanders of the South Pacific.”

Not surprisingly, some of those ashore were rather bewildered by the appearance of a 170’ composite, three-masted topsail schooner of 576 tons and they wondered what the strangers on board were after.

“Most of the natives seemed puzzled to comprehend why we had visited the island at all.

‘No sell brandy?’ – ‘No.’
‘No steal men?’ – ‘No.’
‘No do what then?’

“Their knowledge of English was too limited to enable us to make them understand that we were only making a voyage of circumnavigation in a yacht.”

Sunbeam, which was also equipped with two auxiliary steam engines, would cover 35,400 nautical miles during the course of her voyage, navigating waters hitherto unexplored by a vessel of her type and becoming the first of what we now refer to as the expedition yachts. Her Pacific crossing started at Valparaiso, Chile on 30th October 1876 and took in Bow Island in the Low Archipelago, Tahiti and the Hawaiian Islands from where she went directly to Yokohama in Japan. She would also stop at Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore, Penang, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Aden en route to Suez, which she reached on 29th April 1877.

By the time another 60 years had elapsed, Nahlin, the 1,574 ton, steam-turbine-driven beauty designed by G. L. Watson and built by John Brown & Co of Clydebank, Scotland for Lady Yule would have circled the world too and she ventured as far south as New Zealand. Remarkably, this yacht would survive after many years spent languishing on the River Danube where she served as a restaurant and, having originally been returned to England in 1999, she underwent restoration in Germany.

In spite of its relatively rapid resurgence at the end of the First World War, grand yachting took much longer to recover at the end of the Second World War. Quite a few motor yachts had been commandeered by their Governments and had been lost to mines or in enemy action and some of the larger sailing vessels had surrendered their keels, which were used to make munitions. Owners were faced with higher income taxes and death duties and many of the young men who might have succeeded the pre-war skippers and sailors had been killed or injured.

Eventually those with the wherewithal to enjoy yachting started to return to it and the advent of chartering and the improvement of facilities for visiting yachts outside traditional Mediterranean cruising grounds created opportunities for owners as well as for a new generation of professional crew. These different destinations helped the business grow to accommodate clients whose preferences might include anything from Alaska to Antarctica, or from Palma to Papeete. Furthermore, many of the post-war owners and charterers had businesses of their own to run and the advent of compact and reliable satellite communications systems allowed them to stay in touch.

Other recent and relevant developments for those wishing to go further than the Mediterranean and the Caribbean in a summer and winter cycle include advances in automated sail handling, which enable smaller crews to manage larger sailing yachts and progress in naval architecture and propulsion systems, which benefits all yachts in terms of volume and economy of operation. By the 1990’s, the desire to visit extremes of latitude, as well as to enjoy the fashionable ports and warm islands in between had led to the imaginative conversion of deep-sea tugs and other commercial (as well as a few naval) vessels capable of carrying larger tenders and transformations of this kind ranged from pilot boats and purse-seiners to trawlers and small warships. These craft were initially branded discovery, or exploration yachts before becoming more universally known as expedition yachts and purpose-built...
vessels of this type now represent a much larger percentage of new motor yacht output from yards around the world. If you want to sail across the Pacific in comfort, you can do so in anything from a big ketch from Alloy Yachts to a smaller sloop from Swan. And of course you can follow in Captain Slocum’s wake and embark in a modest 37-footer, the modern version of which will offer much more tolerable accommodation than Spray ever could. In a motor yacht, range is the thing whether you’re on board a Benetti or a Feadship, a Delta or a Schweers, along with dependable machinery and structural integrity, particularly if you’re going to encounter ice.

Jack Setton wanted to do it all, which was entirely in character for the man who had led the field in the burgeoning hi-fi and audio market of the 1970s and 1980s and who would continue to invest time and money in some of the most avant-garde communications and electronics inventions and technologies of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. He owned a De Vries built, 57.30 metre Feadship named Belle France, which he took round the world, partly to escape the overcrowding he had witnessed in some of his favourite European cruising grounds and partly to plan his ideal expedition yacht. He recalled the reasons for the voyage during an interview he gave in 2005.

“I realized that, in a civilized country, the sea is less private than a house is; you cannot be alone on the sea any more than you can in a bay, so that took away quite a lot of my passion for boats.”

One of the many interesting things he would discover in the Pacific was that Belle France was too large for some of the most out-of-the-way places but her tenders (of which the longest was eight metres) were not big enough for the owner’s party to enjoy the surroundings either.

“That was the whole idea of going around the world on Belle France, which was a magnificent vessel; you realize that the yacht has advantages and disadvantages. The conclusion was that I had so much time at sea to devote to the creation of something more appropriate. For me, the big boat is really the wrong way: you need a mother ship for the big tenders.”

As was his wont, Jack Setton was about to establish a trend, this time toward larger expedition yachts, which could carry bigger tenders and have the range, seaworthiness and self-sufficiency to take the more adventurous to new destinations as the converted Smit tug Itasca had begun to do for her owner Bill Simon and her captain Allan Jouning. And, typically, he looked...
for original solutions, including commercial vessels, suitable for conversion, whose dependable machinery, robust construction and practical finish made for longer periods at sea with less time spent in the dry dock or the paint shed in between.

“I went to see some of the most beautiful tuna boats; you know the ones they make in America. I went to Campbell over there. The problem is that they are very beautiful as they are. If you start to put in windows, accommodation or whatever, they lose their lines. Also, they are made to carry fish so they have a very big hull. And after that I looked at North Sea trawlers, some of which would make a really magnificent yacht with a beautiful sheerline. But the engines of a tug are much more efficient than those of a trawler.”

Jack Setton very nearly bought the 66.47 metre Margaret Z, the then flagship of the Zuanich fleet of tuna clippers and the most highly developed of the Campbell-built purse seiners, on a visit to Pago Pago in American Samoa. Some time later, she was arrested in New Zealand when the Zuanich enterprise collapsed and subsequently underwent sea trials out of Whangarei in early 1997 at the request of the late Gianni Agnelli, head of FIAT in Italy, who was looking for an interesting vessel to convert that could carry large tenders, including a sailing yacht.

Acting as his proxy on that day was Johnny Pigozzi, an old friend whose family had owned the Simca car company and whose yacht, the 66.75 metre converted trawler Amazon Express, was also in New Zealand at that time. The sale did not eventuate for various reasons and Margaret Z subsequently rejoined the hunt for Pacific tuna although a Campbell sister ship was eventually modified and named Golden Shadow and she acted as a seagoing companion to the Blohm + Voss built, 80.47 metre Golden Odyssey.

By this time, Jack Setton had enlisted the help of Claus Kusch, whose previous projects included Leander, and together they decided to look for a tug that was for sale and suitable for conversion.
disappointed him. Jack Setton outlined the sale of Simson S in the following terms:
“Peter Lewis was very brilliant, I think. He had never had a big boat before and he goes and buys a tug, which is not the sort you would normally get if you’ve never had a boat before.”
And Peter Lewis recalled the transaction like this:
“The things that appealed to me about Simson S were, first, that it did not look like a yacht. It was a working boat and that was important because there are many places in the world that you go where big white boats somehow generate a feeling of resentment. Number two: it seemed to me that the likelihood of it being more seaworthy was very high. Certainly, every boat is advertised as being extraordinarily seaworthy, but this one had been through all kinds of seas and all kinds of work, so the seaworthiness and safety was therefore an attraction. And that we had the opportunity to take what was already a magnificent conversion and upgrade it even more was an exciting prospect.”
Needless to say, Jack Setton had learned from his own experiences aboard the large converted tug and his next project, a 59.00 metre motor yacht named Senses, built at Schweers near Bremen in Germany combined room for several
large tenders (some of which could be dispatched and recovered while the mother ship was on the move) along with helicopter decks and an ice-protected bow. He described her as follows: “Senses was a child of Belle France and Simson actually. It’s got the luxury of a yacht, more so than Belle France, huge windows, but it has the kind of utility of Simson. You can also launch the Nelson while under way. When you launch with a crane it’s OK for people who use a boat normally but I like to be able to launch and retrieve while under way so I can get out of the big boat, which is very boring for me, and navigate with the smaller one! That was the whole idea of Senses and a big improvement over Simson. It was while I was cruising with Simson that I started thinking about which direction I would like to go. You take a rib from one, and from the other and you create it. That’s why, in the beginning, nobody really understood Senses and I think it was rather new and unconventional to have a yacht, with the finish of a yacht, that was also a discovery machine, you know.”

But while you may need the ingenuity and capital of a Jack Setton or a Peter Lewis to establish expedition yachting as we know it today, you don’t have to find the US$500,000 per month that it took to run Lone Ranger in order to enjoy the Indian and Pacific Oceans on more modest vessels. A sailing yacht has some advantages inasmuch as it has a more flexible range of operation and is arguably less likely to attract unwelcome attention in remote destinations although it may be equally prone to piracy. A motor yacht may enjoy the benefits of shallower draft and might be able to find larger, self-sufficient tenders that can scout likely anchorages before the mother ship commits itself. Smaller vessels of either kind benefit from a wider choice of moorings or marina berths and are probably easier to haul and service in the event of a problem. But if you want the same sort of reception that the bigger boats enjoy then you will have to pay for an agent to help you with everything from Customs clearance to cruising permits, the arrival and departure of owners, guests and crew, and the procurement of necessities ranging from provisions and spares to cruising guides and courtesy flags and an introduction to the agent at the next planned stop. Go to Australia, or New Zealand, for example, and you might get by on your own, depending perhaps upon whether your first language is English but bear in mind that the reason you made all that money and bought the boat in the first place was to have some fun and enjoy the South Sea Islands on your way around the world. Furthermore, a good agent should be able to steer you through the worst of the time-consuming bureaucracy you will sometimes encounter in smaller places while being a reliable source of information about where to relax and take in the best of everything your host country has to offer. Life can be tiresome at times but there are rewards as well. There is little to match the feeling you get after a bracing day’s sail when you’re sitting in a comfortable chair under a whispering palm listening to the waves lap on the shore of a warm Pacific island with a cool pre-dinner drink in your hand. You watch the sun set slowly over the sea, enjoy the colours of the evening sky, and admire the lines of the most beautiful yacht in the anchorage, which happens to be your own!

To quote Oscar Hammerstein again:

“If you try, you’ll find me
Where the sky meets the sea.
‘Here am I, your special island
Come to me, Come to me.’”
The Pacific Voyage of Discovery

ONE of the greatest feelings a Master of a superyacht can experience is clearing the Miraflores Locks on the southern side of the Panama Canal and splashing into the clean blue salt waters of the Pacific Ocean. It is hard to imagine any other point on this earth that offers so much diversity depending on which course the Captain sets after clearing Balboa. Should he head south to the West Coast of South America where he will discover the coastlines of Panama, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile and Argentina, then on to Antarctica? Or north to Central America and the West Coast of North America; Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, the US states of California, Oregon, Washington, then Canada and Alaska? Or southwest to the Galapagos, Easter Island, Marquesas, French Polynesia, Tonga, Fiji, New Zealand and Australia? Or northwest to Hawaii, Japan and Asia? Where else in the world is a superyacht captain presented with so many exotic options to explore and embark on an voyage of discovery? Since the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, superyachts have ventured into the Pacific through Panama in greater numbers than ever before. Many visit for a purpose, to go to Central America, Mexico, California, Alaska or Galapagos and return back into the Caribbean.

But increasingly many superyachts are choosing to explore the whole Pacific Rim and taking a year or more to do so. Depending on the time of year and the wishes of the owner, superyachts generally circumnavigate the Pacific Rim in either a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction. A clockwise route takes the yacht direct to the Galapagos, French Polynesia, Cook Islands, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Australia before heading north to Solomon Islands, Indonesia, Palau, Eastern Asia and Japan before crossing to Alaska, Canada and West Coast USA and back to Central America. Due to the large numbers of yachts transiting this Pacific voyage of discovery over the last decade, high quality purpose-built facilities catering to Superyachts have been created in many of the ports frequently visited by these Superyachts. Large Superyacht refit facilities are also available in New Zealand, Australia and San Diego, providing much needed ‘pit stop’ services and support able to repair even the largest of Superyachts. Superyacht Captains will discover a very mature support industry and network of agents; many of them ex-superyacht captains themselves, who will be pleased to provide all the assistance necessary to make your voyage a memorable success. Welcome to the West Coast of the Americas and the enticing blue Pacific awaits you!
Transiting the Panama Canal in a superyacht

By Captain Mathew George – MY Temptation

DURING MY CAREER OF 15 YEARS sailing as professional crew aboard both private and charter yachts, I have been fortunate to sail on some wide-ranging and adventurous vessels. In this time, I have been lucky enough to transit the Panama Canal on no less than ten occasions. For most of these transits, I was sailing in the position of first officer and in charge of the deck. The vessels were all motor yachts and ranged from 47 to 74 metres.

PREPARATION
Give yourself as much time as possible to start your preparations prior to making the transit. Appoint a good Panama Canal agent as this is the key to having a successful transit. It is important to make a reservation well in advance to prevent delays. Of course, one cannot overstate the importance of crew awareness and training. But there are also some essential items I always have on board before arrival and some preparations I complete before we start our entry into the canal.

MY CHECK LIST INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:
- Two large Eski coolers
- An ample supply of popular soft drinks
- Lots of bags of bite-size chocolate bars
- As many of the thick removalist-type blankets as I can store on board
- Protective covers for work boots. These can be the paper kind but I will normally purchase the more durable vinyl type used by the European yards. These have a vinyl edge glued to a non-slip sole with an elastic band around the top to hold them on
- A roll of Visqueen plastic
- A roll of Blue Diamond plastic
- Roll two-inch blue tape
- A regulation pilot boarding ladder
- Eight mooring lines of 35 metre or more in length, four each for the bow and stern.

Some of the latter can be expensive items to purchase outside of the USA so, if you know you’re heading for the Canal, stock these before you depart.

Regardless of the ocean from which you begin your visit, before you can start you will be visited by a number of Canal officials. Apart from your agent, the Canal Authority will send their people to inspect the vessel to ensure it complies with their regulations. None of these guys remove their steel cap boots.

Before the officials begin stepping onto the teak decks, try to cover as much of the aft deck, one side deck and the path to the foredeck with the Blue Diamond plastic and tape it down with the blue tape. Even if you think you have covered all you need, have another look. Someone will always manage to stand on the only bit of teak you didn’t protect. When visitors arrive on board, they usually step off the wet, greasy deck of a launch, so always tape down a few of the moving blankets in front of your bulwark door. This dries their boots and acts as a door mat, containing a lot of the mess as everyone piles on.

Like all officials, they expect to be shown respect upon arrival. The mate should be present to introduce himself when they board. When met professionally with a formal introduction and a welcoming handshake, the officials are more apt to show respect for the vessel and comply with its operating procedures. Once all are on board, ask if they would mind slipping on the boot covers. This will give you a perfect opportunity to conduct your ISPS duties and identification checks.

The mate should let your guests know he will escort everyone to the bridge to see the captain. Once on the bridge, have the mate introduce the captain. It’s also a good idea to have one of the interior staff on hand to offer refreshments.

While all of the paperwork is being completed, use the time to continue your preparations. The next project is capping rail protection. This is where the moving blankets will pay for themselves. Triple or quadruple fold the blankets and tape them securely to the rails above the fairleads you will be using for the transit and the boarding area. You cannot have enough buffer on top of the capping rails, varnished or not. Also tape a few blankets on the outboard side of the hull around the aft deck fairlead and cover the rubbing strake. This will protect the paint from the steel cables the line handlers hang on to while trying to thread your soft lines through the cable eye when you enter the locks.

Once this has been completed fore and aft, you
can then start to organise the boat to receive the line handlers. Tape off sections of the boat that you do not want people exploring; a simple line of tape across a stairwell works remarkably well. During the transit the line handlers will always ask for the use of a head. If you have an exterior head, this is your best option. If not, use plastic to cover the interior and create a path directly to the head. Always have a crew member escort visitors to and from the head. It is important to keep people from wandering off and exploring unsupervised.

As the line handlers fill their bags before departure. Lastly, flake out four mooring lines of 35 metres each. Do not fill the coolers with all your stocks as the line handlers will fill their bags before departure. Lastly, flake out four mooring lines of 35 metres at each end of the boat. These are going to be used as your soft lines. General procedure for the commercial ships transiting is for steel cables to be pulled on board and placed directly over the line handlers. Tape off sections of the boat that you do not want people exploring; a simple line of tape across a stairwell works remarkably well. During the transit the line handlers will always ask for the use of a head. If you have an exterior head, this is your best option. If not, use plastic to cover the interior and create a path directly to the head. Always have a crew member escort visitors to and from the head. It is important to keep people from wandering off and exploring unsupervised.

As the time for your transit draws near, fill the coolers with a good selection of popular soda and ice, then place one on the bow and one on the aft deck. You should receive eight line handlers and a bosun at each end of the canal as you approach the locks. Have enough for a few cans each. Do not fill the coolers with all your stocks as the line handlers will fill their bags before departure. Lastly, flake out four mooring lines of 35 metres at each end of the boat. These are going to be used as your soft lines. General procedure for the commercial ships transiting is for steel cables to be pulled on board and placed directly over the ship’s mooring bits to keep the ship in place while the workers climb aboard. They take this approach for yachts as well with some hitting very hard, then bouncing off and falling behind the yacht, so board them as far aft as possible. Once the ferry (launch) is alongside, the line handlers will flood aboard. They will all be dressed in the same blue/grey uniform except for the bosun, who will be wearing a white shirt and red helmet. The mate should introduce himself and then show the bosun the proper route to the foredeck. The bosun will then split the workers and take four forward with him while the other four remain aft. Before assisting with the crew set up on the foredeck, the mate must escort the bosun to the wheelhouse. The bosun will hand the pilot certain documentation, such as a list of the line handlers onboard. From this point on, you will need to have at least one crew member stationed at each end of the yacht who is able to go over the soft line set up with the line handlers. When visiting any country, knowledge of the language goes a long way. If you speak any Spanish this will be of great use. All of the pilots speak fluent English and a lot of the line handlers speak some so you can get by, but any local language will be an advantage.

As the yacht approaches the first lock, the line handlers will prepare their own heaving lines which will be passed to the little rowboats that paddle out to meet the yacht as she approaches. These boats have a line running back to the “mules” (locomotives on each side of the lock which will hold the boat in the centre of the lock by wire cable when filling or emptying) and attached to a wire cable. The line handlers throw their line to the rowboat and the boat crew ties both together so the wire can be manually pulled out to the yacht. This is the time damage can be done to the yacht’s paintwork. It is a good idea to have a crew member watching and asking the line handlers to be careful as the heavy cable approaches the side of the boat. Most understand and hold the cable away while the soft line is passed through the eye of the wire and then placed back onto the yacht’s bits. The wire is then dropped down into the water and taken up by the mule driver. Care needs to be taken as sometimes the handlers just let it go without making sure it falls far enough away from the hull. Only two lines each end will be used, though...
you need others in case a line breaks. Once both sides are secure, the line handlers will sit down until you’re ready to leave the locks. This is the time when they look for something comfortable to sit on and have no problems making themselves at home on the deck furniture. It’s a good idea to not have the boss’ white cushions on the chairs. I normally stack the furniture or remove it from the deck altogether. When they are done with their work, I offer the coolers and their contents. More often than not, you will also be asked for food. It is your discretion to offer food – though we have never supplied a meal to anyone other than the pilot, hence the reason for the chocolate bars! Even though the line handlers are relaxed, the crew needs to keep a close watch as the yacht rises and falls within the lock. Due to the large amount of water being pumped in or let out, there are all sorts of stresses being applied to the soft lines. If the crew sees that the lines are being over stretched, they must contact the bridge and have the pilot talk to the mule drivers to either let down or take up on their wires. It may be that the mule driver has fallen asleep or is not watching what they are doing. This has happened more than once, and I have had lines break in this manner. The recoil of the mooring line is extremely dangerous. No crew should stand anywhere near the lines when the locks are in operation.

Once you come to the end of the first set of locks, the shore workers will request the return of the heaving lines brought on when you attached the wires. To do this they throw more heaving lines at the yacht without regard for the deck, the paint or anything else that happens to be in the way. The force with which the monkey’s fist lands is enough to remove paint and leave a large dent in the teak deck. To avoid this, politely ask the shore side to wait while you fetch the long wooden or fiberglass boat hooks most yachts carry. Hold the boat hook out as far aft of the stern or forward of the bow as possible and instruct the thrower to aim his line over the boat hook. The guy throwing generally has enough accuracy to lay the heaving line over the hook on first attempt. They always seem up for the challenge while their mates watch! Once over the boat hook, pull in the line and the line handlers will attach the lines that are to go back ashore and will prepare to leave your yacht. The yacht is then released from the mules and can proceed to cross the freshwater lake under its own power. While transiting the lake the yacht will benefit from the fresh water flushing through the cooling systems. It’s also a good time to flush the fire mains to clear the pipes of any salt build-up.

After the lake the same series of events happen as you enter the locks on the other side and prepare to go down to sea level. Most of the transits I have completed have run overnight, so it is important that good lighting on the embarkation area is available. Also have at least one or two crew on both the fore and aft deck while you have the line handlers on board to answer questions and escort them to the bathroom. Everyone I know that has had the opportunity to transit the Panama Canal agrees that it is an exciting event that they will never forget.

My experiences transiting have enabled me to create a routine which I have found greatly reduces the clean up time and minimises any potential for damage. These few steps have worked on all the vessels I have been fortunate enough to transit on, but may need to be adjusted to fit your yacht. I have been through the Canal using these procedures with and without guests with success. The owner has always been happy to have the protection down rather than a repair bill! For those who may not have thought about travelling this direction, put it on your list of things to do and keep your camera handy!
Panama

Useful Statistics
Republic of Panama

GOVERNMENT: Multiparty Republic
LAND AREA: 77,046 km²
(29,748 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 3,516,820
LANGUAGE: Spanish and English
CURRENCY: Balboa (B)
CLIMATE: Tropical with little seasonal variation. The rainy season is from April to December and humidity is around 80% all year round. The N and NE winds prevail throughout most of the year and the SW winds during Autumn / Fall. Average temperature range from 22° - 32°C
UTC: +9
INTL DIALLING CODE: +507

Panama is the southernmost country of Central America, bordering both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean, between Colombia and Costa Rica. Its location on the eastern end of the Isthmus of Panama, a land bridge connecting North and South America, is strategic. One of the great engineering feats of the 20th century, the Panama Canal, accomplished what nature forgot to do by connecting the Atlantic via the Caribbean Sea with the Pacific Ocean and thus reducing the 12,000 mile sailing distance between New York and San Francisco by more than 7,000 miles. Without question, the best way to experience every mile of this magnificent wonder is from the deck of a transiting superyacht. From this privileged vantage point you get an incomparable perspective while passing through the canal’s three sets of locks. The Canal is 45 NM long and requires about nine hours for an average superyacht to transit. During this brief time, the guests and crew on board have an opportunity to see one of the modern wonders of the world in operation. Its principal physical features are the Atlantic and Pacific termini, short sea level sections of the channel at either end, three sets of twin locks, Gatun and Miraflores Lakes and the Gaillard Cut. The vessel is raised or lowered 25.91m (85ft) in a continuous flight of three steps at Gatun Locks. Each lock chamber is 110ft wide and 1,000ft long. Transiting the canal is one experience every superyacht owner, captain or crewmember should experience at least once in their careers. Using a reputable agent is vital to ensure an efficient and trouble free transit.
IN THE FOLLOWING article, I describe a few of the areas heading North to Alaska after passing through the Panama Canal, with a quick stop at Piñas Bay for some Black Marlin fishing. If you need a helicopter or fixed wing aircraft for visiting the Panamanian islands, contact My Flight Corp. The goal of Mea Culpa was to be in Alaska by the Northern Hemisphere Summer months of July and August (we are arriving in Alaska at the time of this update). The passage north is not to be missed with tremendous cruising through different countries and various ports of call.

I have touched on dockage, anchorages, agents, services and attractions in the different ports. The waypoints are from our logbook and should be used as a guide, rather than as gospel. May you all enjoy your cruise North and experience as much as we did with fair winds, following seas and plenty of fish.

COSTA RICA AND COCOS ISLANDS

In Costa Rica we utilized Paramares Agency for all our Costa Rica agency needs. We shipped in a vehicle, golf cart and temporarily imported the vessel and Vespa. Docking at Los Sueños Marina is convenient, clean and safe. There is a fuel dock, ships store, provisioning facility, restaurants, cigar bar as well as Internet café and hairdresser. There is a great provisioning spot at Los Sueños called Jimmy T's Provisions. The Marriott Hotel is very accommodating and guests can fly into San Jose, a short helicopter ride with Aerotec or an hour drive on the new highway through scenic Costa Rica. For vessels not wishing to dock in the Marina, anchorage is available in Herradura Bay. (09 38.7N 84 39.9W). There are two annual sportfishing tournaments at Los Sueños and plenty of fish to go around as all billfish are caught and released using circle hooks. Numerous charter boats will take your guests fishing here at Los Sueños. Canopy Tours are one item not to miss in Costa Rica. This is where the individual puts on a climbing harness, clips onto a cable which is suspended between trees and glides from one tree to the next in a “tour” around the tree tops. The best contact is Robert at robcanopy2378@yahoo.es Everyone that has done a tour, completely loves it. From youngsters to grandmothers! After that fantastic experience, I suggest you dine at the Treehouse. Please contact Jack for reservations nightly at: adventuredining2004@yahoo.com It is a once in a lifetime dining experience where guests actually dine in a real tree!

Isla Tortuga is a nice place to visit from Los Sueños. There is a very nice anchorage at 09 46.7N 084 53.3W, great beach to attend to,
small bar restaurant and nice water. Manuel Antonio is a National Park with great tour guides, tremendous animal life, hiking and plenty of bugs. Anchorage is 09 23.1N 084 09.0W.

The town of Quepos is nearby and has a fun restaurant, with a bunch of history, called El Avion or the Airplane.

In 2010 a new marina opened in Quepos called Marina Pez Vela. Dockage is available for rent or purchase for full time visitors wishing to base themselves in Costa Rica. For guests wanting to stay ashore, I recommend the Hotel Parador with exceptional views.

There is a great fishing town north of Cabo Blanco, called Bahia Carillo. (09 51.9N 085 29.4W).

One area we did not visit was Bahia Papagayo, to the North toward the Nicaraguan boarder. The Four Seasons has a hotel there and while the Sojourn visited there a few years ago, they were welcomed only with reservations at the hotel. The new Marina Papagayo is open and welcomes visiting yachts.

The Cocos Islands are located 300NM off Costa Rica and are only possible to visit with approval in advance. The Zarpa Issued by the Costa Rica Parks Department is a cruising permit for the requested number of days. See Paramares for issuance of this permit. Upon arrival to Cocos, you will check-in with the officials there and pay a head fee for the number of persons on board for each day you will remain there. The fishing enroute to Cocos from mainland Costa Rica is great as well. We caught sailfish, blue marlin and tuna on the way. Vessels can transit here overnight and back to Costa Rica or head South to the Galapagos for a further adventure! Please note: there is a 15NM fishing restriction for any species and this is enforced by the marine park personnel that are stationed on the island.

Two anchorages exist at Cocos, the initial one in Chatham Bay (05 33.3N 087 02.5W) on the North East corner and the second on the West side called Bahia Wafer (05 32.9N 087 03.9W). We did two exceptional dives, the first off Piedra Sucia or Boat Rock (05 33.0N 087 05.0W) where it's a pinnacle that comes out of the ocean about 1NM from the anchorage in Bahia Wafer. There's a flat on the NW corner which is the drop off point, from where divers can circumnavigate the rock and see schooling hammerhead sharks and coral life.

The second tremendous dive began at the Southern end of Isla Manuella or Nuez Island off Chatham. We did a clockwise dive and ended in the shallows to the NE. A 300# yellowfin tuna came into the pattern, checked us out diving, then bolted like lightning away. We were fortunate to dive with numerous Hammerhead sharks.

GUATEMALA

We had a fantastic fishing experience in Guatemala. Each year the Billfish Association give out worldwide awards for the most released billfish and inevitably, every year at least one winner comes from Quetzal.

Captain Brad Philipps from the Decisive came fishing on board with us and were able to find a few sailfish and marlin. We decided to stay out through the night drifting and the amount of bait, fish and squid in the area was tremendous.

People wanting to have a tremendous fishing adventure should check out the Casa Vieja Lodge at www.casaviejalodge.com or call them in USA at +1 786 243 1552. Captain Tred Barta has a boat at the Casa with Jim Turner and if you want some interesting reading check our www.tredbarta.com.

MEXICO

How does one make the NW trip upwind from Costa Rica, toward Mexico and on to Southern California? My preferred route is offshore from the Gulf of Tehuantepec around 200NM. In my experience, the storm and frontal systems come across Alaska, pass through Canada and the United States, into the Gulf of Mexico. Many times the fronts pass across the narrow strip of land between the southern Gulf of Mexico into the Gulf of Tehuantepec and wind builds to 40+ knots, with a short uncomfortable sea state. At 200NM off shore the influence from the land has dissipated the wind and provides nice traveling weather. Many of my mates have over the years traveled within 20NM of the coast all the way North, but there are numerous unlit “pongas” out fishing, the possibility of visits from the Mexican Coast Guard and lobster pots to avoid.

While traveling north the ports of call that provide services are Acapulco, Zihuatanejo, Ixtapa, Manzanillo, Barra de Navidad, Puerto Vallarta, La Paz, Cabo San Lucas, Ensenada. In Barra de Navidad we were able to refuel and took dockage at the Grand Bay Hotel Isla Navidad. The dockmaster is the expert in the area, his name is Secundino Alvarez and he can be reached at +52 314 337 9008. There was a tequila bar in the hotel that was second to none.

We used an agent Eduardo Pena at eduard580@hotmail.com for customs and immigration formalities. He knew all right people to clear in. Recently, Attessa 3 has docked at the cruise ship dock #3, within the port and isn’t tide dependant for vessels approaching 70M. One great spot to anchor for action and a wonderful lunch ashore is at La Palapa 20 36.0N 105 14.6W. Heading to La Paz, we moored at the Marina Costa Baja. Vessels over 70 metres can moor there and the fuel dock is capable of refueling almost any yacht. We anchored in the following...
Departure clearance can be obtained from the Cruise Ship dock +1-619-557-5730 x 123 at 1240 North Harbor Drive.

This was the home of the America’s Cup from 1987 to 1995. It was defended by the San Diego Yacht Club twice, in 1988 by Dennis Connor and in 1992 by Bill Koch. I was fortunate to be a part of the sailing team in 1992 which last defended the cup. In 1995, SDYC lost the cup to New Zealand. In 2011, San Diego hosted the America’s Cup World Series in the new class of AC-45 catamarans, leading up to the 2013 America’s Cup in San Francisco.

We enjoy mooring the vessel at Shelter Island Marina across from the San Diego Yacht Club. It’s located at the Island Palms Hotel and offers great access to the bay as well as Point Loma.

San Diego is home to the U.S Navy Pacific Fleet on Coronado Island, Miramar Marine Corps Air Station, Sea World, San Diego Zoo, the Padres Baseball team and the Chargers Football team. There is an exciting downtown district with numerous restaurants, bars, and clubs.

Long Beach has a marina and also there is Marina Del Ray for smaller vessels. Approximately 23NM off the coast of Long Beach is Catalina Island. This is a beautiful island and a good place to go outside of the
Los Angeles area, Approximately 80% of the island is a protected wildlife reserve. Helicopter service is available as well as commuter flights. There is an anchorage for large vessels above 40 metres and a mooring for those at 40 metres and under. Call the Avalon Harbormaster to see if there is one available at +1-310-510-0535. Further up the California Coast is San Francisco, the home of the America’s Cup and upcoming races. The AC45 2012 World Series Races are in August and on 2 – 7 October in San Francisco. The Louis Vuitton Series leading up to the Cup event starts on the 4th of July and runs to 1 September 2013. The 34th America’s Cup races are from 7 – 22 September 2013. Thanks to the upcoming races, a pilot is now only required for vessels over 500 Gross Tons. While in the Bay Area, we tied up at Schoonmaker Point Marina (www.schoonmakermarina.com) and many services are available in the local area of Sausalito. It is just to the North of San Francisco across the historic Golden Gate Bridge. San Francisco has everything any yachtsman would care to indulge in. Just a short 90 minute drive to the North East is Napa & Sonoma Valley, where some delicious California wines are produced. I would highly recommend a day trip. Making your way North toward Seattle, Washington, one must plan the weather patterns. The prevailing winds from the NW make this passage sporting. Heading into Seattle, through the Straits of Juan de Fuca has Vancouver Island Canada to the North and Washington State to the South. It’s a very nice passage monitored by Tortino and Seattle Traffic in the VTS scheme. The State of Washington has pilotage exemption exceptions. I work with ships agent Debbie Azure at North Pacific Maritime at +1-907-225-2200 or operations@norpac1.com. The pilotage exemption application now works on Registered Length, not Length Overall, which is beneficial to more yachts wishing to travel without a pilot on board. While in Ketchikan we stayed at Doyon’s Landing and chartered their sea plane for a tour of the area. We traveled toward Craig and did some Salmon Fishing & Catching. The famous Waterfall Lodge (55 17.8N 133 15.7W) hosts guests and has tinnies with guides to charter for yachts wishing their guests to enjoy the salmon fishing. We anchored in two memorable anchorages, the first Port Ascsunion at 55 22.3N 133 33.0W and also Port Rea Marina 55 25.3N 133 29.6W.

We were drift fishing (catching) King Salmon off Cape Addington with all the local boats. This was a truly great experience not to be missed and will be repeated in 2012 by the Mea Culpa. Check out the Northern Spell Lodge and Sam Peters (Slammin Sam) at spetersak@gmail.com Headin North from Craig we made landfalls at Warren Island for a nice overnight anchorage at 55 52.6N 133 51.2W along with the commercial fishing vessels in the area. The next area we anchored was Red Bluff and the fantastic waterfall. We went fly-fishing for salmon there, saw brown bears walking on the shoreline and went up the river at the head of the inlet and anchored a second night at 56 52.3N 134 47.3W. This inlet is one of the most beautiful in all of Southern Alaska. Glaciers are a must when visiting Alaska. We visited the Sawyer Glacier and anchored in Tracy Arm 57 48.5N 133 38.1W prior to making the transit up and back by lunchtime the next day. We tied up in Juneau in Auke Bay. The local fishing guide whom we personally recommend is Zach Kohan 907-209-6883 (zachkohan1571@gmail.com) as a true local, he has his own boat, is educated and versed on super yacht crewing and expectations if you want him on board. The next visit was to Glacier National Park. We made reservations (exactly 60 days in advance) and went to orientation at Bartlett Cove after entering the Park. We then found our favorite anchorage at Beartrack 58 36.2N 135 50.9W. At sunset and sunrise the brown bears are feeding along the shoreline while teaching the bearcubs tricks of the trade. We visited both John Hopkins and Margerie Glaciers in the same day. There was heavy fog heading North, but it was crystal clear when we arrived at both glaciers. One item to consider when visiting Alaska is to charter a sea plane and go fishing at one of the numerous rivers where salmon are headed upstream to spawn. We used Ward Air at www.wardair.com with their Otter and Beaver sea planes. We also used guides from Bear Creek Outfitters at www.juneauflyfishing.com.

If there is further information you would like on all the areas mentioned above, please contact me at HeinLLC@aol.com and let me know if this is helpful.
LARGE, strong gales and storms are quite common within the Gulf of Alaska during the wintertime months, occurring every 2-3 days, often moving along or north of 40N from near the Dateline N.E. ward into the Gulf where they will often slow and weaken as they turn northward into Mainland Alaska, or continue N.E. ward into the Alaska/British Columbia coasts. Occasionally, secondary lows will form along trailing fronts which then intensify into gales themselves as they move northeast to eastward into British Columbia or the Pacific Northwest (Washington/Oregon). Within the Gulf of Alaska itself, low pressure is almost always found, especially at this time of year as maturing gales will often stall and slowly dissipate. Following these gales/frons will be transitory ridges of high pressure which are usually extensions of a larger semi-permanent high farther south, which occasionally bring brief periods of lighter weather as they move eastward along 40-45N. Typical winds in and near the Gulf of Alaska along and south of these gales at this time of year are SW, and frequently reach gale force (8-9), followed by veering winds from W-NW of similar speeds following the passage of cold fronts associated with gales/storms. It is not uncommon within stronger storms in the heart of the winter to produce force 10-11. Easing of the generally westerly winds will occur as areas of high pressure build into the region, in between the passage of gales and storms. Easing will tend to be brief, lasting no more than 24-30 hours at a time. On the north sides of systems, we will find more NE-E winds, generally confined to the northernmost waters, and often, winds will tend lighter here, speeds generally no more than force 5-6, and highest in areas of localized channeling of winds found between islands off of Mainland Alaska.

Wintertime gales and storms often produce exceptionally large seas, especially where there is a large fetch involved, namely in more offshore waters, away from protected channels and passages. Prolonged strong westerly winds can often produce swells near and in excess of 20ft in these areas, with 25-30ft+ possible within strong gales/storms. The highest of these seas tend to propagate eastward into the Alaskan Panhandle, British Columbia and Pacific Northwest coastal areas, with lower seas more likely in the more northern areas of the Alaskan coast, which are less exposed to the large westerly fetch farther south. Even during the periodic episodes from lighter winds (from building high pressure areas), general westerly seas remain “large”, with residual longer-period swells often near if not exceeding 10 feet during these times. Of course, within the inside passage and in protected waters, seas will tend to be far less than those found in more open waters. These seas, while shorter-period and choppier, will also have far less swell associated with them and be purely wind driven.

Farther south, along the Pacific Northwest coast, winter season winds are often somewhat lighter than those experienced farther north and more within the gale track itself. Typical winds ahead of cold fronts that move ashore tend to veer from south to southwest, increasing to force 6-8. Again, with the frontal passage the winds tend to veer SW-W-NW remaining in the force 6-8 range, though winds will be higher, often solidly within gale force (force 8-9) when larger, stronger gales/storms and their associated fronts pass. Winds then lower as the transitory high builds eastward and into the coast, winds continue to veer NW-N-NE and ease to force 4-6. While winds may be somewhat lower than what is in the Gulf of Alaska, often the seas are almost as high as those farther north due to the large fetch of water west of the coast (where the predominant wind direction is from). Ahead of the fronts, SW-W swell will often build to 12-15 feet and in stronger events can build to 15-20 feet. Following the frontal passage as winds become more westerly in nature, seas will tend to build higher, as swells become more W-NW and often build to 15-20 feet with 20-25+ feet not uncommon in the strongest events. The W-NW swell will often then slowly lower back to 10-13 feet as the transitory high builds in.

During the springtime, the gales tend to weaken somewhat, and gradually shift northward. By later April and into May, a more typical gale track is along 45N northeastward into the Gulf of Alaska and then onward into Alaska or British Columbia or Washington. By springtime, “cut-off” lows tend to become more common as lows detach from the main gale track to the north and tend to slowly meander in the central/eastern Pacific near or south of 30N. These can become gales in their own right and will then tend to weaken slowly until eventually getting picked back up and accelerated northeastward,重新 gaining the main gale track. Reflecting the weaker gales, winds and seas both tend to be somewhat lower as we get into later Spring, though still quite high when compared to many other parts of the globe. As we get into the summertime, finally we begin to find conditions that are somewhat more conducive for yacht transit. Gales continue to weaken and become less numerous and slower. They will track east-northeast toward central and northern British Columbia as the semi-permanent eastern Pacific high pressure ridge strengthens and extends farther north.
across the central/eastern Pacific. Eastward moving fronts associated with the lows/gales normally extend southwestward to approximately 37-38N and tend to move inland across the Washington/Oregon and northern California coast approximately every 4-5 days. Once fronts pass, portions of the eastern Pacific high will often break off from the main center and move eastward into the Washington/Oregon coasts. In periods of lighter weather, the thermal trough which during the colder months of the year is found further south along the Mexico and S'm California coast will sometimes build northward along the northern California and Oregon coasts, on occasion as far north as the Washington coast (See chart).

Typical winds and seas are significantly lighter/lower than at other times of year. Within the Alaskan coast, winds are dominated by the persistent, albeit generally weaker area of low pressure often found within the gulf. Along more northern coastal areas, lows and gales typically pass off to the south, and when they do, NE-E winds are common, generally as high as force 5-6 within 150-300 nautical miles of the Alaskan coast and islands just offshore. Farther to the south, winds will again be veering as gale/low systems move through. Along the British Columbia coast SW winds will increase to force 5-7 ahead of fronts with force 8-9 not out of the question within the stronger systems, in particular toward the beginning and end of the summer season. Following the frontal passages the typical veering toward briefly (generally 12-18 hour) enhanced W-NW winds occurs, and is then followed by easing of the winds as the transitory high/ridge builds in. Farther south along the Washington/Oregon coasts, winds will be lighter still at force 4-5 with similar winds following the frontal passage. At this time of year, the position and strength of the thermal trough (low pressure becomes a more important determinant of wind speeds/direction. The trough during the period from mid spring through early autumn in May through October) is often found across coastal and interior California. A southward suppression and a weakening of the trough will occur as cold fronts farther to the north approach and eventually pass. Weakening of the trough will also occur as they drift westward, and as the axis of the trough moves near and just offshore from the California coast. This frequently occurs as high pressure builds north of the trough, into the northwest U.S. Conversely, a strengthening and northward building of the thermal trough will occur in between the passage of cold fronts. If the thermal trough remains just inland with a ridge (high pressure) offshore, the interaction of the two features can produce enhanced N-NW’ly winds, which can run as high as force 6-7, with even stronger winds possible abeam capes (Such as Capes Blanco and Mendocino) due to more localized funnelling. When the trough is weak/broad and right along or offshore, winds are lighter, often NE-E 3-5 and sometime light and variable. These winds are enhanced somewhat during the overnight hours as cooler “katabatic” NE-E winds originating from the higher elevations within interior mountainous terrain flow westward toward the coast, winds generally do not exceed force 4-5 during such instances. Seas are significantly lower but can still be formidable pending the strength/track of gales farther north and west and the associated fairly long period nw-w’y swells that will then propagate e’ward to the coast of British Columbia to Oregon. Generally, w’y swell of 8-10ft are common along the BC coast with 7-9ft for the Washington and Oregon coasts. Additionally, during instances of surging N-NW’y winds as the thermal trough and ridging interact N-NW’y seas along the S’m Oregon to N’rn California coast can build to 12-15ft.

**CURRENTS**

Dominant current directions along the Pacific Northwest coast are from northwest to southeast, with more southwest to northeast currents found farther north, off the coast of British Columbia. Currents in both regions tend to average anywhere from 0.4-0.6 knots over the course of the year, and somewhat faster during the warmer months (summer). Farther north, across the northern Gulf of Alaska and near Mainland Alaska, most dominant current directions are east to west and tend to be relatively weak, generally no more than 0.4-0.5 knots over the course of the year.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

As far as routing recommendations go, it is rare that a yacht would even try to venture north of Victoria Island during the winter months in this area as conditions are rough, and travel would be discouraged for all but the most durable of vessels. It is far better to time departure from the Pacific Northwest in the summertime (later May at the earliest, pending vessel constraints). From Alaska, a particular vessel could look at one of two options: Routing from Alaska directly to Hawaii and then onward from there to Oceania (Fiji etc) and then onward to Australia/New Zealand. This routing requires an extended fuel range and higher “weather limits” to deal with any stronger lows/gales that may be encountered in the Northern Pacific. Given the proximity of more northerly latitudes to the main gale track, the threat of encountering adverse weather from lows and gales should always be considered if one takes this routing option. However, the advantage of this route is shiving a large amount of distance off of the other option, which involves more coastal routing along West’m North America to make distance southward. This option would involve “hopping” southward along the western coast of Canada/US and this would be more geared toward vessels with lower constraints and/or a shorter fuel range. Timing would be key to avoiding any larger swell associated with gales in the Gulf of Alaska, and then farther south watching for a ease in the thermal trough and the high farther west, ideally with the thermal trough spreading and shifting offshore to allow for an easing of the winds. Note, however, that the weather patterns of mid/late spring, summer and autumn, are less progressive than during the winter season, so while weather features are weaker, adverse weather can still be persistent, even during summer. The enhanced NW-N winds associated with the interaction of the thermal trough to the east and high pressure farther west can occur for as long as 3-5 days at a time. At the same time, breaks in the weather and favorable travel windows (when the thermal trough is weaker) can be rather prolonged as well. Once reaching the South’n California or North’n Baja coast and more to within fuel range, a vessel could then turn w-sw’ward toward Hawaii and at that point have the trade winds be at a more favorable direction becoming more beam to following.
WEST COAST OF THE AMERICAS

Alaska (U.S.A.)

Useful Statistics

GOVERNMENT: State of the U.S.A. A Republic

LAND AREA: 1,717,855 km² (686,293 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2008) 626,932

LANGUAGE: English

CURRENCY: U.S. dollar (USD)

CLIMATE: Subarctic oceanic climate in the SW and a continental subarctic climate farther north with moderate temps (short, cool summers). Anchorage and south central Alaska is mild by Alaskan standards due to the region’s proximity to the seacoast, and receives 406 mm of precipitation a year, with around 1,905 mm of snow.

UTC: -8 / -7

INTL DIALLING CODE: +1

ALASKA is a state in the US, in the extreme NW portion of the North American continent – separated from Washington State by the Canadian Yukon Territory and British Columbia. To the south is the Gulf of Alaska and the Pacific Ocean; to the west is the Bering Sea, Bering Strait, and Chukchi Sea and to the north is the Beaufort Sea and the Arctic Ocean. It's the largest state by area and also one of the wealthiest and most racially diverse. Alaska has more coastline than all the other US states combined – nearly 54,720 km (34,000 mi) of tidal shoreline. The Aleutian Islands chain, with its many active volcanoes, extends west from the southern tip of the Alaska Peninsula. South Central Alaska is the southern coastal region and contains most of the state’s population and contain Anchorage and many growing towns, such as Palmer and Wasilla. Southwest Alaska includes Katmai and Lake Clark national parks as well as numerous wildlife refuges. The region comprises western Cook Inlet, Bristol Bay and its watersheds, the Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands. It is known for wet and stormy weather, tundra landscapes and large populations of salmon, brown bears, caribou, birds, and marine mammals. In the Pacific Northwest the most popular cruising area is the San Juan Islands, an archipelago of some 200 islands, many of which have been declared wildlife reserves or marine parks. Through Canadian waters, the Inside Passage linking Puget Sound to Alaska, is America’s ultimate cruising destination. It’s popular for superyachts to visit Alaska for the short summer season, either by taking the inside route, or making an offshore detour via the Hawaiian Islands. Note that there is a strict requirement for foreign superyachts to employ a pilot.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM ANCHORAGE TO:

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USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

Charlie’s North to Alaska Charts
Cruising Alaska – A Traveller’s Guide
Cruising to Alaska – Duke
Exploring Alaska and B.C. – Hilson
Exploring Southeast Alaska – Dixon
Entrance to Skagway – Douglas
Inside Passage to Alaska, Short History – Anderson
Noaa Coast Pilot 9 Alaska Spencer to Beaufort
Travels in Alaska – Muir
Alaska’s South East – Miller

USEFUL WEBSITES

Alaska Mariner’s Guide
Alaska Pilotage Exemption for Foreign Yachts: www.dced.state.ak.us/OCC/pub/mar4479.pdf
Alaska Weather: http://pajk.arh.noaa.gov/
British Columbia – Canada

Useful Statistics

GOVERNMENT: Parliamentary democracy
LAND AREA: 925,186 km² (357,216 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 4,400,057
LANGUAGE: English
CURRENCY: Canadian dollar
CLIMATE: Nov to Apr is temperate on the coast, with dry summers, while May to Oct is warm and rainy. Northern Canada has subarctic conditions during the winter. The southern (Gulf Islands) area is in the rain shadow of Vancouver Island and has milder winters and so cruising is possible all year round. In the summer gales are rare.
UTC: -8 / -7

BRITISH COLUMBIA is bordered by the Pacific Ocean on the west, Alaska on the NW and the U.S. state of Washington to the south. Boasting spectacular scenery and natural beauty, BC offers rewarding cruising grounds, including the coast mountains, the Inside Passage’s many inlets, quiet still fjords, inland sea and of course the Gulf Islands and Desolation Sound. Beautiful Orca, Minke and Gray whales, and a variety of porpoises are native to the coast. The many snowcapped mountains, cascading waterfalls, rugged cliffs, lakes and rivers and the enormous array of wildlife and many Ecological Reserves, provide ample backdrop for the growing outdoor adventure and ecotourism industry in BC. Home to the Grizzly bear, deer, moose, caribou and elk, hunting is very popular and also Sportsfishing; for salmon and trout, halibut and bass. Water sports such as sea kayaking opportunities abound on the British Columbia coast with its fjords. Whitewater rafting and kayaking are popular on many inland rivers and sailing and sailboarding are widely enjoyed. Superyacht facilities centre mainly around Vancouver; which was host city of the 2010 Winter Olympics.
Cruising British Columbia and Canada

By Captain Simon Farmer

THERE HAVE BEEN many books and guides written about the Inside Passage between British Columbia (BC) and Vancouver Island, but until you experience it in person it is very hard to grasp the splendour and beauty of this remarkable region. I was fortunate enough to have this opportunity in the northern summer of 2007 as captain of the customised Northern Marine 81 foot ‘Bella Rosa’. Bella Rosa, whose home port is Mercer Island on Lake Washington in Seattle, is a single-engine, expedition-style yacht with everything you’d expect to find on a yacht twice her size. No expense has been spared and no detail overlooked by her meticulous owner.

We left Seattle just after the 4th of July for Roche Harbour at the northern end of San Juan Island, still inside the USA in the San Juan Archipelago. Getting from Mercer Island to Puget Sound is an experience in itself, with no less than seven bridges to negotiate and one set of locks. The bridges are all Bascule-type, meaning they are two-piece and hinge upward from each shore to open. The bridge operators will generally wait until there is enough water traffic to warrant disrupting the road traffic before opening, so there is often a wait of up to 20 minutes while this occurs.

Then there are the locks! Lake Washington and Lake Union are both freshwater and are separated from Puget Sound by the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks at the western end of the ship canal. Depending on the amount and type of traffic and the time of day it can take up to an hour or two to get through the locks. Weekends are the busiest times and are to be avoided where possible. Conditions for our passage north were perfect, apart from a strong southbound tide which slowed our progress considerably, and we eventually tied up in the quaint little town of Roche Harbour, nestled in the stunning San Juan Islands just before sunset.

Our next destination was Vancouver BC to clear immigration and stock up on wine before heading into the wilderness. Coal Harbour is an excellent facility in the heart of Vancouver. The 224-berth marina is within easy walk of the city centre and can accommodate vessels of up to 330 feet. With the 2010 Winter Olympics held in Vancouver, Coal Harbour, with all its facilities like 24 hour security and free Wi-Fi made the ideal venue for visiting superyachts.
My first real taste of BC was Garden Bay in Pender Harbour 50 miles north of Vancouver. This picture-perfect little town has two small marinas, one of which is an annex of the Seattle Yacht Club, a general store and a couple of very nice restaurants. It is also the springboard for Princess Louisa Inlet and the magnificent Chatterbox Falls which were to be our next destination.

At the entrance to Princess Louisa Inlet are the Malibu Rapids. This piece of water can be quite hazardous due to the narrowness and orientation of the channel which consists of two dog-legs. The current can run at up to 10 knots in a flooding or ebbing tide and the only really safe time to transit is at slack water. It is also recommended to advise Malibu Rapids traffic on VHF channel 16 of your boat’s length and direction of travel.

Once through the rapids you enter Princess Louisa Inlet and are surrounded by a magnificent granite-walled gorge. Cut by a glacier, the walls rise to heights in excess of 2100 metres. Until mid-June, the warm sun melting the mountain snow creates more than 60 waterfalls that cascade down precipitous walls into the inlet below. Tumbling down 45 metres at the head of the inlet is the beautiful Chatterbox Falls, one of the most visited and celebrated nautical destinations in British Columbia. It has been voted the “most scenic natural anchorage” in the world and is accessible only by boat or plane - there are no public roads.

From Princess Louisa it was on to Desolation Sound and the small town of Lund. Lund has a population of just 800 and is the northernmost point of Highway 101, the world’s longest highway which stretches 15,020 kilometres all the way from Castro on Chile’s south coast. It is primarily a fishing town but has a large tourist population because of its proximity to the islands and bays of Desolation Sound.

After an overnight in Lund it was a short six mile passage around the corner to Tenedos Bay. It’s hard to keep finding adjectives that do justice to these anchorages, but ‘stunning’ and ‘magnificent’ are two that come to mind. We dropped anchor on one side of the bay, laid out our chain and stern-tied to a tree on the other side so that our transom was about 20 foot from the shore. Due to some unique tidal anomalies the water temperature in the bay is around 20 degrees Celsius compared with an average of 16
degrees for the greater area. We were swimming and wakeboarding without the need for wetsuits which is unheard of in the Pacific North West. Our route north took us through the Broughton Archipelago Maine Park, a wilderness area consisting of a maze of several small islands and numerous islets at the southern extremity of Queen Charlotte Strait. The islands in the marine park are undeveloped and are largely undiscovered. It's hard to decide which destinations to include and which not to as each one is unique, but one stop in this labyrinth has to be at Pierre's Bay for the Saturday night pig roast. Pierre's Bay ‘resort’ is built entirely on the water and is connected to the land via a couple of walkways. Like all the resorts and marinas along the inside passage it has a warm welcoming family atmosphere; Pierre and his partner Tove greet you like old friends even if meeting for the first time.

One other destination in this area that deserves a mention is Sullivan Bay. Sullivan Bay is a unique floating village with privately owned homes on named ‘streets’. They can accommodate virtually any size boat or boating group and offer 15, 30, 50 and 100 Amp power, potable water and a babysitting boat service. This historic destination is the ideal jumping off point for marine adventures from fishing to kayaking and is one mile walking distance on the docks.

BC is well serviced by seaplanes which run regular scheduled flights throughout the summer. The seaplanes, which carry between 6 and 10 passengers make this entire region accessible and are the lifeline of the remote fishing lodges. After re-provisioning in Port McNeil, a bustling logging and fishing town with a population of 2600, 20 miles south of the top of Vancouver Island we set off across the notorious Queen Charlotte Straits. This 30 mile stretch of water between the top of Vancouver Island and Margret Bay on the Canadian Mainland can become very rough and it’s wise to get an up to date weather forecast before crossing. The National Data Buoy Center website http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/ provides up-to-the-minute sea conditions with information gathered from 18 sea buoys distributed around Vancouver Island and Queen Charlotte Islands further north. Our crossing was uneventful and we eventually tied up at the small fishing lodge of Duncanby Bay six hours later.

There are hundreds of little fishing lodges scattered around BC. Most are privately owned but a few have turned themselves into commercial ventures and offer fully-appointed fishing boats and fishing guides to take you to the best spots. They will take your catch, scale and clean it and freeze it to take home with you. Or if you prefer, they’ll send it to the resort kitchen and cook it.

We progressed further up the coast to Shearwater which was to be our most northerly point before heading south again. Shearwater is an old logging town transformed into yet another fishing lodge and tourist centre. The attraction of this area is the chance to land a huge and hard-hitting Chinook (or King) Salmon that can weigh up to 18kg, or the feisty and acrobatic Coho (or Silver) Salmon, and of course the Halibut which can weigh as much as 190kg. There is an amazing amount of wildlife both in the ocean and on land. Milbanke Sound and the Discovery Passage support enormous numbers of Orcas (killer whale) and Humpback Whales. Shearwater is also on the doorstep of the Great Bear Rainforest home of the Kermode or Spirit Bear (white bear) and the area resonates with the calls of bald eagles and other waterfowl.

The time came for our return journey to Seattle. We bade farewell to Shearwater and Bella Bella and steamed to Telegraph Cove, just south of Port McNeil where we dropped our guests before heading south in the company of a pod of Orca.

There are several tidal narrows to negotiate as you transit the inside passage and if you get your timing wrong find yourself battling currents of up to 10 knots. One of these places is Seymour Narrows just north of Campbell River. Fortunately our timing was good and we were swept downstream and through the narrows at speeds of up to 18 knots. We were able to ride the flooding tide all the way to the Straits of Georgia so decided against stopping and instead steamed through the night.

The next morning we pulled into Port Townsend to clear immigration, and then it was straight back out and on to Seattle and the end of a memorable trip.

I haven’t included many of the places we visited on our three month cruise because of space constraints, but one thing is certain; each marina and anchorage are unique and that around every bend there is another breathtaking sight.
WASHINGTON is a state in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States bordering with Oregon to the south and British Columbia (Canada) to the north. Its position on the Pacific Ocean and the harbours of Puget Sound give Washington a leading role in maritime trade with Alaska, Canada, and the Pacific Rim. Puget Sound’s many islands are served by the largest ferry fleet in the United States. Washington is a land of contrasts; from the deep temperate forests of the Olympic Peninsula, and the desert east of the Cascade Range, to the high glacial mountains covered in ice. There are also a number of National Parks and forests, as well as protected lands and wildernesses and several large military reservations. Popular attractions include Mount Rainier, Olympic and North Cascades National Parks and the beaches of the Pacific, as well as the American Indian heritage evident in the reservations.

OREGON is a state in the US, located on the Pacific coast, with Washington to the north and California to the south. Oregon’s major scenic tourism spots are found all along the Columbia River area; including Crater Lake National Park and Mount Hood where spring river rafting is popular. Other popular summer attractions include Oregon Coast driving tours along U.S. Highway 101, Oregon Caves National Monument, Hells Canyon, and Newberry Volcanic National Monument plus a variety of annual summer fairs & festivals. Cruising yachts, whilst mostly enjoying the splendid coastal scenery, can sometimes experience fog and visibility issues in the Juan de Fuca Strait.

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS
- Pacific Coast Route Planning Map
- South Portion – Douglas
- Guide Pacific NorthWest Marinas
- Discovering The Tidal Potomac
- Cruising The Chesapeake – A Gunkholer’s Guide
- NOAA Coast Pilot 7 Pacific Coast (Hawaii, NorthWest Boat Travel
- Queen Charlotte Sound Cruising Atlas
- Exploring Puget Sound & B.C.

USEFUL WEBSITES
- www.50states.com
- www.weather.gov
- www.oregon.gov
- www.chiff.com/travel/oregon.htm
- www.oregoncitylink.com
- www.travelportland.com
- www.washington.org
- www.tourism.wa.gov
- www.chiff.com/travel/washington.htm
- www.usatourist.com
California (U.S.A.)

Useful Statistics

GOVERNMENT: State of the U.S.A. – a Republic

LAND AREA: 423,970 km² (163,696 sq miles)

POPULATION (est. 2011): 37,691,912

LANGUAGE: English

CURRENCY: U.S. dollar (USD)

CLIMATE: Mediterranean (dry summers and in the winter, rainy and in the north and dry and cool in the south). Summer coastal fogs and cool offshore currents.

UTC: -8 / -7

INTL DIALLING CODE: +1

CALIFORNIA is a state in the US, bordered by Nevada to the east, Mexico to the south and the Pacific Ocean to the west. With an 840 mile coastline, California is the most populous and favourite tourist state in the US. The four largest cities are Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, and San Francisco. San Diego boasts beautiful beaches, canyons, and sailboats; San Francisco has those famous hills, cable cars, Fishermen’s Wharf, the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz and many beautiful parks; and of course Los Angeles is famous for fabulous shopping, Hollywood and Disneyland. California can be enjoyed from one end to the other, from the seashore to the desert, from the mountains to the forests. Yachting facilities throughout California are of a high standard with many marinas or places to anchor. For its cruising attractions alone, California increasingly has become a favourite among yacht owners and charter clients alike. The scenery, the fishing and shoreside highlights that abound along the Californian coastline from the sub-tropical to the sub-arctic are a powerful attraction. Major California ports, roughly centered between the storied cruising grounds of Alaska and the Panama Canal, together have become a hub for an array of support services from complete overhaul to provisioning, with San Diego being the centre and ably represented by the San Diego Superyacht Association. The region’s many ports also serve as stopovers or departure points on the way to favoured destinations to the west, north and south. Other yachts have come to stay, joining a local armada that calls the West Coast home, at least seasonally if not year-round.
San Francisco – America’s Cup

Useful Statistics
GOVERNMENT: State of the U.S.A. A Republic
LAND AREA: 600.7 km²
POPULATION: 812,826
LANGUAGE: English
CURRENCY: U.S. dollar (USD)
CLIMATE: Temperatures exceed 75 °F (24 °C) on average only 28 days a year. The dry period of May to October is mild to warm, with average high temperatures of 64–71 °F (18–22 °C) and lows of 51–56 °F (11–13 °C). The rainy period of November to April is slightly cooler, with high temperatures of 58–64 °F (14–18 °C) and lows of 46–51 °F (8–11 °C). On average, there are 67 rainy days a year, and annual precipitation averages 20.4 inches (518.16 mm).
UTC: -8 / -7
INTL DIALLING CODE: +1

SAN FRANCISCO Bay will be home to the Louis Vuitton Cup, America’s Cup Challenger Series and the 2013 America’s Cup Finals. At 160 years old, the America’s Cup is the oldest trophy in international sport. The America’s Cup has evolved into one of the world’s leading sporting competitions – featuring the best sailors on the world’s fastest boats, the wing-sailed AC45 and AC72 catamarans.

The new America’s Cup World Series opened its inaugural season in August 2011 and continues with events around the world. In the summer of 2013, the 34th America’s Cup begins in San Francisco with the Louis Vuitton Cup running from 4th of July until the 1st of September 2013, followed by the America’s Cup Match Finals running from the 7th until the 22nd of September 2013.

One of the commitments of event organisers is to engage the superyacht industry in the event, both on-and-off the water. Never before has the superyacht world had the chance to be so involved. The America’s Cup Superyacht program is designed to create an experience that goes beyond the water. Superyacht guests will have “front-row” seats to all of the action on the water and off the water, guests will have access to only the finest experiences on offer. By working with leading companies, associations and captains within the superyacht community, while collaborating with key maritime authorities, the America’s Cup Superyacht Program will be able to offer unparalleled experiences and convenience to all of its guests.
West Coast of the Americas

**Superyacht Services**

- **Baja Naval, Ensenada**
  E: marina@bajanaval.com
  W: www.bajanaval.com

- **Hotel Coral & Marina, Ensenada**
  E: marina@hoteltoral.com
  W: www.hoteltoral.com

- **Marina Cabo San Lucas**
  E: CSL@igymarinas.com
  W: www.igy-cabosanlucas.com

- **Marina Costa Baja, La Paz**
  E: info@marinacostabaja.com
  W: www.costabalaresort.com

- **Marinas de Baja**
  E: info@marinadebaja.com
  W: www.marinadebaja.com

- **Marina de la Paz**
  E: marinalapaz@prodigy.net.mx
  W: www.marinadelapaz.com

- **Marina El Cid**
  E: reserve@elcid.com.mx
  W: www.elcid.com/marinas

- **Marina Mazatlan**
  E: ate@marina-mazatlan.com
  W: www.marina-mazatlan.com

- **Marina Nuevo Vallarta**
  E: juan@marinanuevovallarta.com
  W: www.marinanuevovallarta.com

- **Marina Palmira, La Paz**
  E: reservations@marinapalmira.com
  W: www.marinapalmira.com

- **The Marina at Puerto Los Cabos**
  E: marinainfo@puertoloscabos.com
  W: www.marinapuertoloscabos.com

- **Wilhelmsen Ships Service**
  E: wss.northamerica.cs@wilhelmsen.com
  W: www.wilhelmsen.com

**Recent Superyacht Visitors**

- Pelorus, Maltese Falcon, Boadicea

**Useful Statistics**

**United Mexican States**

**Government:** Presidential Federal Republic

**Land Area:** 1,972,550 km² (761,606 sq miles)

**Population:** (est. 2011) 113,423,047

**Language:** Spanish

**Currency:** Peso (MXN)

**Climate:** Divided by the Tropic of Cancer into temperate and tropical zones. Very hot on the coast all year round; more temperate at higher altitudes and in the north. Hottest month is May. Rainy (and Hurricane) season: May to Oct. The best time to cruise is spring and late autumn.

**UTC:** -6 to -8

**Int'l Dialling Code:** +52

**Mexico**

**Useful Statistics**

**Approximate Distance in NM from Puerto Vallarta to:**
- Cabo San Lucas: 294’
- La Paz: 373’
- Acapulco: 441’
- San Diego: 1,022’

**Useful Publications**

- Charlie’s Western Mexico 11th Edition
- Mexico Boating Guide – Rains

**Useful Websites**

- www.virtualmex.com

**Mexico is bounded on the north by the USA; on the south and west by the North Pacific Ocean; on the SE by Guatemala, Belize, and the Caribbean Sea; and on the east by the Gulf of Mexico. The major attractions are the ancient Meso-American ruins, and popular beach resorts, the coastal climate and unique culture – a fusion of European (particularly Spanish) and Meso-American cultures. The Pacific Coast region is a popular superyacht cruising area, where there are cities and towns with rich cultural and culinary traditions, as well as some of the best beaches for water sports like surfing and fishing. You can play golf on world-class courses, on the Baja California Peninsula, as well as discover the underwater treasures of the Sea of Cortez, and witness the amazing migration of the Gray Whale. Less than 400 miles off Mexico’s western coast and visited mainly by yachts on passage to the Marquesas, lie the four Islas de Revillagigedo (Socorro, Clarion and San Benedicto plus the smaller Roca Partida) and several adjoining rocks. Declared a marine reserve and patrolled by the Mexican Navy, the islands are occasionally visited by scuba and fishing expeditions. There are few anchorages and no facilities for yachts in transit, other than the help that the Mexican Navy provides in case of emergencies. The yachting facilities are improving as the number of yachts visiting Mexico increases. Major ports now have a reasonable range of services and repair facilities. Although fuel is available almost everywhere, it can be dirty. Major superyacht marinas can be found in Ensenada, Cabo San Lucas, La Paz and Puerto Vallarta. Acapulco is a convenient stopover for the voyage between Panama and California – caution should be exercised when alongside the town wharf for refuelling as the surge can cause significant vessel movement and mooring line breakages. The Pacific Coast of Mexico is a first class superyacht destination.**
Cruising the West Coast of Mexico

By Captain Mark Drewelow

FROM 14 42 north to 32 32 north, the coast of Mexico dominates the mid latitude, Eastern North Pacific waters. Its coastline contains several weeks of world class cruising either on the way to San Diego while northbound, or after departing San Diego southbound. From Bahia’s Huatulco National Park in the south, to Isla Guadalupe Marine Biosphere Reserve in the North, Mexico has a broad range of natural beauty and culture to experience. Mexico has a European influenced history dating back to the early 1500’s at which time it became part of the Spanish Empire when claimed by Cortez. Mexico is the second most populous Catholic nation behind Brazil and is ethnically diverse. Mestizos (a mix of European and Amerindian) and Amerindians make up about 90% of the population which is the most populous Spanish speaking country in the world. The remaining 10% is a mix of Caucasian European and other world regions. Mexico is one of 18 mega diverse countries with over 200,000 different species, and is home to 10–12% of the world’s biodiversity. Mexico contains 707 known species of reptile, 438 species of mammals, 290 species of amphibians, and 26,000 different species of flora. There are 34 reserve biospheres, 64 national parks, four natural monuments, 26 areas of protected flora and fauna, 17 sanctuaries and four areas for natural resource protection. Formalities for entry are simple requiring the standard set of documents (crew and guest list, registry, clearance from last port, letter of authorization for the Captain, proof of insurance) with normal agriculture and customs inspection. Immigration does require that visas are issued in advance for certain controlled nationalities. It is illegal to carry firearms into Mexico on a yacht. When southbound, in advance secure a Mexican fishing license for everyone aboard. Policy in Mexico from port to port can change, and it is always best to check port specific arrival details well in advance with an agent. The time frame for Mexican cruising is dictated by
Cabo San Lucas, and Ensenada. The coastline and inland Mexico have a broad range of sights to satisfy many interests. From the desert shores of Baja, to the peaks of the Sierra Madre de la Sur towering to 5700 meters, there are scattered cities, towns and villages. Some of these cater to tourists, while others seem untouched by the outside world. From the great metropolis of Mexico City to the tiny seashore fishing village on Baja, the people are warm and friendly. Natural wonders and sea life are plentiful. The uncommonly beautiful beaches of Bahia’s Huatulco are sure to impress. Socorro Island and the revillagigedos are famous for world class diving with clear water and large schooling sea animals. The Grey Whale migration along Pacific Baja will amaze. Fishing in the Sea of Cortez is sure keep the keen angler entertained while cage diving with Great White Sharks at Guadalupe Island will thrill and terrify everyone aboard.

Mexico is a coastline that should not be missed. From cultural enrichment, to abundant sea life, to a multitude of activities for the sportsman, this is Mexico, something for just about everyone. The coast is populated with ports, marinas, and anchorages that have well established infrastructures to handle visitors. From year to year, most of the local infrastructure and businesses ashore that cater to yachts in these areas expand and improve. The major locations listed from south to north are: Bahia’s Huatulco, Acapulco, Zihuatenejo, Ixtapa, Manzanillo, Barra De La Navidad, Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan, La Paz, Cabo San Lucas, and Ensenada.

The coastline and inland Mexico have a broad range of sights to satisfy many interests. From the desert shores of Baja, to the peaks of the Sierra Madre de la Sur towering to 5700 meters, there are scattered cities, towns and villages. Some of these cater to tourists, while others seem untouched by the outside world. From the great metropolis of Mexico City to the tiny seashore fishing village on Baja, the people are warm and friendly. Natural wonders and sea life are plentiful. The uncommonly beautiful beaches of Bahia’s Huatulco are sure to impress. Socorro Island and the revillagigedos are famous for world class diving with clear water and large schooling sea animals. The Grey Whale migration along Pacific Baja will amaze. Fishing in the Sea of Cortez is sure keep the keen angler entertained while cage diving with Great White Sharks at Guadalupe Island will thrill and terrify everyone aboard. Mexico is a coastline that should not be missed. From cultural enrichment, to abundant sea life, to a multitude of activities for the sportsman, this is Mexico, something for just about everyone. The coast is populated with ports, marinas, and anchorages that have well established infrastructures to handle visitors. On the way to or from San Diego, be sure to make multiple stops in Mexico and allow enough time to enjoy all the festivities, food and sights that she has to offer.
Costa Rica

Useful Statistics

Republic of Costa Rica

GOVERNMENT: Constitutional Republic
LAND AREA: 51,100 km² (19,730 sq. miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 4,658,887
LANGUAGE: Spanish
CURRENCY: Costa Rican colon (CRC)
CLIMATE: Tropical, hot and humid, with an average temperature of 22°C (72°F). The dry (and high) season is from Dec through Apr. The rainy season from May to Nov, usually sees sunny mornings with rain showers later in the day. Hotter along the coastal areas and much cooler in the mountains. The west coast has light winds and often calms. Rarely affected by tropical storms.
UTC: -6

COSTA RICA is a country in Central America, bordered by Nicaragua to the north, Panama to the E-SE, the Pacific Ocean to the west and south, and the Caribbean Sea to the east. It is located on the Central American isthmus, 10° North of the equator and 84° West of the Prime Meridian. It also comprises several islands – amongst them; Cocos Island 500km from Puntarenas coast, and biggest island, Calero Island. The hilly interior and attractive capital San José can be visited from either Puntarenas or Limón. There are active volcanos, cloud forests, hot springs and an abundance of national parks.

In the eastern part of the Gulf of Nicoya, at Herradura, there is a luxury development – part of the Los Suenos Resort – with a marina which has services for yachts. Ecotourism is extremely popular with extensive national parks and protected areas around the country. Costa Rica protects a quarter of its national territory within the Protected Areas system and possesses the greatest density of species in the world. Amongst the many other activities available in Costa Rica are: hiking in the rainforest, horseback riding, mountain biking, white-water rafting in the wild rivers, snorkelling through tropical reefs, surfing world-class breaks, deep sea sport-fishing, golf, kayaking, bird-watching, sampling the diverse cuisine, the rich history and culture. Costa Rica’s beaches are the proverbial ‘white sands and palm trees swaying in the breeze’ and there are many. The coastline has a length of over 1800 km with an enormous variety of beach landscapes, from rocky and stony, to sandy with white, grey, bluish black and pink coloured sands.

WEST COAST OF THE AMERICAS

SUPERYACHT SERVICES
Banana Bay Marina Golfito
T: +1 506 2775 0838
E: info@bananabaymarina.com
W: www.bananabaymarina.com

Costa Rica Yacht Club
T: +506 2661 0784
E: info@costaricayachtclub.com
W: www.costaricayachtclub.com

Fish Hook Marina, Golfito
T: +1 506 2775 1624
W: www.marinafishhook.com

Isla Moin Marina
T: +1 506 2201 5511
E: sales@islamoin.com
W: www.islamoin.com

Los Suenos Marina Playa Herradura
T: +1 506 2630-4000
E: bkirby@lossuenosresort.com
W: www.lossuenosresort.com

Papagayo Marina
T: +1 506 2690 3600
E: danusafaldano@marinapapagayo.com
W: www.marinapapagayo.com

Paramares, S.A. (Ernesto Andrade)
T: +1 506 2661 0948
E: eandrade@ice.co.cr
W: www.paramares.net

Pez Vela Marina
T: +1 506 2774 9000
E: info@marinapezvela.com
W: www.marinapezvela.com

Puerto Azul Marina
T: +1 506 26 61 38 73
W: www.puertoazulcostarica.com
E: sales@puertoazulcr.com

RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS
Mea Culpa, Helios, Octopus, Pelorus, Ice Bear, RM Elegant, Atessa, Princess Mariana, Maltese Falcon, Sunrise

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM PUNTARENAS TO:
Balboa 325°
Cocos Island 304°
Acapulco 1,025°

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS
Charlie’s Charts Costa Rica
Cruising Ports Central America Route

USEFUL WEBSITES
www.govisitcostarica.co.cr
www.infocostarica.com
www.visitcostarica.com
Guatemala

Useful Statistics
Republic of Guatemala

GOVERNMENT:
Presidential Republic

LAND AREA: 108,890 km² (42,042 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 14,388,929

LANGUAGE: Spanish (official), Mayan (21 dialects)

CURRENCY: Quetzal (GTQ)

CLIMATE: Coastal regions and NE are hot, with a dry Nov to Apr and rainy season from May to Oct. Average temps; 20°C (68°F). The highlands, including Guatemala City and Antigua, have a pleasant climate with less rainfall than the coast and cold temperatures at night

UTC: -5 / -6

INTL DIALLING CODE: +593

GUATEMALA is the most populous nation in Central America. The name Guatemala means land of the trees in the Maya-Toltec language. Guatemala’s abundance of biologically significant and unique ecosystems contribute to Mesoamerica’s designation as a biodiversity hotspot. It has a total of 91 protected areas – almost a third of the country’s territory. It’s location on the Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean makes it a target for hurricanes (Mitch in 1998 and Stan in 2005). The damage was not wind related, but rather due to significant flooding and resulting mudslides. The Pacific Coastline stretches 250km from the Mexican border in the west to the border with El Salvador to the east and is characterised by black volcanic sand beaches on the coast where water-sports are enjoyed and the mangrove swamps and lush, subtropical forests further inland where several archaeological sites can be explored. Puerto Quetzal is a new port built on the Pacific side to replace the old port of San José. The Navy requires that yachts come directly to the naval basin to ensure safety. All formalities are completed from there. This is a modern commercial port with little attraction as a cruising destination in itself.

El Salvador

Useful Statistics
Republic of El Salvador

GOVERNMENT: Representative Democratic Republic

LAND AREA: 20,720 sq km (8,124 sq. miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 6,090,646

LANGUAGE: Spanish

CURRENCY: US dollar (USD)

CLIMATE: Tropical climate with only two seasons: dry from Nov to Apr, and wet from May to Oct. where almost the entire annual rainfall occurs mostly at night. The coastal areas are the hottest, averaging 22-32°C (72-90°F) throughout the year.

UTC: -6

INTL DIALLING CODE: +503

EL SALVADOR is the smallest and most densely populated country in Central America and lies along the Pacific ring of fire, and is thus subject to significant volcanic activity and earthquakes. Its position on the Pacific Ocean also makes it subject to severe weather conditions, including heavy rainstorms and severe droughts, both of which may be made more extreme by the El Nino and La Nina effects. El Salvador is undergoing both rapid industrialisation and population growth, despite being hampered by natural disasters. This developing country still faces many social issues and is among the 10 poorest countries in Latin America. Tourism has grown dynamically over recent years with visitors seeking out its beautiful beaches and renowned nightlife. Surfing is gaining popularity as more surfers visit El Zonte, Sunzal, and La Libertad – excellent surfing spots that are not yet overcrowded. Cruising yachts are welcome to visit El Salvador, albeit under the watchful eye of the authorities. The Barillas Marina in the Bay of Jiguilisco, welcomes visiting yachts and is a safe place from which to make inland trips.
Nicaragua

Useful Statistics
Republic of Nicaragua

GOVERNMENT: Representative Democratic Republic
LAND AREA: 129,494 km² (50,193 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 5,788,163
LANGUAGE: Spanish
CURRENCY: Cordoba (NIO)
CLIMATE: Tropical: humid and hot, Dec to May being the dry months, while Jun and Oct are the wettest. Violent northerly winds occasionally affect both coasts in winter, particularly the Caribbean coast. Sometimes affected by tropical storms from Jun to Oct.
UTC: -6
INTL DIALLING CODE: +505

NICARAGUA is the largest but most sparsely populated of the Central American nations, sitting 11° north of the Equator. It is mountainous in the west, with fertile valleys and two big lakes, Nicaragua, about 161 km long, and Managua, about 61 km long. Close to 20% of the country's territory is designated as protected areas such as national parks, nature reserves and biological reserves. Nicaraguan culture has strong folklore, music and religious traditions, deeply influenced by European culture but enriched with Amerindian sounds and flavours. Tourism in Nicaragua is reportedly booming, it is currently the second largest industry in the nation and over the last decade tourism has almost doubled nationwide. Visitors are attracted to the tropical climate, beautiful volcanic coastline and beaches, diving and surfing and various developments along the very fertile Pacific coast, such as golf courses.

Honduras

Useful Statistics
Republic of Honduras

GOVERNMENT: Democratic constitutional republic
LAND AREA: 112,492 km² (43,278 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 7,600,524
LANGUAGE: Spanish
CURRENCY: Lempira (HNL)
CLIMATE: It rains all year round, but is heaviest from Sept to Dec. The drier (but very hot) months are April to May.
UTC: -6
INTL DIALLING CODE: +504

HONDURAS is a country in Central America with a Pacific coastline only about 70 miles long compared to a 400 mile shoreline in the Caribbean. Facilities for yachts have generally improved as more cruising boats visit. Honduras is a vibrant country, brimming with clear turquoise waters, pristine beaches, lush jungles, breathtaking mountains, challenging rivers, and fascinating ancient ruins. Vast expanses of nature are to be found everywhere. Ecotours, SCUBA diving, river rafting, and mountain treks are what Honduras is known for today. Honduras is enjoying a boom in popularity, as the rich and famous have found a place where they can still travel unknown. First time visitors to Honduras are amazed by the warmth of Honduran hospitality. Returning travellers have never forgotten it. Archaeologists have demonstrated that Honduras had a rich, multi-ethnic prehistory; an important part was the Mayan presence around the city of Copán in western Honduras, near the Guatemalan border.
West Coast of the Americas

Colombia

Useful Statistics
Republic of Colombia

Government: Presidential republic
Land area: 1,141,748 km² (440,839 sq miles)
Population: (est. 2011) 46,294,841
Language: Spanish
Currency: Peso (COP)
Climate: Equatorial but varies according to altitude, the coast is tropical with high rainfall, hot and humid. In winter NE trade winds cool the coast, while the summer has much lighter winds. Affected by the El Niño and La Niña phenomenon, but hurricanes rarely reach this far south.
UTC: -5
Intl dialling code: +57

Colombia is part of the Pacific Ring of Fire, a region of the world subject to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions and is home to 15 major volcanoes. Tumaco in the south offers excellent and reliable surf with beach breaks offering lefts and rights. Winter and Spring are the best times to visit. Offshore winds blow from the SSE with windswells and groundswells in equal measure.

Most of the coastal development is on the Caribbean side, which has the largest towns. However close to the major city of Cali, Buenaventura is the main port on the Pacific coast, but beware its reputation for being a dangerous place and heed advice and warnings offered by locals. The resort areas of Juanchaco and Ladrilleros, to the north of the city are pleasant places to visit catering to package tourists including the surrounding beaches of Boca, Pianguita and La Cangreja. Migrating humpback whales pass through the waters of Bahía Malaga in the months of July to late September.

Ecuador

Useful Statistics
Republic of Ecuador

Government: Representative Democratic Republic
Land area: 256,370 km² (98,985 sq miles)
Population: (est. 2011) 14,464,739
Language: Spanish
Currency: Dollar (USD)
Climate: Variation determined by altitude: The Pacific coastal area has a tropical climate (temps of 24-30°C) with a severe rainy season from Dec. until May. The Andean highlands are temperate and relatively dry and the Amazon basin is a rain forest zone.
UTC: -5 / -6
Intl dialling code: +593

Ecuador is a South American country, which also includes the Galápagos Islands in the Pacific, about 965 km west of the mainland. One of the world’s highest active volcanoes, Mount Chemborazo (6,210-m AS) is located in Cotapaxi, just south of the capital Quito. There is a wide variety of things to do in Ecuador, as there are four completely different regions, each having its own specialty and its own lifestyle. Amongst the variety on offer are Ecuadorian festivities, museums, adventure: Incan ruins, National Parks, bird-watching, whale-watching, water sports, nightlife and colourful native markets displaying the vibrant culture of Ecuador.

NOTE: See separate Galapagos Fact File
**Peru**

**Useful Statistics**
**Republic of Peru**

GOVERNMENT: Representative Democratic Republic

LAND AREA: 1,285,220 km² (496,222 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 29,076,512

LANGUAGE: Spanish

CURRENCY: Nuevo Sol (PEN)

CLIMATE: Although equatorial, Peru does not have a tropical climate due to the influence of the Andes and the Humboldt Current. The coast generally has moderate temps and high humidity, but low rainfall. The prevailing winds are south or SE and usually light.

UTC: -5  INTL DIALLING CODE: +51

PERU is a country in western South America with Spanish colonial cities, Inca ruins (Machu Picchu), and the magnificent Andes dominating the centre of the country. Peru has always been one of the most interesting countries to visit: a ‘must see’ is Chan-Chan, the 2500 year old Chavin ruins near Huaraz, and those interested in wildlife should visit the Islas Ballestas near Pisco to see huge sea lion and sea bird colonies. The landscape varies from the Pacific coastal plains to the peaks of the Andes mountains and the tropical forests of the Amazon Basin (60% of the country). Peru is a developing nation with a poverty level around 40%. The Peruvian population is multiethnic, giving it a mixture of cultural traditions and a wide diversity of expressions in fields such as art, cuisine, literature and music.

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**Chile**

**Useful Statistics**
**Republic of Chile**

GOVERNMENT: Representative Democratic Republic

LAND AREA: 756,950 km² (292,183 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 17,113,688

LANGUAGE: Spanish

CURRENCY: Peso (CLP)

CLIMATE: Varied climate (according to latitude): hot and dry in the north, windy and wet in the south with the most settled weather from Dec to Mar. Warm from Oct to Apr; Cold from May to Sept. The coastal areas are cooled by the cold Humboldt current.

UTC: -3 / -4  INTL DIALLING CODE: +56

CHILE is a country in South America occupying a long and narrow (4,600 km long/ av. 175 km wide) coastal strip between the Andes mountains and the Pacific Ocean. It encompasses a remarkable variety of landscapes between its borders of Peru to the north, Bolivia to the NE, Argentina to the east, and the notorious Cape Horn and Drake Passage at the country’s southernmost tip. The southern part of Chile has attracted an increasing number of yachts cruising the labyrinth of islands, canals, twisting peninsulas and channels.
Argentina

Useful Statistics
Argentine Republic

GOVERNMENT: Federal presidential republic
LAND AREA: 2,766,890 km² (1,068,302 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 40,412,376
LANGUAGE: Spanish
CURRENCY: Peso (ARS)
CLIMATE: Predominantly temperate with extremes ranging from subtropical in the north to subpolar in the far south. The north is very hot and humid in summer with mild dry winters. The centre has hot summers with thunderstorms and cool winters. The south has warm summers and cold snowy winters.
UTC: -8 / -7
INTL DIALLING CODE: +54

ARGENTINA has some 4,665km (2,899 mi) of coastline predominantly bordering the South Atlantic Ocean. For the purposes of the Great Southern Route Guide, this Fact File focuses on the southern most part of Argentina known as Patagonia and Ushuaia; the port from which superyachts depart to the Antartic Peninsula. Ushuaia is regarded as the southernmost city in the world and is located in a wide bay on the southern coast of the island of Tierra del Fuego, bounded on the north by the Martial mountain range and on the south by the Beagle Channel. Ushuaia is a key access point to the southern regions and a popular vacation spot for people from Buenos Aires. It receives regular flights at Ushuaia International Airport from Buenos Aires and Santiago, Chile, and its commercial pier is a major port for Antarctic cruiseship, superyacht and research traffic. Excellent facilities and support services can be obtained.
ANTARCTICA

**Useful Statistics**

**GOVERNMENT:** Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting  
**LAND AREA:** 14,000,000km² (5,405,430 sq miles)  
**POPULATION:** (2011 est.) 1,000 – 5,000 – none permanent  
**CLIMATE:** Antarctica is the coldest, driest and windiest continent, and has the highest average elevation of all the continents. Since there is little precipitation, except at the coasts, the interior of the continent is technically the largest desert in the world.  
**UTC:** +12 (at South Pole) but cruising ships to the Peninsula area use the Argentina time zone of UTC-3  
**INTL DIALLING CODE:** +672

ANTARCTICA is Earth’s southernmost continent, overlying the South Pole. Situated in the southern hemisphere and largely south of the Antarctic Circle, Antarctica is surrounded by the Southern Ocean. At 14.4 million km², it is the fifth-largest continent in area after Asia, Africa, North America, and South America; in turn, Europe and Australia are smaller. Some 84% of Antarctica is covered by ice, which averages at least 1.6 km in thickness. Its coastline measures 17,968 km (11,160 miles) and is mostly characterised by ice formations. The continent has approximately 90% of the world’s ice (and thereby approximately 70% of the world’s fresh water). Antarctica has never had an indigenous population. Only cold-adapted plants and animals survive there, including penguins, fur seals, mosses, lichens, and many types of algae. The Antarctic Treaty was signed in 1959 by twelve countries. To date, 47 countries have signed the Treaty which prohibits military activities and mineral mining, supports scientific research, and protects the continent’s eczone. Small-scale tourism has existed since 1957 and is currently largely self-regulated by the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO). Antarctica is the last great frontier for superyacht cruising. Not for the faint hearted, fair weather sailor or lightly built, short range superyacht, Antarctica offers unspoiled cruising, breathtaking scenery and unforgettable experiences to those brave enough that venture south across ‘Roaring Forties’ and ‘Furious Fifties’ of the Southern Ocean. Accessible from Australia, New Zealand and Argentina, a variety of cruising areas are frequented by adventure cruise ships and more recently by some adventurous large superyachts on their world wide voyage of discovery. It is recommended to consider embarking an Ice Pilot/Guide for the journey.

**SUPERYACHT SERVICES**

No maritime services exist in Antarctica. Some research bases are equipped with ice and gravel runways.

**Navalia Port Agents, Ushuaia**  
T: +54 2901 423269  
E: info@navalia.com.ar  
W: www.navalia.com.ar

**International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators**  
T: +1 401 272 2152  
E: iaato@iaato.org  
W: www.iaato.org

**Private Yacht Expeditions**  
Sebastian Arrebola  
T/F: +54 115 278 3404  
W: www.privateyachtexpeditions.com  
E: info@privateyachtexpeditions.com

**RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS**  
Lone Ranger, Michaela Rose, Octopus

**APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM COMMONWEALTH BAY TO:**  
Hobart 1,480’  
FROM ANTARCTICA PENINSULA TO:  
Punta Arenas 780’  
Ushuaia 540’

**USEFUL PUBLICATIONS**

*The Antarctic Pilot*  
*The Mariner’s Handbook*  
*The Admiralty Manual of Seamanship Volume 3*  
*Antarctica 3rd Edition Lonely Planet Aust. Geographic Book of Antarctica*

**USEFUL WEBSITES**

www.iaato.org  
www.antarcticagov.au  
www.explorapoles.org  
www.ats.aq  
www.asoc.org  
www.antarcticaonline.com  
www.oceanfrontiers.com.au
VISITING ANTARCTICA in a private yacht is a breathtaking experience. It’s not for the faint-hearted but with a seaworthy vessel and the correct preparation, it is certainly a viable cruising destination. Most of the boats that visit are either large cruise ships, which do not normally make shore landings, or smaller, more rugged ships, some converted from ice breakers or research vessels, which carry 40 to 80 passengers. These smaller ships pack in the sights and are very popular with eco-tourists. The International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO) is the body that maintains control and coordination of professional operators. Private yachts planning to visit Antarctica are encouraged to join IAATO and follow the guidelines the organisation has developed to keep people safe and the environment pristine.

The small city of Ushuaia in Argentina, located in the relatively sheltered waters of the Beagle Channel, is the most common staging post for vessels departing and returning from Antarctica. At the height of the season (December, January and February), Ushuaia is a hive of activity and provides excellent facilities for provisioning. There are plenty of excellent but inexpensive restaurants (the place is a meat lover’s paradise), an international airport 10 minutes drive from town, and plenty of hiking trails and other land-based recreational activities. I used Navalia (navalia.com.ar) as port agents and ship suppliers in Ushuaia. Cruising the Beagle channel and the waterways to Cape Horn is a great experience in itself. Glaciers flowing into the sea, seal colonies and exotic marine life are all part of the sights you can expect to see, but prudent seamanship is required as the wind can change from 0 to 60 knots in a matter of minutes. And it’s not just Mother Nature you need to keep an eye on; Argentinean and Chilean territorial boundaries have long been in contention and the usual protocols for clearing in and out should be adhered to. The Chilean navy keeps a small presence around the area, particularly in the region of Cape Horn. That said, permission to visit the Chilean Naval outpost at Cape Horn Light House can be sought. It’s well worth a visit and the few naval staff posted there will be delighted to have your company for a few hours.

Vessels passing close to Cape Horn will often be ordered by the Chilean Navy to remain outside the 12-mile territorial limit. This is often to little effect as most tourist ships try to get a close pass to improve the view for their passengers, provided the weather is good. Drake Passage, the notorious stretch of water spanning the 500 nautical miles from South America to the Antarctic Peninsula, is considered by many to be the roughest stretch of ocean in the world. The prevailing westerly winds get squeezed between South America and the Antarctic Peninsula and, along with the shallow waters around Cape Horn, this can make for some extreme sea conditions. Once away from the land and in deeper waters heading towards Antarctica, typical Southern Ocean conditions are experienced. Visibility usually reduces to a mile or less as the sea temperature plummets and you can go a long time without seeing anything other than a lone albatross. Icebergs will not normally be encountered until closer to Antarctica but a vigilant watch must always be maintained. The weather systems passing through are usually slowest during January and February and often relatively good crossings can be made. But come late February or early March there is a noticeable increase in the speed and intensity of the low-pressure systems passing through. For your return voyage back from Antarctica, don’t count on finding a ‘weather window’ even for a vessel with good speed. (My advice is to make sure your vessel is seaworthy and batten down.) The excitement of arriving in Antarctica for the first time...
time is indescribable. It is advisable to have an experienced guide aboard. As well as their local knowledge, they should be across the many issues involved in safely operating a vessel in Antarctica. The wildlife and terrain, while incredibly diverse and starkly beautiful, are also unforgiving. A close watch on the unpredictable weather is prudent, though you may be lucky and get a run of calm, clear, sunny days where the pervasive stillness will fill you with awe. Sea temperatures will usually be one or two degrees and air temperatures can range between 10 down to minus five. There is little risk of water tanks freezing provided there is some normal circulation but output of water makers will be drastically reduced due all that chilly seawater. Although many areas of Antarctica remain unsurveyed, British Admiralty charts can be relied upon, at least in the popular areas for cruising. But, as always in Antarctica, caution should always be used and having a small RIB to check depths and contours at anchorages and passages is advisable. For anchoring, good ground tackle is essential. A suitable anchorage can often be difficult to find but with good planning and knowledge, they can be located. Anchorages can be very deep (up to 100 metres) and
few rules that you should definitely adhere to are:

People should have no impact when landing at heritage sites, or elsewhere. The only thing taken back from these visits should be photos. Take a boot-disinfecting bath. Any footwear worn ashore must be cleaned and disinfected on return to the vessel to prevent organisms being inadvertently spread around.

All garbage and food scraps must stay on board. Sewage should be treated and kept in holding tanks until at a suitable location at sea, where it is authorised to be dumped, is reached.

The most suitable way to get ashore is by inflatable boat. Nearly all landings will be beach or rock landings. A landing at Whaler’s Bay in the caldera (a cauldron-like feature caused by volcanic activity) of Deception Island to see the ruins of an old whaling station is a must.

There are plenty of manned research bases around the Antarctic Peninsula and – with prior arrangement – visitors are welcome. Make sure to pick up some souvenirs and send a postcard from the small British outpost at Port Lockroy and take a tour the well-equipped US research base at Palmer Station. IAATO request that all tour vessels submit their cruising schedules well in advance and post details of vessel movements to all operators so that shore landings can be timed to avoid landing parties from two or more vessels showing up at the same place at the same time. An evening check-in on MF/HF radio gives the captain the opportunity to arrange the schedule to avoid these clashes and is also an opportunity to discuss weather and other issues that may affect vessels in the area. Keeping in contact and knowing where other vessels are is an important in case emergencies occur and assistance is required. It’s worth keeping in mind that there is a runway at an Argentine base on King George Island where special charter flights can be arranged to drop off or pick up passengers from Argentina or Chile. But be aware that these flights are costly and often delayed or cancelled due to bad weather conditions. While it may involve a lot of cost and preparation, not to mention a long trip, seeing Antarctica is a magnificent experience. There is little room for error in this part of the world so a seaworthy vessel and competent crew are the two things that you can’t leave home without. Even with the most meticulous planning you’ll still encounter unexpected challenges, but that is just part of the unforgettable experience of travelling in this untamed part of the world.

Marc Grise
Marc Grise started his career at sea in the merchant navy and holds a Master Foreign Going certificate. He has worked all around the world and spent a lot of time in the offshore oil industry. Having begun sailing at a young age in New Zealand he started in the professional yachting industry in 1991, working extensively on sailboats. He has a lot of experience in yacht racing, from dinghies to superyachts. Mark was the commissioning captain on the motor yacht Lone Ranger, which has cruised many areas of the world, including Antarctica.
Yacht Help Superyacht Services
Superyacht Services since 1984
Make the most of Fiji with the best itinerary and logistical support.
info@yachthelp.com
www.yachthelp.com

Port Denarau Marina
Berths to 80m & 5m Draft
50 Ton Travel lift & Marine Services
info@denaraumarina.com
www.denaraumarina.com

Denarau Island: Shopping Center, 7 International Hotels, 18 Hole Golf Course, Bars & Restaurants
Since 1995, our mission has been to assist visiting superyachts in French Polynesia with care, rapidity and cost efficiency. 450 yachts ranging from 20m to 138m have already trusted our services.

How can we help?

www.tahiti-ocean.com
The fabled South Seas has long attracted sailors and voyagers from near and far. Like the Sirens made famous in the musings of ancient Greek scribe Homer’s Odyssey, the islands of the South Pacific have an allure which will forever pull at the hearts and minds of men.

THE IMAGES ARE ENDLESS
A palm sways in the ocean breeze. Great arcs of deserted sand. Warm, turquoise seas lap gently at the shores. Mountains, hewn from the bowels of the earth, tower over verdant rainforest. Coral atolls dot millions of sea miles of untouched seclusion. Amid the smiles and welcome of the people of the isles.

THIS IS THE PACIFIC
Those who venture here will discover a part of earth unlike any other. Untouched by worldly worries, the Pacific islands are the pearls of the South Seas, cradled in the shell of the world’s greatest ocean.

The South Pacific spans from Australia to America and is a crossing that requires considerable planning. But despite its vast size it is dotted with thousands of island nations from New Zealand in the west to French Polynesia in the east. Just as a stone can be skipped across a lake, so to can your yacht hop from island to island across the breadth of the Pacific.

The Great Southern Route guides you every step of the voyage. Many Captains have volunteered their personal experiences of cruising large yachts throughout the South Seas and can provide valuable insight on what to expect.

South Pacific island nations embraced by the Pacific and covered here are New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Wallis and Fortuna Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Nuku, Samoa, American Samoa, Tokelau, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, including the Society Islands (Tahiti, Bora Bora and Moorea) Tuamotu Atolls and Marquesas Islands, and the Galapagos, Pitcairn and Easter Islands furthest east.

The North Pacific is also covered including Palau, Micronesia, Guam, North Mariana’s, Marshall Islands, Kiribati and Hawaii.

For the most adventurous of souls, due south is the greatest southern continent and “undiscovered country” of Antarctica. But for the true flavour of the South Seas, take the advice of one Captain to another and don’t miss Tahiti. “Whatever you have read, or have seen or imagine about French Polynesia, the real thing is better. This is the only destination I know of that outperforms the brochure”.

WELCOME, Halo oiketa, Bonjour, Halo Olketta, Bula, Halo Olketta, Malo e lei lei, Talofa, Takofa Lava, Kia Orana, la Orana.
Weather Patterns of the Tropics and South Pacific

The Tropical and South Pacific, where peace, and tranquility are commonplace, where sunshine and palm trees are everywhere. These are the things that always come to mind when one thinks of what it’s like to be in this part of the world…

By David Cannon, Jeremy Davis, and Garrett Gwiazda Weather Routing Inc.

WHAT ELSE COMES to mind? How about tropical cyclones, adverse weather from trade wind surges, and even the effects from cold fronts? Maybe some of these things come to mind as well, but truth be told, mariners and vacationers alike should be aware of these weather concerns (and others) when traveling in this part of the world, so we’ll revisit this rather expansive area, and give a bit of a “refresher” if you will about the weather dangers to consider and what to look for in this part of the globe. Even the most experienced mariner must be wary of the potential weather dangers along the way…without question this is one of the most important considerations for trip planning.

Obviously, given the rather large coverage area involved, there are a wide variety of weather patterns and phenomena to consider. We will educate the reader on the best times of years to travel and the best course(s) of action to take to avoid exposure to adverse weather and make for an enjoyable time for all on board. Finally, we will explain the importance of utilizing weather providers as guidance for planning and routing.

CENTRAL AMERICAN COAST TO THE BAJA PENINSULA

The period from November through April is known for significant surges of higher winds/seas across this region. These occur about every three to four days, occurring as large, cold high pressure ridges move east to southeastward and north of the area, across the Gulf of Mexico and into the Northern Caribbean. Wind surges are normally in the form of N-NE-E winds across the Central America, where winds can reach as high as gale force (force 8-9), especially across gaps in coastal ranges and across the Gulfs of Papagayo, Dulce, Nicoya, and Fonseca. Similar higher wind surges can occur in NE-E winds along the south side of the Peninsula de Azuero, found between Punta Mala and Punta Mariato. Large seas, as high as 10-12 feet, can also occur during these wind surges, particularly across more offshore waters, where N-NE-E “fetch” is greater.

Farther north, across the Gulf of Tehuantepec, favorable directions in wind surges are NW-NE, with N-NE winds in the western gulfs, and NW-N winds further east. This occurs as northerly winds across inland valleys “fan out” across the gulf itself. Gale force winds are common in these surges, with severe surges in some cases bringing storm to hurricane force winds! Seas as high as 12-15ft can occur during wind surges (even as high as 20 feet in severe surges) across the mouth of the Gulf, with much lower seas found along immediate coastal waters. The weather turns more benign as we look farther north across the Mexican Riviera. Winds here are generally in the form of lighter W-NW-N winds, speeds generally not exceeding force 4-5. In fact, along immediate coastal waters (within approximately 2-3 miles from shore), and in cloud/rain free areas, winds will tend toward onshore sea breezes during the day (mainly occurring from mid morning through late afternoon), with offshore breezes at night and during the early morning hours. Combined seas will generally be from W-NW-N and long-period, heights generally no more than 6-7 feet, though larger long-period sets can occur, from surges of higher NW-N winds farther north. Across the Sea of Cortez, general wind directions are NW-N and tend to be light, with speeds generally no more than force 4-5. However, the passage of cold fronts north of the area and arrival of high pressure building in from the west will bring higher NW-N winds, with speeds approaching if not reaching minimal gale force, typically as high as force 7-8. NW combined seas during these wind surges will often reach as high as 10ft with locally higher sets, particularly along the southwestern coast of the Baja Peninsula. NW winds will generally “wrap around” the southern tip of the Baja Peninsula and combine WSW-W, and during wind surges can reach near gale to gale force. However, with a more limited fetch in place, combined seas will generally tend to consist of a wind chop, typically no more than 4-6 feet across the region. During the remainder of the year (May through November), our attention turns toward tropical cyclones. Tropical cyclone season begins on 15 May, and on average, we will find tropical cyclone development occurring in May about once every other year across this region. Development typically reaches its peak in late July and August, with cyclone frequency rapidly diminishing in September, October, and November (tropical cyclone season concludes on 30 November). Tropical cyclone development is most likely to occur off the Central American coast (south of 15N) and across adjacent offshore waters. Typical tracks will be toward the West or West-Northwest, offshore from the Central American coast, weakening as they move into cooler waters near and west of 110W. An alternate track is one that will often take tropical cyclones on a more northwestward track, moving in the general direction of the Baja Peninsula and the Sea of Cortez. This is more likely to occur from mid/late August onward, as large troughs of low pressure in the mid and upper levels of the atmosphere more eastward toward the Baja Peninsula. Increasing SE-SW winds aloft in advance of these troughs will act to “pick up” and “recurve” tropical cyclones toward the northwest and north.

Aside from the tropics, strong NW-NE-E wind surges are less common or uncommon along the Central American coast and the Gulf of Tehuantepec, as large cold high pressure ridges farther north decrease in frequency. Along Central America, NE-E winds are still in place, but tend to be lighter, normally no more than force 5-6, and tending to occur mainly across gaps in coastal ranges as well as across the Gulfs of Papagayo, Dulce, Nicoya, and Fonseca. This occurs as high pressure builds westward into the Western Caribbean and toward Central America. NE-E combined seas are generally no more than 3-6 feet, tending lower closer to the coast. E-SE-S winds are most dominant across the Gulf of Tehuantepec and “light”, with wind speeds generally on the order of force 3-5 and combined seas generally E-SE-S in direction, generally no more than 5 feet. W-NW-N winds continue to dominate farther to the north across the Mexican Riviera and the Baja coast, though wind surges are less prevalent here. Generally speaking, NW-N winds will not exceed force 5-6 near the Baja coast, with lighter winds further south, where pressure gradients are slackened. Along immediate coastal waters of Mexico and in cloud/rain free areas, “light” onshore sea breezes can be found during the day, with offshore land breezes at night, with generally long-period NW swells found, normally no more than 5-7 feet in the largest of sets. Strong and prolonged trade wind surges well to the south in the Southern Hemisphere will allow E-SE-S swells to propagate northward toward the region. These swells tend to be long-period, and are the result of the strengthening and building of a high pressure ridge south of the Equator. More on this later in this article.

During the period of May through February, a general W-NW flowing current is found along much of the Central American coastline, from Panama to abeam Cabo Corrientes. During March and April however, ocean currents vary more in direction. The W-NW flowing current continues from near the Gulf of Tehuantepec eastward to Panama. However, from the Gulf of Tehuantepec to Cabo Corrientes, a south or southwestern flowing current develops. Further north and west along the west coast of the Baja Peninsula, the “cool” California Current provides a S-SW flowing current for much of the year. So when is the best time of year to travel in this region? What are the best routes to take? Both “winter” and “summer” patterns have their pros and cons. Overall, the best times to travel occur in May, and in October, when weather patterns are in transition, and tropical activity is far less likely to occur. Winter season travel (November through April)
offers a greater possibility of delays and/or stoppages due to adverse weather, particularly in NW-NE-E wind surges farther south (south of the Mexican Riviera), and NW-N wind surges farther north (across the Sea of Cortez and the Baja Peninsula). Routing options during the winter season become more limited as well. The best routing would be to maintain coastal routes. Taking coastal routing reduces the likelihood of encountering large seas associated with wind surges, especially farther south and in NW-NE-E'lys, and affords more readily available stoppage ports, should adverse weather become an apparent threat for onward travel.

**EASTERN AND CENTRAL NORTH PACIFIC, EAST OF THE INTERNATIONAL DATELINE TO 110W**

Two weather features are prevalent throughout the year across more northern waters (north of 10N): high pressure to the west and a thermal trough (low pressure) farther east. The thermal trough is normally found across the Sea of Cortez, Gulf of California, and the Baja Peninsula. The trough will tend to be weaker and cover a smaller area during the mid to late autumn months (November/December), during winter, and in early spring. This is due to the presence of cold fronts moving southeastward into and across much of the western U.S. and (during the winter) through February), as larger, more intense gales and storms track slightly farther south from their summertime positions, but still well north of the region. However, transitory high pressure ridges moving into the Western Pacific will eventually merge with and “reinforce” the semi-stationary ridge, inducing surges of higher N-NE-E winds and larger N-NE-E swells across this region as well. The ridge will tend strongest during the summer months, as gales/storms in the North Pacific track further north.

Looking south of 10N, the aforementioned ridge will interact with a broad east to west oriented trough of low pressure (equatorial trough), which on average covers the Pacific between 10S and 10N. During the late spring and summer months (May through August), the northern extent of the trough will normally be found closer to 10N, drifting southward later in the year, and reaching its southernmost location (near 05N) during December/January. With regards to tropical activity, cooler waters temperatures west of the Baja Peninsula, in particular those associated with the California Current (off the Baja Peninsula), will normally induce a weakening of tropical cyclones as they move farther west into this region. However, warmer water temperatures and lighter winds aloft can and do allow for tropical cyclone development during the summer months in more southern waters, mainly south of 20N. Such cyclones that form in this region will in the vast majority of cases track westward, weakening and/or passing south of the Hawaiian Islands. NW-N-NE winds dominate across waters between the Baja Peninsula and approximately 115W-120W, generally “moderate” to “fresh” in intensity. However, surges of higher winds will occur, mainly during the late autumn, winter, and spring months, as surges of cooler air move in behind cold fronts. Large NW-N-NE swells will accompany wind surges, often near and in excess of 10 feet, though will tend somewhat lower and longer-period in more southern waters. Easing of winds and an abatement of seas will occur as ridging further west weakens, and as cold fronts approach the region from the north and west.

Later in the spring and during the summer/early autumn (May through October), the thermal trough tends to be stronger, with troughing extending as far north as interior/coastal California and Oregon. Weakening and a southward suppression of the trough will occur as smaller, weaker areas of high pressure “break away” from the nearly stationary high pressure ridge in the tropical/subtropical Pacific and into the northwest U.S. Weakening will also occur, as weakening cold fronts move southeastward into the western U.S., more likely to occur later in the period (in October), as cold fronts become somewhat stronger upon arrival along the U.S. West Coast.

Farther west, a semi-stationary high pressure dominates across the tropical and subtropical Pacific, found mainly across waters between 40N and 10N and west of 110W. Slight fluctuations in coverage and strength are likely to occur over a given time period. The ridge will tend to be weakest during the winter season (December through February), as larger, more intense gales and storms track slightly farther south from their summertime positions, but still well north of the region. However, transitory high pressure ridges moving into the Western Pacific will eventually merge with and “reinforce” the semi-stationary ridge, inducing surges of higher N-NE-E winds and larger N-NE-E swells across this region as well. The ridge will tend strongest during the summer months, as gales/storms in the North Pacific track further north.

With regards to tropical activity, cooler waters temperatures west of the Baja Peninsula, in particular those associated with the California Current (off the Baja Peninsula), will normally induce a weakening of tropical cyclones as they move farther west into this region. However, warmer water temperatures and lighter winds aloft can and do allow for tropical cyclone development during the summer months in more southern waters, mainly south of 20N. Such cyclones that form in this region will in the vast majority of cases track westward, weakening and/or passing south of the Hawaiian Islands. NW-N-NE winds dominate across waters between the Baja Peninsula and approximately 115W-120W, generally “moderate” to “fresh” in intensity. However, surges of higher winds will occur, mainly during the late autumn, winter, and spring months, as surges of cooler air move in behind cold fronts. Large NW-N-NE swells will accompany wind surges, often near and in excess of 10 feet, though will tend somewhat lower and longer-period in more southern waters. Easing of winds and an abatement of seas will occur as ridging further west weakens, and as cold fronts approach the region from the north and west.
WEATHER ROUTING

NE-E trade winds are dominant further west toward the Hawaiian Islands and in more southern waters (to 10N), speeds generally no more than force 5-6, with combined seas generally as high as 7-8 feet. However, merging of high pressure ridges will bring about periods of higher NE-E winds, which at times will reach gale or near gale force (force 7-8), along with larger NE-E swells, as much as 3-5 feet higher than those mentioned under “normal” circumstances. The approach and passage of stronger cold fronts north of the area will bring breaks in the NE-E wind/sea regime, normally lasting for 1-2 days at a times over a given location. Winds will actually tend to vary from E-SE-S becoming “gentle” or “moderate”, speeds mainly from force 3-5 and no more. Combined seas, in turn, will become more E-SE in direction and abate, generally not exceeding 6 feet, especially in more prolonged lulls in winds. The largest of these combined seas will tend to be mainly swell, with little wind driven “chop” on top of the swells. Once you are south of 10N, you are getting close to and within the “Doldrums”. Winds become lighter, and vary from NE-SE-S, with NE-E winds found north of the Equatorial Trough axis, and E-SE-S winds found further south. Wind speeds within this region tend to be from force 3-5, and near/below the low end of this range along or very near the trough axis. Combined seas become long-period and tend mostly swell with NE-SE-S seas averaging from 3-6 feet. Slightly higher long-period sets (generally 1-2 feet higher) will occur in higher trade wind surges, typically in NE-E sets from high pressure to the north, or E-SE-S sets from ridging further south, in both instances occurring when ridging is stronger (toward/during the winter season). Disorganized squalls within the Equatorial Trough will bring localized periods of higher winds and combined seas (both in and near squalls). Squalls often bring periods of reduced visibility, with heavy/severe squalls bringing visibilities below 2 nautical miles at times. Prevailing currents more or less will fall in line with dominant wind directions. The already-mentioned California Current runs from north to south more or less paralleling the west coast of the Baja Peninsula and found just offshore. Increases in current speed and a southward “expansion” of the current will occur during stronger wind surges, associated with the passage of cold fronts during the period from late autumn through early spring. Farther west, currents become a more favorable southwest to westward moving direction.

As one might imagine, the key in finding optimal weather winds and routing for westbound transits is in finding the trade winds and avoiding wind surges for the best possible ride. This means avoiding the passage of cold fronts late in the year and during the winter and early spring, thereby minimizing exposure to higher NW-N-NE winds. By allowing for weakening of the high pressure ridge farther west (normally in advance of cold fronts), lighter NW-NE winds and lower, longer-period NW-NE combined seas will allow for a smoother passage across eastern waters, east of 115W-120W. Once farther west and in the trades, travel typically becomes easier. Winds and seas are more or less all following, and the main concern, particularly for less “heartier” vessels becomes higher NE-E winds/combined seas, as high pressure ridges merge late in the year and during winter/early spring. For such lengthy transits across this region, wind surges are almost always a factor to consider, especially during this period. Of course, while summer means less wind surges and overall lighter conditions, it also means one will have to be mindful of the tropics, particularly those cyclones that form in more southern (near/south of 20N) and western waters. Wide “searoom” and sufficient fuel range of vessels will certainly afford route alterations for safe passage around such systems.

PANAMA CANAL TO THE GALAPAGOS

The weather in this part of the world tends to be (for the most part) rather quiet. The main concerns over the course of the year will be enhanced N-NE winds from late fall through early spring (November through April) and squalls, especially later in the year (later spring/summer). “Periodic” (1-2 day duration) higher N-NE winds mainly occur across the Gulf of Panama and vicinity, occurring as large high pressure ridges build into and across much of the western and central Caribbean from the north and west, interacting with a rather persistent thermal trough (low pressure) along/near the northwestern coast of South America. Higher wind surges can occur during the spring, summer, and early fall, but are less pronounced, meaning gale force
winds are less likely to occur, and are mainly due to a westward building of a semi-permanent high pressure ridge, building into the western Caribbean from the north and east. Looking farther south toward the Galapagos, the main weather feature in place is a broad, elongated trough of low pressure, oriented east to west across the equatorial Pacific. It is on the northern extent of this trough that we find the so-called “Inter-tropical Convergence Zone” (ITCZ), where N-NE-E winds further north “converge” with SE-S-SW winds further south, and where clusters of showers and squalls develop and move in a general westward motion across the Eastern Pacific.

During the summer months, the ITCZ is about as far north as one might expect at any point in the year, generally found about as far north as 12N-15N. As time goes on, the ITCZ progresses farther south, and by December/January, it reaches its southernmost point, generally between 02N and 05N. Squalls within the ITCZ are generally disorganized, especially later in the year when the ITCZ is situated farther south, bringing only periodic and localized areas of higher winds and seas, along with reduced visibility. However, as we get into Tropical Season in the Eastern Pacific, more persistent squall areas can and do become tropical cyclones, primarily in waters farther west, west of the Gulf of Panama.

Once south of the Gulf of Panama, the weather to the Galapagos tends to be (for the most part) rather benign. General wind directions are E-SE-W and for the most part, light, no more than force 3-4. Of course, squalls within the ITCZ will bring higher winds and seas and periods of reduced visibility (below 2 nautical miles in heavy/severe squalls), but these bouts of adverse weather tend to be rather localized, confined to areas in or near squalls themselves. Combined seas will generally vary from E-SE-SW, no more than 5-6 feet south of the Gulf of Panama. However, stronger and prolonged trade wind surges in the Southern Hemisphere will at times bring larger, long-period E-SE-S swells, generally as high as 7-8 feet. This is most likely to occur during the period from mid to late spring (May/June) through early to mid-Autumn (late October/November), when high pressure in the Southern Hemisphere tends to be larger and stronger than during other times of the year. For most of the year, a countercurrent is centered about 150 nautical miles south of the Gulf of Panama. Closer to the Colombian coast, the current flows northward. This is part of the cool Humboldt Current, which feeds into the east to west moving South Equatorial Current farther west. Along 81W, the current flows southward, and is weakest during the winter months.

Otherwise, from this countercurrent southwest to the Galapagos, a W-NW flowing current is typical, varying little throughout the year. These currents usually provide a favorable boost for transits from Panama to the Galapagos, with only a small negative impact for northbound transits.

Equatorial Pacific (Equator to 10S, East of 170E): It’s pretty much trade winds all the way here. That’s the dominant wind regime in place across this part of the world. More specifically, we’re talking about E-SE winds, as the aforementioned broad equatorial low pressure trough interacts with a rather persistent high pressure ridge farther south. Over the course of the year, we will see an overall northward/southward “oscillation” in the positioning of both the trough and ridge, farther south during much of the latter half of the year (late July/August through December), with a northward progression during much of the first half of the year. E-SE winds will generally tend to be higher the farther south one travels, further away from the axis of the equatorial trough. Generally speaking, wind speeds will not exceed force 4-5, though merging of high pressure ridges will bring general 1-3 day periods of winds as high as force 6, particularly during the period from May through October, when trade wind surges are most common. Combined seas will generally be E-SE in direction, no more than 7-8 feet, and will tend to be lower and longer-period, consisting mainly of E-SE swells the further north one travels, where lighter winds are more common.

Breaks in the E-SE trade wind regime will occur when slowing/stalling and weakening frontal systems yield more N-NE-E sets. This is most likely to occur near and west of 160W and during the period from May through September, when cold fronts in the Southwest Pacific tend to advance further east before any stalling/weakening occurs. N-NE-E winds are generally from force 3-5, with E-SE combined seas lowering and becoming longer-period, mixing with N-NE-E sets of no more than 5-6 feet. The Eastern and Central Pacific: 10S to 30S and East of the International Dateline To South America: Again, high pressure is dominant, especially across eastern waters and during the period from November through April, when cold fronts are less prevalent. This means more E-SE trade winds, which will tend to be stronger, reaching gale to near gale strength, and are more likely to occur during the period from May through October, when trade wind surges are most common. Tropical cyclones are about non-existent due to cool ocean water and stronger winds aloft. The tropical season for this region occurs primarily during the period from November into April, and only in the extreme western portions. The peak months for concern are January/February, as ocean waters are warmest during this period. During May through October, tropical concerns are just about non-existent due to cool ocean water and stronger winds aloft. This region, typical tropical cyclones develop in the Solomon Islands to north of Fiji, and typically track southeast or south-southeastward to the dateline or 175W. After crossing the dateline, systems typically weaken rapidly due to cooler water further south. Tropical systems rarely form east of the dateline, and never near South America, although, El Nino regimes, particularly stronger El Ninos that are associated with well-above normal sea surface temperatures can allow for cyclone development well east of the dateline, as far east as 150W (certainly a rarity under “normal” circumstances). Once formation occurs, these “rare” tropical cyclones will tend to track in a general W-SW-SW motion, weakening as they get further south (south of 25S), in cooler conditions.
Ocean currents vary greatly throughout this region. From 10S southward to about 25S, a generally westward flowing current is found through much of the year, due to the dominant trade winds that are found here. Further south, from 25S to about 30S is a transition zone. Here, currents tend to flow southwestward from 25S to 30S, and southward from 30S to 35S. From 35S to 40S, ocean currents tend to flow southeastward.

**THE WESTERN PACIFIC, WEST OF THE INTERNATIONAL DATELINE TO NEW ZEALAND / AUSTRALIA, SOUTH OF 10S**

No matter the time of year, this part of the world has a wide range of weather. From the volatile and ever changing to tranquil and persistent, from serene to tempestuous...this area has it all. Two distinct weather regimes are to be noted: winter (more frequent/stronger cold fronts, transitory high pressure ridges, and trade wind surges), and summer (weaker, less frequent cold fronts and tropical cyclones).

During late autumn and winter/early spring (May through October), we find cold fronts moving off of the eastern coast of Australia about every three days or so, generally extending as far north as 20S. Fronts then continue their trek across the Tasman and Coral Seas, finally slowing/stalling and weakening once near/east of the International Dateline, with forward progress slowed by the presence of persistent large high pressure further east.

In the wake of fronts, high pressure ridges “emerge” into the Tasman and Coral Seas, eventually merging with and reinforcing the aforementioned persistent high pressure ridge farther east. These “transitory highs” are responsible for higher than average E-SE-S winds across much of the area, particularly south of 15S-20S, where winds as high as gale and near gale force and E-SE combined seas as high as 13-15 feet are certainly not unheard of in this region. Aside from the higher than normal E-SE-S’lys, E-SE winds generally average from force 4-6, with E-SE combined seas generally from 4-8 feet. These winds will tend lower in far northern waters within this region (closer to 10S), and near the centers of high pressure areas moving offshore (light and variable winds are found under or very near high centers). Furthermore, E-SE combined seas will tend to be lower and longer-period the further north one travels. Breaks in the trade wind regime occur when cold fronts approach and pass across or south of a given location. North of 20S, where “true” frontal passages are less likely to occur, winds will tend lighter, with NW-N-NE winds generally from force 3-5 and longer-period NE-E combined seas lowering to 3-6 feet. Further south, interaction between cold fronts (and associated gales/storms further south) and high pressure ridging further east will bring higher winds/seas. Here, winds tend to veer, becoming NE-NW-NNW, increasing to as high as force 6-7, followed by S-SW-W winds as high as gale force (force 8-9), especially near/south of 25S-30S, with large S-SW-W combined seas likely, as high as 10-15 feet, shorter-period and larger further south, somewhat closer to gales/storms, and where stronger frontal passages occur.

During the period from late spring through early/ mid autumn (November through April), cold fronts become less frequent and weaker, and by December/January only extend about as far north as about 35S, reaching the southeast coast of Australia about every four to five days. With persistent high pressure found farther west (into/ near the eastern Tasman Sea), fronts this time of year will slow and weaken more readily, doing so as they move into and across the southernmost Tasman Sea toward southern New Zealand. Transitory high pressure ridges behind fronts are less prevalent across this region. Rather, in between cold fronts, high pressure further east will build westward into and across the Tasman and Coral Sea, bringing “periodic” (generally lasting 2-3 days) higher E-SE trade winds, generally as high as force 5-6, with lighter winds (force 4-5) found further north, between 10S and 20S. Combined seas during these trade wind surges generally vary from E-SE-S, generally as high as 8-9 feet, but tending lower and longer-period the further north one travels.

It is during this period that our focus turns toward the tropics. Tropical cyclone frequency increases during October/November, with cyclone development generally found in the northern and central Coral Sea, generally tracking southeast to southwest, eventually weakening and becoming extratropical (non-tropical) entities in cooler waters south of 25S and/or merging with cold fronts further south. Tropical cyclone frequency reaches its peak in January/February in the southwest Pacific, and development areas in the weeks leading up to this period expands greatly. Development will occur as far east as 170E (again, during strong El Nino episodes, warmer than normal sea surface temperatures will even allow for tropical cyclone development to occur east of the International Dateline), and as far west as the Arafura Sea and Gulf of Carpentaria.

Those cyclones that develop further west (from the Coral Sea westward) will at times track south to southwestward toward and into northern and eastern Australia, with systems weakening as they move inland. Otherwise, general cyclone tracks this time of year will be southeast to southward, weakening as they move into the cooler waters near/south of 25S to 30S. Tropical cyclone frequency diminishes once again during the period from March through May, with development by May generally confined to the Coral Sea, tracking southeast to southwestward, either weakening as they move into northeast Australia, or weakening as they move into cooler waters and increasingly hostile conditions in the upper levels of the atmosphere south of 25S.

The fastest-moving currents in this region are found north of 10S and just west of the International Dateline to 170E. These are east to west moving currents, part of the South Equatorial Current (found just south of the Equatorial Countercurrent), and show little overall change over a given time period.

As one travels farther south, prevailing currents tend to become more northeast to southwest oriented. Currents along the coast actually become more north to south oriented as the South Equatorial Current turns and becomes the “warm” East Australian Current. Current speeds here also tend to slow in waters further south, becoming progressively slower the further south one travels and further offshore from the Australian coast. During the summer/winter months, average current speeds are higher as compared to during spring/autumn.

**THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC – WHAT ARE YOUR TRAVEL OPTIONS?**

Now that we know what to expect in the South Pacific, which way do we go? When do we travel? Well in equatorial regions (north of 10S), there really is no “best time” to travel, as weather across the region (aside from any squalls one might encounter) tends to be fairly benign and for the most part persistent over a given time.
period. Generally following/quartering conditions are found in NE-E-SE winds, with generally long-period swells and fast-moving westward moving currents. Staying north of 10S will in the vast majority of cases offer a good ride in what will generally be following conditions.

Looking farther south toward 20S and in central and eastern waters, general trade winds are also found, but this area also offers a greater possibility of encountering higher winds and larger, shorter-period seas. This is especially the case during late autumn and winter/early spring when trade wind period seas. This is especially the case during late autumn and winter/early spring when trade wind period seas. This is especially the case during late autumn and winter/early spring when trade wind period seas.

In the southwest Pacific, there are “pros” and “cons” to be found, regardless of when you wish to travel. During late autumn as well as during early to mid spring, our concerns of encountering a tropical cyclone are non-existent, but remember that the weather during this particular time of year can be quite volatile and changeable, as cold fronts and following high pressure ridges become stronger and more frequent. Finding weather windows during this period can be difficult at times, but not impossible, and will be highly dependent on properly timing cold fronts, and the arrival of lighter and more favorable weather, as high pressure ridges move further offshore.

When travel is a must and cold fronts become a factor in routing, one should consider more northern route, staying north of a direct course toward the Australian coast (and keeping stoppage/“bail out” ports in mind) to reduce/ minimize exposure to adverse weather conditions (quartering/head winds and large NW-SW-S combined seas) from fronts.

During summer, the opposite holds true, cold fronts are much less of a factor, and more direct routing is possible. However, we now need to watch the tropics closely, especially as we get into early/mid summer (January/February), when tropical cyclone activity nears and reaches its peak. Weather windows will be highly dependent on tropical cyclone activity and again, mariners who travel during this time need to be mindful of stoppage ports along the way….prepare for delays in departure when a tropical cyclone is already in or might move into your routing path. Failing that, alternate routing options will need to be considered to increase sea room around cyclones.

The most optimal times to travel will be when weather regimes are in transition, from winter to summer and vice versa. During April, tropical cyclone activity is usually diminished, with cold fronts somewhat less of a factor than their wintertime counterparts. Likewise, in October, cold fronts tend to become as we progress through the month, and tropical cyclone activity is less frequent than later in the spring and during much of the summer.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF WEATHER PROVIDERS AND PROPER TRIP PLANNING**

As one can see, there’s a lot to consider and potential dangers to avoid along the way when making such a long transit. Questions invariably come to mind when making such a long trek to Australia: What is the best route to take? When should I travel? What do I do when adverse weather is on the way on my present course? That is where the guidance of a professional weather routing and forecast service comes in. We provide the answers to those questions and more, making for ease in travel planning, wherever your final destination may be. To put it another way, we are more than merely authors. We are forecasters and part of a routing and forecasting company that prides itself in taking the time to constantly monitor vessels and meteorological/oceanographic data, both prior to a vessel’s departure and while underway. This takes the guesswork away from captains, allowing for ease and peace of mind knowing there is someone “watching over you” and always available to provide proper guidance, be it from initial routing and providing forecast information, or to advise of changing weather conditions and alternate route recommendations promptly when conditions dictate.

Awareness is always key. By knowing what to expect and using proper guidance, any yachtman can be rest assured that he/she knows what lies ahead and can avoid any potential danger. It is this awareness that will make for enjoyable trips...the trip of a lifetime that will be remembered by all for years to come.

David Cannon is Yacht Operations Manager and Senior Meteorologist, Jeremy Davis is a Senior Meteorologist, and Garrett Gwiazda is a Meteorologist. All are employed at Weather Routing Inc. (WRI Ltd.), which has provided professional routing and meteorological consultation to mariners worldwide since 1961.
THE MEA CULPA returned to the Hawaiian Islands again in 2012 for the first time since 2007. Again, this was first port of entry into the United States. This entailed a few things, being greater than 300 gross tons and foreign flagged. A 96-hour Notice of Arrival (NOA) is required to be submitted online via the National Vessel Movement Center (http://www.nvmc.uscg.gov/). Masters must establish an account and submit online (https://enoad.nvmc.uscg.gov/). There is also a requirement of a Certificate of Financial Responsibility (COFR) which is issued through the National Pollution Funds Center (https://npfc.uscg.mil/cofr/default.aspx) and your own insurance company will need to fax a binder to NPFC. Also note, that it is a requirement for all non-US crew to have visa’s in their respective passports prior to entry into the United States. The B1/B2 visa is the only visa needed for boats intending to cruise the USA. A C1/D visa will not work for yacht crew as the entry is only for 29 days. The best way to obtain this visa is in the individuals own home country at the US Embassy. For any foreign flagged vessel visiting the United States for the first time, the US Coast Guard will dispatch a frigate to meet you on your inbound journey to your destination port, may it be Kona, on the big island of Hawaii or another port. All of the ports in Hawaii fall within the Honolulu US Coast Guard Captain of the Port Zone (https://homeport.uscg.mil/). Click port directory and pick one of the 42 ports in the USA. In 2007, we were instructed on where to meet the ship and advised to remain 12 nautical miles off the islands. Our overall experience of being boarded by the US Coast Guard was a professional, efficient, friendly meeting and inspection. Declare everything!

The latest regulations on electronic NOA’s is that it must be submitted for each port from US to US for the notice of arrival to the next US port. It has to be done 12 hours in advance for passages less than 24 hours; 24 hours in advance for passages between 24 and 96 hours in length and 96 hours in advance for all passages over 96 hours, such as a further trip to the continental USA. The fishing in Kona was the best in the Hawaiian Islands. We hooked a 450 pound blue marlin and caught some nice wahoo. For charter fishing in Kona there is a big fleet in Honokohau Harbor. We fished with Captain Teddy Hoogs of the “S/F Bwana” a 46’ Gamefisherman (hawaii5-0@hawaii.rr.com). There is a NOAA weather buoy (17° 32.60N 152° 28.25W) to the East of the southern end of the big island where we caught five species in an hour and half of fishing, including a blue marlin. The other NOAA Buoy is called the Tsunami Buoy at 19° 36.7N 156° 35.0W, which was very productive for Dorado.

Finding the buoys is sometimes challenging if the sea state is such and the radius is some 1800M. Anchoring in the Hawaiian Islands is best for vessels with at anchor stabilization. These islands are not protected with numerous bays and coves such as in French Polynesia, as they are large volcanic islands shooting out of the ocean floor. There is an active volcano flowing lava called Kilauea, which started erupting in January 1983 and is visible from visiting yachts on the South East coast of Hawaii’s. In Kona, we anchored at 19° 38.07N 155° 59.94W. Further South we anchored at Napoopoo where Captain Cook’s monument is located 19° 28.42N 155° 55.5W, and be sure to stay outside the marine park when anchoring. On the island of Maui we anchored in Maalaea Bay at 20° 46.8N 156° 28.3W and...
in Lahaina, Maui we anchored at 20° 51.6N 156° 40.66W, nearby the Coast Guard Buoy. We dropped off the guests at anchor via tender and anchored at 20° 47.27N 156° 30.50W which was much closer to the airport than from Lahaina. Just up the hill in Paia is a private getaway bed & breakfast “Mangolani” # (808) 579-3000 (davestein@hawaiiantel.net), hosted by surfer Dave Stein, who surfs huge waves on Maui’s famous “Jaws” break.

In 2007 we cleared into Kailua-Kona, anchored and met the Customs officers at the pier. (Tel: 808-334-1850 Hawaii, 808-522-8001 Oahu, 808-877-6013 Maui, 808-822-5673 Kauai). Later we traveled into the Ala Wai Harbor on Oahu and watched surfers as we transited the channel. The Waikiki Yacht Club is at 21° 17.20N 157° 50.57W the channel is clearly marked and don’t go outside it. Waikiki Yacht Club 808-955-4405 and the dockmaster Jerry Mount can be emailed at portcaptain@waikikiyachtclub.com. The yacht club was very receptive to superyachts and their crews in 2007. They provided good dockage, receptive emails, package receipt, allowance to utilize the yacht club (especially the bar), gold card for a car to park in lot, gate keys for crew, allowed sub contractors to come work on the vessel at your dock, provided guidance, introduction to the fuel dock as well as asking us to fly the Waikiki Yacht Club burgee. I understand that since our visit, the WYC has installed 3 phase shore power for visiting superyachts. There is a fuel dock within the basin and fuel and oil can be delivered in advance via truck. Hotel accommodation is bountiful in Honolulu, and Oahu is serviced by many major airlines. Ships stores, provisioning, wholesale food clubs such as Costco and other suppliers are plentiful on Oahu. Handy contacts include:

- Larger yachts might use the ship’s agent located in Honolulu who recently handled the M/Y Attessa IV. Moorage and fuel is available in the main port now at the new marina at Aloha Tower. In 2012, we cleared in with customs and immigration and moored at Ko Olina Marina & Resort, West of Pearl Harbor (http://www.koolina.com/). Ko Olina offers fuel, dockage, great shore power, golf and three hotels including two Marriott’s and one Disney property. The sensational Dockmaster is Chuck Krause and star office manager is Suzanne Krause. Contact them at c.krause@koolina.com and Suzanne@koolina.com. I did however still need to travel to the main Customs in the port near the Aloha Tower to obtain a US Cruising License. All services and contractors mentioned above will transit to Ko Olina for service. Be sure to call or email Les Vasconcellos (lesvas@hawaii.rr.com) for any bottom cleaning or underwater work. 808-955-3512.

One of the greatest experiences we had in Honolulu was catching up with world renowned photographer, videographer and now digital painter Phil Uhl of Channel Sea TV (uhl@aol.com). He photographed Mea Culpa while at sea, made a spectacular slideshow and we eventually purchased a digital one-of-a-kind painting for our owner. Check out his website at: http://www.philuhl.com/ Another strong recommendation is to rent a Harley Davidson Motorcycle and cruise around the islands. Oahu can be done in one long day, but the big island would take at least two. You’ll be amazed at how many “friends” you meet in one day! Lastly, I need to mention the best way by far to visit the Hawaiian Islands is on a race boat in the Transpacific Yacht Race from Los Angeles to Honolulu. The sleigh ride down the Molokai Channel to Diamond Head light finish is one you’ll remember for the rest of your life. When departing Oahu for California, typically the breeze is on the nose at 25 – 30 knots. We have always headed North and sailed around the Pacific High. We used a weather routing service from Applied Weather (http://www.appliedweather.com/) and their daily service Bon Voyage we’ve been using for years. Once to the High, cross through the center and exit the Northern side. Then you’ll be sure to enjoy wind on the beam and aft quarter for your passage onto California, Seattle or Alaska. There has been much speculation as to the amount of flotsam in the water in the Pacific High, and I even read that the area was the size of Texas. We found this not to be true. Certainly there were signs of fishing gear, ropes, buoys in the high, but fortunately we didn’t encounter the 165 ton dock structure that floated onto an Oregon Beach, just two days after we arrived into Seattle this year.

Many vessels transit to Kauai and stay in Nawiliwili (21° 57.25N 195° 20.7W) which is a port on the south end or anchor, to the North, in famous Hanalei Bay (22° 12.6N 199° 30.4W) and hope to see “Puff the Magic Dragon.” This enables a slight advantage on the Pacific High, as the islands are further West and this provides a better angle to the wind for the passage North. While in Kauai, we suggest visiting the Ka Hale O Luina (http://www. oluina.com/) and for a pampering be sure to call Bruna or Carter, (oluina@gmail.com) before you depart the natural beauty of the Hawaiian Islands.
Hawaii

Useful Statistics

State of Hawaii

GOVERNMENT: 50th state of the U.S.A.
LAND AREA: 29,311 km²
(10,931 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 1,374,810
LANGUAGE: English
CURRENCY: US Dollar (USD)
CLIMATE: Typical for a tropical area, but regarded as more subtropical because of the moderating effect of the surrounding ocean. Summer high temperatures seldom reach above around 27°C (the upper 80s °F) and winter temperatures (at low elevation) seldom dip below 16°C (the mid-60s °F). Snow falls at high elevations on Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa on the Big Island in some winter months. Mount Waialeale, on the island of Kauai has the second highest average annual rainfall on Earth of about 460 inches (38 ft. 4 in., or 11.7 m). Hurricanes are a rare occurrence in Hawaii.

UTC: -10
INTL DIALLING CODE: + 1 (808)

HAWAII is the southernmost state of the United States situated in the North Pacific Ocean, 3,700-km (2,300 miles) from the mainland USA. Also known as the Sandwich Islands, it is the longest island chain in the world, continuing to grow in area because of active extrusive lava flows, most notably from Kilauea (K’lauea). Hawaii’s tallest mountain, Mauna Kea, stands over 4,000 metres. The Hawaiian Archipelago comprises eight islands and atolls extending across a distance of 2,400 km (1,500 miles). Of these, eight high islands are considered the “main islands” and are located at the southeastern end of the archipelago. These islands are, in order from the northwest to southeast, Ni’ihau, Kaua’i, O’ahu, Moloka’i, L’na’i, Kaho’olawe, Maui, and Hawaii (by far the largest and called the “Big Island”). The isolation of the Hawaiian Islands in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, and the wide range of environments to be found, has resulted in a vast array of endemic flora and fauna. Hawaii has more endangered species per square mile than anywhere else. Local climates vary considerably on each island, (divisible into windward and leeward areas) based upon location relative to the higher mountains. Windward sides face the Northeast Trades and receive much more rainfall; leeward sides are drier, with less rain and less cloud cover. Superyachts frequently visit Hawaii in order to cruise the beautiful region, receive services in the main ports and to stopover for fuel when transiting between the US West Coast and the Western and Central Pacific. However it is necessary to submit ‘Notice of Arrival’ via NVMC, and Customs must issue a cruising permit. Fishing for Marlin and Wahoo is a popular sport, as is surfing, given Hawaii is the birthplace of boartriding.
Kiribati

Useful Statistics
Republic of Kiribati

GOVERNMENT: Unitary Republic
LAND AREA: 811 km² (313 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 103,500
LANGUAGE: English, I-Kiribati – a Micronesian dialect.
CURRENCY: Kiribati Dollar and Australian Dollar (AUD)
CLIMATE: Kiribati has a tropical maritime climate that is uniformly hot and humid, tempered by sea breezes. NW trade winds from March to October and westerly gales and heavy rains prevail from October to March. Average daily temperatures range between 28-32°C (79-90°F).
UTC: Tarawa +12, Canton Island -11, Christmas Island -10
INTL DIALLING CODE: +686

KIRIBATI is a very isolated island nation group of more than 30 islands with at least three in each hemisphere, located in the central tropical Pacific Ocean, dispersed over 3,500,000 km² (1,351,000 sq miles) around the point where the international date line and the equator cross. The name Kiribati is pronounced “kee-ree-bus” and was formerly known as the Gilbert Islands. Besides the 16 original Gilbert Islands, Kiribati also includes Banaba (Ocean Island), the eight Phoenix Islands and eight of the eleven Line Islands. All are low atolls enclosing lagoons, rarely more than 12ft (4m) above sea level. The notable exception is Banaba, which is volcanic. Not all islands are inhabited and little grows except coconut palms. Kiritimati (Christmas) Island is a small tropical Eden far off the beaten track for tourists. Once a place of whalers or coconut oil and copra harvesters, today Christmas Island is a protected wildlife haven. A barrier reef pulses with colourful sea creatures and its bird life draws devoted birdwatchers from around the world. Nature lovers will appreciate the wildlife sanctuary being nurtured here, a home to nearly 20 species of birds and surrounded by water teeming with marine life. In 1777, the famed explorer Captain Cook named the island after spotting its landmass on Christmas Eve. It is a convenient stopover point for superyachts on passage between Hawaii and French Polynesia. A site of former British nuclear tests, the island was handed over to Kiribati on that country’s independence. The island is a sanctuary to millions of sea birds and access to the breeding areas is prohibited. Fanning Island (Tabuaerean), only 160 miles farther north, is a typical Pacific island – clean, welcoming and self-sufficient. These Line Islands, together with Washington, belong to Kiribati and their local names have been confused, and are often wrongly depicted in nautical publications. Navigational aids are not very reliable and it is reported that most atolls are without lights after midnight. Most facilities available in Kiribati are concentrated on Tarawa, which comprises several islands around a lagoon. Facilities at the other islands are basic with few imported goods and a limited selection of locally produced fruit and vegetables.
Galapagos

Useful Statistics
A province of the Republic of Ecuador

GOVERNMENT: Unitary Multiparty Republic
LAND AREA: 7,880 km² (4,897 sq miles)
MARINE RESERVE: 138,000 km²
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 20,000
LANGUAGE: Spanish, English
CURRENCY: US Dollar (USD)
CLIMATE: Lying on the equator, the ocean currents determine the weather. Conditions are cool (average temperatures from 21-23°C - 70-74°F), cloudy and mostly dry from June to December; and becomes warm, sunny with a few afternoon showers from January to May (average temps from 25-28°C - 77-83°F).
UTC: -6
INTL DIALLING CODE: +593

THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS, a unique volcanic archipelago comprising of 19 islands and over 40 smaller islets, is one of the most favoured sailing areas in the world. The Galapagos are known the world over for their tame and unique wildlife, sea lions, birds and iguanas, living amidst a barren volcanic scenery. In 1535 the islands were discovered accidentally by Thomas de Berlanga, and later visited by buccaneers and pirates. The Galapagos are located in the Pacific Ocean, 600 miles off the west coast of South America, Ecuador and the Panama Canal. Ocean currents have created this geological, zoological, and biological wonder. This convergence made way for one of the planet’s most compelling compilation of endemic flora and fauna. All of the archipelago’s reptiles, half of the birds, one third of the plants and a quarter of the fish are endemic to these islands. Named one of the Seven Underwater Wonders of the World, the Galapagos Marine Reserve is the second largest reserve in the

SUPERYACHT SERVICES

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RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS


APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM PUERTO AYORA TO:

Balboa 794'  
Marquesas Islands 2,984'  
Papeete 3,742'  
Honolulu 4,214'  
Rarotonga 4,354'
world. Large schools of harmless Hammerhead Sharks, Manta Rays, and frequent Whale Shark sightings are perhaps some of these island’s main attractions; but snorkelling with penguins and enjoying the awesome underwater ballet of the Sea Lions are two of the most memorable experiences one can have. On dry land, visitors are spellbound while observing seemingly unbothered Albatross and the quirky Blue Footed Boobies carrying on their courtship rituals. Visitors can ride horseback back in time to visit the gigantic Galapagos Tortoises in their natural and “dinosaur like” environment. The islands are one of the 22 provinces of Ecuador and the Ecuadorian authorities take their custody of this wildlife sanctuary seriously, with 97% of the land proclaimed as protected National Park, and 100% of the waters as Marine Reserve. The Galapagos is becoming a very popular superyacht cruising destination and stopover point for superyachts sailing from Panama to the Marquesas and on to the South Pacific. There is a process to undergo in order to obtain the necessary permits to cruise in the islands’ protected areas and this is best managed by one of the main superyacht agents that are experts in providing visiting superyachts the information, support and services they require.

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS
Yachtgala Yacht Services

We arrange cruising permits for yachts within the Galapagos Islands. We offer you the best quality service at the most competitive prices.

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Easter Island

Useful Statistics

Territory of Chile

GOVERNMENT: Republic
LAND AREA: 163,6 km² (63 sq. miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 5,034
LANGUAGE: Rapa Nui, Chile
CURRENCY: Chilean peso (US dollars are also welcome)
CLIMATE: Subtropical climate influenced by winds and ocean currents, and an annual average temperature of 20°C. In summer, the temperature ranges from 15-28°C. February is the hottest month, whereas in winter (June to August), temperatures range between 14-22°C. Rain falls steadily throughout the year, although showers are only sporadic and last a short time.
UTC: -6
INTL DIALLING CODE: +56

EASTER ISLAND is over 2,000 nautical miles from the nearest population centres, (Tahiti and Chile), making it one of the most isolated places on Earth. A triangle of volcanic rock in the South Pacific – it is best known for the giant stone monoliths, known as Moai, that dot the coastline. Known as “Rapa Nui” or “Isla de Pascua”, Easter Island belongs to Chile. The capital is Hanga Roa where the vast majority of the people live. Easter Is. is made up of three volcanoes: Poike, Rano Kau and Terevaka and remains one of the most unique places you will ever encounter; an open air museum showcasing a fascinating, but unfortunately lost, culture. The Rapanui are among the friendliest people you will ever meet, and the landscape is truly amazing – with its volcanic craters, lava formations, beaches, brilliant blue water, and archaeological sites. Lying at the south-eastern point of the Polynesian triangle, visiting yachts are increasingly calling at this isolated island. The anchorage off the main settlement of Hanga Roa is open but sheltered from the prevailing south-easterly winds. If the wind turns, one can move to Anakena Bay, site of some of the most interesting excavations and statues on the island, or to Huitui in the east. Swell is a problem in all these anchorages. Tourism, fishing, agriculture and on-going archaeological studies are the primary activities of the island. The 3500 inhabitants, most of whom are Rapa Nui of Polynesian descent, live around Hanga Roa, the only town.
Pitcairn Island

Useful Statistics

GOVERNMENT: Overseas territory of the UK
LAND AREA: 5 km² (3 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 67
LANGUAGE: English, Pitkern
CURRENCY: New Zealand dollar (NZD)
CLIMATE: Tropical; hot and humid; modified by southeast trade winds; rainy season (Nov to Mar).
UTC: -8
INTL DIALLING CODE: +67

THE PITCAIRN ISLANDS form the south easternmost extension of the geological archipelago of the Tuamotus of French Polynesia, and consist of: Pitcairn Island, Oeno Island (atoll with 5 islets), Henderson Island and Ducie Island (atoll with 4 islets). Only three square miles of land, with steep cliffs all around, the sole anchorage is at Bounty Bay which is tenable only in settled weather. Pitcairn is the least populated jurisdiction in the world, and is a dependency of Britain and is the last remaining in the Pacific. Only Pitcairn Island is inhabited and is accessible only by boat through Bounty Bay. Henderson Island supports a rich variety of animals in its nearly inaccessible interior. It is also capable of supporting a small human population, but access is difficult, its outer shores comprising steep limestone cliffs of sharp coral. The islands have only about 48 inhabitants (from nine families).

Marie Grise

CAPTAIN’S LOG BY CAPTAIN MARC GRISE – MY LONE RANGER

Latitude 25.04 south and longitude 130.06 west. It is roughly 2170km (1350 miles) east south-east of Tahiti and just over 6600km (4100 miles) from Panama (source: pitcairn.gov.pn)

If you can get the chance to visit Pitcairn Island it will certainly be an experience and a memory to savour. The fifty or so Pitcairn Islanders welcome visitors and take great pride in showing people around the island. Few ships stop at Pitcairn anymore, except for a supply ship that comes from New Zealand about three times a year, and five to 10 cruise ships that pass by hoping for a chance to get their passengers ashore. The remainder of visitors come by yacht.

If possible, prior to arrival, contact the administration on the email admin@pitcairn.gov.pn noting intention to visit and by VHF on arrival. They will let you know the local sea and swell conditions at the wharf as landings are not always possible.

The main anchorage is approximately three cables (550m) north of Bounty Bay in 12m to 18m of water on sand. There is not a lot of shelter and expect a swell to be present.

The landing is at the small wharf in Bounty Bay. It is tricky at best as the swell breaks at the end of the pier and surges into the small bay. A decent inflatable dingy with outboard motor is most practical and once inside the protection of the pier, it can be relatively calm once tucked in to the wharf but there will always be a surge. Keep valuables in a waterproof bag in case of any mishaps! At the pier is a large boat shed in which the island’s long boats are housed and launched. As regards to formalities, upon making a safe landing, you will likely be greeted by most of the islanders on their quad bikes. Brenda Christian, the local policewoman takes care of the few formalities and may be invited up to her home for coffee and cake to stamp the passports. The Pitcairn Islanders are extremely hospitable and will be delighted to take the guest and crew around the island by quad bike.

SITES TO SEE

Adamstown Square: The church, court house and meeting hall, general store and the anchor of the HMS Bounty are features at the focal point of the Pitcairn Islanders’ community. Fletcher Christian’s Cave: A short but steep hike to the cave where Fletcher Christian would spend a lot of his time, and gives panoramic views over most of the island and Adamstown.
St Paul’s Point: A spectacular natural swimming hole at the eastern side of the island.
John Adams Grave: The grave of the last surviving mutineer from the Bounty. The Islanders will sell or trade fruit and vegetables, honey, wooden carvings, etc, for items less easily obtained on the island. T-bone steaks and useful spare parts are among items good for bartering.

Being so isolated, the island’s ecology is very precious and visitors pose a real threat to upset the natural balance. The introduction of pests and plants must be avoided so commonsense should be exercised at all times. Simple precautions should be undertaken to ensure that footwear and clothing is clean and free of dirt and seeds before setting ashore. Bee keeping and honey production is another trade on the island.

The island supports a rich variety of animals in its nearly inaccessible interior. It is also capable of supporting a small human population, but access is difficult, its outer shores comprising steep limestone cliffs of sharp coral. The islands have only about 48 inhabitants (from nine families).

SUPERYACHT SERVICES

There are no superyacht or other marine facilities on Pitcairn Islands.

Government:
T: +649 366 0186
E: admin@pitcairn.gov.pn
W: www.government.pn

RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS

Lone Ranger

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM PITCAIRN ISLAND TO:

Papeete 1,195’
Galapagos 2,731’
Valparaiso 3,087’
Easter Island 3,444’
Balboa 3,617’

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

Tahiti Handbook – David Stanley
South Pacific Anchorages - W Clay
Charlie’s Charts of Polynesia – Wood
Mutiny on the Bounty – Nordhoff
Landfalls of Paradise – E Hinz

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.visitpitcairn.pn/yachts.html
www.lonelyplanet.com/pitcairn-island
www.government.pn
www.pitcairn.southpacific.org
www.wunderground.com (search)
Imagine this. One hundred and eighteen islands, of all shapes and sizes, scattered over an area of tropical ocean the size of Europe. Across this ocean, trade winds blow steadily from the south-east for most of the year, tempering the heat of the sun. The islands are surrounded by coral reefs, through which there are passes which admit vessels of all sizes, from outrigger canoes to cruise liners. Inside the passes are limpid lagoons where the sea is never turbulent. On the outer edge of the lagoons are lines of low, uninhabited islets. Called ‘motu’, they are covered in coconut palms, ironwood trees and pandanus shrubs and encircled by white sand beaches. Close to the shores of these motu a boat can drop anchor in a sheltered bay and its passengers can be tendered ashore. There they can explore the tiny island, then lie on the beach and watch the sun go down over other islands on the horizon, silhouetted against a flaring South Pacific sky.

A FANTASY, YES? A fantasy, no. Such islands really do exist. They are found in French Polynesia, the primary island of which is Tahiti. Beyond Tahiti there are one hundred and seventeen other islands, and the sea surrounding them comprises one of the finest sailing areas on Earth. The indigenous people of Tahiti’s islands are Polynesian. Migrating out from the archipelagos of South-East Asia about three thousand years ago, they became by necessity seafaring people who used their sailing skills to first reach the islands of Melanesia, in the south-west Pacific Ocean. From there they continued to filter east, voyaging across the open ocean in large, double-hulled canoes hewn from rainforest trees. This migration occurred two thousand years before European seamen crossed the Atlantic Ocean. Sailing against the prevailing winds, navigating by the stars, interpreting the drift of ocean currents, by about the year 1200 AD these consummate South Pacific seafarers were able to reach and inhabit the apexes of what became known as the Polynesian Triangle. These were the Hawaiian Islands in the north, Easter Island-Rapanui in the east and New Zealand-Aotearoa in the south. And innumerable islands within the vast triangle. ‘Polynesia’ means ‘many islands’. These include the 118 islands known today as French Polynesia. The indigenous people who inhabit them, known traditionally as ‘Maori’, remained seafarers, making return voyages in their double-hulled canoes between islands as far apart as Samoa and the Marquesas, New Zealand and Rarotonga, Tahiti and Hawaii. From the late eighteenth century onwards, Europeans explored the Pacific and settled the islands of Polynesia, bringing their radically different culture and transforming the traditional way of life. The
British, then the French, came to Tahiti and her islands, and later, Chinese immigrants were introduced by the French. Intermarriage led to the population becoming a unique racial and cultural melange of Polynesian, European and Asian, and remains so to this day. Of the total population of 200,000, three-quarters of French Polynesia’s people live on the islands of Tahiti and nearby Moorea. French Polynesia’s 118 islands are in five clusters, spread over a sea area of four million square kilometres. The five groups are the Society Islands, which includes Tahiti, the Tuamotu Archipelago, the Marquesas Islands, the Austral Islands and the Gambier Group. California is 6,200km north-east of Tahiti, Australia is 5,700km to the west and Tokyo is 8,800km to the north-west. France, which declared Tahiti and her islands an ‘Overseas Country’ in 2004, is 17,000 km away. Although all of Tahiti’s islands are of volcanic origin, they are of two very different geological types, namely high islands and atolls. The high islands have at their core jagged, forest-covered peaks sometimes rising to over one thousand metres above sea level. Largest as well as the most populous of the high islands is Tahiti itself. Its highest peak, Mt Orohena, soars to 2241m above sea level. Other major high islands are the other Society Islands: Moorea, Huahine, Raiatea, Tahaa, Maupiti and Bora Bora. All are mountainous and forested, and surrounded by coral reefs and tranquil lagoons. Atolls are the ancient remnants of high islands, sunk almost to sea level. The 76 atolls of the Tuamotu Archipelago are scattered across the central Pacific Ocean like a brilliant galaxy. Each atoll consists of bracelets of long slender motus, made of coral sand and rock, enclosing huge lagoons which are protected from the open ocean. Breaches in the motus allow ocean water to enter the lagoon with the incoming tide, flushing its waters and so keeping them pure. These breaches also allow ocean-going yachts and launches to enter and leave the lagoon. Islands are meant to be approached from the sea, as Tahiti’s islands were for thousands of years. Today French Polynesia has a comprehensive, sophisticated infrastructure to accommodate private sailing vessels, with a great diversity of nautical options – blue water, lagoon exploration, inter-island voyaging. And whatever the size of the vessel, the received pleasures are intense. Standing on the deck of a yacht or launch, seeing a smudge of shadow and cloud appear on the horizon, then watching that smudge gradually become more distinct, is an incomparable experience. Drawing closer, saw-toothed mountains, topped with a toupee of cloud, appear to rise slowly from the Pacific. In French Polynesia many of the high islands are in close proximity to one another, so that profiles of neighbouring islands are always present. This is particularly true of the Society Islands, which are divided into the Leeward Islands (to the west) and the Windward Islands (to the east). Tahiti and Moorea are in the Windward Group, and on Tahiti’s northern coast is French Polynesia’s capital and principal port town, Papeete (population 70,000). A bustling, cosmopolitan city which spreads up
the slopes of its mountain hinterland, Papeete is reminiscent of a city on the French Riviera. It has an extensive port where large yachts can moor, as well as a marina for all types of pleasure craft. At any time of the year there will be vessels of all sizes, along with the ferries to neighbouring Moorea island, tied up just below Papeete’s waterfront drive, Boulevard Pomare. The waterfront here is also a popular public gathering place, with many restaurants and craft boutiques at paved To’ata Square at its western end, and mobile snack bars and an open entertainment area at Vaiete Square, at the eastern end. Tahitian cultural shows are also held regularly at Vaiete Square, and can be enjoyed by visitors whose yachts are tied up in the nearby marina. Across Boulevard Pomare from the main wharf are Papeete’s downtown shops, the central business district and the town’s vast, two-level ‘Le Marché’ (public market), one of the best in the South Pacific. Papeete is also the entry point for overseas visitors to Tahiti who arrive by air. Faa’a Airport, the base for both international and domestic flights, is a ten-minute drive west of downtown Papeete.

Tahiti and Moorea are only 17 km apart, separated by the Sea of the Moon. Large catamarans and ferry boats cross this sea many times a day, connecting Papeete, French Polynesia’s capital, with the port of Moorea, Vaiare. Moorea is a popular holiday island where all aquatic activities are catered for. Two giant bays, Bae d’Opunou and Baie de Cook, deeply indent the island’s northern coast, and make ideal anchorages for large yachts or launches. Enclosed by towering mountains, these twin bays provide ready entry and egress to Moorea’s forested interior, which rises to Mt Tohiea (1207m). The Leeward Islands of the Society Group – Huahine, Raiatea, Tahaa, Maupiti and Bora Bora – are clustered about 200 km north-west of Tahiti. Only half a day’s sailing apart, all four are sublimely beautiful high islands. Deep passes through their coral reefs allow even large vessels to enter their extensive surrounding lagoons, which are ideal for anchoring, cruising, swimming, snorkelling and scuba diving. Each island also has a port and a waterfront town where the vessels can be provisioned. The Leeward Islands towns are much quieter than Papeete, and their sleepy ambience suits the territory perfectly. Most attractive of them is Fare, on lovely Huahine Island. Fare’s one main street of shops, cafes and restaurants is directly across from the island’s little harbour, where inter-island trading ships and private vessels tie up. Fare is everybody’s notion of what a South Sea island port town should be. And being located on the west coast of Huahine means that nearby Raiatea, the island which is sacred to all Polynesians, and the island which shares Raiatea’s lagoon, Tahaa, lie across the western horizon. Sitting in a restaurant on Fare’s waterfront, cool drink in hand, watching the sun go down over Raiatea and Tahaa, is one of the South Pacific’s most sensuous experiences. Until you anchor off the west coast of Raiatea and Tahaa, and on deck with cool drink in hand, watch the sun going down over nearby, fabled Bora Bora, which is even more enchanting. There is only one pass through Bora Bora’s reef, but the island’s town, Vaitape, has every facility for seaborne visitors, including a substantial wharf, banks, restaurants, supermarkets and an excellent craft market on the waterfront. And Bora Bora’s lagoon is one of the most beautiful in the South Pacific, with its variegated shades ofblinding blue and a long chain of motus along the eastern fringe of the lagoon. Due west of Bora Bora, half a day’s sail away, is the mini-high island of Maupiti. It has passes at both its southern and northern ends, broad motus surrounding a sapphire-blue lagoon and a central island rising symmetrically to the peak of Mt Teurafaiatu (372m). Utterly au naturel, Maupiti is noted for its secure anchorages, rich bird life, fruit trees and motu beaches. Raiatea does not have as many beaches as the other Leeward Islands, but it is an island of great cultural significance as well as having the second busiest port in French Polynesia. Its waterfront town, Uturoa, boasts a large, modern marina and a deep harbour which accommodates vessels of all sizes. Big enough to have the support facilities cruising vessels require, but small enough to be explored on foot, Uturoa makes a fine base for cruising the extensive lagoons of Raiatea and exploring the island’s enormous sound, Baie de Faaroa, on the island’s east coast. Faaroa Bay is enclosed by mountains, including Mt Toomaru (1017m), the island’s highest peak. Fed by French Polynesia’s only navigable river, the deep bay was the centre of ancient Tahiti’s canoe building industry. The hulls of the great canoes were hewn here, from giant rainforest trees, launched into the bay and taken around the coast to the largest and most sacred marae in all Polynesia, Taputapuatea, which occupies a level promontory opposite a deep pass in Raiatea’s reef. Here the canoes were blessed by priests before their departure for other far-flung islands in the Polynesian Triangle. Taputapuatea was the Cape Canaveral of ancient Polynesia. Just a short sail across the lagoon, directly north of Raiatea, is its sister island, Tahaa. Lush and serene, with immaculate villages, Tahaa is
renowned for its vanilla pods. Vanilla vines thrive, along with other tropical crops, in the luxuriant centre of the island. Two deep bays penetrate Tahaa’s flanks, Baie de Hurepiti on the west coast and Baie de Haamene on the east coast. Both make superb anchorages for yachts and launches. Black pearls, farmed in the island’s deep bays, are another product which Tahaa is famous for.

Further beyond Tahiti, the islands are less visited and accordingly have a much slower pace of life. The atolls of the Tuamotus are another world entirely, their motus being only a metre or two above sea level. But within their sheltered lagoons are some of the finest dive sites and richest aquatic life in the Pacific, with an underwater visibility of many metres. The most developed of the 76 Tuamotu atolls are Rangiroa, Fakarava, Tikehau and Manihi. Tikehau has a wonderful seabird sanctuary island in its lagoon, while Rangiroa’s Tiputa Pass is world-renowned for its ‘shark wall’, where up to 300 sharks of various species gather to feed. Harmless to humans, the sharks and other large fish make Tiputa Pass a diver’s nirvana. Cruising vessels can enter almost all the Tuamotus’ atolls’ vast lagoons via deep passages through the reef, then readily find safe anchorages within them. These lagoons are like sheltered seas within the Pacific Ocean. In 2006 Fakarava atoll’s environmental purity was internationally recognised when it was added to UNESCO’s Man and Biosphere (MAB) programme, a world list of places of exceptional natural beauty where local communities are actively involved in their environment’s conservation. This is a fitting tribute to Fakarava’s lagoon and the pride which the atoll’s population of 700 takes in its protection.

For the adventurous sailor, the Marquesas Islands offer something truly unique. Wild, rugged and remote, this group of twelve islands 1,500km north-east of Tahiti is further from any continental land mass than any other islands on Earth. Steep cliffs plunge into the ocean, waves crash against the base of the cliffs and wild goats and horses inhabit the islands’ ravines and forests. Unusually, the islands of the Marquesas are not surrounded by coral reefs and so lie exposed to the ocean swells. But there are also beautiful bays here, sheltered from the winds and swells, which make up some of the most picturesque anchorages in the world. These include Taioho Bay on Nuku Hiva, Taaoa Bay on Hiva Oa and Aneo Bay, on Ua Pou. Perhaps the ultimate cruise itinerary in French Polynesia would be one which departs from the port of Papeete, cruises through the Leeward Islands, calling at Huahine, Raiatea-Tahaa, Bora Bora and Maupiti, then sailing due east to Fakarava atoll in the Tuamotus. After a stopover at peaceful Rotoava village, inside Fakarava’s huge lagoon, a north-east course is then set, for the Marquesas Islands. Here fine anchorages and fascinating local cultures can be experienced at islands such as Ua Pou, Nuku Hiva, Hiva Oa and Fatu Hiva. The return voyage to Tahiti can then be made via Rangiroa atoll, for a swim with the sharks and rays in Tiputa Pass. Bon voyage!
French Polynesia

Useful Statistics

Territory of French Polynesia

GOVERNMENT: Overseas Territory of France

AREA: 4,167 km² (1,609 sq. miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2009) 287,032

LANGUAGE: French, although Tahitian is spoken by the majority of Polynesians.

CURRENCY: CFP Franc

CLIMATE: French Polynesia has a tropical climate which is hot and humid from November to April but cooler and drier for the remainder of the year. Temperatures are moderated by the prevailing SE trade winds.

UTC: -10

INTL DIALLING CODE: +689

FRENCH POLYNESIA consists of some 118 islands in five scattered archipelagos in the South Pacific Ocean. These comprise five island groups being: (1) The Society Islands which include Tahiti and Bora Bora, (2) the Tuamotu Archipelago, (3) the Marquesas Islands, (4) the Gambier Archipelago and (5) the Austral Islands. Most of the islands are of volcanic origin, mountainous and ringed by coral reefs while the Tuamotu and Gambier island groups are low lying coral atolls. Tahiti at 17°40’S, 149°30’W, the largest of the Society Islands, is the most populated and best known island, holding 69% of the total population. Tahiti is much more than an island, it’s a state of mind. Papeete, capital of Tahiti, on the NW coast, is the chief port and trading centre. It’s also a provocateur luring people to her shores. Today the island is a charming blend of Polynesian “joie de vivre” and Gallic sophistication. But venture out from Papeete, and you’ll find a landscape of rugged mountains, lush rainforests, cascading waterfalls and deserted beaches. Tahara Hill and Matavai Bay is the perfect viewpoint of the bay where Lt. William Bligh’s HMS Bounty anchored in the novel, “Mutiny on the Bounty.” No name captures the imagination of paradise as well as the island of Bora Bora. Majestic mountains sculpted by ancient volcanoes, a shimmering lagoon and a barrier reef dotted with tiny islets welcome visitors to perhaps the most stunning island in the South Pacific, and generations of travellers, including novelist James Michener, regarded Bora Bora as an earthly paradise. To discover the Polynesia of Melville, Gauguin and Michener, you must visit Moorea, just 12 miles across the lagoon from Tahiti. This former haunt of Tahitian royalty is a place where you will still see fishermen paddling outrigger canoes, pareo-clad women strolling along the roads and children fishing from island bridges. Tahiti is the epicentre of superyacht activity in the eastern part of the South Pacific, and has been for many years. Accordingly, there are well established agents, marinas, facilities and service providers that are all experts in supplying visiting superyachts with the services they require and are used to receiving in other yachting centres around the world.
THE TUAMOTU ARCHIPELAGO forms the Earth’s largest group of 78 atolls and islands. From Mataiva in the north to Temoe in the far south, this archipelago forms a loose chain stretching north-westerly to south-easterly. The variety of atolls adds to the scenic landscape, many of which have delicate, almost perfectly circular rings of coral that sit over extinct underwater volcanoes. The atolls of Tuamotu are some of the largest and most impressive in the world. Divers from all over the world flock to Rangiroa, and for good reason. Its dazzling white-sand beaches and 42-mile aquamarine lagoon are filled with unique marine life and magnificent underwater scenery. Rangiroa, meaning “long sky,” is the largest atoll in French Polynesia, and the second largest in the world. It has more than 240 islets separated by more than 100 small channels that make up its ring of coral, and in the centre of the inside lagoon is the Paio islet. Discover this long ribbon of islets located in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and marvel at this remote and rarely visited coral atoll. The second biggest atoll of the Tuamotu archipelago, Fakarava is an interesting atoll to visit and was classified as a biosphere reserve by UNESCO.

THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS located at 9°00S, 139°30W, are the furthest island group in the world from any continent, jutting out of the open Pacific lying between 400-600 miles south of the equator and approximately 1,000 miles NE of Tahiti. Nuku Hiva is the largest island in the Marquesas archipelago and offers many protected anchorages. Put on the map by author-adventurer Herman Melville, these islands are breathtakingly beautiful. Brooding volcanic pinnacles pierce the landscape, while the lush vegetation overflows with sweet-smelling plumeria, bougainvillea, orchids, spider lilies, flamboyant, ginger, ylang-ylang, jasmine and tiare flowers. Its volcanic origins are responsible for the dramatic scenery and vast natural harbour that exists due to the partial collapse of a volcano’s caldera. Hiva Oa is the largest of the southern Marquesas Islands. Its beaches are postcard perfect, with spectacular mountain views and sparkling waters. You can ride horses, hike to archaeological sites, snorkel or dive in the myriad underwater caves, or just relax in this remote and unspoiled Polynesian paradise. Hiva Oa is the final resting place of painter Paul Gauguin and singer Jacques Brel. They are both buried in the cemetery that overlooks the town of Atuona. The Baie des Vierges on the island of Fatu Hiva is perhaps the most scenic anchorage in the Marquesas.

The Marquesas is the usual refuelling stopover point for superyachts transiting between Tahiti and the Galapagos, a leg of some 3,000 NM.
In February 2011 we made the milestone passage of the Panama Canal again as the start of yet another season in the fantastic Pacific Ocean. For me this is my third season in the Pacific on as many different yachts.

The first yacht on which I came across the Pacific was named Alumercia, back in 2002. This yacht and its owner were all about exploring the world and so we did!

The second time in the Pacific, I was onboard Twizzle, a very sophisticated Feadship and I think that throughout our South Pacific season we managed to maintain the very highest of lifestyle onboard even in the most remote places, like Nue and PNG.

This season we are aboard Ocean Victory and are on the owner’s cruise around the world. Again this is a very comfortable Feadship and bigger again than the former yachts.

Coming across the Pacific for the first time onboard Alumercia, I thought this was going to be a once in a lifetime experience! But here I am, having just completed my third season in the Pacific. I feel extremely fortunate to have worked for owners that want to take their yachts to this fantastic cruising ground that the Pacific Ocean is.

The Panama Canal passage is always an exciting event. The efficient help of Associated Yacht Services (Alessandro Risi) yachts@shipsagent.com makes it trouble free. Panama is a great place for a large stock-up of provisions and stores, because although it is possible to get virtually everything out in the Pacific Islands it is generally going to be a lot more expensive. Yachts up to around our size of 75 metres can get in to the Flamenco Marina on the Pacific side of the canal which is great for loading and bunkering.

We went on to Costa Rica first, which is fantastic cruising in February to April. By the time we were ready for the big leg to French Polynesia we were informed that the Flashpoint of the available fuel in Costa Rica had dropped to below the minimum 60° that we (and IMO regulations) require. So we could not get the fuel for our big crossing in Costa Rica. I looked into alternatives and contemplated steaming back to Panama, but we researched a much closer option in Nicaragua and this proved a very good option.

We took our bunkers in the port of Corinto, which is an ISPS commercial port. Our fuel agent set us up with the local agency Griffith; www.jgriffith.com. The whole operation was handled professionally and the fuel was of good quality and much cheaper than in Costa Rica. Good to remember when cruising in Costa Rica.

So with full tanks of fuel and fridges and freezer stocked full we got underway, with no landfall until French Polynesia. Before long we settled into our routine for the next 12 days or so. The Equator crossing always provides a good opportunity to break the routine and so it proved again this time. The Pollywogs were presented to Captain Neptune and his Queen and tested if they were worthy of crossing his seas. Everyone was allowed across the line, so onwards we went. On the 23rd March we dropped anchor first in Baie de Taioatae, Nuku Hiva, in the Marquesas Islands. This is the first and most remote group of islands of French Polynesia you come to when voyaging from America. They are rugged edged islands and look like you have just arrived on a set of Jurassic Park. A representative of the agency Tahiti Ocean, Anne Moetai (www.tahiti-ocean.com) was there waiting to clear us in. This place has a slow island pace, but offers the first amazing impression of the Polynesian culture. If absolutely necessary it is possible to get fuel here, but if you can avoid it and make it to Tahiti, I would recommend that. It is also possible to fly guests out to here. On my first Pacific crossing I actually had guests leaving from here who were onboard for the Pacific crossing.

If you do stop in Nuku Hiva make sure to have a tour around the island as it is truly unique. The scenery is breathtaking and the island has
many remains of ancient Polynesian cultures. The bay more to the west, Baie de Taioa, is also an absolute must see. This is one of the most dramatic bays that I know of anywhere. I have not personally visited any of the other Marquesas Islands, but they seem to offer some very interesting exploration opportunities for yachts seeking remoteness and discovery.

From here we moved on to Rangiroa, which is part of the Tuamotus. This incredible rim of Atolls is the true playground of French Polynesia. The coral reef islands that make up these atolls are barely above sea level, but offer sheltered anchorages and incredible beaches. We stopped for a couple of days just so the crew could have a sneak peak before carrying on to Papeete to start preparations for our guests arrival.

Papeete on Tahiti is the capital and center of French Polynesia. It is a place with lots of hustle and bustle, which you would not immediately expect in the middle of the Pacific, but offer sheltered anchorages and incredible beaches. We stopped for a couple of days just so the crew could have a sneak peak before carrying on to Papeete to start preparations for our guests arrival.

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Tahiti is part of the Society group of islands of French Polynesia. This is where you also find the iconic islands Moorea and Bora Bora, but also Raiatea, Tahaa, Huahine and Maupiti. The Society Islands are the most developed of the whole of French Polynesia and are the ones where you will find the famous resorts. There are many great anchorages around these islands and many luxury resorts, restaurants, spas and all sorts of shore entertainment.

When planning guest cruises it pays to plan the trip to go mostly downwind. The swell between the islands and especially between The Tuamotus and the Society group can be moderate. We found preparing the yacht for cruising in Tahiti (Papeete) is great, but the Tuamotus have become our favorite spot to have our guests flying in to (Rangiroa or Fakarava) and starting the cruise up there; there is really no better way to start a holiday! Walking from the runway to a jetty, while seeing the yacht anchored in pristine turquoise water, boarding the tender and in less than five minutes enjoying a cocktail aboard the yacht surrounded by palm tree rimmed beaches. French Polynesia is of course also a world class destination for diving and snorkeling and in particular the Tuamotus. I do not think there are many other diving sites where it is possible to see so many BIG fish at once. You can encounter here anything from schools of Manta Rays, dolphins, lots and lots of sharks, etc. The corals here are not as varied and colorful as seen on other diving locations, but here it is about large amounts of big fish. Also for guests that are not into diving there is enough to get excited about; beaches, snorkeling, pearl farms or just stunning...
CAPTAIN’S LOG TAHITI

scenery to enjoy from the yacht’s decks. We have often used to great satisfaction the specialist dive guide services of Rodolphe Holler of Tahiti Private Expeditions; (tahiti-private-expeditions@mail.pf) who set us up for diving in the Tuamotus. They provided us with an onboard dive guide that was extraordinary and made the whole experience magical and memorable for our guests. Remember before heading back to the Society Islands that the diving there is much less spectacular, so get your diving in the Tuamotus part of your cruise; from Fakarava, Toau, Apataki, Rangiroa and many more places to choose, from very remote to relatively developed (Rangiroa).

The first anchorage back in the Society group for us was Cook’s Bay on the spectacular island of Moorea. Make sure you arrive there in the morning when guests are just having breakfast. Our crossing through the night from the Tuamotus had been a little rough, with rather large swells on the beam, but the stunning arrival in Moorea the next morning made this all forgotten quickly! The next bay D’Opunohu is almost as breathtaking and from here you can reach by short tender ride “Sting Ray City”, a unique opportunity to hand feed rays while standing and swimming in the water amongst them. Moorea is a beautiful, tranquil island well worth exploring by car or scooter; the view point over the two bays is incredible. There is also a great restaurant here called “La Villa Des Sens” if your guests are up for a gastronomie treat.

From here it is a bit of a steam to Huahine, but downwind and easily doable in a day. Our first stop in the large Moroe Bay was great for visiting the pearl farm out in the lagoon. This is very interesting to see and gives a good idea how these magical black pearls de Tahiti get produced. On the entrance of this bay there is a guy called Marc (organized through Tahiti-Ocean) that organizes private picnics, set-up in one foot deep crystal clear water. This can be even further lightened by Polynesian entertainment and music. Port Bourayne on the West side of the Island is an
anchorage not to miss. The small passage to this anchorage after entering the lagoon on the Island’s Westside is very pretty, especially late afternoon. The lagoon of Huahine is great for an exploration tour by jet ski and/or tender. Most parts of the lagoon are too shallow for the main vessel to go around, but well worth seeing. The jet ski offers a unique perspective here.

On to the next Island, which are actually two islands Raiatea and Tahaa within one lagoon. Raiatea has a reasonable town and a nice bay Faaroa. This gives access to a possible river tour on the Faaroa river at the far end of the bay. But what is an absolute must is the north side of Tahaa. The rim of small little sandy islands (motus) there are fantastic. Just on the North West end it has a beautiful anchorage off Tautau and the “Le Taha’a” Island Resort & Spa. Guests can treat themselves here to body treatments; soothe, moisturise and relax. It is the only one of its kind in the archipelago and it offers unsurpassed views of the island of Bora Bora, on the ocean side.

And on to our final destination of this cruise, Bora Bora, with its iconic shape and romantic name. I think that it probably has a few too many hotels and resorts on it, but it ticks the box for places to see and visit once in your life. Guests can satisfy their pearl shopping needs here and can pick and choose from several luxurious shore facilities for dinner or activities; Four Seasons, St Regis, Matira Beach etc. and of course there is the well known “Bloody Marys”, the place that everyone knows! Our guests left the yacht in Bora Bora and flew back from there to Papeete and onwards home. They had such a great time that we repeated the cruise in slightly different order a few weeks later!

French Polynesia is a hassle free cruising destination, especially with the professional help of the very efficient agency of Etienne Boutin, Tahiti Ocean. Once you have made the long crossing to these islands you find yourself within a short hop from most islands. Some days the swell may be up between the islands, but you can always find a protected anchorage sheltered by the reef, with no rolling anchorages here.

The fantastic mix of Polynesian culture, development and French government support has made French Polynesia into a very comfortable place to cruise. Enjoying it from aboard a private yacht is the very best way to experience these islands and take in all the variety that Tahiti and her islands has to offer. French Polynesia will not disappoint, the reality here is better than the pictures, and it remains my very favorite cruising destination.
Cook Islands

Useful Statistics

GOVERNMENT: a self-governing parliamentary democracy in free association with New Zealand
LAND AREA: 236 km², (91 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 17,791
LANGUAGE: English, Cook Islands Maori
CURRENCY: New Zealand dollar (NZD)
(Cook Islands dollar also used)
CLIMATE: The climate is equable – just inside the Tropic of Capricorn. It enjoys temperatures of between 18-28°C (64-82°F) in the southern winter which is May to October, and between 21-29°C (70-84°F) in the summer which spans November to April. The wet season is normally January to early May. Severe weather is seldom experienced.
UTC: -10
INTL DIALLING CODE: +682

THE COOK ISLANDS lie at the very heart of Polynesia and consist of 15 islands scattered over half a million square miles of the Pacific Ocean divided into two distinct groups: the Southern Cook Islands and the Northern Cook Islands of coral atolls. They lie in the centre of the Polynesian Triangle, flanked to the west by Tonga and the Samoas and to the east by French Polynesia. The Southern Group, of which Rarotonga is the main island, also comprises Aitutaki, Atiu, Mitiaro, Mauke and Mangaia. These are high and fertile and most of the inhabitants live there. The Northern Group are the low coral atolls of Penrhyn, Manihiki, Rakahanga, Pukapuka, Nassau and Suwarrow, which is a national park. Also part of the Cooks are the atolls of Manuae, Takutea and Palmerston Island. White-sand beaches ring the nearly circular island of Rarotonga. The friendly Polynesians are legendary; warm, charming and generous, having their own language and government and enjoying a vigorous and diverse culture with significant differences between each island. Indeed, the outside world has not yet spoiled this tropical paradise. Despite some 90,000 visitors a year to the capital island, Rarotonga, the Cooks are islands of staggering beauty, largely unspoiled by tourism. Tourism is the country’s number one industry, the leading element of the economy, far ahead of offshore banking, pearls, marine and fruit exports. A popular art form on the islands is Tivaivai, often likened to quilting. The Cook Islands offer a rare opportunity for people from the cities of the world to experience a different type of holiday. There are no high-rise hotels and very little hype. The islands are famed for great snorkelling and diving sites, excellent sport fishing and a relaxed, easy going lifestyle. At Ara Metua, there is an all-weather paved road that is centuries old: The “Great Road of Toi” paved with volcanic rock. The open-air stone temple at Arai-te-Tonga Marae formed the royal court of the Ariki (high chief) and remains a sacred place to Rarotongans.
**Useful Statistics**

*Independent State of Samoa*

**OFFICIAL NAME:** Samoa  
**GOVERNMENT:** Constitutional Monarchy  
**LAND AREA:** 2,842 km² (1,097 sq miles)  
**POPULATION:** (est 2010) 183,081  
**CURRENCY:** Tala (T)  
**CLIMATE:** Western Samoa has a tropical climate with two seasons. A dry season from May to October and a wet season from November to April. Occasional hurricanes may occur. The hottest month is December and the coolest is July. Average temperatures range from 22-30°C (72-86°F) all year.  
**UTC:** +13  
**INTL DIALLLING CODE:** +685

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**Samoa**, formerly known as Western Samoa, comprises the two islands of Upolu and Savai’i, as well as several smaller islands. Savai’i is the largest but Upolu is the most developed and the centre of government and commerce. Robert Louis Stevenson was the first in a long line of famous travellers to be seduced by the Samoan way of life and today’s sailors can still find a Samoa whose ways have changed very little during the century since Stevenson lived here. Samoans are a typically open, friendly, welcoming and good-humoured people with great pride in their culture, traditions, history and nationhood. Samoan hospitality and generosity are widely noted.

Cruising along the sheltered northern coast of the two main islands, superyachts can anchor off villages such as Asau on Savai’i, from where guests and crew can explore the interior of these verdant islands with their gushing waterfalls and lush rain forests. Asau is a well-protected anchorage, but only limited supplies are available.

Apia Harbour is the perfect setting for mariners with lovely views of the surrounding mountains and easy access to the capital’s downtown district, although it offers little protection in strong winds. Downtown Apia sits overlooking the harbour and offers all yachting facilities as well as numerous restaurants and bars in the town. There is no marina catering to superyachts. Superyachts can berth alongside the port’s single cargo wharf when no ships are in or are expected.
American Samoa

Useful Statistics

The Territory of American Samoa

GOVERNMENT: Unincorporated territory of the U.S.A.
LAND AREA: 199km² (123.7 miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 68,420
LANGUAGE: English, Samoan
CURRENCY: US Dollar (USD)
CLIMATE: Between the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn, a tropical climate prevails. Temperatures are warm or hot year-round (high 70’s to low 90’s F) with high humidity. Rain showers are frequent. Tropical storms (typhoons) are more prevalent during the wet season (November to May).
UTC: -11
INTL DIALLING CODE: +1 (684)

AMERICAN SAMOA is located in the South Pacific Ocean, southeast of the sovereign state of Samoa. The two neighbouring Samoas are very different from each other, American Samoa being a US Territory, whilst Samoa, formerly known as Western Samoa, is an independent state. American Samoa comprises five rugged volcanic islands and two coral atolls – all the Samoan islands east of the 171° parallel, that is the main (largest and most populous) island of Tutuila, the Manu’a Islands, Rose Atoll, and Swains Island. American Samoa is located west of the Cook Islands, north of Tonga, and some 500km (300 miles) south of Tokelau. To the west are the islands of the Wallis and Futuna group. Pago Pago (pronounced “Pango Pango”) is the capital of American Samoa. It is one of the largest villages and is located on the eastern side of Tutuila island in Ma’oputasi County district. Pago Pago Bay is one of the most dramatic harbours in the South Pacific, a region not unknown for dramatic landscapes. It is a splendid deep water natural harbour offering the best protection from strong winds of all South Pacific islands. Pago Pago attracts cruising yachts, either to reprovision in its well-stocked supermarkets, or to shelter from the cyclone season in its scenically beautiful harbour. Eons ago, the massive seaward wall of a volcano collapsed and the sea poured in. Today, dramatic mountain peaks encircle the harbour. The town is dominated by looming Mt. Pioa, whose summit draws moisture-bearing clouds, earning it the nickname of The Rainmaker. Indeed, Pago Pago draws more than its fair share of rain; the island of Tutuila is a vision of deep, verdant green. Pago Pago is also the cheapest place in the region to stock up on provisions and fuel. An international airport with good connections is close to the harbour. It is also home to a large tuna fishing fleet and cannery and thus there are some support services for large vessel maintenance when needed.
Tuvalu

Useful Statistics

GOVERNMENT: Independent Constitutional Monarchy
LAND AREA: 24 km² (9.2 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2009) 12,370
LANGUAGE: English and Tuvaluan, a Samoan-Polynesian dialect.
CURRENCY: Tuvalu Dollar (Tuv)

CLIMATE: A tropical maritime climate characterised by uniformly hot temperatures - around 28°C all year round, moderated by easterly trade winds occurring most frequently between June and August. Rainfall is high with most falling between November to April. Wind speeds average 10 knots and strong winds are not common.
UTC: +12       INTL DIALLING CODE: +688

Wallis & Futuna

Useful Statistics

TERRITORY OF THE WALLIS AND FUTUNA ISLANDS

GOVERNMENT: Overseas territory of France
LAND AREA: 274 km² (102 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2009) 15,290
LANGUAGE: French and Wallisian or Futunian (the indigenous Polynesian languages)
CURRENCY: CFP franc (XPF) (1,000 XPF = 8.38 Euro)

CLIMATE: The islands have a hot, wet (cyclonic) season from November to April and a cool, dry season from May to October. The rains accumulate 2,500 to 3,000 millimeters (98–118 in) each year. The average humidity is 80% and the temperature 26.6°C (79.9°F).
UTC: +12       INTL DIALLING CODE: +681

WALLIS AND FUTUNA are two island groups separated by 150 miles of ocean in the central South Pacific, located about two-thirds of the way from Hawaii to New Zealand, at 13°18’S, 176°12’W. A French overseas territory consisting of two groups of islands in the southwest Pacific Ocean west of Samoa and slightly off the route (northeast) of Fiji. Since 1969 they have been joined together as a French overseas territory. Wallis is located 240km northeast of Futuna and Alofi islands. Together with some 15 smaller islands surrounding it, on its huge barrier reef, it forms the Wallis archipelago. The pass into the lagoon at Wallis is relatively easy to negotiate and there are several anchorages, the most popular and best protected being at Gahi Bay. There are also several small islets in the lagoon which can be used as day anchorages. Wallis Island has a jet capable airport. Wallis Island and Futuna Island are truly an unspoiled cruising destination.
**Niue**

**Useful Statistics**

**GOVERNMENT:** Constitutional
Monarchy (QEII)

**LAND AREA:** 260km² (100 sq miles)

**POPULATION:** (2011 est.) 1,311

**LANGUAGE:** Niuean, English

**CURRENCY:** New Zealand Dollar (NZD)

**CLIMATE:** A tropical climate, modified by southeast trade winds, with most rainfall occurring from November to April.

**UTC:** +13

**THE ISLAND OF** Niue is one of the world’s smallest states, but the largest block of coral, and is commonly known as the “Rock of Polynesia.” Niue boasts amazing limestone caves both under the ground and the sea and the diving here is excellent. Lying on the direct route from French Polynesia to Vava’u in Tonga, Niue is a convenient stop for west or east bound superyachts. The anchorage is off the island’s west coast, close to the main settlement at Alofi, where there is a break in the reef surrounding the island. Although the anchorage offers good protection from the prevailing SE winds, in westerly winds the island is a lee shore. Niue has a jet capable airport.

**Tokelau Islands**

**Useful Statistics**

**GOVERNMENT:** non-self-governing colonial territory of New Zealand

**LAND AREA:** 12 km²

**POPULATION:** (est. 2011) 1,384

**LANGUAGE:** Tokelauan, English

**CURRENCY:** New Zealand dollar (NZD)

**CLIMATE:** tropical; moderated by trade winds (April to November). The mean average temperature is 28°C. July is the coolest month and May the warmest.

**UTC:** +13

**THE ISLAND OF** Tokelau comprises three small low coral atolls: Atafu, Nukunonu, and Fakaofo lying in the Pacific typhoon belt. The geographic locations of Tokelau’s atolls: Atafu: 8°33’6”S, 172°30’3”W Nukunonu: 9°10’6”S, 171°48’35”W Fakaofo: 9°21’55”S, 171°12’54”W. One of the least visited countries in the South Pacific, only a few yachts make their way to this isolated group of atolls, which lack natural harbours and for most of the year are completely cut off from the outside world. Some formalities have to be complied with before sailing for the islands, but any difficulties are justified, as they give an opportunity to visit one of the most isolated communities in the Pacific. There are no ports or harbour facilities whatsoever, only passes for small boats through the reefs, but these are too shallow for most yachts but may be suitable for superyacht tenders, subject to weather. Normally a superyacht must anchor on a shelf outside the reef, in the lee of the atoll and it is common for conditions not being suitable to anchor. At Fakaofo, there is an anchorage due west of Fakaofo islet, but it is exposed to the SE tradewinds. An alternative anchorage, recommended by the islanders, is NW of the island, off Fenua Fala islet. The island of Fakaofo is reported as being incorrectly charted. Facilities are extremely limited and there no airports on the islands. There are radio stations and a hospital on each island and one cooperative store selling some staple foodstuffs, mostly imported. It is possible to buy some locally grown produce. Water is scarce everywhere.
Tonga

Useful Statistics

Kingdom of Tonga

GOVERNMENT: Constitutional Monarchy
LAND AREA: 747 km² (288 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 104,058
LANGUAGE: English and Tongan (a member of the Malayo-Polynesian family of languages)
CURRENCY: Pa'anga (P)

CLIMATE: A subtropical climate characterised by a warm period from December to March with an average daily maximum of 32°C (90°F) in summer (when there is most rainfall) and a cool period from May to November due to the SE tradewinds with temperatures seldom above 27°C (81°F).

UTC: +13

INTL DIALLING CODE: +676

Tonga, the archipelago of ‘The Friendly Islands’, a Polynesian kingdom, is one of the last unexplored gems of the South Pacific. Located Latitude: 18°60’S and Longitude: 174°00’W, the 171 extraordinarily diverse islands of the Tongan archipelago are divided into four main island groups – Tongatapu, He’apai, Vava’u and the Niuas with fewer than 40 islands that are inhabited. The archipelago is scattered over an area nearly as big as Japan. Tonga was united into a Polynesian kingdom in 1845. It became a constitutional monarchy in 1875 and it remains the only monarchy in the Pacific. Tonga has a population of over 100,000 and the head of state is His Majesty King Siaosi Tupou. Tonga’s waters are a favourite breeding ground of the humpback whale. These majestic animals arrive in their hundreds from May to November and can be seen throughout Tonga. Fishing is abundant in the coastal waters with principal species being tuna and marlin. Whale-watching is also a popular attraction, as whales return each winter to the protected warm waters to give birth and mate. As for diving; Tonga has drop-offs, sea mountains, walls, caves, coral gardens... in fact it has so many dive sites that it fulfils every wish a diver could have. Vava’u and Ha’apai are well-known dive spots, and recently there was a huge ‘cathedral’ discovered near the “forgotten island” of Eua. Swimming, surfing and sailing are popular. Most visitors enjoy a traditional evening feast of suckling pig, crayfish, chicken, and accompaniments. The tourist industry is small but growing, with the majority of visitors coming from Australia and New Zealand. In spite of Tonga’s remoteness, facilities are surprisingly good and the setting up of a small industrial centre near the capital Nuku’alofoa has encouraged several boating-related foreign companies to start operations in Tonga. Superyacht service companies have established themselves in what will undoubtedly become a frequently cruised superyacht destination.
Tonga the Kingdom Come

It was with a small amount of uncertainty when we decided to visit the Kingdom of Tonga, as it is not well known as a cruising destination within the superyacht circle.

Derek an avid fisherman quickly gave us areas to hook up on Marlin, Wahoo, Giant Trevally, Skipjack Tuna and Mahimahi. We quickly worked out that the Marlin are of massive proportions and that fishing with light weight tackle was like trying to pull in a Mack truck with cotton! There are many sights and activities in Nuku'alofa to keep you occupied and our time seemed to fly by with spectacular coral blowholes, Tapa demonstrations, amazing surf, royal palaces and ancient stone structures competing for our attention. But we were impatient to explore the famous Vava’u group, so after three days we steamed off 160kms north of the capital. Vava’u is made up of seventy islands and is a mecca for the New Zealand and Australian Yachting fraternity - we soon understood why. The sail in was breathtaking. Picture dawn breaking with humpbacks breaching either side of you – it was truly an amazing experience breaking with humpbacks breaching either side of you – it was truly an amazing experience that our guests and crew rate as the highlight of the trip.

The sail in was breathtaking. Picture dawn breaking with humpbacks breaching either side of you – it was truly an amazing experience that our guests and crew rate as the highlight of the trip. By Captain Walter Rowan – MIT Major Wager

TONGA IS MADE up of four main island groups with the isolated Niuafo’ou to the far North. The Vava’u group which is considered to be Tonga’s sailing centre, is a beautiful cluster of waterways and pristine, sparsely inhabited islets – at the centre lies an immense land locked harbour, Neiafu. The Ha’apai group is the central island cluster of the Kingdom. It is an archipelago of low coral islands backed by soaring volcanoes and is surrounded by translucent turquoise water. Teeming with fish, Ha’apai is a diving and fishing slice of heaven. Tongatapu is the most populated and farthest south; it is Tonga’s cultural centre and has Nuku’alofa as the capital. We started our Tongan cruise at the Nuku’alofa wharf on the afternoon of Saturday October 18th and were greeted by our agents Sue and Derek Leonard of Yacht Help Tonga. All current GPS settings and charts were accurate and we had no problems navigating the Islands or berthing our vessel. After the usual clearances, bunkering and provisioning, we discussed with Sue and Derek our itinerary for the week. With diving, fishing and sightseeing the main criteria, we quickly realized that this Pacific Island paradise needed more than one week to discover its treasures.
adventurous ones among you, take a torch and further explore the cave by either scrambling or swimming to the shaft of light and discover a dry internal cave. Mariners Cave is another sea level cave worth the trip to the NE tip of Nuapapu. You will swim through a fourteen foot underwater tunnel before popping up into this magical cave, if you go in the late afternoon on a sunny day you will be blown away by stunning light and ethereal fog. Only competent swimmers should attempt entering this cave during calm seas. As Mariners Cave is quite hard to find and there are many false entries close to it, it is best to either have a local guide with you or very detailed instructions. With an average of 4.8 islands every nautical mile of the Vava'u group it is not surprising that there are so many fantastic swimming and snorkeling spots that step right off postcards. In the same breath polarised sunglasses are essential armary in avoiding hazards and reefs. What started as a one week visit quickly became two and then three weeks, we just couldn't get enough of the culture, the people, and beautiful sights and produce that Tonga has to offer. Once again the service supplied by Derek and Sue from Yacht Help Tonga made the experience a breeze. With their knowledge of the Kingdom and connections with Air NZ, Chatham Pacific Airlines and PFL Shipping it was easy to change our itinerary and have our guests fly in to meet us on a weekly basis. Their knowledge and contacts within the tourism sector is unsurpassed, from arranging flights, birthday parties, whale watching, to good old fashioned pub crawls, their expertise was a god send. If it is a six Star holiday with all the modern tourist trappings that you are after then Tonga may seem a little primitive. Tonga time is as infectious as the people who live there, where time begins is the country’s catch phrase, for us is where time stands still. (One has to keep in mind that everything is closed on Sundays…. Yes, everything!) For entertainment on a Sunday all you need to do is follow the most beautiful singing in the world which emanates from every church throughout the Kingdom.(and yes you are welcome to join the congregation). If its eco-tourism with a touch of joining the locals, rather than watching them is your thing, then Tonga is a must for any traveler. As for getting there and the best web sites and agents to visit, we found great information at; tonga@yachthelp.com, www.vavau.to, www.tongaholidays.to, www.tongasailing.net.
SUPERYACHT SERVICES
Yacht Help Fiji, Nadi
T: +679 675 0911 - 2
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Copra Shed Marina, Savusavu
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RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS
Noble House, Suri, VVS1, La Masquerade, Arctic P, Cracker Bay, Adele, Athena, Surprise, Yaakun, Helios, Andromeda Pangaea, Gran Finale

Approximate distance in nm from Suva to:
- Apia: 630'
- Noumea: 727'
- Auckland: 1,154'
- Brisbane: 1,511'

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS
Fiji Marine Guide
Fiji Cruising Notes – P Cregeen
South Pacific Cruising – D Thatcher

USEFUL WEBSITES
www.fijime.com
www.fiji.gov.fj
www.fijisurf.com
www.met.gov.fj
www.nadraki.com

Fiji

Useful Statistics
Sovereign Democratic Republic of Fiji

GOVERNMENT: Multiparty Republic
LAND AREA: 18,376 km² (7,095 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 860,623
LANGUAGE: English, Bau – a dialect of the indigenous Fijians and Hindustani
CURRENCY: Dollar (FD)
CLIMATE: A tropical climate with a wet and dry season. The wet season is between November and April, which is also when hurricanes and cyclones are most likely to occur while the dry season is between May and October. The prevailing trade winds blow from the east for most of the year. Average temperature ranges in Suva are from 20-26°C (68-79°F) in August to 23-30°C (73-86°F) in February.
UTC: +12
INTL DIALLING CODE: +679

Fiji is an island nation east of Vanuatu, west of Tonga and south of Tuvalu at the crossroads of the South Pacific Ocean. The country occupies an archipelago of 333 islands, ranging from coral atolls to large volcanic islands, making for an exciting adventure or peaceful repose aboard a superyacht. About 100 islands are inhabited, while many of the rest are used as fishing bases and planting grounds. The two major islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, account for 87% of the population. The International Dateline runs through Fiji, although most of the islands are just west of 180°. Fiji is the perfect superyacht cruising destination: it has beautiful islands, secluded anchorages, welcoming people, excellent marinas and a mature superyacht support service industry. Viti Levu hosts the capital city of Suva, and is home to nearly three quarters of the population. Other important towns include Nadi (the location of the international airport), and Lautoka (the location of a large sugar mill and a seaport). The main towns on Vanua Levu are Labasa and Savusavu. Other islands and island groups include Taveuni and Kadavu (the third and fourth largest islands respectively), the Mamanuca Group (just outside Nadi), the Mamanuca Group (just outside Nadi) and Yasawa Group, which are popular tourist destinations, the Lomaiviti Group, outside of Suva, and the remote Lau Group. The Fijian Islands are an excellent superyacht destination. Fiji is thus rapidly becoming the superyacht hub of the western South Pacific; a fact being demonstrated with the number of large superyachts that have visited the country in the last few years, as visitation and chartering regulations have been relaxed.
Cruising the Fijian Archipelago

Fiji’s 332 islands, of which only 110 are permanently inhabited, remain the gold standard for a truly tropical cruising destination.

By Captain Steve McDonald – Noble House

FIJI comes as close as any other region to being tropical paradise. In the year that MY Noble House has spent here in charter with its owner, we have covered a lot of ground. However, with 332 islands to explore there is no shortage of places to discover. Lying between latitudes 15° and 22° south of the equator, Fiji possesses an outstanding climate, palm trees, rich tropical rainforests, beautiful white sandy beaches, pristine coral reefs and crystal clear water. Forget the plastic waste so often encountered while cruising, instead you’ll see coconuts floating past. Perhaps the most enduring memory carried away from Fiji is that of the people; their friendly nature and hospitality are legendary.

Tradition is strongly maintained, especially in the outer islands. It is customary to present “Sevu Sevu”, a ritual undertaken when arriving in a new area. You can buy half kilo bundles of pepper plant root (Yaqona or Kava) at the markets, usually wrapped in newspaper and tied with string. When entering the village you should ensure all are wearing shirts that cover shoulders and a Fijian Sulu to cover the legs, no hats or sunglasses should be worn. Upon landing, a representative of the chief will normally accept your bundle of Kava. The representative will present the Kava to the chief and some short traditional speeches will ensue, culminating in your being welcomed to the island. Small gifts are always greatly received. We always carry school supplies, fishhooks and lines, flashlights and other items. My new favourite gifts are small solar powered lights which are a great help in reducing the reliance on kerosene lanterns.

WEATHER
The principal cruising season is the southern winter with east to south easterly trade winds of 15 to 25 knots and temperatures around 30°C during the day, 15 to 22°C by night. The cyclone season is the summer months from November to April. At this time the trade winds die down and offer a great opportunity to cruise the more remote islands in much calmer conditions. Weather information is such that cyclones are easy to track and avoid in places of refuge. Having said that, I couldn’t really recommend cruising during this season for those without a good level of local knowledge.

MARINAS
Port Denarau Marina is only a twenty minute drive from Nadi International Airport, the only Fijian airport with direct international flights from the United States, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Australia as well as clearances for private jets. Set in the middle of the Denarau Island complex, Port Denarau Marina is walking distance from a retail centre, marine repair and maintenance services, high-end hotels and restaurants. It is also the base of operations for Yacht Help Fiji, the premier superyacht agent (www.yachthelp.com). The entrance channel and marina have been dredged to five meters and there are eight berths for up to 60 meter yachts with power, water, fuel and Wi-Fi. The face dock can take 70 meter or larger vessels. This is the only substantial marina in the islands and is the perfect starting point for a cruise to the Mamanuca or Yasawa Groups.

PROVISIONING
Once you have left the main island of Viti Levu there is very little available: no fuel, stores, shopping or spare parts. We carry everything we need and usually replenish at preplanned provisioning points. Many of the outer islands have airstrips and irregular barge services so planning is essential. An agent, such as Yacht Help Fiji, can also assist in importing high-quality food items from Australia and New Zealand.

HAUL-OUT AND MAINTENANCE
There is a floating drydock in Suva and haul-out slips in American Samoa and Tahiti. I could not recommend them for anything apart from routine work. For maintenance I suggest going to Australia or New Zealand. There are some basic chandleries in Port Denarau and Yacht Help Fiji now stocks some more large yacht oriented supplies.

COMMUNICATIONS
GSM cell phone coverage can be found almost everywhere apart from the southern Lau Group. 3G data is available close to the main towns.
PILOTAGE
This remains the principal challenge in cruising throughout the Fiji Islands. Charts are extremely unreliable and cruising must be approached in a very disciplined manner; a good look out and polarised sunglasses are essential. Cruising in reef/shoal waters is best done in the hours between 1000 and 1500 when the sun is high in the sky. If it is overcast or there is bright sunlight on the surface you should not move unless quite sure of your route through past experience. Although the prospect can be daunting, stick to these basic principles of good seamanship and you will be fine. I use Transas, Navionics, Jeppesen and Google Earth to record my tracks and produce composite charts. There is no one system that gives good coverage everywhere.

MAMANUCA AND YASAWA ISLANDS
The location of these islands on the leeward side of Fiji means they enjoy dry sunny weather. The Mamanucas lie within the reef, providing smooth sailing. There are a wide variety of islands, some home to boutique resorts while others are more secluded. As you sail north you arrive at Waya Island in the Yasawa Group, anchoring off Natawa village (South Waya). After presenting Sevu Sevu, a guide may take your guests on a walk, with spectacular views from the island’s peak making it worthwhile the short hike to the top. Stop and refresh in the natural spring on the way up; continue to walk right over the island and meet the yacht on the other side.

Further north near Nanuya Balavu and Naviti Islands you will often find manta rays feeding in the passes between the islands on the high tide. In the southern Yasawas you can snorkel above a Second World War wreck, explore the limestone caves at Sawa I Lau, and visit the fine sandy beaches of Yasawa Island. At any time (except Sunday) it is possible to organise a village to throw a Meke (traditional entertainment) and Lovo, where food is woven into coconut palm baskets and cooked in fire pits over hot stones.

KADAVU AND BEQA
Kadavu lies about 80 nautical miles south of Port Denarau. I like to anchor off Nagigia Island at the South Western extremity to take advantage of several surf breaks, superb snorkeling, a spectacular wall dive that drops off the seaward side of the island and an offshore pinnacle that is always good for some large pelagics. Extending to the east of the main island lies Astrolabe Reef with some great reef passes and excellent diving. Beqa, which lies to the north, close to Viti Levu is known for its Shark Dive (www.fijisharkdive.com), fire walkers and some fantastic fishing. Expect to hook Wahoo, Walu and Yellow Fin Tuna.

VATU I RA AND LOMAIVITI GROUP
The Vatu-I-Ra channel contains some of Fiji’s best diving. The constant flow of water through the channel produces some of world’s most colourful soft coral gardens, and in the deeper water there are pinnacles rising up to the shallows that are the domain of the large pelagic species. These are for experienced divers, a local guide is recommended. The Lomaiviti Group includes the islands of Makogai, an ex-leper colony and now home to a turtle hatchery. Gau is well known for its shark dives and the remote Namena is a marine sanctuary.

SAVUSAVU AND TAVEUNI
Savusavu is a quaint little town with volcanic activity producing hot springs that steam along the foreshore. Home of the Fijian pearl industry, the town has shops and a market for fresh provisions. From here, head east to the island of Taveuni, known as the garden island for its lush rainforest. You will find little evidence of tourism and an opportunity to experience traditional Fijian life. Taveuni is famous for its waterfalls and world-class dive sites like the White Wall on Rainbow reef in Somo Somo Strait. Again, a local dive guide is highly recommended as getting the tide right is critical. Visit the Rabi island dancers in Nuku for great entertainment and the island of Kioa for traditional handicrafts.

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THE LAU GROUP
This is the most isolated and untouched area of Fiji. It’s possible to spend weeks here venturing where few others have travelled. Admixture pilots are often the best guide to what is possible, always keeping in mind that the coral may have grown more than a meter since these recorded visits of warships in the mid-19th century. In all cases, use caution and a tender sounding ahead when in doubt. Only recently opened to yachts, the area offers stunning scenery and rarely visited reefs. If guests wish to cruise these islands, I generally recommend that they fly to Vanua Balavu, Lakeba or Moala Islands to avoid the long trip to windward.

In the north you can visit Wailagilala which has an easily accessible reef entrance to leeward of the prevailing winds and a large navigable lagoon. To the west lies Duff reef where it may be possible to see turtles hatched and/or laid between October and March. Vanua Balavu (also known as the Exploring Isles) is a large reef enclosed lagoon studded with spectacular limestone rock formations, caves, beaches and just about everything you would need to keep you busy for a week. I recommend the diving in Nggilanngila Passage in the north and Tongan Passage in the south. As with all lagoon pass dives, pay close attention to the state of the tide and obtain local guidance where available. It is possible to clear into Vanua Balavu by flying the officials from Nadi or Suva. This is a very good option when approaching Fiji from the East.

Further south lies a large number of islands and rarely visited reefs. There are too many to mention here but I particularly recommend the Yagasa Cluster, Ogea Levu and Vulaga. Vulaga island lies in a stunning turquoise lagoon that is entered through a 50 meter wide passage that should not be attempted in heavy easterly to south-easterly conditions. The inhabitants are traditional carvers, famed for their outrigger canoes, Kava bowls (Tanoa) and decorative woven-house construction.

To the west of these islands, best visited when returning to the mainland, are the islands of Matuku, Moala and Totoya. Totoya offers a beautiful and safe anchorage inside the caldera of its long dead volcano.
Vanuatu

Useful Statistics
Republic of Vanuatu

GOVERNMENT: Republic

AREA: 14,763 km² (5,700 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 224,564

LANGUAGE: English, French and a Pidgin language called Bislama which is widely spoken

CURRENCY: Vatu (VT)

CLIMATE: A tropical climate with humidity averaging 83% all year. The hot wet (cyclonic) season occurs between November and April. Moderate conditions from May to October due to SE trade winds.

UTC: +11

INTL DIALLING CODE: +678

Vanuatu, formerly called the New Hebrides during its colonial period, is an archipelago of 13 large volcanic islands and about 60 small islets in the southwest Pacific Ocean, the largest being Espiritu Santo, Malekula, Efate, Erromango, Ambrym and Tanna. The archipelago is located some 1,750 km east of Australia, 500 km northeast of New Caledonia, west of Fiji and south of the Solomon Islands. Vanuatu is a unique blend of intact tribal communities, resorts, beaches and geography ranging from accessible volcanoes to pristine underwater environments. Most of the islands are of volcanic origin, rugged and mountainous, and contain extensive rainforests with cultivated narrow strips of land along the coasts. Some other islands are of coral atoll formation or almost atoll types. Left alone by the Europeans for longer than other parts of the Pacific, Vanuatu leapt into the modern age quickly, while remaining a place where the rich Melanesian culture is kept very much alive. It is the chance to experience a little of this fascinating culture that brings most superyachts to this country which has been endowed with less cruising attractions than its neighbours.

With the exception of the northern islands, the number of natural harbours is rather limited, with the notable exception of the main island Efate which has several attractive bays. One of the greatest attractions of the islands is a visit to the live volcano on Tanna or Ambrym, where one can ascend into the crater, the closest you can get to an active volcano safely anywhere in the world.

The outer islands have an increasing number of stores and shops, stocked with basic items. However nothing will compare with the facilities available in Port Vila or Luganville. Many small island resorts are extremely helpful to superyachts and provisions can be arranged as well as guides and tours through the local village chief. Many villages receive little or no contact with the outside world other than through visiting yachts. Trading goods for local carvings and fresh produce is a major source of clothing, school supplies and currency for these villagers, so it is to be encouraged as a benefit to all.
CAPTAIN’S LOG VANUATU

Cruising the Islands of Vanuatu

Vanuatu, formerly known as the New Hebrides, used to be known to the western world principally for two unique features: The “Land-diving” ceremonies of Pentecost Island and its unique “Condominium” form of colonial rule under which the British and the French shared power, each administering their own nationals and both largely leaving the local population to get on with things as they wished. Independence in 1980 swept away the Condominium while many other top class attractions have joined land-diving on the world’s “Must See / Must Do” lists.

It is very important for visitors to understand that the people of Vanuatu have a complex and sophisticated relationship with the land and the sea that is quite different from the west. This means someone, somewhere has traditional rights over everything, including the sea, and the visitor does well to ask for permission to walk on the land, to anchor in the bay or to fish on the reef. Normally this permission should be obtained from the local chief but it is not unusual for several individuals or groups to have conflicting claims, especially if they see the value in their land and their country. All are united in offering visitors a warm welcome springing from a very real pride in their land and their country.

The islands of the central part of Vanuatu form a rough “Y” shape with Efate just below the fork. It must be understood from the outset that Port Vila is not representative of Vanuatu. Its level of sophistication and modernity stands in stark contrast to the rest of the country. Here there are shops full of imported goods, hotels, restaurants, bars and clubs that would not be out of place in the Eastern Caribbean or Tahiti. Services for yachting are limited at present but there are artisans skilled in many trades who can carry out a surprising range of repairs.

There are no berths for superyachts in Port Vila although there is talk of new facilities to be built along the waterfront. This lack of berths is not a problem because the bay is well sheltered and it can get rough when, very occasionally, the wind goes into the west. Anchorage may be found in the area lying between the leading line and the reef that closes off the northern part of the bay. Take care not to obstruct the navigation channel because, from time to time, a small tanker comes right in close to land in order to follow the channel east of Iririki Island and into Parry Bay. Superyachts can berth temporarily at the commercial wharf in the southwest corner of the bay for bunkering.

The shopping in Port Vila is excellent with a wide range of imported foods at Au Bon Marché and other specialist shops. The central market, right on the waterfront, offers a range of local produce and should not be missed. Our crew enjoyed Namballan Café (right on the water, with free Wi-Fi) and The Waterfront, the original yachting bar-restaurant, as well as some less salubrious late-night dives in the town.

The islands of the central part of Vanuatu form a rough “Y” shape with Efate just below the fork and the southwest corner of the bay well sheltered so cruisers wishing to return to Port Vila have the option of a circular tour that does not involve much double tracking. This is a clockwise tour of the central area with a detour to the Banks Islands. Havana Harbour, not a harbour at all but an extensive sheltered anchorage on the west coast of Efate, is popular as a first stop after Port Vila.

From here a day’s sail will take you to Lamen Bay, a popular anchorage on the northwest coast of Epi. We had some excellent fishing, with our local guide, Douglas, just outside the bay. From Lamen Bay a short downwind passage will take you to the Maskelyne Islands at the southern end of Malekula. This group of small islands and reefs offers a number of delightful anchorages but be prepared for constant approaches from locals with things to sell or services to offer. One man brought us a small outboard motor which was seized solid as a result of being drowned many months previously and asked if we could fix it. Crab Bay on the northeast coast of Malekula is not to be undertaken lightly if the southeast trades are blowing.

By Captain Richard Le Quesne – S.Y. Squall

Vanuatu is, above all, its people. They may be any of the uncounted tribes and be speaking any one of its 81 living languages, but they are all united in offering visitors a warm welcome springing from a very real pride in their land and their country.
turned out to be one of our favourite anchorages. The entrance is easy, even in poor light; the water is shallow enough and the holding good; the scenery is not spectacular but there is a nice beach and the snorkelling on the reef is superb, with lots of turtles.

We did not like the recommended anchorage at Wala Island, off northeast Malekula, because it is visited by cruise ships and this has changed the attitude of the local people.

The town of Luganville, on Espiritu Santo, is the country’s second, and indeed only, other town. It’s ambiance is completely different from that of Port Vila and, we thought, more in keeping with the country. It is not much more than a single long street fronted by shops and government buildings but, with persistence, a remarkable range of supplies can be found. We even managed to have a failed hydraulic hose copied by a local workshop. The locally produced beef is superb and whole fillets (unfortunately, fresh - not aged) can be bought very cheaply.

Apart from the chance to re-provision, Luganville offers the opportunity to dive the wreck of the President Coolidge, said to be the largest diveable wreck in the world. The diving is sufficiently dangerous that independent divers are not allowed: you have to go with one of the three local dive operators.

During WWII Vanuatu, and especially, Santo was an important staging post for allied troops, mostly American, desperately trying to stop the Japanese advance down through the Solomons. Santo’s Second Channel was an ideal fleet anchorage and the President Coolidge, a troopship, sank after hitting mines lain to protect the anchorage. It is said there were more than half a million foreign troops stationed on the island at that time. One of them was James Mitchener who used his wartime experiences as the basis for his first novel, South Pacific, which became a hugely successful musical and launched his long and productive career as a writer.

Most yachts visiting Luganville choose to anchor on the southern side of the channel, close to Aore Island, because the surroundings there are much more attractive, but we had difficulty finding a spot shallow enough to anchor that was not too close to the shore. The waterfront of Luganville has not been developed and there is no convenient place to leave a tender. Even landing there is not easy. The east coast of Santo offers a number of possible anchorages. We chose to go to Hog Harbour, adjacent to the famous Champagne Beach which, unfortunately, is no longer recommended as an anchorage because of a dispute between local groups over rights. From Hog Harbour we sailed north into the Banks Islands, to Gaua (aka Santa Maria) where we first took the guests and crew ashore at Kwetevat Bay for the traditional “Water Music” performed by women from the village. The main settlement on Gaua is at Lesalav (or Losalava) on the northeast of the island where, with care and good light you can work your way in through the reef and anchor close to the village. There is nothing special about the village and this was the interest for us: a chance to visit a typical island village and, thanks to a French-speaking school teacher, hear about everyday life there.

Next north is Vanua Lava with its Twin Waterfalls on the west coast. The waterfalls bring a steady stream of visitors and the chief has built a yacht club to welcome them. He gave us a lengthy speech which was followed by a welcome song set to the tune of God Save the Queen. North again lies Ureparapara, a most remarkable anchorage in the centre of a volcanic crater that has been breached by the sea. The fishing outside the entrance is very good and we quickly caught some Dogtooth and Yellowfin Tuna.

Northwest of Ureparapara lie the Torres Islands where, we were told, the culture starts to show a significant Melanesian influence from the Solomon Islands further north. We did not, unfortunately, have time to visit them.

The return leg of the circuit from Port Vila takes you next to Maewo, a long thin island across from Santo. Halfway down the west coast are the “Big Water Cascades” which are well worth a visit. Local guides escorted us up the very slippery path between taro patches to the pool at the foot of the cascade where we swam in the clear cool water.

At the southern end of Maewo lies Asanvarei Bay, perhaps, in cruising circles, the most famous of Vanuatu’s anchorages. Here Chief Nelson has built a “Yacht Club” and organises kastom dances, pig roasts and walking excursions. The diving around the coral pinnacle on the southwest side of the bay is excellent. The fishing here is good and, on the way in, we caught a Yellowfin Tuna of almost 60kg which provided plenty of fish for the other yachts in the anchorage and the locals ashore.

The next island south is Pentecost, famous for its land-diving ceremonies which take place in the early part of the year and were, unfortunately, long since over when we got there.

South again lies Ambrym with its two active volcanoes. Ambrym is also considered to be the country’s centre of magic and sorcery and its not hard to see how this arose as a result of the periodic devastation caused by these volcanoes.

The northwestern part of the island is home to the marvellous Rom Dance. We anchored off Ranon at the time of the August “Back to my Roots” festival and arranged to see a Rom Dance at Fanla, about an hour’s walk into the interior. Our circular tour now takes us back to Epi and then south again to Efate. Squall cruised the central parts of Vanuatu in July and August 2008 and we barely scratched the surface. Those two months left all of us with a kaleidoscope of vivid memories and we would go back at once if given the opportunity.

Vanuatu is a country on the brink of massive change. The week before we arrived saw the switch-on of the first country-wide mobile phone service and already the effects were visible: people without electricity, running water or roads were buying mobile phones and the solar chargers supplied with them.

It seems to me highly probable that the combination of the spreading cash economy, better communications and easier travel will quickly lead to “homogenisation” of the culture that will sadly, diminish the things that make Vanuatu so distinctive and so interesting.
New Caledonia

Useful Statistics
Territory of New Caledonia and Dependencies

GOVERNMENT: Overseas Territory of France
LAND AREA: 19,000 km² (7,334 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 256,275
LANGUAGE: French, Melanesian-Polynesian dialects, English
CURRENCY: CFP Franc
CLIMATE: A tropical climate that is modified by the SE trade winds. The wet season is from December to March when cyclones also occur. Average temperature ranges are from 25°C (77°F) in January to 19°C (66°F) in July. UTC: +11
INTL DIALLING CODE: +687

NEW CALEDONIA is the French Overseas Territory of Nouvelle Calédonie, located around 21°30’S, 165°30’E in the southwest Pacific Ocean, approximately 1,200 km (746 miles) east of Australia and 1,500 km (932 miles) northwest of New Zealand. The island nation of Vanuatu lies to the northeast. New Caledonia is considered one of the world’s most botanically-important, and critically endangered hotspots. New Caledonia is made up of a main island, the mountainous Grande Terre, 400 km (250 miles) long and 48 km (30 miles) wide, and several smaller islands, the Belep archipelago to the north of the Grande Terre, the off lying Loyalty Islands to the east of the Grande Terre (Maré, Lifou and Ouvéa), the Île des Pins to the south of the Grande Terre, the Chesterfield Islands and Bellona Reefs further to the west. The Grande Terre is by far the largest of the islands and the only mountainous island. The Grande Terre also boasts one of the largest insular coral reefs in the world and one can sail around much of the island inside the reef. Nouméa itself is a cosmopolitan city and an excellent place to reprovision as virtually everything is available. Noumea offers all facilities that superyachts may have missed whilst cruising the Pacific, such as dairy products, big supermarkets, wines and health services. Noumea offers a remarkable range of products imported from New Zealand, Australia and France. Facilities are extensive as there is a fairly large local yacht population. The new marina facilities at Port Moselle are situated in the heart of Noumea and are central to everything. When cruising around the Loyalty Islands or in the north of New Caledonia, one should pay the traditional call to the chief of the tribe or village. This is an important token gesture and the usual gift is a stick of tobacco, a length of cloth, a souvenir T-shirt from your country or yacht, or some money. Rice or food may be appropriate for more remote tribes. Always ask permission before taking photographs or picking fruit and you will have a rewarding cultural experience.

SUPERYACHT SERVICES
Cercle Nautique Caledonien (CNC)
T: +687 262 727
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E: administration@cnncasso.nc

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T: +687 277 197
E: port.moselle@sodemo.nc
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Marina Port du Sud, Baie de l’Orphelinat, opp. CNC Yacht Club
T: +687 274 777
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E: capitainerie@portdusud.nc

Noumea Yacht Services, Noumea
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W: www.noumeayachtservices.com

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E: info@sofrana.nc
W: www.sofrana.nc

RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS
Ilona, Ken Lee, Salperton, Ultimate Lady, Sunchaser, Perseus, Texas, Alithia, Crescendo, Ipuxuna, Seljm, AnaKena, Antarctica, Spirit of Sovereign, Eclipse, Pangaia, Marie Helene, Surprise, Kokomo

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM NOUMEA TO:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Distance</th>
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<tr>
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<td>989'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>1,070'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

USEFUL WEBSITES
www.rocky-guide-newcaledonia.com
www.newcaledonia.com.au
www.rocket-guide-newcaledonia.com
www.newcaledoniatourism-south.com
www.gov.nc
Grande Terre & the Loyalty Islands

New Caledonia and its adjoining Loyalty Islands lie approximately 800 nautical miles to the east of Queensland, Australia, with Brisbane or the Gold Coast being the closest points of departure to clear out. They are the first group of islands encountered when cruising the Pacific from Australia and well worth exploring as they comprise some of the most scenic “postcard” locations found anywhere in the world.

By Captain Cameron Gray – M/Y Spirit of Sovereign (ex-Lady Janine)
Photography Cameron Gray / Richard Chesher / Jean Marine Demaret

DEPARTING Queensland at the end of August the south easterly trade winds are the predominant weather system that is almost guaranteed to be encountered. They can vary in strength from a pleasant (10-15kts) to “why are we here?” (25kts +) making the three day crossing at eleven knots rather tedious. Observing the weather systems and associated conditions moving east to west generally will give you a good indication as to picking an appropriate weather window for departure. I also made use of the Bureau of Meteorology’s Brisbane office special services unit, who for a small fee offer a weather routing service with updates of expected conditions before and during the transit. I found them to be very accurate with their predictions within 10 – 15% of the conditions we encountered.

Our arrival off the coast of New Caledonia after an uneventful crossing found us entering through the reef at Passe du Dumbea, which is not only the closest channel through the reef to Noumea but is also used by the majority of cruise ships that frequent the area. It is well buoyed with both a port mark and a west cardinal and has an average depth of 35 metres. There is a bank that runs due south from the west cardinal to the tip of the southern part of the reef so the passage is through the opening dog legs to the north if you want to remain in the deepest water. As with all reef openings, especially off the Great Barrier Reef where the deep water of the continental shelf meets the reef edge, rip conditions can be encountered causing a choppy transit when a large ebbing tide is present. This particular opening was not in anyway difficult when we passed through at the bottom of a run out tide. Once inside it is an easy 13 nautical mile cruise to Port Moselle and the visitor’s wharf where the customs and immigration formalities are completed. This floating marina can accommodate yachts to 35m for clearance, larger yachts generally will be directed to the other floating marina around the corner at Port Du Sud or over to the scientific wharf opposite Port Moselle.

I used Noumea Yacht Services as agents for the duration of our stay. Jean-Marie Demaret and Franck Farina (who also happens to be Port Moselle’s Harbour Master) couldn’t do enough for us and made the clearance/immigration formalities a breeze. I thoroughly recommend their service as we used them for a myriad tasks including interpreting at the local fish market! Noumea, the capital, is a modern, reasonably sized town with all the ambience of a French colony. The international airport is approx. 30 minutes out of town and there are plenty of services and trades available for just about any yacht work. Bunkering is easily organised through NYS and the local supermarkets (Woolworths, etc) are within easy walking distance. The markets are 100 metres from Port Moselle marina and affords any guests the opportunity to enjoy the local produce and wares. We found the provisioning to be excellent with produce and variety as good as anywhere. If any down time is available between guest trips Noumea is a fun place to relax with some pretty beaches and great restaurants / night clubs in town and also around the corner (5 minutes in a taxi) at Baie de Citrons, complete with South of France prices.

An easy overnight anchorage can be found
approx. eight miles north of Port Moselle at Bai Maa which is a scenic anchorage affording a great sunset in approximately 8 – 10 metres of water on a mud bottom. This is handy to escape the south easterlies but you still remain close to Noumea if need be.

Amedee Isle is another relatively close location worthy of a visit. Approx 12 nautical miles south of Port Moselle this is a picturesque little cay supporting an historic 45 metre lighthouse. Only a mile in from the Passe du Nord, another reef opening, this little islet benefits from clean Pacific Ocean water on an incoming tide making the snorkelling upon the fringing reefs very worthwhile. A great location for introductory dives or snorkelling for guests to boost their confidence as there is easy access from the beach. The anchorage gives reasonable protection from the south easterlies in approx. 5 – 8 metres. Visit here mid week if possible as it is a busy place on the weekends.

Tabu reef due west of Amedee offers a great dive with an old timber minesweeper sitting on the bottom in approx. 25 metres of water. There is an abundance of fish life on the wreck and good visibility most of the time. An ideal time to dive it is on the slack water at the top of the tide. Cruising to the southern end of the main island and through Canal Wodin finds you at the entrance to the Baie du Prony. Travel north up the bay as far as Port du Carenage passing to either side of an isolated danger mark and the anchorage is at the junction of two bays. This is an amazing area. The French have strip mined the surrounding landscape, although it is slowly growing back giving a surreal landscape. The water is crystal clear and supports some of the most amazing coral reef and sponge gardens that you just do not expect to find so far away from the open ocean. There is a 10 minute walk along a clay trail to some natural hot springs and is worth a visit for this alone. We encountered no other vessels up here, and total glass outs make it ideal for water sports. This anchorage is approx. 34nm steaming from Noumea.

ile Ouen which forms the southern shoreline of the Wodin Canal offers a very sheltered and picturesque anchorage in either of the bays Port Koube or Anse Kembe. It is an all weather anchorage in approx. 6 – 8 metres being almost a landlocked bay. Travel south past the entrance till you pass the end of the bank then cut back up to the North keeping the fringing reef a safe distance off the portside. It is obvious when you transit through here in sunny conditions as the bank on the starboard side is easily visible.

A general rule of thumb when transiting around and through coral reefs and reef openings, especially reefs not adjoining land, is to be where you want to be and anchored by 1600 as turning back to the west to navigate through reefs in the waning sun is fraught with danger. The pinnacle of all the cruising grounds in this southern area in my opinion is the famous L’ile Des Pins (Isle of Pines). 65 miles from Noumea, it is an easy day’s run with about thirty miles in open ocean. Lead lights bring you into Kuto Bay. The Island itself is quite large with a sealed road network and an airport making guest transfers back to Noumea convenient. Hire cars are available and there is a five star resort on the eastern side of the island. Kuto Bay is the pick of the anchorages offering good protection from the trade winds. The bottom is sand and is good holding in approx. 5 – 7 metres. In the unlikely event of the wind swinging to the north, which it did for 24hrs out of the seven days we were there, move around to Baie de Kanumera approx. 1 ½ miles around the headland or 20 metres across the road from Kuto Bay. This bay is spectacular for the rock formations protruding out of the water at the beach end and is the “trademark” tourist picture for New Caledonia. For yachts over 30 metres swinging room can be tight especially if the cruising yachts get the same idea, so a stern anchor deployed can reduce stress considerably. This area has truly crystalline waters and very fine white silica sand, and the local dive operator has some of the best scuba diving in New Caledonia on offer. The long gently sloping beach in Kuto Bay makes this anchorage a favourite with guests. The local gendarmerie (police) will drop by to check your previous clearances but it is more out of curiosity and we found them to be friendly and a great source of information on sights worth visiting on the Island. A few boat T-shirts offered as a thank you for the info will set you in good stead for the rest of your stay. As with other places, there are a few local rules to be observed including the operation of motorised water sports, as jet skis, wake boarding, etc., cannot be carried out in any of the bays. You must be past the extremities of the headlands. Noumea Yacht Services can supply all the local rules.

The Loyalty Islands lie approx. 60 miles off the west coast of New Caledonia and comprise three main Islands. Ile Mare is the southern of the chain, followed by Lifou approx. 30 miles north west then the lagoon atoll of D’ouvea a further 40 miles north west.

We unfortunately did not spend much time exploring these islands other than 24hrs at Lifou on the way through to Fiji. Lifou was again very scenic with a good anchorage in approx 16 metres of water off the beach in Baie de Gaatcha. The water is incredibly clear and constant checking of the sounder was needed to confirm we were in deep water as the sea bed looked as if it was just below the surface! The bottom here has lots of scattered reef so positioning of the anchor was important for a hassle free departure. This wasn’t hard to do with 50 metre visibility! Lifou is approx 133 nautical miles from Noumea via the Havana Passage and customs and immigration were not available on the islands so clearance out involved returning to Noumea or flying customs out to the yacht via a charter flight. This may have changed since our last visit but again the boys at NYS will be able to inform you on this protocol.

Our next foray back to New Caledonia will see us exploring D’ouvea as fellow captains have told me this is also a must see. New Caledonia and its surrounding islands carry with them a turbulent but interesting history as the spread of French colonisation took hold on the islands. There are many historical buildings in most of the areas we visited with the old gaols of particular interest. But rest assured we found all the local islanders and French inhabitants extremely friendly and very accommodating. If you are passing through Australia, a detour to New Caledonia is a worthy stopover that will add to the highlights of your South Pacific Adventure!
Solomon Islands

Useful Statistics

**GOVERNMENT:** Constitutional Monarchy

**LAND AREA:** 27,556 km² (10,639 sq miles)

**POPULATION:** (est. 2010) 538,148

**LANGUAGE:** English, although Pidgin English and over 60 Melanesian languages or dialects are spoken

**CURRENCY:** Dollar (SID)

**CLIMATE:** A tropical climate characterized by high humidity and uniform hot temperatures which are tempered by sea breezes. Greatest rainfall between November and March.

**UTC:** +11

**INTL DIALLING CODE:** +677

**THE SOLOMON ISLANDS** is an archipelago of several hundred islands in the South West Pacific Ocean stretching from Vanuatu to Bougainville. There are over 900 islands, the main six comprise Choiseul, Guadalcanal, Malaita, New Georgia, San Cristobal and Santa Isabel. Most of the islands are of volcanic origin and have rainforest covered mountain ranges intersected by narrow valleys with coastal belts fringed by coral reefs. Most of the smaller islands are raised coral or low atolls. The Solomon Islands archipelago is part of two distinct terrestrial eco regions: the Solomon Islands rainforests eco region, and the Vanuatu rainforests eco region. There are volcanoes with varying degrees of activity on some of the larger islands. More than 230 varieties of orchids and other tropical flowers brighten the landscape. The Solomons’ culture and custom is rich and varied, from wood-carving to beliefs such as shark-worshipping. Many islanders still live in the traditional way and authorities are making a determined effort to preserve this way of life and they enjoy the full support of the customary chiefs in their endeavours.

Visiting yachts are welcomed in most villages, particularly by children who like to trade fruit or shells for ball-point pens, felt-tips or balloons. With underwater visibility usually around 30m and water temperature in the high 20’s (°C), conditions are ideal for divers to discover the marine wonders of the Solomon Islands. There are countless WW2 wrecks, beautiful reefs, enchanting corals and a multi-coloured array of fish comprising this diver’s paradise. Honiara, capital of the Solomons on Guadalcanal island, boasts an idyllic tropical climate, unique historic sights both on land and beneath the water. Plus, handicraft shops, cafés, restaurants and bars. As the site of the first Allied offensive in the South Pacific during WW2, Honiara holds a significant place in history. Allied forces landed on Guadalcanal, largest of the Solomon Islands, and seized a Japanese airstrip under construction. Today this airstrip is Honiara’s International Airport.
Sovereign State of Oceania

Exploring PNG, the Solomons and Fiji is a million miles away from most cruisers, however it's a part of the world worth sailing should you find yourself in southwest Pacific waters.

By Captain David Tomlinson – M/V Flamingo Bay
Photography Solomon Islands Tourism / David Tomlinson

NOW if you have a problem and need more than a 200 ton crane you're a bit limited in these areas. Fiji can offer you a style of help from Fiji Shipbuilder’s, in Suva, for a big slipway and some engineering assistance, followed by Port Moresby’s (PNG) Curtin Brothers. The Solomons have several smaller facilities in Tulagi for haul out and their engineering assistance is a bit limited. Happily, Pacific Air Cargo, in Honiara, flies a 737 freighter from Brisbane weekly and can transport most things easily.

Taking the concern of engineering challenges off the list, and maybe only fuel and provisions are needed, I’d be tempted to head straight for Honiara. Still in a time warp, after years of political challenges, the Solomon capital offers the only bit of sophistication in this 992 island nation of the Solomon Islands. Honiara and Gizo, in the west, are the only two places to clear in or out.

Drop your pick safely in 20-25 metres of water just to the west of the reef zone in front of the Mendana Hotel and its neighbouring Point Cruz Yacht Club.

Notify Honiara Port Control on channel 16 or 9, and if they answer, let them know you’ve arrived. No pilot required. Customs is located in Point Cruz and Immigration is located across from the Post Office only 200 metres west of the Mendana Hotel. Catch a cab from the yacht club or just up on the corner. They charge SBD$50 an hour (US$7.50).

Government fees are minimal and your first visitor’s visa offers 90 days of exploring. Should you find this isn’t long enough to fully enjoy all the areas, a second 90 day visa is allowable at a cost of SBD$150 per person – just over US $20.

‘Deli in the Plaza’ in the Panatina Plaza and ‘Wings’, located downtown, are the best places
to source dry goods and other provisions, but for fresh produce head to the main market on the waterfront where you will find dozens of traders all under one massive roof. Compare your prices because some sellers purchase produce from each other and double the prices. Still cheap though and as fresh as you can get. Don’t expect the same variety as your home port, however, as basically everything is organic, they can’t afford pesticides and the soils are rich in nutrients. Markworth’s and Pacific Fuels (ex-Shell) are the two suppliers of fuels and oils. Both supply from the same wharf just on the eastern end of the commercial wharf zone. When I was last there in January 2007, the cost of fuel was about $A1.00 a litre, 40 cents cheaper than in Australia, but is likely to be more now of course. Spend part of a day visiting the National Museum and various WWII memorials around Honiara, which overlooks Iron Bottom Sound, the home of 111 shipwrecks sunk during some of the Pacific’s most notorious battles. A trip over to the Floridas (20 miles away) lets you visit the old capital, Tulagi and many easily diveable wrecks. Contact Tulagi Dive to help guide you. Take a run through Sandfly Passage taking care to avoid the rock in the middle of the northern entrance, and around the corner anchor off Anuha. Next day return through the Mboli Passage to Honiara or begin towards Marovo. If a local paddles up in his wooden canoe demanding visitor fees for your anchorage politely let him know ‘No’, no matter how official his paperwork looks. Got what you need? Time to go? Pull the pick and start heading west to what I believe to be one of the finest cruising grounds in the world, the Western Province. About 60 miles into this voyage takes you either through Sunlight Channel or past the Russells. This group of islands looks like a maze from the air however it offers good anchorages and protection if needed. Less than 100 years ago, head-hunters inhabited this country, and as you travel through it you’ll notice how easy it is to see one group of islands from the next. Most islands have volcanic origins. Now before you panic, worrying about your draft constraints and manoeuvrability in any of these areas, don’t. I’ve spent the last few years exploring most of the Western Province’s waters in the single screw 126 foot ‘Flamingo Bay’. My draft is nearly 12 ft with a 25 foot beam and no thrusters. So you’re spoiled with your tools. There’s normally only one tide a day ranging up to about a metre. As you approach the island of Gatokae, an extinct volcano and easternmost main island in the Western Province, think about visiting the village of Peava in the SE corner. Peava Lagoon (about 300m x 100m) has an entrance (8°47’S, 158°14’E) that allows a four metre draft and a beam of ten metres to enter anytime. The opening is obvious; enter between the big styrofoam float on your port side and a large pole on your starboard side (if they are still there), stick to the middle and aim at the dock sticking out from Wilderness Lodge directly in front of you. Inside you drop your pick in nearly 20 metres of water and can swim ashore to visit a wonderful friendly village. Make sure you introduce yourself to either the Chief or Cory Howell, proprietor.
Pass on Gatokae's NE corner. Drop in to see Chief Luton, in the middle of Bhili Pass, and ask to see his airplane. A small fee is charged to crawl around a WWII US four-engined bomber that crashed on his land, right on the water's edge. You are now in the largest double-barrier salt water lagoon in the world. Dozens of villages line the foreshores of the internal islands that make up this soon to be UNESCO World Heritage listed lagoon. Unique on the planet they say! Patch reefs can be seen everywhere, safe to manoeuvre in and actually well marked considering that in one respect you are in the middle of nowhere. Chart SI 07 is quite accurate and will let you cruise Marovo safely.

Uepi Island Resort, located at Charapaonna Pass on Marovo’s NE side (8° 25.5’S 157° 57.1’E), is the country’s best dive resort. Grant, Jill and their boys will welcome you and point you in the right direction.

Telepare Island, to the west of Marovo, is reputedly second only in biodiversity to the Galapagos within the Pacific, and well worth a stop at the ranger station on the western side of the gap between Telepare and Rendova. Across the channel on the south-western side of New Georgia Island is Viru Harbour, a welcoming place to visit with a safe entrance and wonderful protection.

As you proceed towards Gizo, travel through the Blacket Straits renowned for heavy fighting during WWII and the loss of JFK’s PT 109. Nusa Tupe Island, next to Gizo, is the main airport to the Western Provinces capital.

The safest entrance to Gizo is from the west and the harbour offers a great anchorage. If you find yourself nearby during May, and the Vakatepe Festival (Festival of the Sea) is on, try to get an anchorage in Gizo harbour. This pretty little unsophisticated town comes alive for nearly a week as Solomon Island war canoes vie for the title of best and fastest. The Gizo Yacht Club helps with this as the Brisbane to Gizo Yacht Rally finishes during the first few days of celebrations. Customs and Immigration are available in Gizo so clearing in and out is easy and, so to, visa extensions. Gizo markets on the waterfront offers the best sources of fresh produce and there are lots of little shops in Chinatown to maybe source dry goods.

I’m biased, I guess, as I’ve enjoyed nearly four years exploring this off the beaten path country. I grew up around southern Florida and the Bahamas before moving ‘Down Under’ and during my boating career I’ve been lucky to explore some of our planet’s most isolated and beautiful areas! So … how do I rank the biosphere? Contrary to international travel warnings it is a safe place to visit. Friendly people and truly a nation made up of villages. Few international ‘white boats’ come this way, and yet, those that do normally return. It really is a boater’s paradise, without the traffic jam at good anchorages. Plus it is north of the South Pacific’s cyclone zone at 8° and a bit South latitude. If you have the time… try it. You’ll never regret it!
Micronesia

Useful Statistics

Federated States of Micronesia

GOVERNMENT: Federal Republic
LAND AREA: 702 km² (271 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 111,064
LANGUAGE: English, indigenous Malayo-Polynesian
CURRENCY: US Dollar (USD)
CLIMATE: A tropical climate that is heavily influenced by the NE trade winds which prevail from November to December and April to May. The tradewinds bring frequent heavy rainfall and average temperature ranges are from 26-27°C (79-81°F) all year.
UTC: +11
INTL DIALLING CODE: +691

MICRONESIA is the name of a region in the Pacific Ocean at 6°55′N, 158°15′E. The Philippines lie to the northwest, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Melanesia to the west and southwest, and Polynesia to the east. This region of Oceania consists of many hundreds of small islands spread over a large region of the western Pacific. The only empire known to have originated in Micronesia was based in Yap. The term “Micronesia” was first proposed to distinguish the region in 1831 by Jules Dumont d’Urville; before this the term “Polynesia” was in use to generally describe the islands of the Pacific. Politically, Micronesia is divided into eight nation-states and territories: the Federated States of Micronesia (referred to as “Micronesia”, or “FSM”), which consists of four states: Kosrae, Yap, Pohnpei, and Chuuk; the Marshall Islands; Palau; the Northern Mariana Islands; Nauru; Kiribati; Guam and Wake Island. The popular superyacht destination of choice is Chuuk (or Truk), a group of islands dotting a large atoll with a vast lagoon that represents an incredible underwater museum. Truk Lagoon is an idyllic setting, surrounded by waving palms and dazzling white sands. It’s a place where you can float in sparkling clear waters while beneath you lie more than 100 wrecks from WW2 ships, planes and submarines. The islands were once a staging ground for forces during WW2 and these wrecks have rested on the bottom virtually undisturbed for more than 60 years. The warm tropical water, prolific marine life and ocean currents have transformed the wrecks into breathtakingly beautiful coral gardens and artificial reefs, home to hundreds of exotic marine animals and fish. Today, this surreal lagoon attracts the world’s divers, underwater photographers and marine scientists. The islands offer amazing flora and fauna, freshwater falls and centuries’ old historic sites from 16th to 20th century battlegrounds.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM TRUK LAGOON TO:
Pohnpei 389
Guam 562
Yap Island 836
Palau 1,039
Tarawa 1,330

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS
Micronesia Cruising Notes – Cregeen
Pacific Wanderer – Earl Hinz

USEFUL WEBSITES
www.visit-fsm.org
www.fsmgov.org
www.micronesia.com
www.lonelyplanet.com/federated-states-of-micronesia

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W: www.visit-fsm.org

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Truk Transportation Co.
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E: TRANSCO@mail.fm

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SUPERYACHT SERVICES

108 | GSR
Guam

Useful Statistics
Territory of Guam

GOVERNMENT: Unincorporated Territory of the U.S.A.
LAND AREA: 543.52 km², (210 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 179,896
LANGUAGE: English, Chamorro
CURRENCY: US Dollar (USD)

CLIMATE: The climate is characterised as tropical marine and the weather is generally warm and humid with little seasonal temperature variation. The mean high temperature is 86°F (30 °C) and mean low is 74°F (24°C). The dry season runs from December through June. The remaining months constitute the wet season. The highest risk of typhoons is during October and November.

UTC: +10
INTL DIALLING CODE: + 1 (671)

GUAM is the largest, most populous island and commercial hub of Micronesia. It is a modern, Americanised metropolis and home to an important US military base in the Western Pacific Ocean. Guam’s big resort hotels and shopping malls stand in sharp contrast to its isolated sandy beaches, small villages and lush mountainous rain forests. So, whatever your passion, you can find something to interest you on this island. It is the southernmost of the Mariana Islands but forms a separate unit from the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas. Guam’s close relations with the USA and its role as a crossroads and distribution centre for the rest of Micronesia because of its air links, makes it rather different from the rest of the Pacific. Visitors will find Guam a contrasting atmosphere to the one they may have experienced in other islands. Guam is the largest of the Mariana Islands, in fact the largest island in Micronesia, located at 13.5°N 144.5°E.

Filled with brilliantly colored flowers, birds and beaches, this vibrant island is also a historic location with six “War in the Pacific” parks to commemorate the past. Its capital is Hagåtña, formerly Agana. Guam's economy is mainly supported by tourism (particularly from Japan, Korea and Taiwan) and United States armed forces bases. The island experiences occasional earthquakes due to being on the edge of the Pacific Plate. In recent years, quakes with epicenters near Guam have had magnitudes ranging from 5.0 to 8.7 but Guam itself is not volcanically active. However, due to wind direction and proximity, volcanic ash activity does occasionally affect Guam. A coral reef surrounds most of the island except in areas where bays exist that provide access to small rivers and streams that run down from the hills into the Pacific Ocean and Philippine Sea.

Interesting places to visit include: Two Lovers Point – legend has it that a Chamorro maiden and her lover leapt to their death from this 400-foot limestone cliff, and Chamorro Cultural Village where native Chamorro practice traditional island crafts.

MICRONESIAN HANDBOOK – D Stanley
DESTINY’S LANDFALL
LANDFALLS OF PARADISE – EARL HINZ

USEFUL WEBSITES
www.visitguam.org (Visitors Bureau)
http://guam-online.com
www.guam.gov
www.mymicronesia.com
www.lonelyplanet.com/guam

SUPERYACHT SERVICES
Guam Chamber of Commerce
T: +671 472 6311 / 8001

Marianas Steamship Agencies, Inc
T: +1671 472 8584
E: info@msa-guam.com
W: http://msa-guam.com
Contact: Richard Sablan, Director

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM GUAM TO:
Saipan 126’
Truk Lagoon 562’
Palau 699’
Tarawa 1,465’
Hong Kong 1,843’
Northern Marianas – Saipan

Useful Statistics

**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands**

**GOVERNMENT:** U.S.

Commonwealth status

**LAND AREA:** 477 km² (181 sq miles)

**POPULATION:** (est. 2010) 53,883

**LANGUAGE:** English, Chamorro, Carolinian, (86% don’t speak English at home)

**CURRENCY:** US Dollar (USD)

**CLIMATE:** The climate is tropical marine, hot and humid (79-86% avg, but greatest from July to November) with uniform temperatures – mean temp 83°F. Known for cyclonic disturbances and typhoon force winds of 120 mph.

**UTC:** +10

**INTL DIALLING CODE:** +670

**USEFUL PUBLICATIONS**


**USEFUL WEBSITES**

- www.saipan.com
- www.mymarianas.com
- www.cmni-guide.com
- www.statelocalgov.net/other-mp.cfm
- www.saipanchamber.com
- www.janeresture.com/saipan
- www.mymicronesia.com

**THE NORTHERN MARIANA** Islands (CNMI) in the Western Pacific has the special status of a US Commonwealth. The American influence is strong, although the legacy of Spanish colonial rule can also be seen. Of the 14 volcanic islands that stretch 375 miles north to south in almost a straight line, the southernmost three, Saipan, Rota and Tinian, are the main islands. For many years the islands were military-dominated and access was forbidden, but that is no longer the case and now the islands attract more cruising yachts every year. Most of these come from Guam, where there is a Northern Marianas representative who can issue the necessary permit to visit the islands. The southern islands are the more developed, while some of the northern islands are wildlife reserves and cannot be visited. Saipan is a mere 14 miles long and 5 miles wide. Nearly all its northern, southern and eastern beaches are protected by a fringing coral barrier reef, while its easterly side takes the brunt of the storm seas with towering cliffs and rugged rocks. You can experience a unique blend of WW2 history and tropical beauty as you float on placid turquoise seas in the Northern Mariana Islands. Most facilities are in Saipan, which is the most developed island, attracting the most tourists. Saipan is a modern, clean and thriving community comprising several villages that are more like small towns. Considered to have the best beach areas in Micronesia, there is native dancing, nightclubs, bars, several discos, fine international cuisine, modern shopping malls and plenty of duty free shopping. The island also boasts modern technological communication, and plenty of recreational facilities including five 18-hole golf courses. Divers will delight in the sunken wrecks from WW2 nestled in the expanse of lagoon waters around Managaha Island, just two miles from Saipan’s Charlie Dock. Visibility under water of up to 50m allows divers to see a fascinating array of wrecks including aeroplanes, submarines, tanks and ships still in good condition. Tinian is less developed than Saipan, but as it has a large farming community, fresh produce is easily available and of good quality.
Marshall Islands

Useful Statistics
Republic of the Marshall Islands

GOVERNMENT: Constitutional government in free association with the U.S.

LAND SIZE: 181 km² (70 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 68,000

LANGUAGE: Marshallese, English, Japanese

CURRENCY: US Dollar (USD)

CLIMATE: Hot and humid, with temperatures between 25°C (77°F) and 30°C (86°F) for the whole year. High temperatures are cooled by trade winds and frequent rainfalls. Wet season from March to November. Many Pacific typhoons start in the region and grow stronger as they move west toward the Mariana Islands and the Philippines.

UTC: +12

INTL DIALLING CODE: +692

THE MARSHALL ISLANDS are a Micronesian island nation in the western Pacific Ocean, located north of Nauru and Kiribati, east of the Federated States of Micronesia and south of the U.S. territory of Wake Island, to which it lays claim. These beautiful islands are a collection of 1,225 flat coral islands and islets of white sand beaches and turquoise lagoons. There’s pristine diving and lush tropical greenery, and the Marshallese people retain many of their pre-colonial crafts and traditions, especially on the outer islands which are sparsely populated and life is generally still fairly traditional: the rural population consuming food that is either grown or caught. For centuries, the Marshallese have turned to the sea for their needs. The islands produce mainly coconuts, pandanus and breadfruit. The Marshall Islands are grouped into 29 coral atolls resembling strings of pearls in a blue ocean backdrop. It is no wonder they are referred to as the ‘Pearl of the Pacific’. They lie in two parallel chains known as sunrise and sunset (Ratak and Ralik) and in true atoll form, they are narrow and low and encircle large central lagoons. All the islands have glorious white sandy beaches, tall palms and are lapped by crystal clear waters. Two-thirds of the nation’s population over 30,000 lives on Majuro, which is also the capital and most developed atoll with a thriving commercial and political centre. It offers visitors, diving and fishing, a cultural museum, a variety of cuisine, entertaining nightlife and is the perfect “home base” while visiting the outer islands. Day trips can be taken to neighboring Arno atoll for fishing or diving. Diving is at its best from May through October, when the water is the calmest, though water temperatures are bath-like all year round. Ebeye has a population of about 11,000 and provides access to some of the world’s best wreck diving. Kwajalein lagoon has numerous WW2 and earlier wrecks including the famous Prinz Eugen, the escort ship to Germany’s Bismark. Fishing too, is excellent here, in waters uninhabited for 50 years. The island of Kwajalein is a restricted military base. However, yachts are free to sail in Kwajalein lagoon waters and to dive on any of the sunken ships and planes.
Palau

Useful Statistics

Republic of Palau

GOVERNMENT: Unitary Republic

LAND AREA: 458 km² (177 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 20,956

LANGUAGE: English and Palaun, a Micronesian language

CURRENCY: US Dollar

CLIMATE: A tropical maritime climate with hot and humid conditions. From May to November the wet season prevails with typhoons (although rare) occurring between June and December. Average temperature is 27°C with 82% average humidity.

UTC: -9

INTL DIALLING CODE: +680

PALAU IS LOCATED in the west Pacific Ocean approximately 597 miles east of the Philippines and is the most westerly archipelago of island groups that make up the Caroline Islands. The archipelago consists of over 200 islands and atolls which vary in size from small islands of coral limestone formation to Babeldoab, the 36 km² main island, which is also the second largest Micronesian island after Guam. Babeldoab was formed from volcanic activity, rises to an elevation of 200m (656 ft) and is surrounded by mangrove swamps. A 181 km (112 miles) reef surrounds the main island group and encompasses a lagoon on the western side that reaches 20 km (12 miles) across at its widest point. Most of the islands are also covered in thick vegetation. Palau’s most important islands are Angaur, Babeldaob, Koror, and Peleliu. The latter three lie together within the same barrier reef, while Angaur is an Oceanic Island several miles to the South. About two-thirds of the population lives on Koror. The coral atoll of Kayangel is situated north of these islands, while the uninhabited Rock Islands (about 200) are situated to the west of the main island group. A remote group of six islands, known as the Southwest Islands, some 375 miles from the main islands, are also part of the country and make up the States of Hatohobei and Sonsorol. The Palau lagoon and its many picturesque islands provide one of the most beautiful cruising grounds in the Pacific. One of the most interesting places there is the Rock Islands, which are over 200 islets covered in jungle growth. Three major ocean currents meet in this area bringing food to nourish the rich marine life. The sea is teeming with turtles, manta rays, moray eels, fish of all descriptions, giant clams and dugong. Diving is exceptional and probably one of the most rewarding places in the world to explore the undersea marine life and sunken World War 2 wrecks. This is a first class superyacht destination.
The exact position is 07°30’N 134°30’E which is approximately 360 nautical miles east of the southern part of the Philippines. The islands vary geographically from the high and mountainous largest island, Babelthuap, to low coral islands usually fringed by large barrier reefs. The Rock Islands are quite unique and instantly recognisable in photos. It is worth noting that only eight of these islands are permanently inhabited. The main urban area is Koror and the total population is approximately 20,000 people. The wet season is from May to November, when it is considered to be hot and humid and there is a risk of typhoons from June to December. The local currency is US dollars and most people speak English.

When arriving in Palau, there are two directions from which to reach the commercial port. One is through the northwestern channel (07°32’39”N 134°27’23”E) and the other is through the southeastern channel (07°16’30”N 134°28’11”E). A pilot is compulsory for vessels over 200 GRT, when entering and departing Palau. While cruising Palau waters, a pilot is not necessary but a guide with good local knowledge is highly recommended. Google Earth is a great way of familiarising yourself with the area. In order to clear in and out of Palau, one must go alongside at the commercial wharf (07°19’49”N 134°27’27”E). Once alongside, the pilot disembarks and the agent comes aboard with Immigration, Customs, the Department of Agriculture and a host of other mysterious government agencies. It is a fairly straightforward process of handing out copies of ship’s registration papers and crew lists. Please be aware that they may ask to seal your freezer for the duration of your stay and will expect you to throw out all fresh produce. The sealing of one’s freezer is “negotiable”. Any rubbish on board that has the remains of fresh produce will have to be disposed of by the government. This will be taken away separately with the remaining fresh produce and destroyed. Should you require fuel, this can be arranged in advance through Sam’s Dive Tours. Palau Shipping Company (www.palaushipping.com).
com) is the recommended agent to use with regards to making sure clearing in and out goes smoothly. It is best to contact them several weeks in advance to make sure that all the required paperwork is in place. Once the vessel has cleared in, one can either stay at the commercial wharf, but bear in mind that it is a working commercial wharf, or one can anchor as close to Sam’s Dive Tours (07°20’18”N 134°27’13”E) as possible. Any vessel up to approximately 50 metres can comfortably anchor in the natural shelter of the basin, which appears to be an old crater, outside Sam’s Dive Tours. There is a narrow channel leading in to the basin of which the depth must be checked before attempting the entrance. One can expect the minimum depth to be three to four metres depending on the state of the tide. Once inside, the depth drops away to in excess of 20 metres. If one is not comfortable anchoring inside the basin, one can anchor before the small channel, still in sight of Sam’s Dive Tours.

The advantage of anchoring here is that there is a very good pontoon here which can be used for arriving and departing guests, not to mention being the location of a very pleasant bar for the crew to enjoy a sundowner!

During your stay in Palau, it is highly recommended using Sam’s Dive Tours (www.samstours.com). They can provide a guide with good local knowledge to safely move around these reef-littered waters. They have helped every large yacht that has visited Palau over the last 10 years. Hence they know what the requirements are and can help very effectively including such things as provisioning. The selection of goods for provisioning is fair in Palau. It does however depend on how recently the supply flight from Guam has come in. It pays to hunt around for goods as different supermarkets may have entirely different supplies. An imaginative chef is also an advantage as it certainly is not the same selection as one would expect from a “western” supermarket. The alcohol selection is very poor with regards to quality.

Sam’s Dive Tours can help with itinerary planning, obtaining various permits for persons, tenders, fishing and the vessel. They can also help organise all types of activities for both guests and crew, such as helicopter rides, kayaking trips, overnight camping on deserted beaches, diving, snorkelling, fishing, shore excursions and exploring the islands.

The airport is approximately half an hour’s drive from Sam’s Dive Tours and once again they can help out with providing transport. They are the ultimate one stop shop for all your requirements. Bear in mind that all commercial flights come through either Guam or Manila.

A Cruising Permit must be secured from Koror State Rangers before departing Malakal Harbor for the beautiful anchorages of Palau’s Rock Islands. Keep in mind that large vessels may be constrained by draft however, regardless of your particular anchorage Palau is beautiful and one can easily move around using the tender to go to beaches, dive sites, exploring the Rock Islands, etc. It must be noted that the diving in Palau is commonly considered amongst the best in the world. It is worth trying to time one’s dives when the dive companies don’t have their
customers diving. It can get very busy on some dive sites. With regards to the beaches, they can get relatively busy at lunch time when the dive companies take their customers there. By mid afternoon the beaches are usually deserted again and one can enjoy complete privacy. There are some private beaches, for which a permit can be obtained. This is worth considering. All the beaches are kept immaculate.

In conclusion, the Republic of Palau is an absolute must for any superyacht owner who enjoys diving but also for those that simply enjoy beautiful islands, reefs and beaches set in an incredible array of different shades of blue water. It is a unique and pristine place that encompasses the ultimate getaway, which is for many superyacht owners, the prime objective of cruising far flung Pacific Islands. Here lies endless paradise, welcoming you with open arms. Happy sailing.
World-class marinas in the heart of Auckland.

Waterfront Auckland provides Auckland’s premier marinas with berths ranging between 10-115 metres. Our three primary facilities are within walking distance to Auckland’s central city and bustling café and nightlife scene. All marinas provide direct access to New Zealand’s most comprehensive marine service precinct making it the ideal destination for any repairs or service work.

**VIADUCT MARINA**

With berths up to 60 metres long, Viaduct Marina is located in the heart of Auckland’s vibrant waterfront. Viaduct Harbour is a first class residential, commercial and entertainment precinct. Never too far away from the action, this is the ideal place to be near world-class events.

**SILO MARINA**

Silo Marina is the premier home for superyachts in the South Pacific. Offering berths up to 115 metres Silo Marina is located in Auckland’s newest waterfront destination, Wynyard Quarter.

**WESTHAVEN MARINA**

Westhaven is one of the largest marinas in the Southern Hemisphere. With berths up to 30 metres, Westhaven is on the doorstep of the Hauraki Gulf’s stunning cruising grounds, and provides a convenient base for Pacific cruising.

www.aucklandmarinas.com
As you head into the Bay of Islands, undoubtedly a top local holiday spot, the cafés and bars of the busy, fun towns of Russell and Paihia are balanced by two of New Zealand’s most historic settlements – Waitangi, where the document, the Treaty of Waitangi, was signed in 1840 to create one nation, and Kerikeri, home to New Zealand’s oldest stone building, the Stone Store, built in 1836. Take a day trip to the windswept west coast to see the largest Kauri tree still standing, Tane Mahuta, in the Waipoua Forest.

Around Cape Brett and its iconic ‘hole in the rock’, you find Tutukaka and fantastic diving opportunities in the Poor Knights Island marine reserve. Through Whangarei Heads, you’ll find the northern city of Whangarei, while to the east lie the islands of Little Barrier and Great Barrier. Established as a nature reserve in 1895, Little Barrier Island is considered to be one of the most important reserves of its kind in the world with rare and endangered plants, birds and animals. Visitor numbers are limited and permits must be pre-arranged with the Department of Conservation. Great Barrier Island is also a special place with a small resident population of hardy, independent

New Zealand’s small land mass and multiple islands lend themselves to a circumnavigation, although safe moorings for vessels over 35 metres are limited on the wind-swept west coast with Nelson and Fiordland the best western options. At the northern-most tip of New Zealand, the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean collide in a never-ending swell at Cape Reinga. Ninety Mile Beach stretches south down the western side of the narrow stretch known as the Far North while around to the east lies sandy Karikari Peninsula, where you’ll find New Zealand’s northern-most winery, Karikari Estate. The golden sands of Doubtless Bay lead along Coopers Beach to the seaside township of Mangonui and its world-famous Mangonui Fish Shop. The next stretch of coastline includes the many beautiful secluded bays of Wangaaroa Harbour and the Cavalli Islands, areas where scuba diving, snorkeling and game-fishing are all likely to reward the keen diver or angler with the freshest scallops, crayfish (lobster), paua (abalone), snapper, kingfish or the world-class game fish which frequent these seas; tuna, marlin and swordfish.

As you sail along the many untouched stretches of New Zealand’s coastline, it’s easy to imagine the scenes that would have greeted Lt. (later Captain) James Cook when he charted this small country.

Some say New Zealand’s landscapes remind them of the splendours of Canada on a smaller, more easily accessible scale. In the North Island, the semi-tropical nature of the far north transitions into pastoral farmland dotted with active and inactive volcanoes. Across Cook Strait, the South Island’s majestic mountain ranges border serene fiords and isolated high country before reaching Stewart Island’s prolific native birdlife and pristine bush. All of this set inside 15,134 kilometres of varied coastline makes New Zealand a natural home or destination for those aboard a sailing vessel of any size. Virtually all New Zealanders live within a three-hour drive of the ocean and, for those aboard sail and motor yachts, New Zealand offers an equally diverse cruising ground. Add in the rivers and lakes that abound in this temperate nation and the seafaring heritage that runs through the veins of the Maori, Europeans and Pacific Islanders who call New Zealand home, you’ll see why the locals love any sport or recreational activity that involves water.

Whether you seek a scenic hour’s stroll or bike ride, or the exhilaration of completing a challenging five-day hike, you will find an extensive array of well-mapped walks all over New Zealand. Many are in the country’s 14 national parks, others are in urban locations. For more information, look on the Department of Conservation website, www.doc.govt.nz.

As you head into the Bay of Islands, undoubtedly a top local holiday spot, the cafes and bars of the busy, fun towns of Russell and Paihia are balanced by two of New Zealand’s most historic settlements – Waitangi, where the document, the Treaty of Waitangi, was signed in 1840 to create one nation, and Kerikeri, home to New Zealand’s oldest stone building, the Stone Store, built in 1836. Take a day trip to the windswept west coast to see the largest Kauri tree still standing, Tane Mahuta, in the Waipoua Forest. Around Cape Brett and its iconic ‘hole in the rock’, you find Tutukaka and fantastic diving opportunities in the Poor Knights Island marine reserve. Through Whangarei Heads, you’ll find the northern city of Whangarei, while to the east lie the islands of Little Barrier and Great Barrier. Established as a nature reserve in 1895, Little Barrier Island is considered to be one of the most important reserves of its kind in the world with rare and endangered plants, birds and animals. Visitor numbers are limited and permits must be pre-arranged with the Department of Conservation. Great Barrier Island is also a special place with a small resident population of hardy, independent

Aotearoa New Zealand may be a small country, but with more than 15,000 kilometres of coastline and a hugely varied landscape, there is much to see and do in this beautiful country down-under.

By Kate Gordon
Photography Tourism New Zealand
NEW ZEALAND

souls who live without mains power. Fantastic isolated beaches, abundant fishing, spectacular scenery and walking tracks make the island worthy of a visit.

South of Whangarei, vessels enter the Hauraki Gulf with the country’s largest city, Auckland, tucked into its southeastern corner. The gulf is part of the Pacific Ocean, which it joins to the north and east. It is largely protected from the Pacific by Great Barrier Island and Little Barrier Island to the north, and by the 80-kilometre-long Coromandel Peninsula to the east. The gulf is thus well protected against all but northern winds. More than 70 islands are scattered around the Hauraki Gulf including Kawau Island just off the coast of Warkworth, north of the city. Visit the beautifully restored Mansion House built in 1906 and once a tourist mecca for city folk who visited the island by ferry. The dormant volcano of Rangitoto Island provides an unprecedented view of Auckland city from the top should you wish to make the climb.

In Auckland itself, enjoy the many restaurants, art galleries and fashion design studios to be found in metropolitan areas such as the Viaduct Harbour, Takapuna, Parnell and Newmarket. Kelly Tarlton’s Antarctic Encounter and Underwater World attracts families from all over the world. Many marine-related businesses, including yacht builders, sailmakers or spar manufacturers, make their home near the Viaduct Harbour Marine Village, which was built for the America’s Cup in 1999-2000. Among the business offering a variety of marine services, repairs and refits, vessels up to 80 metres can berth. Day trips from Auckland could incorporate a visit to the black sands of Auckland’s west coast beaches, Piha and Murawai, or a visit to one of the many golf courses around the region such as Gulf Harbour’s peninsula-top course north of the city.

With festivals and events as varied as its landscape and culture, every month holds something special for locals and visitors alike. Enjoy haute couture at Auckland Fashion Week or catwalk art at Auckland’s Style Pacifica, both held in September. Sports enthusiasts can enjoy international talent at the Heineken Open and ASB Classic Tennis tournaments, held in January and February respectively, or take part in the biggest event in Auckland’s sailing calendar, Auckland Cup Week in February. Sample the glamour of horseracing at Auckland Cup Week in March, cheer on the Super Rugby teams playing through the winter season, or participate in the Auckland marathon held every November.

To the east of Waiheke Island, adventurers will find Coromandel and its misty rainforests and pristine golden beaches. Blessed with hundreds of natural hideaways, Coromandel is an ideal place to slow down, relax and unwind. Dig your own hot spa pool in the sand at Hot Water Beach, explore the Coromandel Forest Park or cruise around the Mercury Islands. Further south on the North Island’s east coast is the Bay of Plenty with its great surf and pretty harbour, this district is literally the bay of plenty, producing much of New Zealand’s kiwifruit, citrus and avocado crops. The game fishing off the coast of Whakatane is highly regarded and head further east around East Cape to Gisborne to enjoy surf and fantastic Maori traditions.

There’s a long stretch of virtually uninhabited coastline on the southeast of the North Island before you round into Palliser Bay or Wellington, the country’s capital city where you can visit the national museum, Te Papa. Crossing Cook Strait is best achieved during mild weather conditions and the trip in through the many islands of the Marlborough Sounds will be spectacular.

South down the coast takes you to Kaikoura, famous for whale watching and fresh crayfish, then the pretty English-style gardens of Christchurch city and the bulbous form of Banks Peninsula, which offers many scenic secluded bays for private mooring including the attractive French-influenced settlement of Akaroa. From Christchurch, take a car north to the wineries of Waipara or helicopter out into the high country of Lake Tekapo and Mount Cook Aoraki for a taste of true southern splendour.

Continuing south, you’ll pass Timaru and cross the 45th parallel south just before Oamaru and then on to the major southern city of Dunedin, which is tucked at the top of the Otago Harbour. Albatross, rare penguins and sea lions breed on the Otago Peninsula, creating an exceptional land-based adventure. The South Island begins its turn to the west when you reach the Catlins, a relatively undiscovered, truly beautiful region. You’ll pass the southern-most point of the South Island at Slope Point before having to round Bluff to reach Invercargill. The region is famous for its Bluff oysters, which grow slowly in the cold, clean waters of Foveaux Strait – mark the May annual Bluff oyster festival in your diary and book ahead for tickets! Across the strait lies Stewart Island, 85 per cent of which is designated national park. It’s a very special place with clear, clean waters, lush rainforest, sweeping sands, flora and fauna and an unspoilt natural beauty that will astound and delight.

Tackling the challenging wind-swept seas that take you around the coast of UNESCO World Heritage-protected Fiordland. With its dark bush-clad mountains and deep, deep sounds, this is one of the most dramatic and beautiful parts of New Zealand. Cruising aboard a fine seagoing vessel in these crystal-clear waters can only be described as breathtaking as you explore Dusky Sound, Doubtful Sound and the more touristy Milford Sound.

North up the West Coast, you’ll pass the majestic scenery of Haast, Grey mould and Westport before the landscape changes again at Farewell Spit, which protects Golden Bay, the Abel Tasman National Park and Nelson which offers one of the few berth options for large vessels on this coast. Sun-drenched and relaxing, the whole district is worthy of several days’ exploration.

With no places to berth a superyacht, you’ll be looking from afar as you sail up the west coast of the North Island. You’ll pass Kapiti Island, New
Plymouth, Raglan, Port Waikato, and the shallow entrance to Manukau Harbour before reaching the expansive Kaipara Harbour.

The round trip of New Zealand’s coastline is nearly complete as you reach the Hokianga Harbour before travelling alongside the magnificent Ninety Mile Beach back to Cape Reinga.

For this century’s waterborne visitors, New Zealand offers much to see and do as a cruising destination. From utter luxury to pure simplicity, this little country down-under provides visitors with an extraordinary range of experiences, scenery and activities within easy reach of a safe ocean or harbour mooring.

New Zealand has also become well known for its custom built boats and innovative marine products which have certainly made their mark around the world, however this quality of workmanship and technical knowhow is by no means confined to these areas of marine expertise. There is a refit and repair infrastructure that is well organised and consistently producing some of the finest quality refits available anywhere in the world at competitive rates, as if there were not already enough good reasons to come to New Zealand.

The collective skills and work ethic of the kiwi workforce can help make the refit process about as easy as it ever going to be.

In the North Island the main refit hub is in central Auckland which has for many years appealed to the overseas yachts who can enjoy all of the benefits of a central city location yet still complete all their maintenance requirements. There are some significant yard facility developments underway that will expand the existing facilities at the site known as Wynyard Quarter in Westhaven plus a new site, called Site 37 at Hobsonville which when fully developed will make New Zealand a truly world class yacht hub.

Gulf Harbour just north of the city is another excellent option with a marina lifting facility and a

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Gulf Harbour just north of the city is another excellent option with a marina lifting facility and a healthy refit infrastructure (plus golf course very handy). Whangarei is also developing as a good alternate for yachts of all sizes, with a large skill base to call upon. Tauranga to the south also caters for smaller yachts but has plans to expand facilities in the near future.

In the South Island, Nelson and Picton are the two locations that offer good refit and repair facilities in the south.

The first time visitor is often surprised by the size and magnitude of our marine industry, often comparing us with the main hubs of the northern hemisphere, this can be often be a welcome relief for those a long way from their home port along with many experiences that New Zealand offers.

For further information visit www.nzmarinas.com, www.newzealand.com or www.nzmarine.com
CUSTOMS
New Zealand legislation requires the master of every craft en route to New Zealand to provide the following information at least 48 hours prior to the expected arrival time in New Zealand.
Details of the craft
Estimated date and time of arrival
Customs port of entry at which craft will arrive
The name of the originating port and subsequent ports visited on the voyage to New Zealand.
This information can be provided by completing the Small Craft Inward Report form and the Yachts and Small Craft Arrival Advance Information form.

IMMIGRATION INFORMATION
The New Zealand Customs Service will provide immigration services on arrival in New Zealand. The New Zealand Immigration Service publication Visitors Arriving by Yacht provides details of requirements for owners and crew of yachts, small craft, and superyachts travelling to New Zealand, as well as contact details for immigration offices off-shore.

VISAS
A superyacht is considered to be any privately owned yacht over 20 metres in length powered by motor and/or sail. For those owners and crew of superyachts who must obtain a visitor’s visa, on arrival in New Zealand, you may be granted a permit current for the period specified by your visa (usually six months).

If you are not required to hold a visa you may, on arrival in New Zealand, be granted an initial visitor’s permit valid for three months, or six months if you are a British national.
In special circumstances you may be granted further permits allowing a total stay in New Zealand of up to twelve months (eg, if a yacht needs to undergo refitting or major repairs, or yacht crews wish to wait out the South Pacific hurricane season (October to April).

ENTRY OF CRAFT
Yachts and small craft entering New Zealand are subject to import clearance requirements and the payment of Customs duty (including Goods and Services Tax (GST)) on arrival. However, craft owned and operated by a bona fide visitor, and in New Zealand temporarily, may be granted a Temporary Import Entry (TIE) with Customs duty and GST charges being deferred. Customs will generally align the period of the TIE with the length of your visitor’s visa, or 12 months whichever is less.
You should note the conditions applying to TIE’s include:
Agreement to export your craft by the expiry date of the TIE.
An undertaking that the craft will not be sold, offered for sale or otherwise disposed of in New Zealand.
Immediate advice to Customs at the port of arrival of any change to the Master’s or craft’s presence in New Zealand.
Possible requirement to provide a security by way of a cash deposit or letter of undertaking.
GST on Purchases while in New Zealand.
Most goods and services attract Goods and Services Tax (GST). Some taxable supplies are zero-rated, which means GST is charged at a rate of 0 per cent rather than the standard rate of 12.5 per cent.

If you are employing an agent, they will bill you excluding GST where possible and claim back from Inland Revenue themselves.

FIREARMS & WEAPONS
The importation of firearms is strictly controlled in New Zealand. All firearms must be declared to the Customs officer on arrival of the craft from overseas. Firearms onboard will be detained and placed in safe keeping by the New Zealand Police who will hold them until the craft’s departure.
The importation of weapons such as flick knives, swordsticks, knuckle-dusters, and any weapon designed to give the appearance of another article, is prohibited.

PORTS OF ENTRY
Once you have entered New Zealand territorial waters (12 nautical miles), the International Q-flag must be clearly displayed.
All craft arriving in New Zealand from overseas must first report at a Customs port of entry. Once your craft has arrived, you will be met by Customs and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) quarantine officers. With the exception of an emergency situation, all persons and goods must remain on board until the craft has been entered.

These documents must be presented on arrival: an Inward Report (Small Craft) a completed New Zealand Passenger Arrival Card for each person on board a valid passport for each person on board Border Cash Report, if required completed Import Entry (Temporary) Yachts and Small Vessels form last port clearance MAF Masters Declaration.
For further information visit www.immigration.govt.nz
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North Island

Useful Statistics

GOVERNMENT: Parliamentary Democracy (Constitutional Monarchy) QEII
NTH IS. LAND AREA: 113,729 km²
POPULATION: (est. 2011): 3,366,100
LANGUAGE: English, Maori
CURRENCY: New Zealand Dollar (NZD)
CLIMATE: Mild and temperate and mainly maritime, with temperatures rarely falling below 0°C (32°F) or rising above 30°C (86°F). Subtropical in the North.
UTC: +12 (summer +13)
INTL DIALLING CODE: +64

NEW ZEALAND is a country in the south-western Pacific Ocean comprising two large islands (the North and the South Island) and numerous smaller islands. In Maori, NZ has come to be known as Aotearoa, which is usually translated into English as The Land of the Long White Cloud. The population is mostly of European descent, with the indigenous Maori being the largest minority. The country has extensive marine resources, with the seventh-largest Exclusive Economic Zone in the world, covering over 1.5 million sq miles. The North Island is one of the two main islands of NZ with approximately 76% of NZ’s population living there. Several important cities are in the North Island, notably the largest city, Auckland, and Wellington, the capital, located at the southern extremity of the island in the North Island. Geographic attractions include: Cape Reinga, Cook Strait, Lake Taupo, Tongariro National Park, Waikato River and Ninety Mile Beach. The North Island is less mountainous than the South, but is marked by volcanism. The tallest North Island mountain, Mount Ruapehu, 2,797m is an active volcano. New Zealand has a well established superyacht industry centred mainly in the Auckland, Whangarei and the Bay of Islands regions, and comprises various world class superyacht builders, refit yards and an ancillary industry built up over many years providing visiting superyachts with necessary services. Hosting of past America’s Cup regattas has further refined the NZ superyacht industry. A superyacht visiting Auckland will find every service they could possibly require being available. Cruising experiences in the North Island are numerous and varied and will provide superyacht visitors with a rewarding experience. The Bay of Islands is a favourite cruising area in the North Island providing spectacular cruising in this large protected bay dotted with the many islands that provide its name. Of particular note is Great Barrier Island that offers excellent fishing, diving and cruising possibilities. Other highlights of cruising New Zealand include the capital Wellington and, across Cook Strait, picturesque Picton and the Marlborough Sounds.

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APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM AUCKLAND TO:

- Noumea 989’
- Suva 1,154’
- Sydney 1,185’
- Brisbane 1,248’
- Papeete 2,226’

NEW ZEALAND
The northern part of the North Island is geographically subtropical and the southern part of the South Island is very close to the Southern Ocean and the sub-Antarctic islands. For this reason, New Zealand offers a unique cruising experience contained within only 1000 miles of coastline between the two islands.

The main port of entry for most superyachts entering New Zealand is Auckland. The vessel can re-provision here having access to all the provisions, wines and delicacies that the chef must be able to provide to the owner. Repairs and maintenance are also able to be carried out. Often the superyacht has just finished a Pacific Island cruise from Tahiti to Fiji with numerous owners or charters on board so the superyacht and crew are also ready for some welcome R + R. From Auckland the itinerary could take the vessel north to the Bay of Islands – Whangaroa Harbour. Some yachts enter in the Bay of Islands and have the R+R there before heading down to Auckland, a distance of 120 miles.

New Zealand consists of two main islands, the North and South Island, separated by the Cook Strait.

By Captain Allan Jouning
Photography New Zealand Trade & Enterprise / Tourism New Zealand

THE NORTHERN part of the North Island is geographically sub tropical and the southern part of the South Island is very close to the Southern Ocean and the sub-Antarctic islands. For this reason New Zealand offers a unique cruising experience contained within only 1000 miles of coastline between the two islands.

The main port of entry for most superyachts entering New Zealand is Auckland. The vessel can re-provision here having access to all the provisions, wines and delicacies that the chef must be able to provide to the owner. Repairs and maintenance are also able to be carried out. Often the superyacht has just finished a Pacific Island cruise from Tahiti to Fiji with numerous owners or charters on board so the superyacht and crew are also ready for some welcome R + R. From Auckland the itinerary could take the vessel north to the Bay of Islands – Whangaroa Harbour. Some yachts enter in the Bay of Islands and have the R+R there before heading down to Auckland, a distance of 120 miles.

NEW ZEALAND WEATHER
The weather systems predominantly come from the south eastern corner of Australia; a strong south westerly flow is usual over the spring months September though to December. Tropical cyclones can get down to New Zealand from the Coral Sea area during the summer months. For the New Zealand summer – December though to April – large high pressure systems can dominate the country giving settled weather with light north easterlies. Most superyachts plan to move north during May and often make Fiji the first port of call being only 1250 miles away, and with a good weather forecast it usually is a comfortable trip.

The cruising grounds of New Zealand can be divided into three main areas; North and East of Auckland. Marlborough Sound, including Golden Bay and Abel Tasman National Park. West coast of the South Island, Fiordland, south to Stewart Island and the Banks Peninsula on the east coast.

NORTH AND EAST OF AUCKLAND
From the northern tip south down the east coast to Auckland and east to Great Barrier Island and the Mercury Islands. This is a vast area with numerous excellent anchorages and places to explore. It really deserves two different cruises. Travelling at a leisurely pace a three week cruise from Auckland up the coast to as far north as Whangaroa harbour, a unique land locked anchorage with many bays opening up inside for a quiet remote anchorage.
The second cruise south with possibly a second set of guests would re-visit the Bay of Islands and then once departing head overnight to Great Barrier Island, excellent anchorages, walking tracks, diving, beaches and exploring. From here the Coromandel Peninsula is just 10 miles away with golden sand beaches and remote anchorages.

The third cruise, after another guest change if necessary at Great Barrier Island, could take you further south again down the east coast to the Mercury islands, excellent fishing for the enthusiast, diving and the small town of Whitianga where re-provisioning can be done and shore excursions organised.

From Whitianga the cruise back to the northern tip of the Coromandel Peninsula is a few hours and then an overnight in the historic gold mining town of Coromandel. From here across the Firth of Thames to the island of Waiheke, vineyards, white sandy beaches, and restaurants await you. This island is only 10 miles back to Auckland so makes a good final destination before heading back into Auckland and preparation for the adventures of the South island.

VOYAGE SOUTH

Careful consideration should be given to the route south, the most obvious by looking at a chart would be down the East coast, although this often can be a big mistake, and once around Cape Reinga and then down the West coast is actually about the same. With the correct weather pattern the West coast choice is preferable to the east coast.

While the boat transits approx 48 hours, guests can move ashore and explore the interior of New Zealand, top quality hotels and lodges, trout fishing and many other activities can be enjoyed while the yacht makes it way to Wellington, the Capital of New Zealand.

Excellent provisioning can be found in Wellington and fueling available, and guests can re-join the yacht here.

MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS

Picton Harbour which is a small seaside township at the top of the South Island is aptly named “The gateway to the Marlborough sounds.” It is an easy place to get to being the port where the inter-island ferries commute to Wellington. Blenheim is 25 minutes drive and is the best known wine-growing area in New Zealand. Helicopters can land close to the Marina and Blenheim can accommodate private jets.

Guests may chose to see other areas in this region such as the west coast of the South Island, Nelson or Kaikoura, well known for whale watching being its major attraction. If it was decided the guests would like to start their charter in the privacy of one of the outer islands in total seclusion, the helicopter is ideal for this purpose.

The Marlborough Sounds is made up of 1,760 kms of coastline. The Sounds are a remarkable visual fusion of land, native bush and sheltered waterways, and are blessed by the sunniest climate in the country. There are three main sounds being The Queen Charlotte, the Kenepeuru and the Pelorus Sounds. At the outer edge of these sounds there is a lovely island called D’urville which has two natural harbours. If guests wish to really extend themselves, from this island to Tasman Bay is a sail of approximately four hours, which is quite adventurous given that you go across a large bight, but never losing sight of land. Tasman Bay is famous for its golden beaches, warmer waters and the Abel Tasman National Park Walkways.

In the Queen Charlotte Sound there is a lot of history. Captain James Cook, who discovered New Zealand, came to Ship’s Cove five times to clean and provision his ships, where there now stands a memorial monument. There are several bush walks, some short while others can be up to 4 – 5 hours around this area. Next to Ship’s Cove is Motuara Island, which is a bird sanctuary and has a lookout at it highest point giving excellent views of the Sound and on a clear day you can see the North island. Motuara has a high abundance of bird life including nesting penguins. Next to this island there is a fish sanctuary called Long Island, and if one is keen on diving or snorkeling this is a must.

If guests decided to go in to the other two sounds they also have lots to see and do. A large proportion of New Zealand’s green lipped mussels are grown in this area and there is good fishing in the outer reaches of these sounds as well.

If one was designing an itinerary for seven days and given suitable weather conditions a charter could cover all areas of the Marlborough Sounds, D’urville Island and Tasman Bay. But this would involve increased travel time, where as one could equally spend seven days in the Queen Charlotte Sound alone and be fully occupied.

Diving – An interesting dive is the Russian Cruise ship “Mikhail Lermontov” which was a regular cruise ship visitor to New Zealand waters. She sank on 16 February 1986 at Cape Jackson near Picton due to a pilotage error, with the unfortunate loss of one person.
WALKS
Track conditions vary so sturdy, comfortable boots or shoes that have been well broken-in are a must. A guide can be provided to accompany guests on shore if so desired.

WEST COAST OF THE SOUTH ISLAND
The run from Picton down to Milford Sound is approx 350 miles. Often for this leg the guests go ashore and explore the interior of the South island while the yacht makes the passage. There are many up-market lodges to choose from and things to do from fishing, walking tracks, golf, vineyards, horse riding and many other activities.

The most spectacular way to re-join the yacht in Milford sound is by helicopter. This takes you over the Southern Alps, alongside glaciers and then down into the Milford Sound. After leaving Milford sound the remote and wild Fiordland stretches to the south west corner of New Zealand.

Cruising in this region demands careful planning and great respect. The deep and narrow sounds and extensive valleys, surrounded by glaciers are an incredible sight. The area is abundant with spectacular waterfalls, and sometimes the yacht can get under the actual fall! This area is totally inaccessible by road, again as in Milford the use of a helicopter to meet you on one of the secluded beaches and take you exploring through the mountains is an experience that will stay with you, then re-join the yacht at a different location up one of the many fiords and continue down the coast.

On rounding the southern tip of the South Island the cruise across to Stewart Island is 70 miles. As this area can be the roughest wind torn space of water in the southern hemisphere, it is important to pick the weather for the crossing, most of the time it will be a south westerly air flow, but often these fronts come up from the southern latitudes and can be very fierce.

Stewart Island is very quiet, and as 85 per cent of the Island is National Park, its clear green waters and lush rainforest, sweeping sands and Flora and Fauna is a protected experience for all to enjoy. Numerous parts of the island are bird sanctuaries and the New Zealand “Kiwi” can be found here.

The area has an abundance of wildlife, walking tracks and fishing. Bird watchers from all corners of the globe visit Stewart Island for its uniqueness. The main harbour and town is Oban, a very quiet little fishing village that has all the necessities for a short stay on the island, and there is a regular air and sea service to the town of Bluff.

From Stewart Island the really adventurous could head south to the roaring Fifties and Sub-Antarctic Islands. Sitting below 50 degrees south and approx 200 miles south of Stewart Island, this is truly an adventure for the experienced yachtsman, the area is abundant with sea life, and it has been described as the “Galapagos of the Southern Ocean”.

The anchorage in the Auckland Islands is completely land-locked with excellent protection. For the treasure hunter looking for the shipwreck full of gold – this is the place. The wreck of the “General Grant”, a fully rigged ship of 1,103 tons, London bound from Melbourne in May 1866, is there after she crashed into the towering cliffs on the west coast of the main island of the group. Her manifest included wool, skins, pelt, and spelter, but it was the gold bullion in her cargo which persuaded shippers to insure it for £165,000.

From Stewart Island heading north it is 150 miles to Dunedin and then a further 150 to Banks Peninsula, is the harbour of Akaroa. This is a one hour drive from Christchurch which is an attractive area with lots of festivals, art galleries, museums and yes, churches.

Even today you find the main streets retain their French heritage and some of the early forms of architecture relate to those early days. Often regarded as the Riviera of Christchurch for its bays and cobalt blue waters, Akaroa is a major vacation and weekend retreat.

The final destination for the guests could be Stewart Island or Christchurch, providing the weather is settled the run up the east coast from Stewart island to Akaroa could be very enjoyable. Private jets can land at most of the major airports in the South Island and there is regular air service to Auckland.
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Cruising the North Island of New Zealand

Imagine an urban environment where everyone lives within half an hour of beautiful beaches, hiking trails and a dozen enchanted holiday islands. Add a sunny climate, a background rhythm of Polynesian culture and a passion for outstanding food and wine and you're beginning to get a picture of Auckland and Northland.

In the Maori language, Auckland is known as Tamaki-Makau-Rau; ‘the maiden with a hundred suitors’. It earned this name because it was a region coveted by many tribes. Auckland as a city is vibrant and the first major port and “big city civilisation” seen by crews after leaving the West Coast of the Americas and crossing the Pacific. The city's superyacht marina is situated in downtown Auckland, built for the 2000 Americas Cup and is surrounded by some of New Zealand's leading bars, cafes and restaurants. All things marine are also found in this area from chandlery stores, spar manufacturers, leading engineering companies, haulage facilities and sailmakers and are all within walking distance from Viaduct Harbour. For a day's trip, Team New Zealand's yachts are available for match racing on the Waitemata Harbour, a visit to the scenic and very rugged west coast black sand beaches of Piha and Karekare, a surfer's jackpot, or shop in the exclusive Parnell and Ponsonby districts only a five minute drive from the Viaduct Harbour. Within an hour's sailing from the Viaduct are a multitude of sheltered bays and the islands of the Hauraki Gulf. One of the larger islands, Waiheke is just 14 kilometres from the heart of Auckland city. It’s a place that visitors, and the people who are lucky enough to live there, find particularly relaxing. Home to many of New Zealand’s successful artists, Waiheke has a long-standing arts and crafts focus. You'll find a number of galleries and craft outlets in the seaside shopping areas. There are plenty of places to enjoy a good coffee or a taste of New Zealand's clean, fresh cuisine. And with more than a dozen high quality vineyards, Waiheke is a wine lover’s delight. Many of the vineyards include relaxing cafe-style restaurants that look out across the vine-covered valleys to the blue sea beyond. Several well signposted walkways can help you work up an appetite or walk off an indulgence. The trails include cliff tops, beaches and native forest enclaves. Within a short distance from Waiheke are many fishing and diving areas including the reef off Motuihe, the islands of the Noisey’s, Rakino, Rangitoto, Kawau and of course the areas surrounding this. In fact you could quite easily spend a week poking around while using Waiheke as a base for guests not wanting to go...
of the Kaitoke Hot Springs to a day tramp to the island’s highest point, Mount Hobson (621 metres) and the historic Kauri dams. The coastline also provides a diversity of habitats for aquatic plants and animals. The Barrier’s location on the edge of the Pacific Ocean means that its waters contain all manner of unexpected visitors from whales and pelagic fish to manta rays and turtles.

Compared to city life, the Barrier has no street lighting and many homes are only accessible by bush tracks. There is no reticulated mains power, water supply or sewage system. Electricity is supplied by private generator or alternative power system. It is advisable to bring a torch. Cell phone coverage is limited to a few spots in Tryphena, Whangaparapara and Port Fitzroy.

Other activities on the island include excellent fishing, surfing, diving, snorkeling, swimming, horse riding, mountain biking, harbour tours, and guided and self-drive tours of the island. Great Barrier Island is the guardian of the gulf. As its name suggests, it shields the inner islands. Its eastern side takes a pounding from the Pacific, creating almost unmatched breaks on the surf beaches of Awana and Medlands. The western coast is more tranquil, with deep-water harbours that provide a safe anchorage for yachts. Great Barrier has the kind of rugged, untouched beauty that appeals to adventurers and that is getting harder and harder to find on our planet. Unsurprisingly, wildlife flourishes here - the island is a haven for rare birds and lizards. Around the coasts, it’s all about endless white sandy beaches and crystal clear waters that offer...
brilliant fishing and diving experiences. From the Barrier, you can either head south to the Great Mercury Islands, which give you access to the The Alderman Islands, Coromandel and Tauranga Harbour. The Mercury Islands offer spectacular rock pinnacles, caves and drop-offs in 8-30-metre visibility, 15 NM out from Whitianga. Best sites are Black Rocks, Danger Rocks, Whale Rock and South Sunk Rock. The underwater terrain is exceptionally varied throughout the Islands. Never Fail Rock is a popular cave diving area with drop-offs to 37 metres. Scallops can be found at Opito Bay and Otama. While some 10 NM offshore are the Alderman Islands where scenic pinnacles and walls drop off to 55 metres and harbour abundant marine life. Big game fish are often seen along the drop-offs. Dogger Reef, 15 metres below the surface has a variety of pelagic species in summer and is often visited by sharks. Tairua Reef around 22 kilometres offshore has stands of black coral and myriad schools of fish in depths ranging from 9-46 metres. Overall the islands offer interesting diving, usually with fairly clear water. The Aldermans has some fantastic pinnacles and drop-offs. The diving is often compared to that of the Poor Knights but definitely lacks the amazing above and below arches and features despite being in the same volcanic chain of islands. Underwater the life is productive and there has been some unusual sightings over recent years such as Queensland Grouper, Oceanic White and Orca. South to Tauranga offers access to New Zealand’s active marine volcano, White Island, via helicopter charter or fly inland to the Waitomo Caves and go caving. How often do you get to abseil 400 metres into a cave and blackwater raft out? Definitely not for the faint hearted! This area also gives you access to the inland areas and towns of Rotorua, the cultural capital of New Zealand and Taupo, New Zealand’s largest lake and trout fishing mecca. Lunch at New Zealand’s premier luxury retreat, Huka Lodge is spectacular. Depending on the season, Taupo can offer hunters Red and Sika deer, duck shooting, turkey shooting and wild boar hunting also. Travelling north from Great Barrier Island up the eastern coast of the North Island you can stop off at the Poor Knights Marine Reserve (approx 157 NM from Tauranga). The Poor Knights Islands were named by Jacques Cousteau as one of the top 10 dive sites in the world. Cousteau would know, and Cousteau was right! Separated from mainland New Zealand, the Poor Knights are influenced by a warm current that originates in the Coral Sea, north of Australia. Water temperature is higher, and visibility significantly greater than in nearby coastal anti-nuclear protest fleet at Mururua. 62 metres long she now lies in 30 metres of water just 2km north of Tutukaka Heads. HMNZS Waikato, a Leander class frigate, complete with guns and helicopter hanger. 113 metres long she now lies in 28 metres of water just two kilometres south of Tutukaka Heads. Penetrate the wrecks through purpose cut access and exit point, and explore control rooms, bridges, crew living quarters and engine rooms via established routes. Another half-day north lie the Bay of Islands waters. Tropical and subtropical life forms have become established among the diverse and multiple environments formed by the island’s volcanic origins. Underground caves, tunnels and archways are home to an extraordinary variety of seaweeds and dense populations of friendly, colourful fish. You can expect, the mixture of tropical and subtropical sea life and the clarity of the water result in an underwater environment that is unmatched. Nearby are another two great dives. Two former navy ships, purpose sunk for diving excitement, prepared and maintained for easy access penetration diving. When accompanied by a well-qualified wreck guide divemaster, this is high adventure diving. HMNZS Tui, formerly a US Navy ship, was designed for hydrological survey and submarine hunting spy work and protected New Zealand’s
New Zealand with 144 islands and bays. Marine life includes whales, penguins, dolphins and fantastic sports fishing.

On the east coast of Northland, Russell, Opua, Paihia, Waitangi and Kerikeri all make up part of the Bay of Islands, a world-renowned tourist destination and the cultural centre of New Zealand. Waitangi is where New Zealand’s founding document, the Treaty of Waitangi, was signed in 1840. Some of New Zealand’s oldest buildings are found in the Bay of Islands. Desirable Kerikeri is one of New Zealand’s fastest growing towns and a horticultural hub with significant orchard plantings. From Kerikeri, flights and transfers can be made to West Coast for expeditions on quad bikes, BloKarts (micro land yachts), mountain bikes, On-Top Sea Kayaks and more in the backdrop of the world famous Ninety Mile Beach or the historical Ahipara Gumfields where once a huge town thrived. Enjoy a beach barbecue or Maori Hangi or enjoy a spiritual experience and visit to the greatest Kauri Tree of them all; Tane Mahuta. Learn from the guides the stories that abound about this giant. Just north of the Bay of Islands en route to Whangaroa Harbour lies another dive wreck. The Rainbow Warrior was Greenpeace’s flagship on its way to protest France’s nuclear testing on the Mururoa Atoll when it was sunk by French saboteurs on July 10, 1985, in Auckland Harbour. Three years after the bombing Greenpeace gifted the Warrior to the sea and she now lies as an artificial reef in the Cavalli Island group, a refuge for the marine life she was sunk trying to protect. At a maximum depth of 27 metres the Warrior is now home to a huge variety of aquatic life and is a world-renowned dive site. The Warrior is an amazing dive and truly is the ‘Jewel of the North’. This dive should only be attempted if you have experience diving on wrecks or are with an experienced diver. Nearby is the stunning Kauri Cliffs Lodge and Spa for the female guests or play a round at one of the world’s most spectacular golf courses situated at Kauri Cliffs.

The final harbour north is Whangaroa Harbour situated in the far north of New Zealand on the protected east coast and has without doubt one of the most productive marlin fishing grounds in New Zealand. Whangaroa is world renown for its spectacular scenery, safe anchorage and for having the largest Striped Marlin in the world, known to many as the Striped Marlin capital of the world. When marlin fishing is just 15 minutes from the entrance to the protected harbour, pack attacks are not uncommon. During the peak part of the game fishing season, a significant number of the Bay of Islands charter boats base themselves from Whangaroa Harbour. This is a reflection of the productiveness of the Whangaroa fishing area and the suitability of Whangaroa as a launching point to the Three Kings and Middlesex Bank fishing areas.

All of this within an overnight steam from downtown Auckland. Guests leave New Zealand saying if they’d known how much there was to see, they’d have stayed longer. Don’t make the same mistake!
South Island

Useful Statistics

SOUTH IS. LAND AREA: 151,215 km² (58,093 m²)
POPULATION: (est. 2011): 1,038,400
CLIMATE: Mild and temperate and mainly maritime, with temperatures rarely falling below 0°C (32°F) or rising above 30°C (86°F). Extremely wet on the West Coast of the South Is. to semi-arid in the Mackenzie Basin of Inland Canterbury.

THE SOUTH ISLAND of New Zealand is the world’s 12th-largest island and the largest land mass of NZ, although less populous than the North. It is divided along its length by the Southern Alps running along its west coast. There are 18 peaks over 3,000m in the South Island. Mount Cook/Aoraki is the highest point, 3,754m above sea level and is a popular skiing spot. Geographic features of interest are: Arthur’s Pass, Banks Peninsula, Catlins, Doubtful Sound, Fox Glacier, Farewell Spit, Franz Josef Glacier, Haast Pass, Lake Manapouri, Lake Wakatipu, Lake Te Anau, Mackenzie Basin, Marlborough Sounds, Milford Sound and the Southern Alps. It also boasts nine National Parks: Abel Tasman, Aoraki/Mount Cook, Fiordland, Kahurangi, Mount Aspiring, Nelson Lakes, Paparoa, Rakiura and Westland National Park. Exceptional superyacht cruising can be found on the west coast of the South Island in the fjord-like Milford Sound, and the picturesque waterways on the northern tip of the island near Nelson. Major ports include Lyttleton near Christchurch, Dunedin, and Bluff near Invercargill on the southern tip of the island, and Nelson at the northern end of the South Island in Tasman Bay. Nelson is the country’s biggest fishing port; it has a good range of marine facilities and a climate which allows outside work to be carried on most of the year. The breathtaking scenery, abundant sea life and myriad high quality superyacht services and infrastructure coupled with a welcoming population make this a destination neither easily forgotten nor easy to leave.

SUPERYACHT SERVICES
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APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM NELSON TO:
Lyttleton 189‘
Auckland 278‘
Sydney 1,154‘
Melbourne 1,374‘
Hobart 1,200‘

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS
Marinas In New Zealand
New Zealand Mariners Handbook
New Zealand Weather Book
Destination New Zealand 4th Ed
New Zealand Cruising Guide
Coastal Cruising Handbook of NZ
The Fishing, Diving, Cruising Guide to the Bay of Islands – Steve Radich
The Hauraki Gulf Boating Atlas
William Owen’s Northland Coast
William Owen’s Hauraki Gulf
Northland Coast Boating Atlas
Kiwi Cruiser’s Log Anchorages in the Hauraki Gulf
Stewart Island Cruising Guide
A Boating Guide to Fiordland
South Pacific Anchorages – Clay

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Visiting New Zealand’s South Island aboard a super yacht provides opportunities for cruising among spectacular scenery in remote areas as well as the opportunity to berth in one of the island’s secure ports and jump off the yacht for some adventure ashore.

The South Island’s climate encompasses all extremes of weather and conditions, with Nelson boasting the most hours of sunshine annually while the country’s premier ski resorts of Queenstown and Wanaka have ski seasons running from late June through to September.

The summer months from November through to March are the time to enjoy cruising around the South Island of New Zealand. The most popular and easily accessible area is along the north coast of the island, an area of sea-drowned valleys that form the Marlborough Sounds stretching from Tasman Bay in the west to Cloudy Bay in the south-east. The Sounds is an extensive region of inlets and bays among forest and national parks, much of which is inaccessible by road. The Marlborough Sounds are actually made up of two main waterways: Queen Charlotte Sound to the east and Pelorus Sound to the west. It would be possible to lose a couple of weeks cruising the Sounds without anchoring in the same bay twice. In the summer months the Sounds are abuzz with small cruising boats, sea taxis and kayaks on the water (apparently there are 6000 in the region), coming and going from the many summer houses or baches on the shores.

Countless tracks for hikers and mountain bikers thread through the forests and parks with campsites, homestays and lodges conveniently placed along the routes. At the base of Queen Charlotte Sound the small town of Picton is the destination for the Interislander ferry from Wellington and thus the gateway for car and foot passengers from the North Island. Picton has a marina for both commercial fishing and leisure craft and can take yachts in excess of 40 metres. On the western fringes of Marlborough Sounds is Nelson, the main port in the region. Nelson’s eight kilometre harbour wall, a natural formation and the longest boulder bank in the world, protects the town and port from the often tempestuous conditions of the Cook Strait. Nelson can accommodate even the largest super yacht in its extensive port network and offers facilities for repair and refit as well as secure mooring. To the west of the Sounds are Tasman Bay and Golden Bay. With a combined span of around 20 NM the bays stretch up to the northwestern tip of the South Island. The shores of Tasman Bay are in places long

Not Your Average Pacific Island Paradise

The mention of South Pacific islands usually evokes visions of warm seas, palm trees swaying to a tropical trade wind breeze and hotel floor shows with bare-chested, tattooed warriors and ladies in grass skirts. But you won’t find any of this in New Zealand’s South Island.

By Guy Waddilove Photography Tourism New Zealand
The small number of superyachts visiting the area for refit work means that local companies can easily accommodate visiting yachts’ work requirements alongside their regular work on the local fishing and commercial shipping fleet. The port has the largest slipway in New Zealand as well as travel lift for smaller craft. For those requiring assistance with the management of their refit, Refit Nelson, set up by long time superyacht captain Rocka Romke of Nelson Yacht Services, acts as a consortium of local companies capable and keen to work on superyachts. They can offer project managers, naval architects, boat builders, electricians, electronics technicians, systems engineers, upholsterers, painters, sailmakers, riggers and cabinet makers and will work together as a team to complete the job.

Leaving the yacht in a secure marina and taking advantage of the diverse range of activities ashore is a major reason for visiting the South Island. For those looking for a relaxing time, a tour through the vineyards and wineries of the Marlborough region should definitely be considered. The Marlborough area is the country’s most famous wine region and produces a range of sauvignon blanc that is considered by many European wine critics to be the best in the world. While around the Nelson and Golden Bay area it would also be worth stopping in at some of the small art galleries and craft shops to look at the work of the many local artists.

As a refit destination, Nelson should definitely be considered by those seeking to do a low overhead or self managed refit project. The infrastructure around the port of Nelson lends itself to superyachts needing structural work, machinery refurbishment or interior work with all sub contractors conveniently located within a short distance of where the yachts berth.
Touch of Spice
Meeting the needs of the discerning

Jacqui Spice established Touch of Spice after 10 years working in luxury super yachts around the world catering to discerning clients and yacht owners. She now leads a team of experienced and creative professionals who craft tailored solutions to their clients’ needs, opening doors to some of the finest experiences New Zealand has to offer. Experience is the new luxury, and Touch of Spice offers a “back stage pass” to New Zealand’s unique people, culture and landscape. The Touch Of Spice concierge team focus on meeting clients’ needs and desires 24/7, 365 days a year.

New Zealand’s leading luxury concierge company

Phone: +64 3 450 0855 Email: info@touchofspice.co.nz Website: www.touchofspice.co.nz

up for skiers and snowboarders alike. Heli-skiing with guides is also an option. The resorts offer year round activities with mountain biking and hiking popular in the summer months and paragliding, hang gliding and fishing popular year round. For thrill seekers Queenstown is home to a couple of bungy jumping sites in spectacular surroundings, tandem free fall parachute jumps and jet boat rides over rapids. The stunning alpine scenery enhances all of the activities adding another dimension to the enjoyment. On the west coast is another amazing natural feature, the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers. The glaciers can be explored from one of the many walking tracks in the region, by helicopter or ski plane, which will actually land on the glaciers. Wherever you travel in New Zealand’s South Island you are almost guaranteed to see spectacular scenery: from the glaciers on the west coast to the alpine region around Queenstown, the rolling plains in the north of the island to rugged fiords in the Fiordland region. Locals have developed their businesses imaginatively around the scenery and climate to provide visitors with a huge range of activities and diversions to enjoy, so whether you are on the water or travelling ashore, you are guaranteed to be blown away by what the South Island of New Zealand has to offer.
Australia

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Before you plan your next trip to Australia please visit our website
www.superyacht-australia.com
AUSTRALIA is truly an amazing country – it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Superyacht Australia section of the Great Southern Route. Superyacht Australia has members dotted around the country’s 36,735 km coastline to deal with the essentials of visiting superyachts. The total focus of Superyacht Australia and its members is to attract the white boats to our shores by guaranteeing a new and exciting adventure in a land and seas ready to be discovered.

From the pristine waters and beaches of the Great Barrier Reef in Queensland surrounding the magnificent Lizard, Hamilton and Hayman Islands, to the beckoning of historic Tasmania, to the spectacular ancient Kimberley area of Western Australia or the incomparable grandeur of Sydney Harbour, cruising is made easier knowing there are industry professionals available and ready to facilitate a yacht’s every requirement. Superior refit facilities, cutting edge technology, unsurpassed produce, award winning wines from renowned providores coupled with exceptional provisioning guarantee unforgettable lifetime experiences in the iconic “land down-under”.

Enjoy this sojourn through all Australia has to offer and for whatever reason, if there is additional information required, please don’t hesitate to contact us. Superyacht Australia is waiting and at your service, established to guide you on an unimaginable voyage of extraordinary discoveries.

“Our Heaven on Earth”

Sincerely

Barry Jenkins
SUPERYACHT AUSTRALIA CHAIRMAN
Looking good is one thing, looking cool is another... For that you need the ultimate finishing system, one you can rely on to keep its looks in all seasons. For more than thirty five years Awlgrip® has been recognised as the trusted, most desirable yacht paint available. Our reputation and dependability are second to none, as too is our technical back-up and support. Few things in life are naturally cool.... be one of them. Awlgrip, your first and only choice. FINISH FIRST

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Australia

Useful Statistics
Commonwealth of Australia

GOVERNMENT: Parliamentary
Democracy – Constitutional
Monarchy (Federal, State and
Local governments)

CAPITAL: Canberra at 35°18’S, 149°08’E

LAND AREA: 7,741,220 km² (2,988,888 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 22,838,267

LANGUAGE: English

CURRENCY: Australian Dollar (AUD)

CLIMATE: The largest part of Australia is desert or semi-arid and it is the driest inhabited continent. Only the SE and SW corners of the continent have a temperate climate, whilst the northern part of the country is tropical. Most of the population lives along the temperate SE coastline. Significantly influenced by ocean currents, the east coast sees snow each winter and North Queensland is home to tropical rainforests teaming with animal and plant life.

UTC: various (+8 ... +11.5) incl. DST

INTL DIALLING CODE: +61

AUSTRALIA is the world’s smallest continent and also the largest island with 34,218 km of mainland coastline. Australia is a land of geographical extremes, boasting some amazing natural scenery and formations, notably the Great Barrier Reef, the world’s largest coral reef, extending for over 2,000 km. The Great Dividing Range along the east coast sees snow each winter and North Queensland is home to tropical rainforests teaming with animal and plant life. Inhabited for more than 42,000 years by Indigenous Australians, the British settled the eastern mainland through penal transportation as part of the colony of New South Wales in 1788. Most Australians are descended from European settlers, the majority from Great Britain and Ireland. Today the population, now 21 million, is concentrated in the state capitals and has quadrupled since the end of WWI, spurred by an ambitious immigration program and a policy of multiculturalism. Sport plays an important part in Australian culture, assisted by a climate that favours outdoor activities. Superyachts, upon entering Australian waters, should participate in AUSREP, which is a ship reporting system designed to contribute to safety of life at sea and is operated by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) through the Australian Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC Australia) in Canberra. Participation in AUSREP is mandatory for certain ships but superyachts visiting Australia or transiting Australian waters are encouraged to participate voluntarily. More info at www.amsa.gov.au/publications/AUSREP.pdf. Australia has a very well established and cohesive superyacht industry that is ably represented by the national body, Superyacht Australia, a division of the Australian International Marine Export Group (AIMEX) and regional cluster groups in most states.

SUPERYACHT SERVICES
The Australian Superyacht Industry is represented by the national body, Superyacht Australia, a division of the Australian International Marine Export Group (AIMEX).

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USEFUL PUBLICATIONS
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Australian Cruising Guide – Lucas

USEFUL WEBSITES
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Australian Hydrographic Office
www.hydro.gov.au

Australian Customs
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Aust. Department of Immigration
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Civil Aviation Safety Authority
www.casa.gov.au

Airservices Australia
www.airservices.gov.au

Tourism Australia
www.australia.com

AUSTRALIA
AUSTRALIA

Australia is the sixth largest country in the world. It is roughly the same size as the 48 mainland states of the USA and 50 per cent larger than Europe, but has the lowest population density in the world - only two people per square kilometre. Australia’s coastline stretches almost 50,000 kilometres and is linked by over 10,000 beaches, more than any other country in the world. More than 85 per cent of Australians live within 50 kilometres of the coast, making it an integral part of our laid-back lifestyle.

Famous for natural legends like the Great Barrier Reef and for the iconic kangaroo and koala, Australia is rich in culture and has a plethora of iconic events and tourism destinations to entertain.

Australia is a favorite tourist destination for many. The warm and friendly Australians lend a helping hand to the foreign visitors; the hospitality of this spectacular country and pleasant weather in Australia is legendary. A land of the unexpected, of amazing natural resources, striking scenery and exotic plant and animal life; a journey to Australia is a trip to a magical island that is also a country and the only country that is also a continent.

Over the last decade the Australian superyacht industry has come of age and now can stand up alongside the other main superyacht destinations of the world as a cruising region of choice. On a visit to Australia you will now find world class marinas and ports that are at convenient distances apart from each other, state of the art shipyard facilities and infrastructure, expert technical contractors and a vibrant cohesive network of superyacht industry regional cluster industry associations that have just one purpose; to deliver to you everything you need as a superyacht captain and to be able to provide a first class experience to your owner.

The Australian superyacht industry is largely led by professionals who spent long periods of their careers working aboard superyachts and in the superyacht industry internationally. Therefore, we know well the issues superyacht captains and crew face, especially on long voyages, and thus have tailored our businesses and services to best meet your requirements.

We believe that many owners and captains have the goal of at least one circumnavigation in their yachting career, and the knowledge that Australia, as the halfway mark on this epic
voyage, not only provides you with an excellent cruising experience and destinations at any time of year, but also serves to provide you with the technical support needed to make Australia the “service centre” necessary to make your voyage successful.

SUPERYACHT AUSTRALIA
In January 2012, SYBA (Superyacht Base Ltd), the peak body for the Australian Superyacht sector, merged with the Australian International Marine Export Group (AIMEX), the peak body for the marine export sector. AIMEX set up a Superyacht division and has appointed a committee of Superyacht industry representatives to drive this sector in Australia.

Since being managed by AIMEX, Superyacht Australia has enjoyed excellent profile and promotion internationally, has made some inroads into key lobbying issues and has developed a new website which is now gaining momentum as the portal for the Australian Superyacht sector. For the last decade, Superyacht Australia has been promoting Australia as a superyacht destination and links captains with Australia’s world class services and facilities. Superyacht Australia is dedicated to the promotion of Australia as a preferred destination for superyachts from throughout the world. In doing so Superyacht Australia promotes Australian infrastructure, services and facilities and manufacturers of yachts, ensuring consistent growth and development of all facets of the Australian superyacht industry.

It is an organisation of businesses that provides a product and service portal to the superyacht industry. The members are proud of their businesses and strive to provide quality workmanship and customer service for your vessel, owner and crew. The member network is national with regional cluster groups concentrating in strategic locations around our main Ports: Brisbane & Gold Coast, Cairns, Western Australia & Northern Territory, Tasmania and Victoria. Each region has its own cluster network of superyacht services and facilities, ensuring your every need is attended to by experts of the area. Superyacht Australia endeavours to provide an information base to make your job, as a Captain, easier. Superyacht Australia maintains a service directory including members’ contact details categorised by the products and services available, as well as by region. For visiting vessels to Australia, the Superyacht Australia website overflows with destination guides, regulatory information including pilotage, permits and visa rules; sample itineraries and the member services directory. Superyacht Australia is the “one-stop-shop” resource for captains, crew and owners aboard superyachts planning and executing a voyage to Australia.

The AIMEX board is committed to driving the superyacht sector in Australia, the Superyacht Australia Division Committee is made up of industry experienced persons who work within the industry on a day to day basis and understand the issues and customer service levels expected by the prestige industry. These fundamental values and customer service standards are encouraged from all Superyacht Australia members so that your experience in Australia is not just a good one but a great one. Australia has it all; iconic destination, safe cruising grounds, high quality services and skilled refit and repair specialists, excellent infrastructure and the friendliest welcome you can imagine. Stay as long as you like and please let us be at your service.

It is fair to say that Australia, as a superyacht destination, is now well and truly on the radar. A voyage down under provides cruising destinations and adventures unlike anywhere in the world. In fact, you can cruise Australia for twelve months of the year and enjoy varying experiences that relate to ideal visitation times and climate. For more information, please see our extensive website, the portal for Australia’s superyacht facilities and services at www.superyacht-australia.com
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Nordship Marine admin@northship.com.au CAIRNS
North Port Marine Services Michael@northportmarine.com.au WA
Pearl Marine Engineering rnr@PearlMarine.com.au NY
Strategic Marine mark@strategicmarine.com WA
Sydney City Marine info@sydcitymarine.com.au SYDNEY
Thales pat.hall@thalesgroup.com.au WA
ThyssenKrupp Maritime & Associates thmmar@tcom.com.au WA
Tower Marine Management david@towermarine.com.au NSW
Tropical Reef Shipyard info@trshipyard.com.au CAIRNS
White Bay 6 Marine Park info@whitebaymarine.com.au NSW
Wright Marine shannon@wrightmarine.com.au BRISBANE
Yacht Group Australia info@yachtgroupaustralia.com WA

SUPERYACHT AGENTS
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Australian Superyacht Services info@AustralianSuperyacht.com.au NSW
Australian Superyachts richard.australianaustralsuperyachts.com.au NSW
Brisbane Superyacht Services mike@superyachts.com.au BRISBANE

Carter Marine Agencies carrie@cartermarine.com CAIRNS
International Maritime Services kim@internationalmaritime.com WA
IP Marine admin@ipmarine.com.au QLD
M & G Kains terrykew@mgkains.com.au WA
Major Yacht Services Australia info@myaus.com.au NSW
Marine WA ceo@marinewa.com.au WA
Sevenstar Australia info@sevenstartw.com.au NSW
Super Yacht Group – Great Barrier Reef info@superyachtgroup.com CAIRNS
Superyacht Brisbane diane.etsworth@bigpond.com BRISBANE
Superyacht Sydney exec@superyachtssydney.com.au NSW

SUPPORT SERVICES
Associated Foreign Exchange wad@afex.com WA
Australian Commercial Marine info@acomarine.com.au WA
Channel 7 immgy@seven.com.au CAIRNS
City of Cockburn coinfo@cockburn.wa.gov.au CAIRNS
City of Fremantle paul@fremantle.wa.gov.au CAIRNS
City of Geraldton council@cgg.wa.gov.au CAIRNS
City of Mandurah stephan.vanrensburg@cityofmandurah.wa.gov.au CAIRNS
Cocks Macnish cme@cocksmacnish.com.au CAIRNS
Gavin Ford gfinfern@poynt.com.au WA
Geraldton Boat Lifters info@geraldtonboatlifters.com.au CAIRNS
Rose Fittings Plus hoset fittingsplus@inetnet.com.au CAIRNS
Jyemo Mooring & Rigging simon@jyeco.com.au CAIRNS
Mandurah Boat Show info@mandurahboatshow.com.au CAIRNS
Marine Survey Company of Australia msc@bigpond.net.au QLD
Media Highway kelsey@mediamagazine.com.au WA
Perth Security Services neville@perthsecurityservices.com WA
Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show boatshow@sancsaustralia.com QLD
Shire of Broome shire@broome.wa.gov.au WA
Shire of Bunbury shire@bunburn.wa.gov.au WA
Shire of Exmouth Cr_Fly@exmouth.wa.gov.au WA
Shire Port Cally.Hockin@broome.wa.gov.au WA
Stilo Marine Equipment info@stilo.com.au CAIRNS
Universal Customs Brokers wtaminga@unicustombrokers.com.au WA
WA Trade Boat Centre perth@faceliftcentre.com.au WA
West Australian Superyacht Services rod@superyachts.com.au WA
Wilhelmsen Ships Services Deny.Hughes@wilhelmsen.com WA
Ways jo.woodfield@wray.com.au WA

TOURISM / TRAVEL SERVICES
Australia’s North West Tourism info@australianwestnorth.com WA
Good Guide bothr@goodguide.net.au BRISBANE
Pro Dive Cairns shop@prodivescairns.com CAIRNS
Reef Info Visitor Centre riv@reefinfo.com.au CAIRNS
Rent Magic Cruises rent@magiccruises.com.au CAIRNS
Spa To You ren@spatoyou.com.au WA
The Travel Lounge info@travelounge.com.au WA
Tourism Council of Western Australia tcaw@tourismcouncilwa.com WA
Tourism NT richard.au@nt.gov.au NT
Tourism Western Australia travel@westernaustralia.com WA
North Star Cruises Australia Pty Ltd mark@northstarcruises.com.au WA
Visitor Centre Association of WA eo@vcaaw.org.au WA
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Telstra Business Centre sales@tbbcairns.com.au CAIRNS

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Imax Marine billy@imaxmarine.com.au WA
Mark Ellis Marine Design mark@markellisdesign.com WA
Peter Lowe Design info@peterlowedesign.com NSW
Sam Sorgiovanni Designs sams@sorgiovanni.com.au WA
Spear Green Design info@speargreen.com.au NSW

YACHT INTERIORS / SOFT FURNISHINGS
Allamanda Carpet Cleaning & Restorations admin@allamanda.com.au CAIRNS
Boat Style sarah@boatstyle.com.au BRISBANE
Cairns Marine & Granite csgroup@cairnsmarine.com.au CAIRNS
Quality Covers qualitycovers@bigpond.com.au NSW
Salomon’s Flooring salomon@austrantam.com.au CAIRNS
Upholstery Works info@upholsteryworks.com.au CAIRNS

For more details on these companies, please visit www.superyacht-australia.com
Bringing Superyachts into Australia

By Australian Customs and Border Protection Service

WHAT IS A SUPERYACHT?
A Superyacht is defined as any high value luxury sailing ship or motor vessel which is all of the following:
- 24 metres or longer in length
- not carrying cargo
- used for sport or pleasure.

ARRIVING IN AUSTRALIA
Operators intending to bring a superyacht to Australia (under its own power) must notify Customs and Border Protection of the impending arrival at least 96 hours before arrival in Australia. Impending arrival reports may be made by email to yachtreport@customs.gov.au and the requirements may be found at www.customs.gov.au/site/page4358.asp

ENTERING AUSTRALIA
Superyachts on international voyages that enter Australia must arrive at a port of entry that is designated for the arrival of international superyachts, unless permission is granted to arrive at another port in Australia. For ports of entry locations and more detail see www.customs.gov.au/site/page4358.asp

INTERNATIONAL VOYAGES
Operators of superyachts that enter Australia while on an international voyage to a place outside Australia are generally not required to enter those yachts for home consumption (e.g. yachts that transit through Australia on a single direction voyage for the purpose of making passage are not considered as being imported). Port to port clearances will be required (limited to ports of entry). Loading of stores and fuel is permitted.

CLEARANCE OPTIONS FOR SUPERYACHTS REMAINING IN AUSTRALIA
For owners of superyachts that remain in Australia (after breaking an international voyage) these options may apply:
- enter the superyacht for warehousing (no duty or GST is paid) – currently, there are no marina style warehouses in Australia.
- make a temporary importation for a maximum stay of 12 months – a security or undertaking may be required (or in limited cases an ATA Carnet)
- obtain a control permit* for up to 12 months – no security required.
*Control permits are only available for pleasure craft that arrive under their own power for specified purposes.

ENTRY FOR HOME CONSUMPTION
Superyachts that are imported, or intended to be imported, may arrive in Australia as cargo on board a ship or aircraft, or arrive under their own power. Superyachts that are imported, or intended to be imported, must be entered into home consumption or entered into a licensed warehouse. Generally, entries must be finalised by no later than close of business the working day after the Superyacht arrived.

DETERMINING ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
The importation of a yacht or the intention to import a yacht depends upon an objective assessment of all the facts and circumstances for each case to determine if there is/was the requisite intention to import a Superyacht.

DUTY AND GST
Imported Superyachts are subject to assessment for duty and a 10% GST on the value of the taxable importation which comprises of the Customs value, any duty payable plus transport and insurance costs. Superyachts greater than 150 Gross Construction Tonnes (GCT) have a free rate of duty. Other duty concessions may be available under Free Trade Agreements.


YACHTS OPERATING COMMERCIALY IN AUSTRALIA
If an operator intends for a superyacht to work in Australia (engage in the domestic economy), the operator has intent to import a superyacht.

Working in Australia includes:
- commercial touring
- chartering
- leasing
- hiring
- carrying fare paying passengers
- operating for a reward of any kind.

Superyachts engaged, or intended to be engaged, in the domestic economy must be entered for home consumption.

Operators of imported yachts, that hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and are registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) for GST, may be eligible for input tax credits for any creditable importation made for the purposes of operating their business. ABN holders who are registered for GST may also qualify to participate in the ATO’s GST deferral scheme.


SALE
Superyachts intended to be sold or offered for sale in Australia must be entered for home consumption or entered into a section 79 warehouse, pending sale.

REPAIR AND REFIT
A superyacht cannot maintain its continuing international voyage status while it is in a dry-dock facility. If the nature of repairs or other work is sufficient to prevent a superyacht from maintaining its continuous voyage status the yacht should be either exported or entered for home consumption for repair and export.

A security may be required for any duty liability but the importation is non-taxable (GST free). On completion of repair work, and necessary testing, the superyacht must be exported. Where a superyacht is not exported after repairs are completed the security may be forfeited.

Goods imported to repair yachts that exceed 150GCT have a free rate of duty under Item 42 of Schedule 4 to the Customs Tariff Act 1995. These goods are subject to GST at importation if the yacht was imported.

ENTRY FOR WAREHOUSING
Current licensed warehouse facilities in Australia only allow for yachts to be lifted and placed on a hard stand or trailer. A yacht may be entered into a licensed warehouse without duty and GST being paid. Yachts in a warehouse may be sold (conditions apply) or offered for sale. Yachts may be entered for home consumption or for export from a warehouse.

TEMPORARY IMPORTATION OF YACHTS
A tourist** or temporary resident** may import a superyacht they have owned for a period of 12 months, subject to conditions. An entry is required and a security or undertaking may be required subject to risk assessment (a threshold amount applies).
Superyachts imported for public exhibition or entertainment (e.g. boat show), or to be tested or evaluated may also be imported on a temporary basis (conditions apply). Superyachts participating in a nationally or internationally recognised race/event may be eligible to be temporarily imported under an Admission Temporary/Temporary Admission (ATA) Carnet (as professional equipment). Australia does not accept ATA Carnets for means of transport. Imported replacement parts for repair of a temporarily imported yacht may also be imported on a temporary basis.

“A tourist or temporary resident must be a person and cannot be a corporation, company, trust or other organisation. Yachts imported on a temporary basis cannot be sold, offered for sale, leased, hired, chartered, loaned or engage in the domestic economy without permission. Permission may be subject to the payment of duty and GST.

CONTROL PERMITS
Tourists and eligible foreign corporations/entities may be granted a Control Permit to sail in Australia if the primary purpose of the visit is for touring purposes. A Control Permit is issued for up to 12 months and subject to strict conditions. Control Permits are not available to commercial operators of yachts or other ships that are intended to operate in Australia for reward, or to be sold or offered for sale. Imported replacement parts for repair of a yacht operating on a Control Permit must be entered for home consumption duty and GST paid before delivery to the yacht.

QUARANTINE EXAMINATION AND CLEARANCE
The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) Biosecurity considers superyachts high-risk vessels due to exotic locations visited and the volume of timber used in the construction of superyachts. DAFF inspections will be conducted at the first port of arrival in Australia. More information can be found at http://www.daff.gov.au/aqis/avm/vessels/yachts/super_yachts

VISAS
Superyacht crew (subclass 488) visas are valid for up to 12 months from the date of issue. Crew issued with this visa may:

• enter Australia on multiple occasions during the 12 months validity of the visa
• work to support the usual operational requirements of a superyacht while in Australia.

The validity of a superyacht crew visa is independent of the entry of a Superyacht for home consumption. Information on visa or immigration matters can be found at http://www.immi.gov.au/. For other Customs and Border Protection matters visit http://www.customs.gov.au/. This fact sheet is a guide only. In all instances compliance with Customs law is required to export, import, obtain clearances and take delivery of yachts.

Australian taxation issues for foreign flagged vessels chartering in Australia waters

The Commonwealth of Australia’s taxation system is operated by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). In general, there are two types of taxes levied in Australia:

i) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

ii) Income Tax

Australia has a self-assessment system. In broad terms, the Commissioner accepts the income tax returns as lodged. A detailed examination is conducted only during the course of an audit of the taxpayer’s affairs.

IMPLICATION FOR SUPERYACHTS
The taxation obligations differ depending on whether the superyacht is a foreign flagged vessel in Australian waters for either of the following:

• Charter work; or
• Private cruising

CHARTER

i) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

To meet the taxation obligations of chartering in Australian waters, there are a number of procedures that must first be followed: (It is advisable to have the following procedures instigated at least 60 days prior to entry into Australia).

• Application for an Australian Business Number with the ATO (requiring certain documentation for identification and registration).

• Application for the Import Deferral System via the ATO.

All income from charters will be subject to 10% GST charge whilst operating in Australian waters. Any GST paid on consumables and repairs can be fully offset against the GST collected.

ii) Income Tax

If operating the charter through a company, income tax of 30% of the net charter income deducting may be applied. The net charter income is calculated after allowable deductions.

For individuals or partnerships, income tax will be charged at non-resident progressive rates on the net charter income. This is subject to the operation and application of double tax agreements.

PRIVATE CRUISING

A private yacht will have no obligations to the ATO, but will pay the GST (a consumption tax) on all goods and services purchased whilst in Australia. (The applicable GST is paid at purchase). Special rules apply to fuel on exit and other consumables. One exception to this is where Repairs and Refits are performed whilst in Australia.

The repairer/refitter can make a GST free supply of the repair or refit where they retain a copy of the cruising permit, and copies of the documentation associated with the repair/refit ordinarily required for accounting and taxation purposes.

ii) Crew Tax Obligations

Each charter vessel will be different with regard to the crew payments and specific advice should be sought with regard to the Australian taxation implications. This information is current as at the time of writing (July 2012).

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ICONIC AUSTRALIAN EVENTS

January

AUSTRALIAN TENNIS OPEN, MELBOURNE
Watch top international tennis players battle it out across Australia in the summer of tennis in the lead up to the Australian Open, the first Grand Slam tournament of the year, in Melbourne.
www.australianopen.com.au

SYDNEY GAY & LESBIAN MARDI GRAS, SYDNEY
The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Festival is the world’s premier gay and lesbian cultural festival.
www.mardigras.org.au

L’OREAL MELBOURNE FASHION FESTIVAL, MELBOURNE
Preview the autumn/winter collections of Australia’s hottest designers at L’Oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival – a week-long carnival of cutting-edge fashion and culture.
www.lmff.com.au

February

MAGIC MILLIONS GOLD COAST YEARLING SALE, GOLD COAST
Australia’s favourite sale, the Magic Millions Gold Coast Yearling Sale, is a top level thoroughbred horse auction and carnival event attended by horse racing enthusiasts from Australia and the world.
www.magicmillions.com.au

SUPER 15 RUGBY
Season commences in February, Australia has five elite rugby teams, fixtures are played across Australian states.
www.superxv.com

March

FORMULA 1 AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX, MELBOURNE
For speed, glamour and a superb city backdrop you can’t beat the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne. This is a must-see event for racing fanatics.
www.grandprix.com.au

THE MARGARET RIVER WINE FESTIVAL, MARGARET RIVER (WESTERN AUSTRALIA)
The annual Margaret River Wine Region Festival is an abundance of wine, food, music and art experiences.
www.margaretriverfestival.com

May

SANCTUARY COVE BOAT SHOW, QUEENSLAND
Held in the picturesque setting of Sanctuary Cove, this annual boat show is considered to be one of Australasia’s most significant marine lifestyle events.
www.sanctuarycoveboatshow.com.au

ROSEMONT AUSTRALIAN FASHION WEEK, SYDNEY
Get a sneak peek of spring/summer trends at Rosemont Australian Fashion Week, held in Circular Quay, against the stunning backdrop of Sydney Harbour. This is an industry event but you can join the fashion parade with a special VIP package.
www.rafw.com.au
July

SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW, SYDNEY
The Sydney International Boat Show displays the latest and greatest of all things boating in the beautiful setting of Darling Harbour.
www.sydneyboatshow.com.au

August

HAMILTON ISLAND RACE WEEK, WHITSUNDAYS
Every August, the Hamilton Island Race Week draws yachts from around the globe to the Whitsundays for Australia’s largest offshore yachting regatta.
www.hamiltonislandraceweek.com.au

September

AFL GRAND FINAL
Experience the speed, excitement and passion of Australian Rules football at the Grand Final event.
www.afl.com.au

October

PHILIP ISLAND MOTOR CYCLE GRAND PRIX, PHILLIP ISLAND (VICTORIA)
With a history of delivering the very best that MotoGP has to offer, the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix is bound to push your excitement levels to the limit.
www.phillipislandcircuit.com.au

November

MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL, MELBOURNE
The Carnival’s premier event, the Melbourne Cup, is held on the first Tuesday of November but the whirlwind of horse racing, fashion and fun starts in September and doesn’t end until mid-November.
www.melbournecup.com

December

BOXING DAY CRICKET TEST, MELBOURNE
The Boxing Day Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground is one of Australia’s most popular sporting events.
www.mcg.org.au

NEW YEAR’S EVE, SYDNEY
Join the party atmosphere at the New Year’s Eve capital of the world famous for its themed, multi-coloured pyrotechnics, which explode off the iconic Harbour Bridge and six barges around the harbour.
Why not Australia?

How about a year or two cruising the east coast of Australia? It is now not such a far-fetched idea as it was a few years ago.
I FIRST VISITED North Queensland, or to be more precise, Cairns, during my first round-the-world cruise in 1986 and enjoyed every day of the five or so weeks we stayed there. Not only was it a fun place but also a very practical place for routine maintenance work done on board a 45 metre yacht. That was over 25 years ago. During four subsequent visits to the coast, I have seen the infrastructure increase in leaps and bounds and it is now as good as Europe. But more on that later! There is almost 2000 miles of the east coast offering a great variety of un-spoilt cruising areas, ranging in climate from tropical to temperate. Choosing the time of year for cruising an area can ensure that one gets Mediterranean weather all the year round, greatly extending the time of use and enjoyment of the yacht. Winter in the northern end of the Great Barrier Reef ensures clear skies, average 25ºC and summer in Sydney is much the same, giving year round cruising in conditions that only exist in the summer in the Mediterranean. Enough has been said and written about the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef to not require further expansion here, but suffice for me to say that after many hundreds of days cruising the area over the years, I am still in awe of the reef and island cruising, deserted beaches and secluded anchorages.

South from the Great Barrier Reef there is a variety of safe cruising grounds, reasonable distances apart, stretching the full length of the coast. Choices vary from deep inlets, like Broken Bay just north of Sydney, to wide estuarial layouts such as Port Stephens and Port Macquarie, and natural harbours such as Coffs Harbour and Jervis Bay, not forgetting one of the world’s most beautiful natural harbours, Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour). Of course, the entrances to some of the estuaries are not for the feint hearted in strong onshore weather. Some estuaries require several days exploring the wild life and complex waterways.
to get full enjoyment of these nature playgrounds. So why not continue past the Caribbean after the winter cruise? If you can reach the Caribbean, you can reach Australia! If not on your own keel, then with Dockwise who now have regular voyages to the east coast, dropping off and picking up in the USA and Pacific Islands. This means that a whole new world of cruising grounds can be accessed on route; quite a big difference since my first trip when we had to strap 40 x 200 litre drums of extra fuel on deck to make the big jump from the Marquesas to the Galapagos Islands.

So we know why we want to go and how to get there, but what facilities and services are there for us when we arrive? In the 1980’s, facilities existed that were copying those in Europe and USA and offering just adequate services. In thirty years the yachting world has moved on and Australia has caught up and is running neck and neck, poised to take over the lead any day now! Melbourne, Australia’s second largest city has its own superyacht marina in the heart of that city called Docklands Superyacht Marina, built for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. Just a short overnight’s cruise from there is the beautiful island of Tasmania which boasts some of the most picturesque cruising grounds found in a temperate climate.

Further north, in Sydney, the Rozelle Bay Superyacht Marina, constructed just in time and specifically for the 2000 Olympics, is a well laid out facility just off the city centre showing good forethought in anticipating the needs of the industry by a government. Recently sold to a private sector group, the marina is currently being redeveloped into an even greater facility. Major repairs are well catered for by a large new purpose built yard for superyachts, Sydney City Marine, in Rozelle Bay; managed and run by people well experienced in yachting. It has an 800 ton ship lift and a paint shed specifically designed for superyachts up to 55 metres and operated by Superyacht Solutions.

An awesome site for superyacht berthing in the heart of Sydney is Campbells Cove in Circular Quay, adjacent to the Opera House and Harbour Bridge, and right outside the 5-Star Park Hyatt Hotel. This is definitely now one of the most prestigious positions in the world in which to moor a superyacht, especially for the city’s famous New Years Eve celebrations.

Further north on the Queensland / NSW state border is Surfer’s Paradise / The Gold Coast. While the Gold Coast is a brash, flashy holiday area, there are some excellent facilities for repairs and servicing in the area. The Marina Oceanus and the Southport Yacht Club are expanding their superyacht facilities, and with the Gold Coast City Marina and Sanctuary Cove up the Coomera River, a full infrastructure exists that makes this a modern superyacht haven. New marina developments have been completed and thus enhance the previously limited facilities around
Brisbane. These include the Rivergate shipyard and marina, the Brisbane Marine Industry Park and Brisbane Slipways all located on a stretch of the southern shore of the Brisbane River south of the airport. Marina and repair facilities for large yachts are available at a few strategic locations on the Queensland coast inside the Great Barrier Reef, Mackay and Cairns being the major players. Hamilton Island at the heart of the Whitsundays, probably the best island group in the Great Barrier Reef region, has recently deepened the marina and can take well over four metres draft, (but) is still only 100 metres from it’s own jet airport capable of handling very large executive jets and regular airline flights from Sydney and Brisbane. Mackay has recently opened a deep water marina capable of berthing 60 metre plus superyachts together with the planned expansion of existing repair facilities. New marinas are also at nearby Airlie Beach. Cairns is possibly the icing on the cake as far as access, weather, cruising, marina services and repair facilities are concerned on the East Coast. There is nothing for which a large yacht could want if they based their Australian tour in Cairns. Marlin Marina is a large modern marina with amenities as good as the best in Europe and USA; very secure, deep water, 80 metre alongside berths a five minute walk into the centre of town and 15 minutes to the Cairns International Airport. All manner of repairs can be done to the most demanding standards by Cairns Slipways, where they can handle 80 metres with ease. The above is a very brief idea of what cruising on the East Coast in Australia can offer. Superyachts venturing out here would be well advised to consider visiting the other excellent cruising areas found in the country as well, such as Darwin, in the Northern Territory and the Kimberley Coast in Western Australia. Further excellent refit and repair facilities can be found in Fremantle, the port city of Perth, home to the former Oceanfast shipyard and now base of Austal Ships and other superyacht enterprises that ensure that this remains a vibrant hub of superyacht construction and maintenance expertise. So why not come on down? I visited Cairns and Australia once too often to forget the place; and I’m now staying!

Joe Russell is now a resident on the east coast of Australia and is available to answer your questions and help plan your cruise or refit. Tel: (Aust) + 61 419 608 382; E-mail joe@therussellsofoz.com

CHARTERING IN AUSTRALIAN WATERS?
NEED TO KNOW YOUR AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OBLIGATIONS?

If you are chartering in Australian waters on a foreign flagged vessel, AllState Partners can help you safely navigate all compliance issues through its unique Accountancy and Business Advisory services for both clients in Australia and overseas.

We have tailored services specifically for international charter operations, utilising the latest information technology and procedures.

AllState can assist with all relevant requirements of the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) with regard to visiting charter vessels and specifically offers the following services to the superyacht industry.

• Application for Australian Business number
• Preparation of monthly Business Activity Statements
• Liaison with other relevant professionals
• Australian Taxation Office liaison to implement the Import Deferral System
• Assistance with bookkeeping requirements

We also offer customised business services (including business acquisitions) to selected domestic and international clients.

Visit our website www.allstatepartners.com

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Australia’s longest established Superyacht Agent/Concierge, serving over 400 superyacht visits since 1999

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E: Donna@SuperyachtCrew.com.au

Captain Richard Morris  Donna Morris
New South Wales

Useful Statistics
State of Australia

GOVERNMENT: Democratic Federal Constitutional Monarchy (3 levels of govt: Federal, State and Local)

LAND AREA: 809,444km² (312,528 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011): 7,238,819

LANGUAGE: English

CURRENCY: Australian Dollar (AUD)

CLIMATE: Temperate climate with no extremes, although the climate undergoes large variations depending on proximity to the coast and mountains. Generally mild, the annual average temperature is 12-21°C, but in summer, temperatures increase to average 25-30°C

UTC: +10

INTL DIALLING CODE: +61 2

NEW SOUTH WALES (NSW) is Australia’s most populous state, located in the SE of the country, north of Victoria and south of Queensland. Its coast faces the Tasman Sea. Within the state are two Federal enclaves: Australian Capital Territory (ACT), and the Jervis Bay Territory. The NSW capital is Sydney (also the largest city in Australia) with over 60% of NSW’s population being based there. The three major cities are Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong which all lie along the coast. The NSW coastal strip has a climate warming from cool temperate on the far south coast to subtropical near the Queensland border, and includes the regions south of Sydney such as the Illawarra, Shoalhaven and Eden, and to the north of Sydney, the Central Coast, Newcastle, Port Stephens and the North Coast. The mountainous area of the Great Dividing Range and the high country surrounding them includes the Southern Highlands, Central Tablelands and the New England regions. Numerous ski resorts are open in winter in the Southern Alps. The Hunter Valley near Newcastle is one of Australia’s main wine producing regions. Since prior to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, NSW has actively promoted itself internationally as a destination for visiting superyachts, attracting over 400 superyachts to NSW waters since then. A viable and extensive superyacht industry comprising marinas, shipyards, refit and maintenance providers, agents and all manner of support infrastructure has been created that provides a full service capability to any superyacht that visits the state. This industry is represented by the NSW Superyacht Industry Association, Superyacht Sydney, and more details about cruising NSW and the available services can be found on the Association’s web site at www.superyachtsydney.com.au.

SUPERYACHT SERVICES

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E: sydney@australyacht support.org

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Sydney Superyacht Marina and Campbells Cove
T: +61 2 9818 0605
E: info@superyacht marina.com.au
W: www.superyacht marina.com.au

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RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS

Elandess, Adele, La Masquerade, Apoise, Twizzle, Big Aron, Ilonka, Arcadia, Andromeda La Dea, Cracker Bay, Ullysse, Boadicea, Athena

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM SYDNEY TO:

<table>
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<th>Destination</th>
<th>Distance</th>
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USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

Cruising New South Wales Coast

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.superyachtsydney.com.au
www.bom.gov.au/weather/nsw
New South Wales

The NSW Superyacht Industry Association – Superyacht Sydney exists to provide superyacht owners, captains and crew with as much information as possible about cruising NSW and to put them in direct contact with the leading service providers that will contribute to making your trip a total success.

The Association produces an annual Directory and this is mirrored on their website www.superyachtsydney.com.au. It is not only a directory of available services, but also a mariner’s sailing guide to ensure that visitors to NSW are fully aware of all the fascinating destinations there are to visit.

Superyacht Sydney and its member companies are ready to ensure that your visit to this unique and beautiful part of the world is as successful and as rewarding as it could be.

The coastline of New South Wales stretches for over 630 Nautical Miles from the Queensland border in the north to the Victorian border in the south. Whilst NSW is home to major ports on the coast such as Sydney, Newcastle and Port Kembla, it also has a variety of interesting, picturesque and safe cruising areas that offers year round cruising for all types of vessels.

The southerly flowing East Coast Current is quite predominant and superyachts cruising south and wishing to hitch a free ride on this current that sometimes runs up to four knots should track down the 100-fathom line clearly depicted on the Australian charts where it runs strongest.

Conversely, those tracking north should remain close inshore to keep out of the current.

NSW has many rivers on its coast that are navigable well inland but some have challenging bar crossings that require careful navigation and boat handling procedures to ensure a safe transit.

More information and downloadable boating charts for all NSW waterways can be found on NSW Roads & Maritime Services’ web site www.maritime.nsw.gov.au.

New South Wales is entirely in the temperate zone. The climate is generally mild, equable and mostly free from extremes of heat and cold. NSW is not in a cyclone prone area and thus enjoys a climate well suited for superyacht refit, particularly with humidity levels that are most suitable for superyacht painting all year round. The climate of the coastal strip is influenced by the warm waters of the Tasman Sea, which in general keep the region free from extremes of temperature and provide moisture to increase rainfall; the annual median of which ranges from about 750 mm in the south to 2000 mm in the north.

First Class Fleet Services

Twelve years on from the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, the Superyacht Industry in NSW continues to forge ahead with new developments and infrastructure, and more service providers catering to an ever increasing number of large superyachts choosing to visit our shores.

By Captain Richard Morris

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SYDNEY AND ENVIRONS

Sydney Harbour is world renowned for its natural deep water channels, its Opera House and Harbour Bridge, and is thus one of the world’s most beautiful harbours. It is also a thriving port that caters for an unrivalled mix of commercial shipping and recreational boating activities including the start of the famous Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race and the spectacular New Year’s Eve fireworks, that has helped Sydney secure the mantle of ‘New Year’s Eve Capital of the World’.

Sydney has been actively promoting itself as a destination for superyachts since 1998 and has enjoyed over 400 superyacht visits since then. It now offers everything a superyacht captain or owner may desire; from protected cruising waters inside the harbour to fine dining and world-class shopping and cultural activities. It has excellent
yacht maintenance and refit facility

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berthing facilities in Rozelle Bay and Campbells Cove and a diverse range of technical support and refit infrastructure that provides visiting superyachts with a superb base in which to remain to undertake maintenance whilst waiting for the next cruising period. It is a great place for crew to relax and have a good time.

Broken Bay is located 15 Miles to the north of Sydney Harbour. It is the entrance to the Pittwater, Hawkesbury River and Brisbane Waters estuaries. Numerous superyachts have enjoyed a day cruise or extended stay within the protected waterways, enjoying the unique, pristine and secluded national park. It is an ideal day cruise from Sydney or stop over on the trip between Sydney and Newcastle.

NEWCASTLE
Newcastle, city 60 miles north of Sydney, is a vibrant and thriving centre offering a relaxed lifestyle and unique cultural experiences. Newcastle Harbour is a deep-water port with no draft or air-draft restrictions and provides close access to the Hunter Valley Wine District.

PORT STEPHENS
Port Stephens is the perfect place for superyachts to spend some time cruising. The region offers exceptional game fishing plus beach, rock and estuary fishing. Port Stephens has numerous large marinas located on the southern shore. From Port Stephens it is only 40 minutes by road to the Hunter Valley Wine District which boasts many high quality wineries producing some of Australia’s best vintages.

NSW NORTH COAST
The North Coast of New South Wales, from Port Stephens to Tweed Heads, is famous for its sub-tropical climate and the multitude of pristine sandy beaches and marine habitat. Superyachts cruising this area of the coast will be able to find shelter at various convenient locations, depending on weather. Points of interest include Port Macquarie, Trial Bay, Coffs Harbour, Clarence River and Byron Bay.

NSW SOUTH COAST
The South Coast of NSW, also known as the Sapphire Coast, is picturesque and has two places in particular that can offer an interesting diversion for guests or shelter from inclement weather. They are Eden and Jervis Bay. Eden is almost equidistant between Sydney and Melbourne.

LORD HOWE ISLAND
Located 450 miles north east of Sydney, Lord Howe Island is a small, spectacular volcanic island boasting rainforest-clad slopes rising above a pristine lagoon fringed by the world’s southernmost coral reef.
Due to its unique beauty and biodiversity, Lord Howe Island was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 1982 in recognition of the rare birds and plant life, and coral reef in unpolluted and virtually untouched waters. If weather conditions are right, it is an impressive superyacht stopover that rivals the Galapagos Islands!
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For further information on the redevelopment of Sydney Superyacht Marina and the opportunities available, please contact Justin James
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E: justin@superyachtmarina.com.au
W: www.superyachtmarina.com.au
Superyacht Sydney, the NSW Superyacht Industry Association, has over 60 member companies, all of whom are leaders in their fields at providing visiting superyachts the services that they require. Their details and services are listed at www.superyachtsydney.com.au. Services provided range from marinas and shipyards, engine repairers and painters, hotels, agents, and just about every other conceivable service a visiting superyacht may need. The members of the Association all work together in a cohesive fashion to provide visiting superyachts with the high quality service and support they expect in other yachting regions around the world.

Berthing
Superyacht Marina in Rozelle Bay, built specifically to cater for demand generated in the lead up to the Millennium celebrations and Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, now stands as a post-Olympic legacy for superyachts visiting Sydney and wishing to moor securely in a facility located in a well-protected bay close to the city. Additionally, Sydney offers what is arguably the most picturesque and well located superyacht berth in the world; nestled between the iconic Opera House and Harbour Bridge. Campbells Cove has developed a global reputation as a high quality and unsurpassable location in which to berth. Situated on the western side of Sydney Cove, Circular Quay, and adjacent to Australia’s top hotel, the Park Hyatt Sydney, the berth affords magnificent unbroken views of the main harbour and is about 5 minutes’ walk from the centre of Sydney. It is a hotly sought after berth for large superyachts wishing to enjoy a front row seat for Sydney’s world famous New Year’s Eve fireworks.

NSW Mariner Industry
NSW has created the infrastructure needed to provide world-class refit and repair services to visiting superyachts. Whilst NSW is already a great place for superyachts to visit, the presence of the shipyard Sydney City Marine and the expert contractor base just further enhances the experience.

Sydney City Marine is a modern superyacht refit facility in the heart of Sydney Harbour right next to Sydney Superyacht Marina in Rozelle Bay. The facility comprises 5 acres of hardstand with deep-water frontage, repair and paint sheds to 50 metres long, marine service facilities and an 800 ton platform lift. Also located in Sydney Harbour are an 800-ton
floating dock and a graving dock for even the very largest superyachts. Westrac are NSW’s authorised Caterpillar dealers and have fully trained diesel technicians than can service Caterpillar engines with the highest level of expertise and workmanship.

MTU Detroit Diesel Australia has one of the very few factory overhaul centres outside of Germany, located in Sydney. They are capable of full W6 re-builds and overhauls and have the capacity to turn around overhaul time very quickly. Sevenstar Yacht Transport Australia can facilitate transporting your yacht to and from Australia should you wish an alternative to the voyage. Australian Superyachts is a full service Superyacht Sales, Purchase, Charter, Management, Crew and Yacht Agency that is able to provide assistance and support to all yacht owners and captains, and to facilitate the necessary arrangements for foreign superyachts to charter in Australian waters. Completing repairs and maintenance in NSW is straightforward, especially when visiting superyachts are supported by a diverse and highly skilled supplier and contractor base. Your visit to New South Wales aboard your superyacht will be one of the most rewarding cruising experiences you will discover on your world cruise.

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TOGA GROUP
Lord Howe Island

Useful Statistics

Unincorporated area of New South Wales (a State of Australia)

GOVERNMENT: Self-governed by Lord Howe Island Board

LAND AREA: 14.6 km² (8.1 sq miles)

POPULATION: 350 permanent residents.
* Tourists are restricted to 400 at any one time.

LANGUAGE: English

CURRENCY: Australian Dollar (AUD)

CLIMATE: Subtropical, with temperatures rising from an average low of 16-19°C in winter, 26°C in the summer and an annual rainfall of 1650mm. Over the winter (from June until September) there is usually a lot more rain and wind.

UTC: +10:30 (+11 DST)

INTL DIALLING CODE: +61 2

LORD HOWE ISLAND is a small island in the Pacific Ocean 600-km east of the Australian mainland. It is a spectacular volcanic island boasting rainforest-clad slopes rising above a pristine lagoon fringed by the world’s southernmost coral reef. Due to its unique beauty and biodiversity, Lord Howe Island was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 1982 in recognition of the rare birds and plant life, and coral reef in unpolluted and virtually untouched waters. Only a tenth of the land has been cleared for cultivation or grazing, and two-thirds of the island is designated as Permanent Park Reserve. The Lord Howe Island Marine Park protects the waters surrounding the island group. Over 400 fish species are found in the waters around Lord Howe including nine endemic to the region. Over 80 species of coral occur in the reefs surrounding the islands. The reef is sustained by the warm summer currents that sweep in from the Great Barrier Reef, making it a scuba diving and snorkelling paradise. Together with the attractions of the nearby Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs, as well as the stark beauty of Ball’s Pyramid, Lord Howe Island is a welcome spot to enjoy a uniquely unspoilt taste of island life. It’s an excellent destination for superyachts, but only in reasonable weather. The best time to visit is when the wind is from the east or north east, when shelter will be afforded on the western side of the island. Reasonable anchorages are available there in depths between 20 and 30 metres, but the holding is marginal due to the bottom being rock and shale. If shelter on the eastern side of the island is required, then there are a number of anchorages on the north eastern side of the island in depths of about 15 metres. Care should be taken when navigating around Lord Howe Island as it has been inadequately surveyed. The only berth suitable for handling vessels is in the lagoon that is only accessible from the western side, and only in calmer weather and for very shallow draft vessels of a few metres.

SUPERYACHT SERVICES

Fishing & Bird Watching Tours
Sea to Summit Expeditions
T: +61 2 6563 2218
E: seatosummit@gmail.com
http://seatosummit.googlepages.com

Howea Divers
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E: howeadivers@bigpond.com.au
W: www.howeadivers.com.au

Lord Howe Is Marine Information

Marine Adventures
T: +61 2 6563 2248
E: emilychester@hotmail.com
W: www.marineadventures.com.au

Oblivienne Sportsfishing Charters
T: +61 2 6563 2185 / 2155
E: ttbb@clearmail.com.au
www.fishinglordhoweisland.com.au

Prodive
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E: tas@prodivelordhoweisland.com.au
W: www.prodivelordhowe.com

Wilson’s Hire Service (Sea Kayaks, Cars, Bikes, Surfing & Snokelling)
T: +61 2 6569 2045
W: http://www.lordhoweisland.info/services/wilsons.htm
E: michele.wilson@bigpond.com

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

Cruising New South Wales Coast
5th Edition – Alan Lucas

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.lordhowe.com.au
www.lordhowe.com
www.lordhoweisland.info
lord_howe

An unofficial, but regularly flown flag of
Lord Howe Island.
**Norfolk Island**

**Useful Statistics**

**Territory of Norfolk Island**

**GOVERNMENT:** Self-governing territory, external to Australia

**LAND AREA:** 34.6 km² (13.3 sq miles)

**POPULATION:** (2010 est.) 2,141

**LANGUAGE:** English, Norfuk

**CURRENCY:** Australian Dollar (AUD)

**CLIMATE:** Mild subtropical climate with little seasonal differentiation. Mean annual rainfall is 1,357mm although El Niño events can cause prolonged droughts. Seasonal changes are moderated by the ocean, but winters are wetter than the rest of the year.

**UTC:** +11:30

**INTL DIALLING CODE:** +6723

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**NORFOLK ISLAND** is an Australian Territory and is the main island of the volcanic island group located in the South Pacific Ocean lying midway between Australia and New Zealand, east of the Australian mainland at 29°02’S, 167°57’E. It has no large-scale internal bodies of water, but 32km of coastline. Phillip Island, the second largest island of the territory, is located at 29°07’S, 167°57’E, several NM south of the main island. The coastline of Norfolk Island consists, to varying degrees, of cliff faces. A downward slope exists towards Sydney Bay and Emily Bay, the site of the original colonial settlement of Kingston. There are no safe harbour facilities on Norfolk Island, with loading jetties existing at the historic settlement of Kingston and Cascade Bay. All goods not domestically produced are brought in by ship, usually to Cascade Bay, but loading in the tender can sometimes be very difficult. The island is visited mainly by yachts sailing between Australia and the South Pacific islands or by those sailing from New Zealand to New Caledonia and beyond. Sheltering anchorages are at Ball Bay and Headstone where landing is very difficult. None can be regarded as all-weather anchorages. Ships anchor about 1km offshore. Cargo at Norfolk Island is unloaded by the ship’s derricks into lighters which are then towed ashore by motorised launches. The Norfolk Island Lighterage Service is a Government Business Enterprise of the Administration of Norfolk Island and provides unloading facilities from ship to shore for cargo and passengers, and provides equipment for sea rescue. Emily Bay, protected from the Pacific Ocean by a small coral reef, is the only safe area for recreational swimming, although surfing waves can sometimes be found in Ball Bay. The area surrounding Mt. Bates, the island’s highest point, is preserved as the Norfolk Island National Park, covering around 10% of the land in the NW of the island. The major settlement on the Island is Burnt Pine, located predominantly along Taylor’s Road, where the shopping centre, post office, liquor store, telephone exchange and community hall are located. Settlement also exists over much of the island, consisting largely of widely-separated homesteads.
Queensland

Useful Statistics

State of Australia

GOVERNMENT: Democratic Federal Constitutional Monarchy (3 levels of govt: Federal, State and Local)

LAND AREA: 1,853,242km²
(715,309 sq miles)

POPULATION (est. 2011): 4,516,361

LANGUAGE: English

CURRENCY: Australian Dollar (AUD)

CLIMATE: Due to the size of its area, the variation of climate across Qld is considerable: low rainfall and hot summers in the inland west, a monsoon season in the north, and warm temperate conditions along the coastal strip, contrast with low minimum temperatures that can be experienced inland and about the southern ranges. Tropical cyclones are a natural hazard from about November through to May but more commonly from January to March.

UTC: +10

INTL DIALLING CODE: +61 7
QUEENSLAND is a state of many contrasts that range from sunny tropical coastal areas, lush rainforests to dry inland areas. It occupies the NE corner of the mainland continent, neighboured by the Northern Territory to the west, South Australia to the SW and New South Wales to the south. To the east, the Coral Sea and Pacific Ocean. Queensland is often called the Sunshine State, since it enjoys warm weather and a sizable portion of the state is in the tropics. The area was first colonised by Indigenous Australians and Torres Strait Islanders, who arrived between 40,000 and 65,000 years ago. The current population is concentrated in the south-east corner, which includes the capital Brisbane and the Gold and Sunshine Coasts. Other major regional centres include Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton and Bundaberg. Queensland has many places that are blessed with natural beauty, including the Sunshine and Gold Coasts having some of the state’s most popular beaches, the Whitsunday Islands and Hinchinbrook Island. The World Heritage Great Barrier Reef is the major attraction for visiting superyachts, providing unsurpassed cruising, diving and fishing opportunities. The Australian Government, recognising that the Great Barrier Reef as a particularly sensitive area requiring the highest possible level of environmental protection, has enacted legislation for compulsory pilotage in the Inner Route of the Great Barrier Reef between Cape York and Cairns and the Hydrographers Passage. Pilotage in other areas of the GBR is recommended by IMO. Pilotage is compulsory for all vessels more than 70 metres long but superyachts less than this are advised to consider embarking a pilot to assist them through this challenging route. Pilotage services are provided by two companies; Torres Pilots and Australian Reef Pilots. The Great Barrier Reef is undisputed as one of the world’s most important natural assets. Regulations are in place that ensure the sustainable use of the Marine Park and are basic rules for operating which apply to all recreational and commercial users. Most vessels can access almost all areas of the Marine Park without a permit, however, it is advisable to check the current requirements before each visit, by reviewing the following documents that are available on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority’s web site www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/key_issues/tourism/super_yachts : Zoning plan, Plans of Management, Waste Disposal Regulations, Anchoring Regulations, compulsory pilotage regulations, best environmental practice and whale and dolphin watching regulations. The Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait Vessel Traffic Service (REEFVTS) is a mandatory Ship Reporting System (REEFREP) that through the integrated use of AIS, Radar, Automated Position Reporting via Inmarsat-C, VHF reports and detailed route plans provided by vessels, compiles a timely and accurate traffic image of shipping throughout the region to enhance safety and minimise risk of pollution. All ships and superyachts of 50 metres or greater in overall length are required to report to REEFVTS irrespective of whether they are on overseas, interstate or intrastate voyages, and smaller superyachts transiting the REEFVTS area are encouraged to report on a voluntary basis. Queensland boasts a fully established and integrated superyacht industry represented by three regional cluster groups: Superyacht Group Great Barrier Reef (Cairns), Whitsunday Mackay Superyacht Group (Whitsundays) and Superyacht Brisbane (Brisbane and the Gold Coast Region). Together, the companies and organisations represented by these clusters provide visiting superyachts access to some of the best services available anywhere in the world.
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“Absolutely magnificent refinish. DuPont is delighted to have been associated with the MY Aquamarina project. The yacht looks sensational and will attract attention wherever she sails.”

DuPont Senior Executive
Cities of Gold & Silver Seas

Brisbane and the Gold Coast City, can only be described as Beautiful One Day, Perfect the Next. With it’s perfect all year round climate, many natural attractions, surfing beaches, rainforests and fishing, combined with a kaleidoscope of entertainment from Australia’s best known theme parks and sporting events, to world renowned hotels and shopping precincts. Queensland’s Gold Coast is also home to one of Australia’s largest boat building industries and it is an Australian cruising destination that is marked in every captain’s log.
Brisbane is a major cruise ship destination and port, with the beautiful Moreton Bay at our doorstep. Our region has many destinations to explore. To the south the “Gold Coast” entices with its magnificent surfing beaches, marinas, international hotels, shopping and nightlife. To the north lies the “Sunshine Coast”, the world’s largest sand island “Fraser Island”, the Great Sandy Straits, and the Bunker Group of Islands at the start of “The Great Barrier Reef” which stretches 1400NM of natural wonders to Far North Queensland. This is an amazing and varied area of the world to explore.

Brisbane is a vibrant and energetic New World city with an innovative edge; a modern, free spirited outlook built around the meandering Brisbane River. Brisbane has several premier shopping precincts, world-class theatre, restaurants and national sporting events. Brisbane River has many wonderful vantage points to relax overlooking the river and city. South Bank and West End are popular locations for alfresco dining with numerous cafés and restaurants all in close proximity to Queensland’s Cultural, Arts and Music district. Southbank Parklands is the transformed site of Brisbane’s World Expo 88 and offers a large man-made beach and swimming lagoon. The “Gabba”, located in Woolloongabba just south of the city, is a 42,200 seat circular sports venue hosting national and international sporting events. The cultural calendar extends throughout the year with a diverse array of events and festivals including fireworks, jazz and the classics bringing the waterways alive. Queenslanders are well known for their relaxed and friendly attitudes, with a love of the outdoors.

The Gold Coast is Australia’s tourist capital; glamorous and relaxing to some, adventurous and active to others. As Queensland’s second largest city, attracting over 10 million visitors each year, the “Gold Coast” encompasses 70 km of coastline and is Australia’s largest expanse of calm water. This city is defined by glamour, fashion and sun-kissed locals with a sophisticated style. Fashion is a big part of life on the Gold Coast; a shopping mecca with all the international fashion names. Leading events include the Magic Millions horse races, the high Octane V8 Supercars (Gold coast 600) and major surf titles. Australia’s most acknowledged restaurants and international chefs are located here, as is Conrad Jupiters Casino and a vibrant nightclubbing scene from Broadbeach to Surfers Paradise. The Gold Coast hinterland cradles World Heritage listed rainforests with unique Australian native
wildlife and small country life communities. A sophisticated city, formed by a complimentary fusion of people from around the world, a blend of sun, surf, sand and vibrant city sights, with 40 premier golf courses and 4 major theme parks. The region is a fishing and diving haven, offering a wide variety of experiences to suit all levels of ability. Pristine reefs, amazing wrecks and a wide variety of marine life such as Manta Rays in summer, Humpback whales and Grey Nurse sharks in winter and the permanent home to six out of seven of the world’s species of sea turtle. The average annual water temperature is between 20 and 24 degrees, with an average visibility of 18 to 30 metres during the warmer months. Famous for fresh, abundant seafood and blessed with great ingredients for world-class cuisine, tropical fruits and the best locally grown produce, all perfect for unsurpassed yacht provisioning. Located in the southeast corner of Queensland, the region experiences brilliant hot summers and clear and dry mild winters; a perfect subtropical climate with beaches, islands and natural waterways that are used for recreation, commerce, fishing and transport. The marine industry located at Brisbane and the Gold Coast, 80kms apart, is serviced by two international airports, rail links, and a highway hub. The Gold Coast, home of the Sanctuary...
Cove International Boat Show has become the key Australian centre for producing top recreational craft. South East Queensland houses Australia’s largest boat building industries with a cross-section of professional marine and related businesses experienced in providing boat building, refits, component manufacturing and support services for the superyacht industry. The Gold Coast has the capacity for up to 95 superyachts, with calm deep-water berthing across eight marina facilities. Brisbane’s current capacity supports 34 superyachts across five marina facilities.

South East Queensland offers an ideal refit location below the cyclone (hurricane) belt and is conveniently situated halfway between Sydney and the Great Barrier Reef. Brisbane is the only Australian port in the Dockwise Yacht Transport international network, providing superyachts with direct access to world-class refit facilities and marine industry services as well as a perfect launching point for cruising the Queensland coast. Brisbane and the Gold Coast boast a high calibre of marine industry workmanship and an impressive track record in refitting, refurbishing and maintaining superyachts. The facilities in Brisbane offer a total of 35,000m² of hardstand area, five marine travelifts capable of lifting up to 600 tonnes, multiple slipways capable of accommodating vessels up to 100m (LOA) or 2500 tonnes lightship displacement, as well as a Panamax Class dry dock which is one of the largest in the southern hemisphere; a 300m long lay-berth with deep water access serviced by a 30t crane. The Gold Coast Marine Precinct includes a 150t travel lift & seven Superyacht refit & construction facilities with the region providing over 5000 skilled marine tradesmen.

Deep-water berthing in state-of-the-art marinas is accessed by a regularly maintained and charted 15 metre commercial channel through the cruising grounds of Moreton Bay, past the Port of Brisbane to the Brisbane CBD. Local destinations are accessed from the Brisbane River which extends out to the spectacular aquatic playground of “Moreton Bay”, a 1,000 square kilometre body of sheltered water, with 54 nautical miles of white sandy ocean beaches on “Moreton”, “North Stradbroke” and “South Stradbroke” Islands, sheltering 335,455 hectares of natural landscape. Moreton Bay is a marine national park brimming with marine life – turtles, dugongs, dolphins and migrating whales during spring. The islands of Moreton Bay are undoubtedly some of Brisbane’s most valuable assets with excellent
anchorages for deep draft vessels.

Moreton Island is a magnificent sand island and is almost completely National Park status, perfect for bird watching and bushwalking on established walking tracks. Freshwater ‘Blue Lagoon’ lake offers a host of birdlife and wildflowers during spring. The oldest lighthouse (1857) in Queensland stands at Cape Moreton. ‘Tangalooma’ offers quad-biking tours around the island and head-first, high-speed sand-tobogganing down the world’s tallest stabilised sand dune mountain – Mt Tempest.

Stretches of white sandy beach line the island’s ocean side making it ideal for swimming, surfing, and fishing, while the sheltered western edge offer a calm environment for those after a more relaxing experience. A number of mysterious wrecks are dotted along the western coast of Moreton Island, including the famous Tangalooma Wrecks. Rich in Aboriginal and European historical sites, you can also attend indigenous cultural and bush tucker talks.

North Stradbroke Island, or ‘Straddie’ as it’s known to locals, is a ruggedly beautiful sand island, an ideal location for surfing, four-wheel driving over sand dunes, swimming in fresh water lakes, snorkelling and diving in the Pacific Ocean, whale watching, fresh seafood and fine dining.
The Sunshine Coast has 100 kilometres of surf beaches from Caloundra to Noosa in the north. It is also home to Steve Irwin’s Australia Zoo, and the hinterland area behind is covered with temperate rainforest with a wonderful melting pot of artists, crafts, food and wine producers. Coolum, on the coast, is the home of Queensland’s premier PGA golf course. Coolum is situated close to “Mooloolaba” Marina and accessible by tender, weather permitting. Noosa is an international tourist mecca with a relaxed beach atmosphere, delectable foods, high fashion and luxury accommodation.

Fraser Island is a truly unique World Heritage listed destination only a day’s steaming from Brisbane. It is a place of exceptional beauty with uninterrupted white beaches flanked by strikingly coloured sand cliffs and over 100 freshwater lakes perfect for swimming. Fraser is the largest sand island in the world and the only place where tall rainforests grow on sand dunes at elevations of more than 200 metres. It is the home of the purest breed dingo, 354 recorded species of birds and provides the perfect opportunity to view at close quarters the majestic humpback whales’ frolicking with their young during their Antarctic migrations in July before returning south in October.

The Great Sandy Straits separating Fraser Island from the mainland provide excellent and secluded anchorages extending from the southern tip up the island’s western coast. Lady Elliot Island, less than a day’s cruise north of Fraser Island is a coral cay island paradise with an eco-resort, heritage-listed lighthouse and airstrip. Lady Elliot is part of the Capricorn Bunker Group in the southern part of the World Heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef. Like her sister islands further to the north, the coral cays are touted as some of the best diving locations in the world due to the water clarity and temperature. You can step off the beach and snorkel, swim or dive amongst a diverse array of coral and fish with turtles and manta rays calling the location home. The surrounding reef area has 14 well-known dive sites and is famous for a resident population of 40 manta rays.

Lady Musgrave Island, 21 nautical miles northwest of Lady Elliot, is a 13 hectare uninhabited coral cay with a large protected lagoon. The famous Fitzroy Reef is northwest of Lady Musgrave and is fantastic for diving and snorkelling. Lady Musgrave and Fitzroy Reef have large lagoons providing safe and sheltered anchorage, with larger vessels anchoring in the lee of the island and atolls. Venturing further north, Heron Island lies on the Tropic of Capricorn, northwest of Lady Musgrave Island. Heron is a small, but spectacular coral cay surrounded by a rim of coral reef, abundant in life. It supports around 900 of the 1,500 species of fish and 72 per cent of the coral species found on the Great Barrier Reef. There is a Reef Research Station and a private island resort on the island. Humpback whales pass by in June and over 100,000 seabirds nest on the island in January. Two nautical miles southwest of Heron Island, Wistari Reef provides a designated anchorage suitable for vessels over 35 metres in length. Diving in this area has an international reputation, with Jacques Cousteau listing the Heron Bommie as one of his top 10 favourite dive sites.

North West Island, northwest of Heron is the second largest coral cay in the Great Barrier Reef. The island was once the site of a flourishing guano mining operation during the 1890s and a Turtle soup cannery in the early to mid 1900s. Great Keppel Island is located off the coast of
Yeppoon and is one of 14 islands making up the Keppel group. The Keppel islands offer beautiful cruising through crystal blue waters and white sandy beaches. Inland of here Port Clinton and Island Head Creek would appeal to yachts seeking picturesque, remote and protected anchorages (with consideration to tidal variance), with deep water right up into the mangrove estuaries.

The Percy group of Islands are continental islands 120 nautical miles NNW of Great Keppel Island and eight hours cruising south of the world famous Whitsundays group of islands. Isolated anchorages, secluded bays, sandy beaches and heavily forested rich and unique flora abound. Middle Percy is a popular stop to view the collection of passing yacht memorabilia stored in the famous ‘A-frame hut’ ashore at West Beach. To the North West, Scawfell Island, is a good overnight anchorage on your way to the Whitsunday Islands. The island is a remote and unexplored piece of paradise with safe anchorage at Refuge Bay.

Many of these islands are significant seabird breeding and green and loggerhead turtle nesting and feeding sites between November and February. Wherever you venture along the Queensland coast, natural wonders abound that will inspire the senses and soothe your soul.
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The calm and pristine waterways, secluded anchorages and line of sight navigation of Australia's tropical Whitsundays provide the perfect sailing conditions. So it's no surprise that Hamilton Island hosts Australia's largest offshore yachting regatta each year in August, Audi Hamilton Island Race Week, now open to superyachts.

With the iconic Hamilton Island Yacht Club overlooking our secure, 245-berth marina and adjacent deep water anchorage, a fully-personalised concierge service to assist your every need, a chandlery, boatyard and fuel wharf, plus airport facilities for private jets and helicopters, Hamilton Island is your ultimate superyacht destination.

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Hamilton Island Great Barrier Reef, Australia

Introducing superyacht owners and their guests from around the world to the unmatched beauty of the Whitsundays and the Great Barrier Reef.

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To find out more, visit www.hamiltonisland.com.au or call 137 333 (+61 2 9433 0444)
CAIRNS AND SURROUNDING AREAS
Sixteen degrees, 55 min Lat South, 145 degrees, 46 min Long East are the entry coordinates into Australia’s most comprehensive superyacht destination. The city of Cairns has been welcoming the world’s superyachts for many years. It is one of Australia’s largest and oldest ports and has a rich maritime history. As the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef and a Section 15 port, Cairns is the ideal port for clearing into Australia and offers a superb cruising, maintenance and refit base.

Cairns is a vibrant cosmopolitan city with a large country town feel. Its warm tropical climate allows safe berthing for most of the year and its international and domestic airports facilitate crew movements. Cairns is a well laid-out city, easy to navigate and all services are close at hand. The casino, international hotels, shopping centres, supermarkets, farmers markets, excellent restaurants and bars are all within walking distance from the city’s marina, as is the tropical swimming lagoon. Walking, cycling and running tracks along the Esplanade are just minutes away. Cairns Marlin Marina is a designated superyacht marina in the heart of the city and both marine and non-marine businesses in Cairns are experienced in superyacht requirements. Many are long-term and proactive members of the Superyacht Group Great Barrier Reef, an industry-based, not-for-profit organisation, established to facilitate and develop superyacht visitation to the north-east coast of Australia. This is truly a unique destination as
The Tropical Far North

Where else on earth can you experience the World Heritage Great Barrier Reef, ancient tropical rainforests, idyllic islands, unforgettable cruising and diving, state of the art marinas and refit facilities, cosmopolitan cities, world-class dining and an enviable year-round climate? Welcome to Tropical North Queensland, Australia.

it is the only place on earth where two World Heritage-listed areas – the Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef – meet.
info@superyachtgroup.com
www.superyachtgroup.com

BERTHAGE AT CAIRNS MARLIN MARINA
Sailfish Quay in the Cairns Marlin Marina is a world-class facility for the most advanced superyachts and is right in the heart of the central business district. It is 10 minutes to the international and domestic airports and five minutes to Lloyds-accredited refit and maintenance facilities. With full security and 12 dedicated superyacht berths, along side and stern to floating pontoons up to 130m, it is Australia’s most popular superyacht marina. This facility allows customer parking, delivery access and refuelling while your vessel is alongside. Friendly marina staff will deliver local and national newspapers daily and be on hand to help with all enquiries. On arrival the vessel will receive a comprehensive welcome pack, with details of all Cairns has to offer.
marina@portsnorth.com.au
PORT DOUGLAS
Port Douglas, an hour’s drive north of Cairns, offers great shopping and epitomises the laidback Australian style of tourism. The Meridien Marina Port Douglas has superyacht berths available up to 45m with access to three-phase power and water. 
E: info@meridienmarinas.com.au
T: +61 (0) 7 4099 5335

PALM COVE
Palm Cove, 20 minutes north of Cairns, offers sophisticated dining, luxury accommodation and is a relaxing spot in a picture-postcard setting. To the west and south, up on the Tablelands behind Cairns, the temperature is cooler and the landscape very different. Most of Cairns’ fresh produce originates here. The rolling green hills are perfect for dairy and beef cattle and the volcanic soil encourages an abundance of fruit and vegetables. Following the discovery of gold in the latter part of the 19th century, a host of charming townships, such as Atherton and Mareeba, were founded and they still ooze Australian pioneer spirit over a century later. The drive to these areas is extremely scenic, with the journey being as enjoyable as the destinations themselves.
**CAIRNS AIRPORT**
- International destinations to NZ, PNG, Hong Kong, Guam, Japan and Singapore
- Daily domestic transfers throughout Australia
- Accommodates individual requirements for private aircraft with runway escorts and discreet, private transfers. Confidentiality and world-class service assured.

**REFIT AND MAINTENANCE**
Cairns has a proud shipbuilding history, with over 700 commercial, naval and luxury vessels constructed over a 60-year period.

Cairns has three major shipyards – BSE Cairns Slipways, Tropical Reef and Norship – all of which are Lloyds accredited. Facilities include 3000 tonne and 1200 tonne trolley slip systems, 400 tonne and 150 tonne travel lifts, a 60m dry dock and undercover designated refit sheds, the largest of which is 80m long.

Cairns’ experience in luxury yacht refits over 17 years includes major engineering works, interior refurbishments, extensions and luxury paint jobs for yachts built by Feadship, Lurssen, ISA, Delta Marine, Royal Huisman and Christensen, to name but a few.

A workforce experienced in all marine disciplines ensures quality, value for money and timely execution.

All major engineering, hydraulics, electronic and electrical systems brands have long-standing dealerships and distributors based in Cairns. Ancillary services for all superyacht requirements are also well represented for both motor yachts and sailing yachts. Most businesses are based in the marine precinct of Cairns, five minutes from Cairns Marlin Marina.

A superyacht services directory with all contacts and maps is available at www.superyachtgroup.com or by contacting local superyacht agents.
Cruising the Great Barrier Reef

The Great Barrier Reef is spectacular whether you’re on, under or above it and offers a safe, pristine and private cruising environment that spans 2300km. Thankfully, it’s still the source of wonder that Captain Cook described in the journal he wrote in 1770. Starting at the northern tip of Cape York and finishing just north of Bundaberg, Queensland, the Great Barrier Reef incorporates 2900 separate reefs off the coast of the islands and the mainland. These turquoise waters, interspersed with sandy atolls and island groups, offer an abundance of safe anchorages and moorings enabling a host of activities limited only by one’s imagination.

From Cairns, head north to the award-winning Lizard Island, via North Opal and North Escape. Experience amazing diving and snorkelling at the ribbon reefs and take a trip to shore at Cooktown to get an insight into Aboriginal and early colonial history. Take a splendid seven-day holiday and explore the 24 powdery sand beaches of Lizard Island, as well as its five-star facilities.

On the mainland, immerse yourself in the living museum of Australia’s world heritage-listed Wet Tropics, where ancient, evergreen rainforests are parted by waterfalls tumbling into cool waterholes enlivened by the occasional electric flash of a blue Ulysses butterfly. Experienced local guides ensure fascinating experiences.

Closer to Cairns:
- Green Island
- Fitzroy Island
- Double Island
- Frankland Islands
- Bedarra Island

All islands have resort facilities and all are within one to six hours cruising from Cairns. Journeying south, anchor at Hecate Point and, by tender, explore Hinchinbrook channel, one of Australia’s most scenic and calm waterways. To
see koalas in the wild, visit Magnetic Island. On nearby Orpheus Island, which is just 11kms long, 340 out of the 350 known species of reef coral can be found. Some 650 kilometres to the south lies the archipelago of the world famous Whitsundays Island group. Imagine for a moment, the sun settles over the east coast of Queensland, alighting the wispy late afternoon clouds. Your gaze crosses the majesty of the Whitsunday passage, an ancient mountain range flooded by the oceans rise over millions of years. A glass of French bubbles in one hand, the other around a loved one, as your feet dangle off the swim platform idly kicking in the tropical water... a day’s end in the magical waters of Australia’s Whitsunday islands. The Whitsundays lies midway along Australia’s Queensland coast, bordered by the Great Barrier Reef and cradled by the calm waters of the Coral Sea, and over recent decades the area has attracted hundreds of superyachts. The region spans from the beautiful beaches of Bowen in the north to the cane fields and sugar mills of inland Proserpine to the gorgeous golf greens of Laguna Whitsundays in the south. Of the 74 islands in the Whitsundays, only eight are inhabited, the most famous two being luxury resorts on Hamilton Island and Hayman Island, surrounded by one of the world’s seven natural wonders, The Great Barrier Reef. These islands form the largest offshore island chain on Australia’s coastline and with ten resorts on the eight islands there are plenty of man-made attractions (restaurants, cocktail bars, resort pools) to explore in your yacht, quite apart from the obvious natural attractions of the beautiful beaches and inlets, mountainous offshore islands and coral reefs.

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choice • service • the right price
Said to be the world’s largest living structure and the only one visible from outer space, the World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef is one of the seven natural wonders of the world. Stretching over 2000 kilometres in length, the reef protects the Whitsunday Coast and Islands from huge ocean swells, providing the region with some of the safest, most protected cruising grounds in the world. The Whitsundays region also benefits from being located as the closest point off the Queensland coast to the Great Barrier Reef, which places it as another ideal point from which to explore this maritime treasure with Hamilton Island as its hub, easily accessible with its own jet airliner-capable airport serving major cities.

Famous Whitsundays attractions are the pristine silicone sands of Whitehaven Beach, which reportedly can be seen from the moon; the luxury spa resort of qualia on Hamilton Island’s northern peninsula, as well as the island’s iconic Yacht Club and every August the world famous Audi Hamilton Island Race Week, celebrating its 30th year of yacht racing competition, camaraderie and cheer in 2013. Of course the best way to experience the Great Barrier Reef is by taking the plunge and donning goggles to explore the underwater world of corals from huge bommies to delicate spans of plate coral and the skeletal shapes of staghorn varieties. You can make your own discoveries of clams and starfish, urchins and sea cucumbers, anemones and clown fish, manta rays and green turtles. If scuba diving is your passion, then the Great Barrier Reef waters are paradise. Home to tens of thousands of species of brilliantly coloured fish, coral and other marine life including whales, dolphins and turtles enjoy the diversity of this underwater playground. For the more adventurous, get on the communications radio and order a seaplane to swoop in and land on the water adjacent your anchorage, from where you can fly to the outer barrier reef for some deeper reef diving adventures. Visiting “the river” at Hardy’s Reef on the outer barrier reef is highly recommended.

Superyacht berths are available in:
Hamilton Island Marina (berths available to 45m)
E: vacation@hamiltonisland.com.au
W: www.hamiltonisland.com.au
The Port of Airlie and Abel Point Marina (berths available to 60m)
E: reservations.ap@meridienmarinas.com.au
W: www.abelpointmarina.com.au
THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

PERMITS
Regulations ensure the sustainable use of the Marine Park. These are basic rules for operating which apply to all recreational and commercial users. Most superyachts can access almost all areas of the Marine Park without a permit but it is advisable to check the current requirements before each visit. Before cruising the Great Barrier Reef, superyachts should review the following documents:

- Zoning plans
- Plans of management for the Cairns and Whitsunday areas
- Waste disposal regulations
- Anchoring regulations
- Compulsory pilotage regulations for vessels over 50m
- Best environmental practice
- Whale and dolphin watching regulations.

All documents and a comprehensive collection of superyacht itineraries are available on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority’s website www.gbrmpa.gov.au (enter ‘superyachts’ in search function).

T: +61 (0) 7 4750 0775
E: tourrec@gbrmpa.gov.au

CRUISING THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND EAST ASIA
As an increasingly large proportion of the international superyacht fleet, both motor yachts and sailing yachts, discovers the magnificent cruising experiences the South Pacific and East Asia regions can offer, many owners and crew choose Cairns as the ideal location to base their vessel. Cairns has become an international superyacht hub and is relatively close to popular cruising grounds such as:

- Papua New Guinea
- French Polynesia
- The Cook Islands
- Fiji
- New Caledonia
- Tahiti
- Vanuatu
- Samoa
- Tonga
- Bali/Indonesia
- Thailand
- Guam
- Macau/Micronesia
- Maldives

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International Superyachts have been visiting in Cairns for over 17 years. To service these vessels, a unique network of marine and non marine based businesses have come together with one aim.

To promote Cairns as the dedicated South Pacific and East Asia hub for Superyacht visitation by providing services and infrastructure, opportunities and exceptional experiences.

- **Entry Location:**
  - 16° 55min Lat South 145° 46min Long East
- **Port Depths:** Gazetted channel depth 8.3m  
  Depth alongside 6.5m
- **Berths to 130m**
- **Secure, Gated, CCTV**
- **Vehicle access for deliveries and marina parking**
- **Walk to restaurants, bars and the Cairns City Centre**
- **Duty Free Fuel Bunkering on the marina**
- **10 minutes to International Airport with regular flights to all Australian and South Pacific destinations**
- **5 minutes to Refit Precinct**
- **World Class Marina and Superyacht Hub**

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The Adventure Gateway

Darwin is a modern, tropical, spirited destination and the hub of Australia’s “Top End”. Surrounded by sea on three sides, Darwin has a harbour twice the size of Sydney Harbour making it a natural gateway between cruising destinations in South-East Asia, Australian waters and the South Pacific.

By Murray Hird

The Northern Territory Government is working hard to revitalise part of Darwin’s foreshore. To be built over a period of 15 years, the Darwin Waterfront project will redefine Darwin as the northern gateway to Australia and will be an attractive site for the location of a large yacht marina.

For many international cruising superyachts, Darwin is an ideal entry/exit point to Australia and is within two days sailing of Timor Leste or Indonesia, where you can anchor before heading on to Singapore and other Asian ports. Darwin offers year round warmth. May to October brings bright sunny days with cool nights and clear skies. During November to April you can experience tropical downpours and spectacular lightning storms.

A modern city with all the facilities a visiting Superyacht could ask for, Darwin offers fine dining, a casino and world class shopping. You will also have the chance to experience our unique multicultural lifestyle. You can sample flavours of the Asia-Pacific at our local markets or be tempted by the exquisite tastes of kangaroo, buffalo, or crocodile along with other bush tucker delicacies such as the Kakadu plum and lotus seeds.

With access to the Timor Sea, the Kimberley’s, Kakadu and some of the most remote cruising and fishing waters in the world, when you are based in Darwin you really are in the ideal position to enjoy the adventure cruise of your choice. Equivalent in size to France, Italy and Spain combined; it’s not surprising that Australia’s Northern Territory is blessed with an abundance of natural environments.

Westward you can cruise and fish waters where fresh water falls direct into the sea and the sports fishing grounds are untouched. To the east is the Arnhem Land coast, along the Arafura Sea, famous for its fishing and diving where the Australian Aborigines have combed the beaches and speared in the crystal waters for thousands of years. Destinations such as the Tiwi Island, Coburg Peninsula and other remote coastal communities and white sandy beaches await your discovery.

These destinations can all be accessed within reach of Superyacht Darwin’s safety net of care. Darwin has all the fine things in life to complement your visit and all your ship related requirements can be catered for by an industry group of Darwin businesses working collaboratively to provide a service to international cruising Superyachts. Services, maintenance, shiplift and private berthing needs can be accommodated along with refrigeration, electrical, mechanical, engineering, fabrication, diving services and equipment, and cleaning and detailing.

The Northern Territory Government supports local marine businesses to help market and promote Darwin as a destination for international cruising yachts and Superyachts. Industry representatives often meet with their counterparts in Singapore and Malaysia and are continuing to work together with other marinas and service providers in the South-East Asian region to forge a cruising pipeline between Asia, Northern Australia and the Pacific regions.

Our objective is to make your visit a seamless, smooth experience with excellent value for money, a minimum of disruptions and professional support and attention-to-detail. Your security and peace of mind is our goal.

*A permit to access Aboriginal land may be required in some remote coastal areas."
Northern Territory

Useful Statistics
Territory of Australia

GOVERNMENT: Democratic Federal Constitutional Monarchy (3 levels of govt: Federal, State and Local)
LAND AREA: 1,420,968 km² (548,639 sq miles)
PUPULATION: (estimate 2011): 229,675
LANGUAGE: English
CURRENCY: Australian Dollar (AUD)
CLIMATE: Tropical
UTC: +9:30
INTL DIALLING CODE: +61 8

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY is a federal territory of Australia. Darwin is the capital city; the other two sizable settlements are Alice Springs (in the desert interior, 1,500 km (930 miles) to the south) and Katherine (near the base of the Top End). Residents are often known simply as ‘Territorians’. There are many very small settlements scattered across the Territory but the larger population centres are located on the single sealed road that links Darwin to southern Australia, the Stuart Highway. Tourism is one of the major industries of the NT, which is home to two spectacular natural rock formations, Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Tjuta (The Olgas), which are sacred to the local Aboriginal peoples. They have become major tourist attractions, images of which are recognised the world over, ensuring that tourism in the NT will remain a vital component of its future. Also well-known in the northern part of the territory lies Kakadu National Park, which features breathtaking wetlands and native wildlife. To the north of that lies the Arafura Sea, and to the east lies Arnhem Land, whose regional centre is Maningrida on the Liverpool River delta. There are a large number of other National Parks (protected areas) within the Territory. The major rivers include: the Alligator, Daly, Finke, McArthur, Roper, Todd, and Victoria River, which flows for 560km (348 miles) until it enters Joseph Bonaparte Gulf in the Timor Sea. Diverse landscapes, spectacular waterfalls, wide open spaces, aboriginal culture, wild and untamed wildlife, all create a unique opportunity for the visitor to immerse themselves in the natural wonder that the Northern Territory offers. Darwin is usually the first port of call for superyachts arriving in Australia from Asia, or the final one when departing to Asia. It is also an ideal base from which to cruise the Kimberley region in Western Australia as well as Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

SUPERYACHT SERVICES

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E: charmaine@australiasuperyachts.com.au or murray@australiasuperyachts.com.au

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E: lockmaster@bayviewmarina.com.au
W: www.bayviewmarina.com.au

Cullen Bay Marina
M: +61418 898 891
E: gm@cullenbaymarina.com.au
W: www.cullenbaymarina.com.au

Darwin Port Corporation
T: + 61 8 8922 0660
E: darwinport.dpa@nt.gov.au
W: www.darwinport.nt.gov.au

Wilhelmsen Ships Service, Darwin
T: +61 8 8947 2882
E: wss.darwin@wilhelmsen.com
W: www.wilhelmsen.com

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Senses, Athena, Cambria II, White Rabbit, La Numero Uno, Pangaea, Amevi, Amevi Surprise, Maloukoe, Octopus, Twirlybird 5, Sea Rose Star

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM ADELAIDE TO:

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<thead>
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<th>City</th>
<th>Distance</th>
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<td>Cairns</td>
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<td>Fremantle</td>
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<td>Sydney</td>
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</tbody>
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USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

Downwind Around Australia and Africa Pilot – Warwick Clay
Crusing Guide to the Northern Territory Coast

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.nt.gov.au
www.tourismnt.com.au
www.waterfront.nt.gov.au
www.travelnt.com
www.northernterritory.visitorsbureau.com.au
www.australianexplorer.com/northern_territory.htm
www.bom.gov.au/weather/nt
Western Australia

Useful Statistics

State of Australia

GOVERNMENT: Democratic Federal Constitutional Monarchy (3 levels of govt: Federal, State and Local)
LAND AREA: 2,645,615 km² (1,021,478 sq miles)
POPULATION: (estimate 2011): 2,346,400
LANGUAGE: English
CURRENCY: Australian Dollar (AUD)
CLIMATE: The SW coastal area is relatively temperate, whilst the central part of the State is semi-arid or desert. Rainfall is very erratic because most of it is produced in torrential falls by cyclones in the summer months. However, in the northern tropical regions, The Kimberley has a hot climate with good rainfall and a very long dry season from April to November.
UTC: +8 INTL
DIALLING CODE: +61 8

Western Australia covers approximately one third of the Australian mainland and is bordered by the Northern Territory and South Australia. The capital city, Perth, is the most isolated city in the world with more than one million people and is closer to Singapore and Jakarta than it is to Canberra (Australia’s capital). But the locals say that is what makes it great. The majority of people live in and around Perth. The state has a substantial agricultural industry and massive natural resources including iron ore, bauxite, gold, diamonds, oil and gas, along with many other minerals. WA has major world-class wine producing regions in the Margaret River and Swan Valley regions, the latter of which is just half an hour from Perth. There is also a significant fishing industry that supplies seafood for local consumption and exports include Western Rock Lobsters, Prawns, Crabs, Shark and Tuna. Fremantle, famous for its hosting of Australia’s 1987 America’s Cup defence, is the port for the city of Perth and is also the centre of the state’s superyacht industry. It has been home to well known superyacht builders Oceanfast (Austral), Evolution, Hanseatic, and Imax, as well as superyacht tender manufacturer Vikal, and an abundance of other highly skilled maritime support services, all ably represented by the regional cluster group Superyacht Base WA. The WA coastline is approximately 12,500 kilometres long and provides visiting superyachts with unsurpassed variety in cruising experiences.

Of particular note is the Kimberley region in the north of the state featuring pristine but rugged terrain and sensational colours of earth and rock not seen elsewhere. Western Australia is a new and exciting destination for superyachts to cruise and to undertake refit works in one of the high quality shipyards.
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Australia’s West

With its wealth of pristine waterways, cruising is the perfect way to explore Western Australia’s spectacular coastal sights.

By Rod Tweddle

WESTERN AUSTRALIA’S North West has a fascinating history. Over two billion years in the making, its landscapes have been home to Indigenous peoples for some 30,000 years, with the first European explorers arriving in the 1600s. It is one of the world’s last true wilderness areas and home to the Kimberley, the inspiration for Australia (the movie) and the number one place to go for an authentic outback adventure.

By air, both Darwin and Broome have international connections so checking out the cruising experience before bringing your own vessel here is simple. There are a number of five-star vessels offering comprehensive charters throughout the region to places only accessible by boat or helicopter. The region offers unprecedented cruise opportunities in a place that’s been little changed since prehistoric times. Australia’s North West has a rich mining history. Gold was first discovered in the 1880s, natural gas and iron ore in the late 1960s, and diamonds in 1970. Visit some of the world’s largest open cut mines and watch in wonder as the world’s longest trains hurtle past.

Cossack, on the Pilbara region’s Point Samson Peninsula, was the first pearling port in the North West. This began the boom times in Broome, with over 300 pearl luggers plying the waters for the huge Pinctada Maxima oyster. This area continues to produce 80 percent of the world’s renowned South Sea Pearls.

From Broome, venture into red-earth country by four-wheel drive, take a scenic flight over extraordinary rock formations and magnificent waterfalls, or cruise through the inland waterways that permeate the region. Explore the dinosaur footprints preserved in rock or simply relax on the timeless stretch of glimmering white sand at Cable Beach.

Highlights of Australia’s North West include the Bungle Bungle Range, the rocky landscapes of Karijini National Park, and the many ancient gorges featured along the Gibb River Road, and Lake Argyle, a mass of water large enough to be classified as an inland sea.

If angling is your thing, take your pick from some of the best barramundi fishing spots in Australia, located in the northern coastal areas, or head out on a boat to the pristine Dampier Archipelago off the Pilbara coast.

The North West region is rich in pioneer history and Australian Aboriginal culture. Dampier boasts the highest density of rock art in the world, and there are pockets scattered throughout the Kimberley.
On the coast, Fremantle, one of the best-preserved 19th century cities in the world, takes you back in time, while its marine heritage draws you to the ocean. South of Fremantle lies Australia’s largest collection of shipbuilding businesses. This is where the well-known brands of Austal, Oceanfast, Hanseatic and Vikal are based.

Endless beaches stretch from Fremantle up past the famous Cottesloe Beach towards Lancelin, Western Australia’s windsurfing and sandboarding mecca. Head over to Rottnest, an island just off the coast, to be soothed into a state of total relaxation among sheltered bays and stunningly clear crystal waters. Surfing, fishing and diving are all great ways to relax here.

Inland lies the sweeping Swan Valley, a showcase for local produce, including premium wineries and art galleries. Adventurers travelling further east won’t be disappointed either, as rafting on the Avon River, hot-air ballooning, skydiving and abseiling are all on offer.

Beaches, exotic marine life, national reserves and the bluest ocean you’ll see anywhere in the world can all be found on Australia’s Coral Coast. This coastline region commences at Cervantes, where you’ll find the unique rock formations of the Pinnacles, and stretches as far north as Exmouth, home of the World Heritage-listed Ningaloo Reef, as well as Naval Pier, which is listed as one of the top 10 dive sites in the world. This amazing area rivals the Great Barrier Reef. Swim in warm turquoise waters with a whale shark – the world’s largest fish – and walk the white sandy beaches. The untouched coral, amazing range of sea life and excellent visibility make for unforgettable diving and snorkelling.

Further south, from Geraldton, the hub of Western Australia’s crayfishing industry, fly or cruise to the Abrolhos Islands, where you’ll find fascinating history, secluded beaches and sheltered snorkelling waters.

Inland, the desertscape of Nambung National Park is home to the strange limestone pillars called the Pinnacles. One of Western Australia’s most magnificent and accessible national parks is Kalbarri. Steep gorges, carved out of the rugged red terrain over millions of years, provide amazing trekking and awesome scenery to capture on film.

PERTH

Some of the country’s best beaches, plenty of nightlife, bustling markets, inner city parks, outdoor dining and the modern city of Perth, Western Australia’s capital, sit beside the widest stretch of the meandering Swan River. For an awesome view of the river and city, head to Kings Park’s Federation Walkway, where you can wander among the treetops in a 400 hectare natural park.

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Australia’s South West was chosen by Lonely Planet as one of the world’s Top 10 Regions for 2010. The journey south along the western coastline brings you to the ocean paradise of Margaret River with its legendary surf breaks. The Margaret River wine region is an adventure playground boasting amazing fishing, diving, snorkelling and sailing experiences. The beautiful limestone caves nearby also attract many visitors. There’s an array of first class wines, fresh produce and unforgettable gastronomic delights to be discovered at the region’s fine dining restaurants, casual cafes and cellar doors.

From towering forests to whale watching, Australia’s South West offers some of the most varied travel experiences in Western Australia. A huge drawcard for scuba divers is the HMAS Swan dive wreck, also visible to snorkellers from above the ocean surface. The Busselton Jetty, almost two kilometres long, and Underwater Observatory provide another amazing view of the colourful world beneath the sea. Further south, in Albany, are even more fascinating diving experiences, including the HMAS Perth dive wreck. But this buzzing town is better known for its whaling history, now preserved in an oceanside museum. Whale-watching boat trips are a must along the Southern Ocean and right up to Augusta on the Indian Ocean coast.

After canoeing on the Blackwood River, do the Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk, suspended 40 metres above the forest floor in Walpole, or see the wildflowers in the Stirling Range National Park. Linking the whole region is the Bibbulmun Track, a walking trail that stretches more than 1000 kilometres from Perth to Albany. There really is something for everyone in Western Australia.
South Australia

Useful Statistics

State of Australia

GOVERNMENT: Democratic Federal Constitutional Monarchy (3 levels of govt: Federal, State and Local)

LAND AREA: 984,377 km² (380,070 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011): 1,644,642

LANGUAGE: English

CURRENCY: Australian Dollar (AUD)

CLIMATE: The climate varies from hot and dry in the interior to the milder, wetter climate of the southern Mount Lofty Ranges and the SE Coast. The mean temperature range is 29°C in January and 15°C in July. Daily temperatures in parts of the state in summer (January & February) can reach 48°C.

UTC: +9:30

INTL DIALLING CODE: +61 8

SOUTH AUSTRALIA is located in the southern central part of Australia. It covers some of the most arid parts of the continent. It is bordered to the west by Western Australia, to the north by the Northern Territory and Queensland, to the east by NSW and Victoria, and the south coast is flanked by the Great Australian Bight and the Southern Ocean. The majority of its people reside in the state capital, Adelaide, with most of the remainder settled in fertile areas along the south-eastern coast and Murray River. The state’s origins were unique in Australia as a freely-settled, planned British province rather than a convict settlement. The aim was to establish the province as a centre of civilisation for free immigrants, promising civil liberties and religious tolerance. Although its history is marked by economic hardship, South Australia has remained politically innovative and culturally vibrant. Today, the state is known as a state of festivals and of fine wine. The state’s economy centres on the agricultural, manufacturing and mining industries and has an increasingly significant finance sector as well. The principal industries and exports of South Australia are wheat, wool and wine; more than half of Australia’s wines are produced there in the famous Barossa and McLaren Vale regions. Superyachts can find ample berthing and other facilities available in various locations in the state, which is the traditional home of a huge tuna fishing industry and other commercial maritime operations. The coast of South Australia offers visiting superyachts some of the world’s most spectacular scenery, fishing and diving opportunities. It is the home of the Great White Shark which has generated a unique and unforgettable cage-diving experience famous the world over. South Australia is best visited during the summer months when weather conditions are more suited to superyacht cruising in the Great Australian Bight.
Great Southern Bight

Although it is one of the most remote coastlines to reach for superyachts coming from the Northern Hemisphere, the unique attractions and experiences cruising South Australian waters make it a very special place to visit.

By Captain Andy Skimming

SOUTH AUSTRALIA is a destination worth visiting aboard a superyacht. Obviously the access to South Australian waters requires a passage through potentially challenging seas and caution should be exercised with route planning and picking an appropriate weather window to cross either the Great Australian Bight from the west or Bass Strait from the east. This coast is, after all, the northern part of one of the most notorious bodies of water for weather in the world; the Southern Ocean. The best time to visit South Australia is from October to April during the Australian summer months.

Describing the coast from west to east; a quiet fuel stop with a protected anchorage can be found at Ceduna where its famous fresh oysters are available in season up to April. The Nyts Archipelago is a string of small islands extending to the southeast. Good anchorages are possible off the northern beaches of St Francis and Franklin Islands. Guided fishing is available from Ceduna Boat Charters (www.cedunaboatcharters.com.au). Snapper, Australian Salmon and the famous King George Whiting are found here in abundance.

Heading south, safe anchorages and 360 degree protection can be obtained in Streaky Bay and interesting stopovers can be made on the Pearson Islands for great photo opportunities and unusual rock formations and fauna. Coffin Bay also has a few good anchorages and fishing guides are available. Out of the bay to the southwest, be on the lookout for fish schools such as the Southern Blue Fin Tuna found south of Greenly and Four Hummocks Islands from about February to April. Rounding Eyre Peninsula, the good anchorages and some berthing and fuel is available in Port Lincoln, the home of a large tuna fishing industry. Tours can be arranged from here and air transfers to Adelaide are available with Rex Airlines. Awesome adventures to the Neptune Islands to cage dive with great white sharks depart from Port Lincoln. The Calypso Star (www.calypsostarcharters.com.au) has taken divers from all over the world to see these awe inspiring creatures one on one. For superyacht owners who are keen scuba divers, their diving experiences around the world will not be fully complete until they have dived in a shark-proof cage with one of the huge great white sharks found in abundance in South Australia. The Neptune Islands were the location for the real shark scenes from the film ‘Jaws’. This fact should also be kept in mind by keen deckhands and bosuns wanting to get in the water to clean the waterline or polish the prop while at anchor in these waters – don’t! It is quite common to see these monsters when at anchor, usually near a seal colony, menacingly sliding under the hull on the prowl for seals or human-sized lookalikes! Heading east, one of South Australia’s tourism jewels, Kangaroo Island, provides numerous scenic anchorages on its northern side. Emu Bay, Kingscote and American River are the most protected. All types of accommodation are available on the island and tours of the island’s flora and fauna attractions can be easily arranged. A 20 NM hop across Backstairs Passage towards Adelaide finds another good anchorage at Rapid Bay, famous for its marine sanctuary and the Leafy Sea Dragon. A good marina called Sunset Cove Marina with berths up to 40 metres is just adjacent this bay. This spacious marina, which at first seems to be in a strange location, provides good access to the famous McLaren Vale wine region and Fleurieu Peninsula.

Diving tours on the wreck of former Navy destroyer HMAS Hobart can be arranged from here. 50 NM to the north is the entrance to Port Adelaide. Commercial wharf space, fuel and a number of new 40 metre yacht berths are available at the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron. This provides road access to the world famous Barossa Valley wine region, home to many famous labels such as Wolf Blass, Yalumba and Seppelt, and the attractions of Adelaide city. Fuel is also available from North Haven Marine and Fuel Supplies. Vessels planning to head east should watch for a decent weather window as the next major port from Adelaide is Melbourne, although there is a possible bad weather shelter at the commercial port of Portland on the Victorian Coast.
Discovering a pristine cruising environment somewhat similar to what is found in the South Island of New Zealand and in Scandinavia. There are ample safe anchorages, berths, facilities and support services, as well as many destinations and activities that will keep most superyacht owners and guests enthralled with the experience.

THE STATE OF TASMANIA includes the island of Tasmania, and other surrounding islands. It is located at latitude 42° South, longitude 147°, 200 km (125 miles) south of the eastern side of the continent, being separated from it by Bass Strait. Tasmania promotes itself as the Natural State and the “Island of Rejuvenation” owing to its large, and relatively unspoiled natural environment. The vegetation is extremely diverse; from tall evergreen eucalypt forest, alpine heathlands and large areas of cool temperate rainforests and moorlands. Formally, 36% of Tasmania is in reserves, National Parks and World Heritage Sites. The state capital and largest city is Hobart, which encompasses the local government areas of City of Hobart, City of Glenorchy and City of Clarence. Other major population centres include Launceston in the north, and Devonport and Burnie in the northwest. The subantarctic Macquarie Island is also under the administration of the state, as part of the Huon Valley Council local government area. Hobart is the finish line for the famous Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, starting on Boxing Day in Sydney and usually arriving at Constitution Dock in Hobart around three to four days later, during the Taste of Tasmania – an annual food and wine festival. King Island off the north-western coast of Tasmania has a reputation for world-class boutique cheeses and dairy products. Superyachts cruising to Tasmania have discovered a pristine cruising environment somewhat similar to what is found in the South Island of New Zealand and in Scandinavia. There are ample safe anchorages, berths, facilities and support services, as well as many destinations and activities that will keep most superyacht owners and guests enthralled with the experience.

USEFUL WEBSITES
http://tas.gov.au
www.parks.tas.gov.au
www.discovertasmania.com
www.cruisetasmania.com
www.hobarttravelcentre.com.au
www.ryct.org.au (yacht club)
www:cyct.org.au (yacht club)
www.parks.tas.gov.au
http://tas.gov.au

Recent Superyacht Visitors
Apoise, White Rabbit, Achilles 3, Status Quo, Ulysses Blue, John Oxley, Gissie M, Sally Anne

Approximate Distance In NM From Hobart:
Melbourne 379°
Sydney 630°
Bluff NZ 939°
Macquarie Island 841°
Commonwealth Bay, Antarctica 1,447°

Useful Statistics
State of Australia

GOVERNMENT: Democratic Federal Constitutional Monarchy (3 levels of govt: Federal, State and Local)
LAND AREA: 90,758 km² (35,042 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 507,626
LANGUAGE: English
CURRENCY: Australian Dollar (AUD)
CLIMATE: Tasmania is right in the pathway of the notorious “Roaring Forties” wind that encircles the globe. The climate is extremely variable with high fluctuations in temperature and wind speed during the average week. Summer lasts from December to February when the average maximum temperature is 21°C (70 °F). Winter is from June to August with an average maximum temperature of 12°C (54 °F). UTC: +11
INTL DIALLING CODE: +61 3

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W: www.motoryachtclub.org

Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania
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W: www.ryct.org.au

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The Island state of Tasmania is an unspoilt destination and well worth a visit for its world renowned beautiful scenery and cuisine.

By Captain Peter Cook

TASMANIA is a pristine island which lies 200 NM south of Melbourne and occupies the south-eastern corner of Australia. Seafood, Wine and Cheese has helped develop Tasmania’s reputation throughout the world as a food lovers delight. No matter where you travel, someone would mention the delights of Tasmania. A visit to Tassie (as it is known in Australia) will have you spellbound and wanting to stay longer.

If you are a true yachtsman, Hobart is where the world’s best yachtsmen converge once a year at the completion of the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. The first race started back in 1945 and has grown in reputation as one of the toughest and most demanding ocean races in the world. With a population of around 500,000, Tassie is able to offer good facilities in all of its major ports, of which there are several. Launceston in the north, accessed via a gentle cruise down the tranquil Tamar River, and the Port of Hobart in the southeastern corner of Tasmania, a short run of 11 NM up the fabulous Derwent River. Hobart and Launceston are well equipped to cater for superyachts. Tasports, the Tasmanian Port Authority, can organise all berthing, fueling and sullage removal.

Most likely superyachts would choose to cruise from Melbourne or Sydney across Bass Strait and stopping over in the Furneaux Group of Islands which include Flinders, Lady Barron and Clarke Islands. From there they can day cruise further down south visiting the world famous Wineglass Bay and the Freycinet National Park, Maria Island and Port Arthur, all of which are steeped in Australia’s colourful convict history. They are excellent stops enroute to Hobart and offer protection in all weather. Hobart, the capital of Tasmania, is well known for its beautiful scenery and old world charm. Berthing for superyachts is available at Elizabeth Street Pier right in the centre of Hobart. Maintenance facilities are excellent with the boatbuilding industry going from strength to strength. Incat is a world player in the fast ferry market supplying the world with its wave piercing 120 metre high speed ferries and the 61-metre trimaran superyacht White Rabbit built in Tasmania by North West Bay Ships in 2005 helped put Hobart on the superyacht map. North West Bay Ships was purchased by Austal Ships and they are now producing a variety of vessels some 25 kilometres south of Hobart. Muir winches, which supply the world with anchoring systems also call Tasmania home. Facilities for haul out include the Domain slipway in Hobart with a 1200-tonne slipway operated by Tasports and various other smaller refit facilities, marine engineers, painters and fine interior finishers are all within easy access. Hobart is the perfect sized town to spend time exploring the history and scenery. From Hobart there are the regions further south and to the west which are worth exploring. A short drive or helicopter flight would find you in the middle of Tasmania enjoying the pristine Cradle Mountain or some trout fishing for which Tasmania is famous. A day’s sailing from Hobart will see you exploring the inside sheltered waterways of the D’Entrecasteaux Channel and the Huon River. A further day’s cruising would find you on the West Coast at Port Davey. Port Davey is a UNESCO World Heritage-listed area and is totally pristine and untouched by humans. Beautifully calm waters and towering mountains will greet you, or even a little further north on the west coast would have you visiting the picturesque township of Strahan and the world famous reflections of the Gordon River.

Diving for crayfish, abalone or scallops are all big attractions when in Tasmania, but 7mm wetsuits or dry suits are recommended in the winter months. From the giant kelp forests which range along its rugged coastlines, to the deep sponge gardens and a ship’s graveyard, Tasmania offers a wide variety of scuba diving, where frequently crayfish and abalone are found in abundance between the rocky boulders of a reef. Many species are endemic and unique to Tasmania, such as the handfish. Weedy seadragons and seahorses are also common in the temperate Tasmanian waters.

For those superyachts looking to be a little more adventurous, Hobart is recognised globally as the world’s pre-eminent international gateway to the Antarctic, sub-Antarctic and Southern Ocean. Tasmania offers the services of a Hardy community who thrive on the region beyond 40 degrees south!
Docklands Superyacht Marina delivers you into the heart of a thriving, creative City of Melbourne. Step ashore and you’re only a few minutes’ stroll from some of the Australia’s best food and wine, fashion, arts and events.

For full details go to: www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/waterways

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superyacht@melbourne.vic.gov.au

A member of Superyacht Australia (SYBA)
Victoria

Useful Statistics

State of Australia

GOVERNMENT: Democratic Federal Constitutional Monarchy (3 levels of govt: Federal, State and Local)
LAND AREA: 237,629km² (91,749 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011): 5,574,000
LANGUAGE: English
CURRENCY: Australian Dollar (AUD)
CLIMATE: A varied climate despite its small size, ranging from semi-arid and hot in the northwest, to temperate and cool along the coast. The Great Dividing Range produces a cooler, mountain climate in the centre of the state.

UTC: +10
INTL DIALLING CODE: +61 3

VICTORIA is located in the southeast corner of Australia; the smallest mainland state in area but the most densely populated and urbanised. Melbourne is Victoria’s capital and largest city, with more than 70% of the state’s population and dominates its economy, media, and culture. Victoria’s northern border is the south bank of the Murray River, the river itself being part of New South Wales. It also rests at the southern end of The Great Dividing Range, which stretches along the east coast and terminates west of Ballarat. It is bordered by South Australia to the west, and Bass Strait to the south. Victoria contains many topographically, geologically and climatically diverse areas, ranging from the wet, temperate climate of Gippsland in the southeast to the snow-covered Victorian alpine areas which rise to almost 2,000 m (6,500 ft) and extensive semi-arid plains to the west and north-west. Superyachts visiting Victoria primarily will be sailing to Melbourne, Australia’s second largest city, and the shopping and dining capital of Australia. The hosting of the Commonwealth Games generated interest that justified the development of a purpose built superyacht marina in the heart of the Docklands precinct of Port Melbourne, adjacent to the city. Superyachts can now berth a few minutes from downtown Melbourne, providing their owners and guests with easy access to one of the world’s greatest cities that hosts numerous major events including the Formula One Grand Prix, Australian Open tennis championship and the Melbourne Cup horse race.

To
U R S M A U STRAL I A

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W: www.portofmelbourne.com.au

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W: www.ppsp.com.au

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APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM MELBOURNE TO:

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USEFUL WEBSITES

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celebrate and the majority can be accessed by tender – without leaving the water.

FASHION, DESIGN, ART & CULTURE
A key event on the fashion calendar is L’Oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival. The festival prides itself on presenting the best of Australian fashion to a world stage. Renowned for dramatic style and impeccable detail, each runway presents collections from Australia’s leading designers and showcases the beauty trends of the season.

Scratch the surface in Melbourne and you’ll discover a city buzzing with dynamic and cutting-edge arts and cultural companies. So dense and multi-faceted is Melbourne’s network of artist and designer workshops and studios that in recent years there has been an explosion of tours that coincide with the expansion of innovative galleries, artist-run spaces and artists’ studios in Melbourne’s inner precincts. The National Gallery of Victoria boasting Australia’s largest art collection is a short stroll from the marina. Exquisite shopping, fabulous food and fine wine Weaving a maze through the city grid, Melbourne’s laneways uncover hidden treasures and a charming, intimate atmosphere. Al fresco eateries, one-off shops and bars that are off the beaten track, all nestle side-by-side in laneways winding in all directions throughout the city.

Melbourne has enjoyed a long and eventful love affair with coffee from the time the first Italian-owned cafes imported Melbourne’s earliest espresso machines in the 1950s. The hum of coffee machines can be heard all over the city as coffee lovers flock to their favourite coffee outlets. Experience Melbourne’s mix of cultures in its myriad of restaurants, cafes, bistro and bars. Whether you’re after modern, traditional, exotic or homespun flavors – Melbourne’s eclectic dining scene offers a startling array of the world’s great cuisines, from popular favorites to the truly groundbreaking.

Share a drink while snacking on high end tapas in a laneway eatery, take on a Szechuan chilli dish in Chinatown, or break out of the CBD and discover the city’s specialist eating destinations – Richmond for Vietnamese, Carlton’s ‘Little Italy’, Fitzroy for Spanish and Brunswick for Lebanese. For wine connoisseurs – Victoria boasts more than 850 wineries spread across 21 distinct wine regions.

OPEN SPACE
Melbourne is the capital of the State of Victoria. Victoria is a garden state that boasts 45 National Parks and 13 Marine National Parks as well as a number of State Parks, regional parks, Botanical Gardens, wilderness reserves and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Reserves.
VICTORIA

GOLF
If you’re not into spectating Melbourne has its tempting sand belt golf courses. Royal Melbourne, host of the President’s Cup, and Huntingdale, home of the Australian Masters, are among several internationally recognised golf clubs. Alternatively you can head for the coast and share a round with hundreds of kangaroos.

DAY TOURS
Further afield there is an amazing array of unique experiences. The Great Ocean Road, recommended as one of the 10 must do drives in the world, is a 243-kilometre stretch of road that takes in the famous Twelve Apostles limestone formations. The breathtaking scenic road begins at Torquay – home of several global surf brands including Rip Curl and Quicksilver and Australia’s most noted surf beach Bell’s Beach. Victoria’s famous Penguin Parade at Phillip Island Nature Park, is one of the State’s top attractions. Thousands of locals and visitors head to Phillip Island to view the Little Penguins as they emerge from the sea every night of the year. There are 32,000 breeding pairs, the largest collection of penguins in Australia, with approximately 6000 of them landing on Summerland Beach every evening during the famous penguin “parade”.

FLYING IN
Melbourne Airport is situated 24 kilometres from the city. Helicopter transfers to a heliport within walking distance to the superyacht facility are easily arranged. Essendon Airport provides facilities and services for international and domestic corporate aircraft and is situated just 10 kilometres from the city centre.

VICTORIA AND ENVIRONS
Victoria boasts almost 2,000 km of coastline with the Southern Ocean, Bass Strait and the Tasman Sea forming the southern border of the State. The Great Ocean Road is famous for the imposing beauty of the Twelve Apostles, whale watching and a history of ships being wrecked in its treacherous waters. The Murray River, Australia’s principal river, forms the northern border separating Victoria from New South Wales.

In Victoria experience spectacular surf, desert, rainforest, mountains, rugged coastal scenery, goldfields, vineyards, lakes, magnificent rivers, wildflowers in Spring and snow in Winter. Native wildlife includes kangaroos, koalas, wombats, platypus, echidnas and lovable little penguins, which parade nightly along Phillip Island beach. From the cool-climate varieties of the Yarra Valley to the big reds of Rutherglen, you won’t have to travel far to taste fantastic wine in Victoria with over 850 wineries in 21 wine districts.

Victoria’s capital, Melbourne, has an abundance of arts and culture, major events and festivals, fine food and wine, great shopping, cutting-edge fashion from Australian designers, lush parks and gardens, vast waterways, great architecture, friendly people and world class sporting events. From the cool-climate varieties of the Yarra Valley to the big reds of Rutherglen, you won’t have to travel far to taste fantastic wine in Victoria with over 850 wineries in 21 wine districts.

Major events include the Australian open Tennis Championships, Australian International Air Show, Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix, Melbourne International Comedy Festival, World Cup Aerials at Mt Buller Ski Resort, Australian Football League Finals Series, Melbourne International Arts Festival and the Spring Racing Carnival featuring Australia’s famed Melbourne Cup.

The internationally-renowned Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), one of the world’s largest and most outstanding outdoor sporting grounds were hosts to the opening and closing ceremonies and athletics events of the 1956 Olympic Games and the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

For further information visit http://www.superyacht-australia.com
Located at the Western tip of Singapore, adjacent to the Second Link Bridge connecting Singapore and Malaysia, Raffles Marina is a first class, full service boating haven, offering all the amenities of a Bluewater Marina. It offers berthing facilities for a wide range of boats from small pleasure craft to super yachts.

Protected by a solid breakwater, Raffles Marina provides the calmest marina lagoon in Singapore with an average depth of 4m at LAT. Berthing facilities include, 152 walk-on berths for boats of up to 20m/65ft and a boathouse that has 208 dry-berths for boats of up to 10m/35ft.

In addition, it accommodates a full service yacht repair and service yard, comprising a 70-ton travel lift and operating the largest Chandlery in Singapore. Shore power services, freshwater supply, WIFI Internet, 24-hour security and Immigration services, are also available.

Raffles Marina is the ideal destination for recreation needs too. The clubhouse has a landscaped free-form swimming pool and Jacuzzi, bowling centre, gymnasium, 3 dining venues, 19 guestrooms, and 8 function rooms.

For rates and more information, please contact Dockmaster’s office:
Tel: (65) 6861 9000
Fax: (65) 6862 2280
Email: dmo@rafflesmarina.com.sg
Website: www.rafflesmarina.com.sg
Facebook: www.facebook.com/rafflesmarina
By Captain Cilian Budarlaigh, Founding Partner of The Yacht Support Group

ONCE UPON A TIME, when yachtsmen in the West thought of Asia they imagined the exotic Orient and its inscrutable inhabitants, and mysterious destinations such as the Spice Islands. Truth be told, it was no wonder they had such a simplistic notion of the region as cruising in Asia, especially for a non-local, was no simple matter. But as the Asian Century powers on, yachts and superyachts are an increasingly common sight on Asian waters and the support facilities available to them have improved immeasurably. I would go so far as to predict that Asia will soon be seen as the next great destination for those who enjoy yachting.

Whether you are coming from the Red Sea via the Maldives, India and Sri Lanka, or from the Pacific Ocean via Australia, Japan, the Philippines and Indonesia, once your vessel is in the region you can slow to a more leisurely pace and follow the trade routes followed by Chinese traders and European and Arab spice merchants in days of yore. Routes are readily identifiable and past issues with piracy in the Malacca Straits have been addressed thanks to the Information Fusion Centre, which coordinates the resources of several navies.

South-East Asia has led the way in developing a vibrant yachting scene to complement its growing tourism industries. The Coral Triangle (an area encompassing the tropical marine waters around Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste that contain at least 500 species of reef-building corals) offers the world’s best scuba diving and Hong Kong and China are opening new marinas to service the growing ranks of Chinese yacht owners as well as foreign visitors. Existing superyacht hubs in Singapore, Phuket and Bali are renowned for being great bases from which to explore. Centres such as these offer quality fuel, gourmet provisions, exotic flowers, spare parts and technicians. As international flight centres they allow easy access for crew and guests and allow special items to be flown in too.

For those who want to get away from tourist hotspots there are still plenty of remote, little-visited islands to be found in Indonesia, Borneo and Myanmar. Professional superyacht agents have helped make these islands more accessible to the adventurous, providing all the usual luxuries expected aboard a superyacht, plus a few special treats.

In fact, agents such as www.yachtsupport.org have developed sustainable charity programs within the region to provide remote coastal communities with schoolbooks and supplies, which they encourage visiting superyachts to deliver. The Yacht Support Group has truly taken up the YachtAid Global idea of ‘Changing the world without changing course’.

Owners and crew alike will be stunned by Asia’s natural beauty, enchanted by its elegant hotels and charmed by the people of this vibrant, colourful and increasingly important region. We eagerly await your visit.
Asia & Indian Ocean Weather Conditions

From the Southeastern Indian Ocean and Indonesia to Northern and Western Australia: Two semi-permanent weather features can be found across the southeastern Indian Ocean and near Indonesia.

By Amanda Delaney, Mark Neiswender & Brian Whitley of Weather Routing, Inc.

THE FIRST is the equatorial trough that extends from the equator southward to 10S and from 50E eastward along Indonesia and New Guinea. Showers and squalls associated with the equatorial trough generally move westward and are more numerous from January through March. This feature changes little in strength and is quasi-stationary throughout the year. However, over the southeastern Indian Ocean, the equatorial trough can shift farther south a few degrees in the summer and north in the winter. A ridge of high pressure is a semi-permanent feature across the Southeast Indian Ocean.

From November through March, the west to east oriented axis of the ridge is found along 32S to 35S and from approximately 50E eastward to 105E. The ridge shifts farther north in June through October along approximately 29S to 32S. At times, portions of this ridge will move eastward across Australia during June through August or further south across the Great Australian Bight from December through February. Winds across the southeastern Indian Ocean from 10S to 20S are generally east to southeast of Beaufort Force 3-5 and swells 5-8ft during the summer months (December through February). However, these winds increase during the winter months (June through August) out of the east and southeast of Beaufort Force 4-6 and swells 6-10ft. The reason for the higher conditions in the winter is due to the ridge of high pressure situated farther north this time of year and interacting with the equatorial trough. Closer to the equatorial trough axis (between 5S and 10S), winds are generally out of the east approximately 1-2 Beaufort Force lower, with swells 2-3ft lower. Outside of any squalls, trade winds and swells are similar across the Java and Banda Seas as described near the equatorial trough across the southeastern Indian Ocean. Winds generally funnel from Torres Strait through the Gulf of Carpentaria and Arafura Sea especially during the winter months. During the summer months, winds are out of the east to southeast Beaufort Force 4-5 (though force 6 to, at times, 7 are more likely near and in Torres Strait). Swells are usually out of the east to southeast of 6-10ft (highest just west of Torres Strait). By winter, east to southeast winds will increase 1-2 Beaufort Force higher with swells building 2-3ft higher across these regions. These surges occur when a ridge of high pressure builds across Australia and interacts with the equatorial trough. The winds are stronger in the winter with these highs shifting farther north over Australia during this time of year. Farther south, a thermal trough of low pressure is usually found along the western Australian coast south of approximately 20S. The movement and strength of the trough will affect the winds and seas along the coast. The approach and passage of any cold fronts and the eventual approach and passage of any following areas of high pressure will result in an offshore progression and weakening of the thermal trough. As a result, southeast winds along the western Australian coast become light and sometimes variable (Beaufort Force 4 or less) along the trough axis. Swells generally lower to southwest 4-7ft with the highest sets farther south during these events. On the other hand, an inland progression and strengthening of the trough can be expected in the wake of these following high pressure areas, as the semi-permanent high pressure ridge builds farther east. This will increase southeast winds to approximately Beaufort, Force 4-6 and southwest swells of 6-10ft (the highest conditions occurring farthest south along the west coast of Australia).

Cold fronts are more frequent and stronger during the winter months. These fronts extend as far north as 26S to 28S and reach the southwestern Australian coast every three days. During spring and autumn, these cold fronts are weaker and shift farther south to approximately 28S to 30S. By the summer, the fronts only reach as far north as 30S and pass over the extreme southwestern coast of Australia every four to five days. Ahead of these cold fronts, winds are generally out of the north to northwest of Beaufort Force 3-5 and swells northwest 4-7ft during the summer. In the winter, the winds will increase out of the northwest of Beaufort Force 4-6 and swells northwest averaging 6-9ft ahead of these fronts. Behind the fronts, winds increase out of the south to southwest Beaufort Force 4-6 and swells build out of the southwest of 6-9ft during the summer. During the winter, winds will increase out of the southwest of Beaufort Force 6-8 and swells build out of the southwest 9-13ft behind cold fronts. However, sustained gale force winds and swells of 10-15ft out of the southwest can develop along the Australian coast south of 25S during exceptionally strong storms.

The southeastern Indian Ocean and Australian tropical seasons begin in October and usually end in April, with peak activity in this season typically during February. The majority of tropical cyclone development usually occurs near the equatorial trough, between approximately 06S and 10S, in the southeastern Indian Ocean. Once development occurs, the most likely tracks will be toward the W-SW, along the northern periphery of the semi-permanent ridge of high pressure. Over time, tropical cyclones will usually track more south and southeastward over the southwestern Indian Ocean and weaken over cooler waters between 20S and 25S. Farther east, tropical cyclones generally develop close to and within the equatorial trough near the Arafura Sea and Gulf of Carpentaria. Once a tropical cyclone develops, the system will usually track west-southwestward and will take one of two tracks. The system can track southwestward and make landfall along the northwestern coast of Australia (or in the Gulf of Carpentaria move inland over Northern Territory). The other track is out over the southeastern Indian Ocean with an eventual turn south and southeastward, where the tropical cyclone weakens and becomes extratropical over cooler waters south of 20S. There are times that a tropical cyclone will move inland over the Cape York Peninsula then re-intensify over the Gulf of Carpentaria, before following similar tracks described.
PLANNING AND ROUTING OPTIONS

Now that all of the major weather features and currents have been summarized, some questions may come to mind such as: When is the best time of year to transit across these areas and what is the best route? Let’s address this:

Looking farther north, across the Persian Gulf and vicinity, best times will be when weather patterns and regimes are in transition, especially during April, May, and during the summer period (May through September), when cold fronts are far less frequent and not as strong. Winter travel will prove more difficult in this region, as stronger NW wind surges and larger NW seas are more common during this period, as stronger, more frequent fronts pass.

Elsewhere, within the Red Sea and the northern Indian Ocean, overall the best times of year to make this transit are during April through early May and from late October through November. There are several reasons that these times of year are more favorable to plan a voyage. Spring and autumn are the transitional times between the northeast and southwest monsoons. Winds and swells are generally lower across the northern Indian Ocean as the wind direction becomes more variable. Across the Red Sea, cold fronts are weaker and high northwest winds surging across the northern Red Sea occur less often. Also, the thermal trough of low pressure across the Red Sea and Arabian Peninsula is weakening in autumn, allowing for lighter southeasterly winds across the northern Red Sea and through Bab el Mandeb. Across the southeastern Indian Ocean and northern Australia, the trade winds are generally lighter and along western Australia, cold fronts are less frequent and weaker. April and early May also avoid the worst of the tropical cyclone season across the entire region.

The tropical cyclone season is just beginning across the northern Indian Ocean during this time and, farther south, the tropical cyclone season is winding down near northern Australia. Planning a trip during late October through November does increase the threat of tropical cyclone formation, especially in the northern Indian Ocean. However, a tropical cyclone can be easily avoided as long as one has access to the latest tropical advisories or consults a marine meteorologist prior to and during a voyage.

As for routing options, timing will be key for transiting through the Red Sea in order to avoid any wind surges, but once conditions become favorable a direct route to Bab el Mandeb is best. From the Gulf of Aden the best course of action is to transit at least approximately 50 nautical miles north and east of Socotra Island. Not only does this keep the vessel north of residual southwest winds and swells associated with the southwest monsoon, this also minimizes the threat of piracy reported offshore the coast of Somalia. Once the vessel passes this island, a direct route towards the Maldives or southern India is valid.

Halfway across the northern Indian Ocean, there are two options to consider especially for a vessel heading to northern Australia. The first is to head directly to the Strait of Malacca. This route will be more favorable for vessels that do not handle larger east to southeast winds, swells and currents that occur across the southeastern Indian Ocean. Also, the tropical cyclone season is more active than usual over the southeastern Indian Ocean during this time as well. However, this route does increase the threat of encountering a tropical cyclone especially in May and November. It is best to keep in mind a place of stoppage, such as the Maldives, in case a system does develop in this region to allow for the system to move safely away from the vessel’s path. Once through the Strait of Malacca, the vessel can then transit directly through the Java, Banda and Arafura Seas to northern Australia. Trade winds and currents across the Java and Banda Seas are generally lighter. However, there are still are concerns to consider for this part of the voyage, mainly of tropical cyclone development offshore northern Australia and any enhanced trade winds across the Arafura Sea and near Torres Strait. Additionally, there will be a greater threat of showers and squalls with the vessel transiting close to the equatorial trough.

The other option is a direct route across the southeastern Indian Ocean to Australia. This route is better when the northeastern Indian Ocean tropics are more active and minimizes any showers and squalls associated with the equatorial trough. The main concern will be any early or late tropical cyclone development along northern Australia and across the southeastern Indian Ocean but these systems develop less frequently during the spring and autumn. Planning a transit during the winter months across the Red Sea and northern Indian Ocean is not ideal with higher north-northwest winds and swells across the northern Red Sea and higher north-northeast winds and swells across northern Indian Ocean. Currents are less favorable too, with mainly east to northeast currents across this region. If a vessel must depart during this time, be prepared for long delays and numerous stoppages to wait for a brief break in the northerly wind surges. The best action from the Gulf of Aden will be to head north of Socotra Island, and then take a best southeasterly heading towards the Maldives; however, north-northeast winds and swells will be strong. The winds and swells will slowly improve towards the Maldives, with either direct routing to the Strait of Malacca or across the southeastern Indian Ocean to Australia remaining valid. The only problem heading to the Strait of Malacca is the large northeast swells propagating southward from the Bay of Bengal. Once in the southern hemisphere, tropical cyclones will become a greater threat and will have to be monitored with greater care.

It is usually not recommended to plan a trip across the northern Indian Ocean during the summer months. Sustained gale force winds, large southwest swells, and a strong Somali current in the Arabian Sea, plus the threat of tropical cyclones will make the transit extremely uncomfortable and, at times, can be dangerous especially for smaller vessels. Long delays are likely and window to transit across this region are few and far between. Even if the vessel does make the transit and arrives in the southeastern Indian Ocean or across the Arafura Sea, trade winds will be more enhanced across this region, as well as large southwest swells propagating northeastward from storms in the southern Indian Ocean to further hinder the transit. It is recommended to avoid transit across the northern Indian Ocean to Australia from the end of May through to September. Having this basic weather information and knowing when to plan for generally the best conditions at hand will give a mariner a better idea of what to expect while navigating across the Indian Ocean. However, the weather does not always go according to plan and it is best to have access to the latest weather information on board the vessel or to consult a private weather company, such as Weather Routing Incorporated, where marine meteorologists can monitor the weather and advise of any route alterations in order to avoid heavy weather. This way a mariner will have peace of mind knowing what lies ahead and can confidently steer for clear skies.
Superyachts in Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea lies north of the Australian continent between the parallels 0° and 10°S, resembling some prehistoric dinosaur with its mouth facing west to Indonesia and the tail hanging down to the southeast, and cutting the Louisiade Archipelago. Its southern coastline forms the northern barrier of the Torres Strait – the logical route to Australia’s east coast for yachts approaching from the Indian Ocean or Asia.

By Captain Gordon Scott Photography Bob Halstead

THE ISLAND

The western sector, Papua (formerly Irian Jaya) is a province of Indonesia and the eastern half, Papua New Guinea (PNG), is an independent nation. While globalisation has resulted in “sameness” between countries, Papua New Guinea remains unique and largely unchanged. The country is also one of the world’s least explored, both culturally and geographically.

CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION

A PNG visa can be obtained upon arrival, but I would highly recommend these be acquired for all crew and guests prior to arrival. This can be done online at www.papua-new-guinea.visahq.com but also, check with your agent that all formalities have been attended to well prior to arrival.

The government has bureaucratic red tape down to a fine art, so a local agent’s skills and knowledge is essential in avoiding delays or hassle.

SERVICE/REPAIR FACILITIES

The nearest service facility with the infrastructure, skills and knowledge is Cairns Slipways in Cairns, Australia www.cairns-slipways.com.au

DIVING

The educated thinking believes the world’s coral reef species originated in the triangle encompassing Sulawesi, PNG and the Solomon Islands and as you venture further afield, coral diversification diminishes. Hence, the variety and quantity of underwater life in the waters of PNG is truly staggering and scientists are still discovering new species at a fabulous rate.

Suffice to say, the diving here is arguably the best there is – in fact 20 of the world’s “Top 100 Dive Sites” are on the one island of New Britain – right here in PNG.

In my opinion, the best known of the PNG dive guides is Bob Halstead www.halsteaddiving.com – Bob@halsteaddiving.com

WEATHER

The recommended time to visit PNG is from April and May through until December, the southeast monsoon or dry season. This is also the best time for diving as the water clarity is at its best. December to April is the northwest monsoon and the wet season. Cyclone season runs from December to March, but only the southeastern portion of the country is affected. As with most regions on or near the Equator, and
east, the logical entrance is via China Straits or Jomard Entrance further to the east. Both are well lit and charted. I regard a cruise up the mighty Sepik River an absolute “must do”.

ANCHORAGES
Mostly the anchorages around the mainland and continental islands have a mud bottom and very good holding. Beware sudden squalls and wind shifts as the weather here can be very localised and difficult to predict. Typically you will have many outrigger canoes arrive shortly after dropping anchor, and while you must always be on the alert, I have never had any security issues when dealing with them.

PILOTAGE
While British Admiralty and Australian hydrographic charts cover the area adequately, the surveys are quite dated. The major shipping route(s) have accurate hydrographic information. Outside these Zones of Confidence is inadequately or totally unsurveyed territory, nowhere more so than the route through the reefs of the Bismark Sea. The condition or lack of navigational aids used to be part of the adventure. Do not expect lights to be working, or even charted beacons to be present. Having said that, a lot of work has been done over the past five years replacing many of the lights and most are now in excellent condition, especially those in Milne Bay Province. Bulk fuel is available at all the main ports, mostly from tanker truck.

GUIDES AND AGENTS
Melanesian Tourist Services www.mtspng.com is the agent I use in PNG, the most respected and best available. You must always be mindful that this is not the Continental US or Europe and things happen at a very different pace and with a very different approach here. As mentioned earlier, one of the most respected guides, and absolutely the most experienced dive guide in PNG is Bob Halstead.

with a mountainous interior, sudden and often violent winds arrive with little or no warning. Light sea breezes are typical, with long periods of calm. Occasional afternoon thunderstorms, with associated heavy rain are not uncommon. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology www.bom.gov.au covers the area with their “High Seas Forecasts”.

Cruising
The best cruising in PNG is found among the islands to the east and north of the mainland. This covers a vast area, and is dotted with a myriad of islands, bays, reefs and local villages. Here you will find the locals still going about life much the same as they have been doing for thousands of years just like a living, breathing National Geographic documentary. I usually begin in either Madang and cruise east through New Britain and New Ireland concluding in Rabaul and a separate cruise from Alotau (Milne Bay Province) through Goodenough, Normanby and Fergusson Islands and the western sector of the Louisiade Archipelago. For those approaching from the south and

SECURITY
I avoid both Lae and Port Moresby due to the lawlessness. There has been occasional theft from mainly smaller yachts, but once again, liaise with your agent on this subject and always be vigilant.

STORES
There is no shopping in the regular sense to be had in PNG. In the major cities there are a few malls and supermarkets but otherwise most of the shopping is done in small village markets that are held at irregular intervals. Haggling is not really an accepted custom, one can haggle a bit but to do it excessively is considered rude. Excursions: I could write forever on all there is to see and do in this amazing country. May I suggest contacting Melanesian Tourist Services www.mtspng.com and/or Transniugini Tours www.pngtours.com for up-to-the-minute information and itinerary planning.

A voyage to Papua New Guinea will be an experience that will forever live in your memory.
Papua New Guinea

Useful Statistics

Independent State of Papua New Guinea

GOVERNMENT: Constitutional Monarchy

LAND AREA: 461,691 km² (178,260 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 6,187,591

LANGUAGE: English (Pidgin form is more widely used). Over 850 indigenous languages and dialects.

CURRENCY: Kina (K)

CLIMATE: A monsoonal climate with high temperatures and humidity throughout the year. The NW Monsoon season is from December to March and the SW Monsoon season is from May to October. Rainfall is at its heaviest in the highlands. Average temperature in Port Moresby is from 26-28°C all year.

UTC: +10

INTL DIALLING CODE: +675

PAPUA NEW GUINEA is a Melanesian country in the south-western Pacific Ocean, occupying the eastern half of the island of New Guinea and numerous offshore islands (the western portion is the Indonesian provinces of Papua and West Irian Jaya). PNG is situated on the Pacific Ring of Fire, with active volcanoes and eruptions, and earthquakes sometimes accompanied by tsunamis. PNG is one of the most fascinating countries in the world and is definitely best visited by superyacht. This not only gives the opportunity to catch a glimpse of life in a society still following ancient ways, but also increases security for those aboard. Outside of the main centres life is little changed and these areas offer safe and spectacular cruising adventure. Rabaul, the capital of New Britain Island in the Bismark Archipelago, is the largest of PNG’s islands and is surrounded by a colorful coral reef and sprinkled with World War 2 relics. Decimated during World War 2, Rabaul was rebuilt following the war, only to be ravaged again by the eruptions of volcanoes Tavurvur and Vulcan in 1994. Madang on the northern coast of New Guinea also has a well-protected harbour in an area scattered with islands, reefs and lagoons. It has always been a popular stop, especially for those superyachts taking the route north of New Guinea towards Indonesia.

The best cruising in PNG is found among the many islands to the east of the main island, where islanders still live a peaceful life and sail large traditional canoes for fishing and trading voyages. Some superyachts have ventured many miles up the Sepik River, well in to what some refer to as “Head Hunter territory”... A cruise in PNG waters has been for many superyacht guests and crew, the highlight of their world cruise, and if the itinerary is chosen carefully, it is a country well worth visiting.
### Indonesia

**Useful Statistics**

**Republic of Indonesia**

**GOVERNMENT:** Unitary Multiparty Republic

**AREA SIZE:** 1,906,230 km² (736,000 sq miles)

**POPULATION:** (est. 2011) 237,424,363

**LANGUAGE:** Bahasa Indonesian, there are over 250 languages spoken throughout the territory: Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Malay and English is understood

**CURRENCY:** Rupiah (Rp)

**CLIMATE:** Lying along the equator, Indonesia has a tropical climate, with two distinct monsoonal wet and dry seasons. Humidity is generally high, averaging about 80%. Temperatures vary little throughout the year; the average daily temperature range of the capital, Jakarta is 23–33°C (73–91°F). The dry season is from June to September and the wet season is from November to March.

**UTC:** from +7 to +9

**INTL DIALLING CODE:** +62

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**INDONESIA** is the world’s largest archipelagic state. It is the world’s fourth most populous country and the most populous Muslim-majority nation. Indonesia’s 17,508 islands, about 6,000 of which are inhabited, are scattered over both sides of the equator. The region surrounding the island of Bali in the south is the most popular superyacht cruising destination. The cruising highlights include: Bunaken National Marine Park in North Sulawesi holds a diverse marine life of both coral, fish and mammals. With sheltered bays, deep water areas, wall dives, barrier reefs and mangrove reefs this is an excellent cruising ground; Raja Ampal Islands, Papua (Irian Jaya) are said to have the world’s richest reef systems. The archipelago consists of four large islands and up to 600 smaller islands. The scenery is diverse steep mountain cliffs, dense jungle forests and deserted white sandy beaches. There is virtually no tourism in this area, so if you are looking for an untouched, natural cruising and diving location this is it; Lesser Sunda Islands Indonesia is comprised of Bali, Lombok, Komodo and onwards to Timor. There are amazing dive sites, snorkeling and clear waters on this route. The scenery is spectacular from white sandy beaches to the three coloured lakes of the Kelimutu volcano and the chance to see the Komodo dragon. For those who wish the ‘best of both worlds’ in this cruising ground you can find luxury hotel resorts, spas, world class restaurants and shopping.
Island of the Gods

The timeless rural scenes of Bali have fascinated generations of people around the world. On an island where natural beauty intermingles with the ancient religious belief of the local Balinese, you find yourself enveloped and overcome with deep serenity and balance.

By Captain Cilian Budarlaigh
“evolutionary cauldron” of Cenderawasih Bay (Lat 02°00’ S Long 135°00’ E) on the North coast of the “Bird’s Head” (as the mainland is known). Terrestrial diversity ranges from unusual orchids to tree kangaroos to birds of paradise. The tribal people live as one with nature and are very shy. However you may be lucky enough to experience a traditional welcome dance and feast.

MALUKU
The fabled home of the Spice Islands, stretching from Ternate & Tidore in the north to Seram & Run in the south Banda Sea. Ambon (Lat 03°42’.25 S Long 128°09’.4 E) is at the heart of this region and provides full CIQ both by sea and air. History, culture, land & sea natural sights. Visit nutmeg plantations, purchase pepper direct from the farm, or go diving on spectacular drop-offs near to remote islands.

WESTERN SULAWESI
A “drop-in” area from Malaysian Borneo, the Philippines or Palau. Clearing at Bitung (Lat 01°27’.4 N Long 125°14’.3 E good anchorage) places you immediately in the Lembeth Straight (home of muck diving). There are a few resorts here but they collectively manage the dive sites to ensure limited numbers of divers each day. Easy access by air via Manado international airport, just 45 minutes by road from Bitung.

EASTERN SULAWESI
*As we approached a small island, a loud bang could be heard at intervals; dynamite fishing we thought, with sinking hearts. We rounded the east point as the sun was setting, and there before us was a scene reminiscent of Dante’s inferno;
every 20 mins a loud explosion was followed by a spurt of lava shooting stars into the night sky, before cascading into the sea around us. Backing off a safe distance of a mile or so, we enjoyed the show and a fresh fish dinner on the aft deck.” Dick Beaumont; S.Y. Moonshadow.

Bali

Fabled “Island of the Gods”, Benoa is a large sheltered commercial harbour (Sea Buoy: Lat 8°45’ 14 S Long 115°14’ 55 E ) with limited Superyacht alongside or stern-to berthing (at the Big Boat Quay: 7m MLWS). Smaller yachts up to 30m and less than 3m draft can tie alongside the Bali Marina; which is rather run down. There is also a busy anchorage at Serangan island (tricky entrance from 08°43’ 52 S 115°16’ 4 E, involving transits) with 7m depths.

Bali has very good provisioning, easy access via the international airport, plenty of high end hotels & restaurants, and offers many shore based delights, from temple tours to spas to lively nightlife. Dive to see Mola Mola, luxuriate on private beaches attached to chill out clubs, or head up to Ubud, the sacred monkey forest.

Bali to Komodo

Indonesian equivalent of the Monaco to St Tropez “Milk Run” – although covering 300 nm. Lombok and Sumbawa have great fishing & scuba diving along their northern shores. Surfers will relish the southern route. Komodo, home of the legendary dragons, takes you back into prehistoric times.

“The best cruising sailing I have ever done…”

Owner; S.Y. Bristolian.

International clearance in/out can be done at Kupang if coming from or going to Darwin, Australia, but there is not much cruising near Kupang, as far as I am aware.

Western Indonesia

As most Superyachts travel from either Phuket or Langkawi when coming from the West, it is usual to bypass Sumatra. However a visit to the Mentawai islands is a must for surf aficionados. Clearances can be done at either Sabang, Banda Aceh or Padang, W. Sumatra.

Yachts departing Singapore may wish to visit Riau or Anambas island groups (note that separate permits apply) which have become a favorite playground for Singapore based yachtsmen. There is a marina at Nongsa Point that can cater CIQP clearances but most Superyachts are too large to fit inside.

Kumai can be interesting for it’s river cruise through the jungle (by small local craft) up to the Orangutan sanctuary.

Jakarta has three marinas (mostly too shallow for Superyachts) but some vessels have anchored off Batavia Marina when a trip to the nation’s capital was required.

In General

The people of the world’s 4th most populated country are generally very friendly and welcoming; the kids are wide eyed and curious. In remote areas it is customary to seek the Village Head’s permission to visit & dive; in developed places there are often local by-laws to follow. Flaunting wealth will generate the same jealousy as in other poor parts of the world, and is to be avoided.

In bygone days, piracy was a real threat but this seems to have been reduced and managed by cooperation between Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia (at least for the Malacca Straights). The Indonesia Superyacht Association report that in seven years of members operations, they have not heard of Superyachts being pirated in Indonesian waters.

It is becoming easier to solo cruise Indonesia but the services of a dedicated Superyacht agency such as www.indoyachtsupport.com will ensure you make the most of this huge playground. IYS also organize targeted charity donations to remote primary schools along the littoral; which visiting Superyachts can assist by taking the requested supplies onboard and delivering to the appropriate schools.
Brunei

State of Brunei Darussalam

GOVERNMENT: Absolute Monarchy (Sultan)

LAND AREA: 5,765km², (2,226 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 401,890

LANGUAGE: Malay, English

CURRENCY: Brunei ringgit (BND)

CLIMATE: Equatorial tropical, with high temperatures, high humidity, sunshine and heavy rainfall throughout the year.

UTC: +8

INTL DIALLING CODE: +673

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM, meaning Abode of Peace, is small state situated on the north-west side of Borneo, and is composed of two separate areas divided by the Malaysian state of Sarawak. The western section is made up of Brunei-Muara, Belait and Tutong districts, and the eastern part is Temburong. Despite a small population, the country is extremely rich because it retains the income from its oil and gas reserves. Ruled by the Sultan of Brunei, in a 600 year old family monarchy, his rule means Bruneians have one of the highest standards of living in Asia, with free education, free medical services, housing support, international education scholarships, no income tax, cheap loans etc. Brunei has a long maritime history, and the pattern of settlement has traditionally focused on waterways. This maritime focus creates useful advantages to yachtsmen; any items imported for marine use are duty free. Muara port, 16 nm downstream of the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan area (BSB), gives cruising yachts the most convenient access to city facilities with the most protected anchorage on the west coast of Borneo. One option for an anchorage is further upstream off the other Royal Brunei Yacht Club premises at Kota Batu. It has great dining and is only 5-10 minutes in a vehicle to central BSB. There are few other anchorages on Brunei’s short 100 nm coastline. Numerous offshore oil and gas installations make navigation complicated, especially at night. There is an official exclusion zone around all the offshore installations and yachts are advised to keep out of the area. For the sporting minded, Brunei has a number of top quality golf courses within 30 minutes drive of the Serasa superyacht anchorage, including the “Augusta of Asia” – the Sultan of Brunei’s golf course. Brunei also has the best protected rainforest on Borneo and the highest proportion of its land area included in the WWF’s Heart of Borneo preservation region. And if you like recreational diving, there are easily accessible and well preserved reefs and wrecks for your diving enjoyment.
OVER THE LAST 20 years of captaining yachts I have experienced some exceptional cruising destinations – from the rugged North West coast of Western Australia to the spectacular backdrops of British Columbia. After arriving in Kota Kinabalu (KK) in the northern State of Sabah on Malaysian Borneo a year or so ago I now have to include this as one of those truly rare and remarkable destinations. What makes Sabah different from the other States of Malaysia is its exceptional biodiversity, low population and breathtaking scenery. Yes the traffic can get a little crazy in KK, particularly on the Holy day of Friday when the city’s faithful are off to the Mosque to pray, combined with commuters on their way home as well as tourist buses and taxis. But head out of town for 15 to 20 minutes and you find yourself in a beautiful rural landscape that is largely unaffected by the hustle and bustle of the city. In fact of a total statewide population of 2.4 million, over 540,000 live in the greater KK area. KK has a mystical quality, particularly after a rain shower when the clouds drape themselves over the mountains and fill the valleys. And there is nothing more stunning than watching the sun rise behind the iconic Mount Kinabalu which serves as a majestic backdrop towering 4,095 meters above the city.

Sabah is home to some of the most unique and endangered species of wildlife and plant life on earth, some of which include the Sumatran Rhinoceros, Orang Utan, Sun Bear, Proboscis Monkey, Clouded Leopard and Pigmy Elephant. These species are all under pressure from the logging industry (now very strictly controlled), agriculture and the general spread of humanity and many are on the verge of extinction. The Sabah Wildlife Department is actively engaged in the protection of these and other endangered species, and is making great progress toward stabilizing populations and increasing numbers. The State has approximately 1,285km of coast line that stretches from Sindumin, just north of Brunei on the west coast around to Tawau just north of the border of Indonesian State of Kalimantan on the East Coast, and of that 90% is uninhabited. Around the coastline there are in excess of 100 islands, again with most uninhabited.

For the yacht owner who has become jaded with the crowds, expense and commercialism of the Med and the Caribbean, Sabah makes a refreshing change. Known as the “Land below the Wind” because of its location below the Typhoon belt it escapes the fierce storms that so frequently ravage the Philippines and Southern China, making boating a relatively safe affair. In all of my time in Sabah I have only seen two or three storms, and these generally blow through in a matter of hours.

Sutera Harbour Marina in KK is the only full service marina in the State and is a truly exceptional facility. This deepwater marina (5 meters at low tide) is flanked on each side by two five-star hotel resorts and offers year round protection from the north and south monsoons. The adjoining marina club has everything a travel weary crew could ask for – 4 swimming pools, several F&B outlets, a 27 hole championship golf course, tennis courts, gym, pool hall, bowling alley, movie theatre and much, much more. Marina users receive temporary membership...
which entitles them to 50% off food and beverage purchased in selected outlets within the marina club and use of the club facilities. The marina is within easy reach of both airports and the city center, and has a helipad for air transfers. Directly off the coast KK lies the 49 square kilometer Tunku Abdul Rahman National Marine Park. This protected area is made up of five islands, the largest of which is Pulau Gaya. Pulau Gaya has good anchorages on the northern and southern sides and offers protection in almost all conditions; however care must be taken to anchor only in sand and not on the coral reef. What strikes you most when you first venture out to the islands, and even before you leave Sutera Harbour Marina, is the clarity of the water and the abundance of marine life. The marina has to be one of the cleanest in Asia Pacific and is described by most as a big aquarium. Gayana Eco Resort on Gaya Island is home to the Marine Ecology Research Center (MERC). This privately funded, not for profit center is actively involved in the re-establishment of the coral reefs that have been badly damaged over time by boat anchors and fish bombing. Sabah is home to seven of the eight known species of Giant Clam on the planet. Unfortunately these species are under serious threat of extinction from over fishing. MERC are also working toward the propagation of this species through the growing and nurturing of the Clam in a ‘Marine Nursery’ and then placement onto the surrounding coral reefs. Pulau Mangalum located 30 nautical miles Northwest of KK is home to astonishing white sandy beaches, sea grass fields and a small but growing Dugong population. According to local lore, the great explorer Magellan and his fleet stopped at this island (hence the island’s name) on their way to Brunei to pay homage to the Sultan. The island is surrounded by shoals and coral reefs, extending all the way to Mantinani Island some 40 miles north. Scuba diving in this mainly unexplored remote area offers good visibility and plenty of reef fish. There is a nice fringing reef just off the island ranging from 3 to 14 meters deep and there are several patch reefs ranging from 8 to 29 meters deep which give shelter to a number of marine species such as anemones, numerous pink-eyed gobies, nudibranchs, seastars, and reef fish such as Angel- Parrot- Damsel- & Butterfly fish. This is a nice “muck” dive site with every now and then a school of Snappers or Sweetlips passing by. Whip rays and Eagle rays are occasionally sighted. 130 nautical miles further is Layang Layang, an atoll of 14 sq km in diameter, jutting 2,000 meters from the depths of the South China Sea. In 1985, the Malaysian Federal Government began reclamation works and created a 50-acre island on one part of the reef. Thus, what is ardently known to East Malaysians as “Terumbu Layang-Layang” or “Swallow’s Reef” has now become Layang-Layang Island. Within the atoll is a calm lagoon which teems with wildlife. As many as 13 coral reefs have formed here, creating spectacular underwater scenery with crystal clear visibility averaging 50-60 meters. It is among the famous Spratlys, which is a collection of about 600 islands, reefs, and atolls strategically located in the South China Sea. The island has been nicknamed “Big Fish” or the “Wall Diving Mecca of Southeast Asia”.

CAPTAIN’S LOG BORNEO
Kudat Riviera. This area is fast becoming the new cruise to the northern tip of Borneo and the From Sutera Harbour it’s an easy 6 to 7 hour length of time is not recommended.

Just south of Labuan is Pulau Keramat which is the only oceanic island in Malaysia, rising 600 meters from the seabed. It was formed by living corals growing on top of their cultivated land. Sipadan, currently in the running to become one of the seven New Wonders of the World is the only oceanic island in Malaysia, rising 600 meters from the seabed. It was formed by living corals growing on top of their cultivated land.

One of Layang-Layang's biggest attractions is the Hammerhead Shark. Manta rays with fin spans of over 10ft are also found here. Other pelagic species that are found regularly include tuna, barracuda, and reef sharks. The eastern end of the atoll is home to thousands of migratory birds. Hence Layang-Layang is not only a diver's paradise but also a bird watchers' haven. 70 miles south of KK is the duty free island of Labuan. Originally under the rule of the Brunei Sultanate Labuan was ceded to the British in 1846. The British then officially declared Labuan a colony of the British Empire in 1849 and renamed it Victoria. The British government lost its hold over Labuan in 1942 when the Japanese Army invaded and occupied the island, renaming it Maeda Island. After World War II the British resumed control of the island until 1963 when Labuan joined Malaysia and became a part of Sabah. The Island became a Federal Territory of Malaysia in 1984 and Labuan was declared an International Offshore Financial Centre in 1990.

Marine services in Labuan are geared toward the oil and gas industry, and so most of the service companies only deal with large commercial craft. Just south of Labuan is Pulau Keramat which is a beautiful, relatively uninhabited island with a protected anchorage on the northern side and a long natural sand spit. There is a small, very basic dive resort on the island and a very long natural sand spit. There is a small, very basic dive resort on the island.

Asian Elephants to the extremely rare Sumatran Rino. The birdlife is also prolific with hornbills, kingfishers and many others commonly spotted. In 1997, 270 square kilometers of the lower Kinabatangan floodplain was declared a protected area, and in 2001 this designation was upgraded to that of "bird sanctuary", largely through the efforts of the World Wide Fund for Nature. However, further efforts to have the area declared a "wildlife refuge" or even "national park" have been opposed by the logging industry, and oil palm plantation owners seeking to expand their cultivated land.

Sipadan, currently in the running to become one of the seven New Wonders of the World is the only oceanic island in Malaysia, rising 600 meters from the seabed. It is located in the Celebes Sea east of the major town of Tawau. It was formed by living corals growing on top of an extinct volcanic cone that took thousands of years to develop. Sipadan is located at the heart of the Indo-Pacific basin, the centre of one of the richest marine habitats in the world. More than 3,000 species of fish and hundreds of coral species have been classified in this ecosystem. Frequent scenes in the surrounding waters include schools of Green and Hawksbill turtles nesting and mating, schools of Barracuda and big-eye Trevally in tornado-like formations, as well as pelagic species such as manta rays, eagle rays, hammerhead sharks and whale sharks. A mysterious turtle tomb lies underneath the column of the island, formed by an underwater limestone cave with a labyrinth of tunnels and chambers that contain many skeletal remains of turtles that have become lost and drown before finding the surface.

Borneo has endless beauty, come and see!
CAPTAIN’S LOG SINGAPORE

I have been a captain in South East Asia for just over two years, so I am relatively new to this part of the world. However, having experienced Singapore both as a foreign flagged vessel and more recently a Singapore registered vessel, I feel the experience gained from both aspects has really helped me to maximize the pleasure of sailing these waters. On my previous yacht in Asia, a beautiful 30m Jongert called Impression, we would use Singapore as a sort of ‘service station’ whilst traveling between the monsoon seasons; it is an excellent place to get all types of repair and mechanical work done. It was the one location that our previous owner truly trusted, and he was rarely proven wrong. Since taking a Captain’s position on local superyacht Hye Seas II, based in Sentosa’s Oneº15 Marina, I have started to see Singapore in a completely different light; there are some really nice cruising areas around the southern islands and up to Palau Ubin in the north-east. From joining the mass of ships that gather after the sun has set over the Jurong and Pula Bukom, to a night cruise past Marina Bay with the Singapore skyline in the background, there are highlights on offer that are hard to beat.

As a visiting yacht, what else does Singapore have to offer? There are four marinas to choose from; all are some of the best in South East Asia. I have personally stayed in three of the four and as you would expect from Singapore they are all well run and maintained with excellent facilities. On the West Coast is Raffles Marina, a large facility with good protection due to being tucked up the Johor Strait in between Malaysia and Singapore. It is what I would call a more ‘yachtie’ type of marina, in that it has a good chandlery and there is always a good banter going on in the bar. Make sure you taste Singapore’s world-famous cocktail the “Singapore Sling” – conceived in the Raffles hotel bar. Moving east is the Republic of Singapore Yacht Club, where I stayed here in 2010. It was my first Marina in Singapore, with a lovely swimming pool and

Enter the Lion’s Den

Singapore is a bustling and sophisticated city at the crossroads of Asia. The superb geographic location on the tip of the Malay peninsula, southeast of the maritime trading corridor of the Malacca Strait, has ensured its growth over time to become the busiest port in the world for commercial shipping. The lion city continues to excite and appeal, and constantly evolves to present new and engaging travel experiences.

By Captain Allen Sutton – M/Y Hye Seas II
a karaoke room, a must for a good laugh and unwind. It’s located in one of Singapore’s busiest docks near the West Coast Ferry Terminal, and you can become mesmerised just looking at the massive cargo ships docking throughout the day. Keppel Marina is on the south coast of Singapore, this has two appealing features, a well-designed break wall that means no matter what the weather, you’ll be confident that your yacht will not move from its location. The marina is only a short hop from the local shopping centre on the harbour front, from there you can get on the MRT and have access to the whole of Singapore. Being from England, I’m not a big fan of public transport, but the Singapore train network is excellent. Taxis are also a good mode of transport around the city, realistically priced, but be aware of the potential of large booking fees. Another piece of good advice is to pre-order your taxi by phone or at a concierge at any hotel, as they are almost impossible to flag down in the street.

Last but not least is my new home, the One°15 Marina on Sentosa Island, situated among some of the highest priced real estate in Singapore. Sentosa Cove, like Keppel, is only a short distance to the MRT at Vivo City and has a free transfer bus service from the marina to mainland Singapore, which takes around five minutes. There has been a lot of development in and
around the marina over the past few years. Now almost completed, there are a large range of high-class shops, restaurants and hotels opening. The Marina boasts excellent pool and gym facilities and maintains very high standards of food and service in its hotel and restaurants. I’m not going to try to deceive you, but compared to other countries in Asia, Singapore is expensive, not so much concerning marina fees but eating out and drinking can hurt, however, you don’t need to spend too much as there are hawker centres dotted all over Singapore, great local food and so cheap, while other areas for a good meal and cheap drinks would be Chinatown or little India. I have to say, I love the black peppered crab at one of the many restaurants situated along Boat Quay, but remember you have to barter well before you sit down to eat! – Believe me, the taste is second to none!

Of course, Singapore is renowned for its shops, which are in some of the best shopping centres in the world, along with a large range of International Five-Star Hotels, very popular with the yachting fraternity. The Island of Sentosa has its own attractions, with Resort World, beaches and wave pool for surfing, all good fun. Singapore is one of those places that’s really worth reading up on before entering as there are some restricted and prohibited areas – good pilot guides will have all the information you need and it’s worth looking on the MPA website at www.mpa.gov.sg for all details on protocols and procedures for entering and leaving harbour and for foreign yachts in Singapore. A couple of things to note: on all the major fairways, if crossing, you must give way to any traffic in the that fairway. When entering Singapore for the first time, if you are staying in Keppel Marina or One°15 Marina, make sure you first anchor at the western anchorage area to clear immigration; a work boat will come alongside so make sure you have fenders ready just in case. For visiting yachts, once in Singapore it can be beaches and some really nice resorts. So, in conclusion to cross the straits you plan to the amount of commercial shipping in and around the port and remember that pilotage is compulsory in Singapore water, within the straits themselves, not to mention all the local regulations that go with it. You will need to obtain a local cruising permit that is acquired via the MPA and renting a MARITIS system (if you don’t have an AIS). Once obtained this can only be used during daylight hours, so this does restrict you to basically moving between marinas. Also, you must remember that if you leave Singapore port waters it is considered an international trip and you must clear immigration if re-entering. Singapore is only a stone’s throw from some great locations, with Indonesia right on the doorstep. Bintan’s Nongsa point marina always seems to be a favourite with local yachts, as well as cruising around the Island of Bintan. If you fancy going farther afield then a Trip to Pulau Tioman, about 120NM on the East cost of Malaysia, is a cracking trip, great for diving, white sandy beaches and some really nice resorts. Despite the local regulations and procedures you must adhere to, the benefits of cruising in Singapore waters far outweigh these regulatory requirements, and having sailed around a large part of South East Asia, I can vouch that there really is nowhere quite like it.

CAPTAIN’S LOG SINGAPORE
Singapore

Useful Statistics
Republic of Singapore

GOVERNMENT: Unitary
Multiparty Republic
LAND AREA: 620 km²
(239 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2009) 4,657,540
LANGUAGE: English, Chinese, Tamil and Malay
CURRENCY: Dollar (SD)
CLIMATE: Singapore has a tropical climate: hot and humid conditions. Rainfall is distributed evenly throughout the year. During the NE Monsoon, floods are common while the SW Monsoon usually brings violent wind squalls called Sumatras.
UTC: +8
INTL DIALLING CODE: +65

SINGAPORE IS LOCATED at the crossroads of South East Asia, in the centre of a region that is considered to have the world’s highest marine biodiversity. Aseanarean – a name coined to describe the seas around South East Asia and the wider ASEAN hinterland – has all the geographic prerequisites and natural attributes for cruising. The Philippines alone has 9,000 islands, while the Indonesian archipelago has 17,000. The region’s abundant cultures and ethnic mix makes it an anthropologist’s delight. Singapore’s highly developed physical and business infrastructure, strong multi-modal connectivity and strategic position geographically and economically, make it a safe haven in more ways than one. The island state is one of the safest cities in the world for ships, money and personal safety. It has four world class marinas with superyacht capacity, wealth management is a cornerstone of the country’s finance sector, and it has been ranked the safest place in Asia outside Japan. Superyachts started to discover Southeast Asia as far back as the early 1990s. Although the superyacht industry in the region is still in evolving, Singapore is well placed to ride this developmental wave. Its pro-business environment makes it easy for businesses and those already operating in the commercial maritime sector to cross over and provide services for the luxury yacht market. The recent formation of the Superyacht Singapore Association is an indication of the seriousness with which Singapore interests intend to engage the superyacht market.

SUPERYACHT SERVICES
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T: +65 6768 9233
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Spinnaker International
T: +65 6875 1819
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W: www.spinnaker.com.sg

Marina at Keppel Bay
T: +65 6303 8434
E: marina@marinakeppelbay.com
W: marinakeppelbay.com

RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS
Helios 2, Al Duhail, Adjutor, Squall, Jeremy, Yanneke Too, EOS, Ciliam, White Rabbit, Georgia, Arctic P.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM SINGAPORE TO:
Kota Kinabalu 794’
Hong Kong 1,415’
Darwin 1,832’
Sydney 4,068’
Suez 4,959’

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS
Cruising Guide Southeast Asia Vol 2
– Stephen Davies & Elain Morgan

USEFUL WEBSITES
www.superyacht.sg
www.visitsingapore.com
www.singaporegovernment.com

NEWSPAPER

ASIA & INDIAN OCEAN

GSR | 227
MALAYSIA is a federation of thirteen states in Southeast Asia. The country consists of two geographical regions divided by the South China Sea. Peninsular Malaysia (or West Malaysia) on the Malay Peninsula shares a land border on the north with Thailand and is connected by the Johor-Singapore Causeway and the Malaysia-Singapore Second Link to the south with Singapore. Malaysian Borneo (or East Malaysia) occupies the northern part of the island of Borneo, bordering Indonesia and surrounding the Sultanate of Brunei. The two distinct parts of Malaysia, separated from each other by the South China Sea, share a largely similar landscape in that both West and East Malaysia feature coastal plains rising to often densely forested hills and mountains, the highest of which is Mount Langkawi.

Useful Statistics

**Malaysia**

**GOVERNMENT:** Federal Constitutional Monarchy

**LAND AREA:** 329,749 km² (127,317 sq miles)

**POPULATION:** (est. 2009) 25,715,820

**LANGUAGE:** Bahasa Malay, Chinese, English and Tamil

**CURRENCY:** Ringgit (R)

**CLIMATE:** Malaysia has a tropical climate with two monsoon seasons. The NE Monsoon from October to March and the SW Monsoon from April to October with squalls and thunderstorms common. Humidity is high all year round and average temperature ranges for Kuala Lumpur are from 22-32°C (72-90°F) while in the mountains the average temperature ranges are from 13-27°C (55-80°F).

**UTC:** +8  INTL DIALLING CODE: +60
Kinabalu at 4,095.2 metres (13,435.7 ft) on the island of Borneo. The Straits of Malacca, lying between Sumatra and Peninsular Malaysia, is arguably the most important shipping lane in the world. The west coast of Malaysia attracts the most cruising yachts and there is plenty to see, from the attractive old city of Malacca and the fishing port of Lumut to the islands of Penang and Langkawi. The Langkawi islands, the only Duty Free island in the region, lies close to the border with Thailand and possesses the finest scenery anywhere in Malaysian waters and has become the most visited destination by superyachts in Malaysia. Langkawi also has excellent superyacht refit facilities. The best weather is during the NE monsoon when the west coast provides an excellent lee and most yachts cruise up the coast from Singapore to Thailand. Sabah and Sarawak along the northern coast of Kalimantan are visited by yachts en route to or from the Philippines and Hong Kong. Kota Kinabalu, on the island of Borneo in East Malaysia is also an attractive destination for superyachts. Sipadan, part of East Malaysia, is also a world famous destination well worth visiting. Sabah’s cruising waters from Labuan to Tawau offer some of the most spectacular and beautiful waters, islands and mainland attractions in South East Asia. Visitors can combine the delights of crystal clear waters, tropical islands and mainland coastal bays, some of the world’s greatest dive sites, including world class Sipadan Island and Layang-Layang, and extraordinarily diverse mainland beauty – the highest mountain in South East Asia, virgin rainforest conservation areas, waters, canyons, exotic wildlife, flora and fauna, and myriad adventure and eco-tourism activities – all accessible as a day or overnight excursion from your yacht.

RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS
Lady Christine, Samax, Tatoosh, Sinbad, Georgia, Pelorus, Montigne, Le Grand Bleu, Liberty, A’Khaliq, Ilona, Indian Empress, Senses, Montigne, YTL Princess, Suakin, Northern Light, Infatuation, Polaris, Newcastle Explorer, Yanneke Too, Stella Fiera, Lionwind, St John, Sakinah

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM PORT DICKSON TO:
Singapore 147’
Phuket 382’
Manila 1,448’
Hong Kong 1,553’
Darwin 1,979’

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS
Cruising Guide Southeast Asia Vol 1 Stephen Davies & Elaine Morgan

USEFUL WEBSITES
www.malaysia.com
www.tourism.gov.my
www.malaysia.gov.my
http://allmalaysia.info
www.met.gov.my/home_e.html
www.asiadivesite.com/malaysia-dive-sites
Thailand

Useful Statistics

Kingdom of Thailand

GOVERNMENT: Constitutional Monarchy

LAND AREA: 513,115 km² (198,115 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2009) 65,905,410

LANGUAGE: Thai. English is also widely understood.

CURRENCY: Baht (B) divided into 100 Satangs.

CLIMATE: Thailand has a tropical climate dominated by the monsoons. The climate is characterized in general by four seasons: (1) A dry season from November to end March (NE Monsoon) (2) A hot season from March to May (3) A wet season from end March to November (SW Monsoon) and (4) a cool season from November to December, with around 90% of heavy rains occurring at the actual changes of the monsoons.

UTC: +7

INTL DIALLING CODE: +66

THAILAND IS LOCATED in the centre of mainland South East Asia. It is bound by the Andaman Sea to the west, Myanmar to the west and northwest, Laos to the east and northeast, Cambodia to the east as well as Malaysia and the Gulf of Thailand to the south. Its capital and largest city is Bangkok, one of the largest cities in the world. The Kingdom of Thailand draws more visitors than any other country in southeast Asia with its irresistible combination of breathtaking natural beauty, inspiring temples, renowned hospitality, robust cuisine and ruins of fabulous ancient kingdoms. Few countries are so well endowed.

From the stupa-studded mountains of Mae Hong Son and the verdant limestone islands of the Andaman Sea, to the pulse-pounding dance clubs of Bangkok and the tranquil villages moored along the Mekong River, Thailand offers something for every type of traveller. By far the best time to visit is from February to March when the weather is stable and the beaches are at their best.

Thailand is visited yearly by a large number of superyachts. The country’s cruising attractions are many: its rich culture inland; secluded anchorages around Phuket Island and its many offshore islets, away from the crowded resorts. Many beautiful anchorages are to be found on the coast north from Malaysia. Phuket Island is Thailand’s premier tourist destination and it is here that the largest concentration of hotels, restaurants, shops and nightlife are found. The island is connected to the Thai mainland by a bridge but has retained a distinct culture fused from Chinese and Portuguese influences. Phuket’s most beautiful beaches are situated on the west coast and consequently this is where the majority of the tourist facilities are. With the idyllic tropical islands of Similan, Surin and Phi Phi and the world-class cruising areas of Phang Nga Bay and Krabi a few hours sail away, Phuket is a great base for visiting superyachts. There are two marinas and a well-serviced international airport on the island. Koh Samui, in East Thailand is also a very popular superyacht cruising destination.
APPENDIX DISTANCE IN NM FROM PHUKET TO:

- Langkawi: 140’
- Singapore: 530’
- Colombo: 1,172’
- Bangkok: 1,313’
- Darwin: 2,362’

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

- Andaman Sea Pilot – O’Leary & Dowden
- Cruising Guide Southeast Asia Vol 1
- Cruising Guide Southeast Asia Vol 2
- Stephen Davies & Elaine Morgan
- Indian Ocean Cruising Guide – Heikell
- Thailand Insight Guide 14th Edition
- Sail Thailand – Art Asia Press

USEFUL WEBSITES

- www.thailand.com
- www.thaiwave.com
- www.sawadee.com
- www.tourismthailand.org
- www.wunderground.com/global/TH.html
- www.asiadivesite.com/thailand-dive-sites
- www.asia-superyacht-rendezvous.com (Superyacht Event)
Cruising Asia’s “Land Between Water”

The Sanskrit word for continent is ‘dvipa’, meaning “land between water.” No other part of the world conjures up images of lush green jungles and rice fields surrounded by calm oceans studded with islands as does Southeast Asia. And deservedly so: from Burma and Thailand in the west to Irian Jaya in the east, Southeast Asia is made up of vast archipelagos with over 30,000 islands. So vast is this archipelago and so rich is it in culture and biodiversity that it is no exaggeration to say it would take a lifetime to get to know it. If one was to visit every island and spend one day on each it would take a staggering 46 years to cover the islands of Indonesia alone. Considering that three of the world’s five largest islands lie within Indonesia, one can get an idea of just how vast an area it is.
Gilded temples and long-forgotten jungle ruins. While we are attracted by this strangeness, and most Westerners are susceptible to the ideas of Buddhism and Eastern spirituality, in general there remains an element of caution and apprehension in our dealings with the East. The recent influx of tourists into the region has again only helped to renew and deepen the mystery that surrounds it. Millions return home with glowing reports from the “Land of Smiles”, the superb diving and rich culture, lost cities in the jungle, the food, followed by the shocking reports of tsunamis, volcano eruptions and rare diseases. I believe there is no other place in the world that is more exotic than Southeast Asia; this huge archipelago straddling the equator for 50 degrees of longitude. No other region is this much misunderstood and yet adored at the same time.

With the arrival of tourism in the region, maritime tourism developed as fast as all other sectors of the industry. It did not take long for the infrastructure to develop. In 1992, we had only one marina in Singapore and a handful in Hong Kong; today we count no fewer than twelve full-service marinas between Singapore and Phuket alone, and new ones are always under development. However, the absence of large superyachts, especially regionally based large charter yachts, became apparent to me during a 14 month cruise on the 175’ motor yacht Pegaso between November 2005 and March 2007. During the entire time there, we covered a total of 25,000 miles. Besides the usual yachting hotspots of Phuket and Bali, we visited numerous world-class destinations such as Burma’s Mergui Archipelago, home of the notorious British pirate “Siamese White;” Krakatau, the most famous of all volcanoes, and Java’s Borobodur, one of the Seven Wonders of the World; Komodo Island, home of the dragons, and Flores, famous for its three-colored lake; Borneo’s Tanjong Puting, with its orangutans, and Kakaban with its fabled jellyfish lake; Sulawesi straddling the Wallace Line, the demarcation between Asia and Australia; from there all the way north to Busuanga, in the Philippines, and across the Sulu Sea to Bangkok. During this entire time we shared an anchorage only once with another large yacht, and that was outside of Phuket. The rest of the time we were on our own, bar the occasional stray live-aboard dive vessel. With all that Southeast Asia has to offer, it is astounding that not a single large charter yacht
has established its base in the region. It is certainly no longer a chicken-and-egg situation. The eggs are clearly in the basket. Anyone visiting Oneº15 in Singapore, for example, will have to admit that this is as good a marina as they come. The main reason there are so few yachts in the region is misinformation, ignorance and superstition. Let us look at a few of these misconceptions.

PIRATES
Generally piracy in Asia can be summed up in a few sentences. Piracy is on the increase, with most cases (some 300 annually) reported in Southeast Asia. The conclusion is also quite clear: don’t go there.

Having spent many years of trouble-free cruising in the region, I feel things are a bit different than widely perceived. To deny the existence of piracy in the region would be foolish. However, the vast majority of reported piracy cases involve only petty theft in port or suspicious behavior observed either in port or at sea. In the US, for example, any thefts on yachts are simply reported to the police. In February of 2005, I had a burglar board my yacht in Fort Lauderdale. No one ever considered using the word “piracy”. One wonders why not: this was not an isolated case; tens of cases have been reported to the local police. Why don’t these incidents show up in the annual piracy report? I am sure we would see a clear shift of statistics, and that suddenly Southeast Asia would no longer be seen as the hotspot of piracy.

To my knowledge, most of the violent acts of piracy that resulted in the death of crew members or even an entire crew always involved oil tankers.

I suppose it is much easier to shift large quantities of petrol or diesel or even, as in one case, coconut oil, than it is selling other goods. For this reason I believe that such a threat to a superyacht is not very large.

One worrying aspect is the merging of piracy and terrorism. It is one of the big fears of the international shipping community that pirates will seize a major ship and, depending on the cargo, use it to threaten entire cities, disrupt traffic flow in major shipping lanes, or other such sinister things. The insurance community advises that Southeast Asia would be a very high-impact area, with major shipping bottlenecks such as the Singapore and Malacca Strait, but the actual risk is deemed low.

However, it is a major consideration for any of us in the large-yacht industry dealing with our high-value “cargo,” in terms of our passengers on board. It is quite conceivable that a group of misguided individuals would dream up a plan to seize a major yacht and its passengers and crew in an attempt to raise awareness for their cause or simply for financial gain. There is no denying that this is a real threat and that this threat prevails worldwide, not just in Southeast
Asia. In 2006, for the first time since I came to Asia, the world shipping community and the insurance brokers have stated that the piracy threat in Southeast Asia is on the decline, and the Malacca Strait has finally been removed from the war risk areas.

SERVICES
Another area of misconception about cruising in Southeast Asia is its remoteness. While it is true that Southeast Asia is one of the last frontiers of the world for yachtsmen, it is still quite manageable for a well-found superyacht and a competent and motivated crew. The idea of needing an exploration yacht to undertake a voyage of discovery of several months through the archipelages is simply wrong. While the Pegaso is without doubt a well-found and capable superyacht of substantial size and range, she was designed and built as a Mediterranean yacht. The two most important aspects in taking a superyacht on a voyage like this is an owner with a sense of adventure and a captain who can put together a crew that function well not only when stern-to on the dock in Antibes.

With the formation of SuperyachtASIA, captains now have an alternative network of agents throughout Southeast Asia. SuperyachtASIA was formed to offer a high-quality service ensuring yachts receive the vital support required throughout the region. While cruising through Southeast Asia with the Pegaso, I used the services of SuperyachtASIA agents throughout the trip, and was truly impressed by the professional service I received from all its members. Those captains that are used to dealing with the agents in the Med will find nothing lacking in this department in the region, and will even be positively surprised just how smooth things can run.

In my opinion, Southeast Asia is an absolute must for any enthusiastic yacht owner. This region has far more to offer than a seemingly endless supply of beaches and anchorages. While the rich culture of Southeast Asia is famous for is epitomised in the ruins of Cambodia’s Angkor Wat and in Java’s Borobodur, a visit to Bangkok and Ayudhaya will give the visitor a good impression of just how glorious both the living and past culture of the region really is.

There is no need to worry about what to expect. There are excellent charts and cruising guides to be purchased. Contact any of the agents at SuperyachtASIA and they will happily supply you with whatever you require. You are not on your own. Southeast Asia is a well-established but certainly not a well-traveled destination; one that will keep you spellbound for many years.

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Vietnam

Useful Statistics

Socialist Republic of Vietnam

GOVERNMENT: Unitary Single-Party Socialist Republic

LAND AREA: 329,565 km² (127,246 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 90,549,390

LANGUAGE: Vietnamese or Quoc-Ngu, (French, Chinese, English, Khmer and tribal languages are also spoken).

CURRENCY: Dong (D)

CLIMATE: North Vietnam is characterised by a hot and humid wet season from mid May to mid September as well as a warm and humid dry season from mid October to mid March with two short transition periods. In the south the seasons come later and in Central Vietnam rainfall is heaviest between September and January when the coast is subject to tropical storms.

UTC: +7

INTL DIALLING CODE: +84

VIETNAM is bound by the South China Sea to the east, Laos and Cambodia to the west and China to the north. The country can be divided into three regions, North, Central and South Vietnam. Over a quarter of a century has passed since the Vietnam War ended in 1975 with the fall of Saigon. Today, the name of this bustling metropolis on the Mekong River is Ho Chi Minh City. Yet, the essence of the city, a major trading center since the 18th century, remains unchanged. The air is filled with the cries of street hawkers and honking horns. Swarms of motorbikes buzz down the crowded streets balancing every sort of cargo imaginable — from clinging families to coops of live chickens. And everywhere, friendly faces and warm greetings meet you. The port city of Vung Tau is a seaside beach resort located about 2 hours east of Ho Chi Minh City, with shopping, discos and a range of eateries. As the closest beach in the vicinity, Vung Tau is a daytrip away, offering a retreat from the city heat. Nha Trang was a popular recreation spot for U.S. servicemen during the war. Today, it is one of the country’s most popular seaside destinations, frequented by superyachts. Its four miles of white-sand beaches lined with gently swaying coconut palms and turquoise waters makes this up-and-coming resort area a popular seaside destination. Colorfully painted fishing boats line the harbors of the small villages, and the surrounding countryside is a gently rolling landscape of little towns nestled in green valleys. Tour the city from the great Cham Tower to the Buddhist shrine at Long Son Pagoda. Or journey into the countryside to see the small villages, fields of rice paddies and bamboo groves. Vietnam’s number of visitors for tourism has increased steadily over the past 10 years. The country is investing capital into the coastal regions that are already popular for their beaches and boat tours. Hotel staff and tourism guides in these regions speak reasonable English. Services for superyachts are steadily being improved.

Approximate Distance in NM from Ho Chi Minh City to:

- Sihaoukville: 348'
- Bangkok: 563'
- Singapore: 585'
- Hong Kong: 856'
- Manila: 863'

Useful Publications

- Andaman Sea Pilot – Bill O’Leary and Andy Dowden
- Cruising Guide Southeast Asia Vol 1
- Cruising Guide Southeast Asia Vol 2
- Stephen Davies & Elaine Morgan

Useful Websites

- www.vietnamtourism.com
- www.vietnam.com
- www.sailingclubvietnam.com
- www.wunderground.com
- www.lonelyplanet.com/vietnam
- www.geographia.com/vietnam
- www.asiadivesite.com/vietnam-dive-sites
- www.benlineagencies.com
- www.sunnytrans.com.vn
- www.iss-shipping.com
- www.jardine-shipping.com
- www.choiminhcitydx.com
- www.jardine-shipping.com
- www.sailingclubvietnam.com
- www.oceancruisercompany.com

Recent Superyacht Visitors

- Georgia, Taipa 3
Cambodia

Useful Statistics

Kingdom of Cambodia

GOVERNMENT:
Constitutional Monarchy

LAND SIZE: 181,035 km²
(69,898 sq miles)

POPULATION:
(est. 2011) 14,805,358

LANGUAGE:
Khmer which is spoken by the entire native population, (French, Chinese)

CURRENCY:
New Riel

CLIMATE:
Cambodia has a tropical climate with two distinct seasons: (1) The wet or monsoon season that lasts from May to October and (2) the dry season that lasts from November to April while humidity is high throughout the year. Average annual temperature for Phnom Penh is 27°C (81°F) all year.

UTC: +6:30

INTL DIALLING CODE: +855

Cambodia is a country in Southeast Asia with a population of almost 15 million people, bordered by Laos to its northeast, Thailand to its west and northwest, and Vietnam to its east, the country has a long and tragic history, as well as a fascinating culture. The Khmer civilization left the amazing temple ruins at Angkor. Phnom Penh being the capital city, Cambodia is the successor state of the once powerful Hindu and Buddhist Khmer Empire, which ruled most of the Indochinese Peninsula between the 11th and 14th centuries. Most Cambodians are Theravada Buddhists of Khmer extraction, but the country also has a substantial number of predominantly Muslim Cham, as well as ethnic Chinese, Vietnamese and small animist hill tribes. In the south it faces the Gulf of Thailand with 443 km (275 miles) of coastline. The geography of Cambodia is dominated by the Mekong river and the Tonlé Sap (“the fresh water lake”), an important source of fish. The low geography of Cambodia’s fertile areas means much of the country sits nearly below sea level, and consequently the Tonle Sap River reverses its water flow in the wet season, carrying water from the Mekong back into the Tonle Sap Lake and surrounding flood plain. In 2005, oil and natural gas deposits were found beneath Cambodia's territorial water, and once commercial extraction begins in 2009 or early 2010, the oil revenues could have a profound impact on the future of Cambodia’s economy. In recent years superyachts have expressed an interest in cruising this uniquely beautiful, culture rich and historic country but due to regulatory and other issues, have been unable to successfully enter the country. This situation may change in the future. Of interest would be an overland tour to the lost city of Angkor Wat, which is the finest example of Khmer architecture in existence with its 100 magnificent temples, now a UNESCO Heritage site. Built to honour the Hindu god Vishnu, Angkor Wat is the world’s largest religious complex, taking nearly 40 years to complete and using the manpower of some 50,000 artisans, workers and slaves.
East Asian Weather Conditions

Eastern Asia has many exotic locations to explore such as South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Eastern China and Hong Kong. Along with sights, sounds, and culture comes variety... in the weather world. The weather conditions across this part of the world differ significantly during the summer and winter months, and tropical season never officially ends (on the surface, a less the comforting thought). However there are places to go to get away from it all and to find the best weather. Safe routing through the region will be determined by prevailing weather features, strong currents, and tropical cyclone activity.

By Jeremy Davis of Weather Routing, Inc.

JAPAN AND KOREA TO TAIWAN
A large, semi-stationary North Pacific high extends east to west across the Pacific towards the Philippine Sea and Japan during the late spring and remains in place through August. This large Pacific high will dominate the flow of storm tracks across the northwestern Pacific. This high slowly begins to weaken and retreat eastward away from Eastern Asia during August and September, and further weakens during winter, occurring as cold fronts become stronger, more frequent, and extend farther south into the region. Fronts of course are associated with the passage of lows and gales off to the north. These lows/ gales during June through August are less frequent than during most other times of the year, and typically remain north of 35N in the summer from eastern Japan northeastward towards the Bering Sea and Aleutians. At times, these systems can move more east-eastnortheastward from the Kuril Islands into and across the Western Pacific. Lows during this particular period are associated with the so-called “Bai-U” front, which is basically a “line of demarcation” if you will between warm, moist air from the tropical Pacific, and cooler, drier air (more typical of spring) farther north. During the early part of June, the Bai-U front lies along southern Japan, and during the month begins a slow trek north toward Hokkaido and vicinity, where it retains its “residency” for the summer. With the arrival of the Bai-U front (and the passage of lows), there is an increase in the incidence of showers and squalls along this front, creating a distinct rainy season. The front usually lasts for 1-2 weeks before moving completely out of a particular location (farther north), though during this rainy period it is not uncommon to get bouts of heavy precipitation and severe squalls. Cold fronts associated with lows during the summer typically extend southwestward to near 33N, moving across the Sea of Japan approximately every 3-4 days. Behind these fronts, transitory high pressure ridges build eastward into the Japan/Sea of Japan area, breaking away from the main high pressure ridge farther west.

Gales (and storms during the winter season) become more frequent in October through early spring. The gales/storms develop mainly between 30N to 60N and track northeastward toward the Bering Sea. Cold fronts associated with these systems extend farther south as well, and during the winter season are often found to move across Taiwan and the Taiwan Strait vicinity. The main concern during June through
September will be the tropics, becoming most active this time of year, averaging 4 to 7 systems per month. Tropical cyclones typically develop in the Western Pacific east of the Philippines, and take one of two tracks: 1) a general west to west-northwestward track through the Philippines and into South China Sea, toward mainland China, or 2) “curve” northwest to northward toward Japan and the Sea of Japan, before turning more north to northeastward near 30N-35N once these systems get caught up in the increasing southwest to westerly winds in upper levels of the atmosphere. Tropics will still be a factor across the area during the autumn months, averaging 3 to 5 systems per month. Typical cyclone development and tracks change little compared to the summer months. Again, systems tend to develop near/east of Philippines, then track either west to west-northwestward across the South China Sea, or turn northwest to north, then northeastward toward 30N, before tracking more north to northeastward, weakening and becoming extratropical as they move into the cooler waters north of 30N.

Tropical cyclones are rare but not unheard of in January through March. Over the past ten years, these months average less than 1 tropical cyclone per season. Tropical cyclones normally begin to weaken/become non-tropical, and become part of main low/gale track once they move into the cooler waters north of approximately 33N-35N. Also, systems on the more northern track can, at times, show rapid intensification in the area between 20N-30N and from 125E-135E, with the very warm ocean currents in that area. During June through September, typical winds ahead of cold fronts tend to veer S-SW-W with speeds of force 4-5, and seas typically are from southwest to west, building to approximately 4-8 feet. Seas are typically lowest along the immediate east coast of Japan, in the lee of islands, and along the Korean Peninsula, where fetch is more limited. After fronts pass, winds become west to northwesterly again force 4-5 with periods of force 6 likely after stronger frontal passages and seas become west to northwesterly, generally in the 5-9 feet range, though lower along coastal areas.
During particularly strong frontal passages, especially during the winter season, winds can easily reach force 6-7 and seas can build in the Yellow Sea and Sea of Japan up to 11-16ft from the northwest. Sea height averages tend to increase across the northern Philippines to the East China Sea vicinity into the fall. This area becomes much larger through November and December, expanding across much of the South China Sea, eastward across Luzon Strait to approximately 135E, and northward into the Philippine Sea. Once highs build eastward toward the area, winds generally veer further from northwest to northeast, with speeds from force 3-5, and seas becoming north-northeasterly to northeast, slowly easing to near 3-6ft range.

Note that visibilities tend to be lower than 2 miles due to fog in June through August near the Kuril Islands vicinity.

TAIWAN THROUGH THE CHINA SEA
Farther south near Taiwan, Eastern China, and the Hong Kong vicinity, localized “channeling” or “funneling” of higher winds and building seas can cause some potential headaches for travel. The southwest monsoon season is underway during mid to late spring and the summer, allowing predominately south to southwest winds, generally force 4-5 across the northern South China Sea, and through Taiwan and Luzon Straits. However, localized funneling of south to southwest winds in Taiwan Strait can develop much higher winds to this region, with winds often as high as gale and near gale force (force 7-8).

Near the China coast and the Sea of Japan the pressure rises from August into September and the low over southern Asia fills. As the southwest monsoon disappears, winds shift back to northeasterly force 4-5. During the fall and into the winter months, winds are predominantly influenced by a building Siberian high, which encompasses Eastern China, the Yellow Sea, and the Sea of Japan vicinity. Winds are mainly from the north to northeastern across Eastern Asia, becoming more north to northwesterly north of 45N. As the Siberian high strengthens, strong northerly surges become more common across the East China Sea and Taiwan Strait. During a strong surge, winds can reach gale force (force 8-9) and seas build through the strait and across South China Sea, as high as 10-15 ft within the strait itself.

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SOUTH CHINA SEA
The weather across this region is marked by two distinct monsoon seasons. The southwest monsoon typically occurs during the period from May through September, with south to southwest winds dominant during the period. These winds for the most part are “light”, generally of no more than force 3-4, with seas consisting of a wind chop of no more than 4-6 feet. Clusters of squalls moving westward across the area will create localized higher winds and seas, mainly confined to squalls themselves or areas very near squalls. Larger, more persistent squall areas can become better organized, particularly in the warmer waters and with a favorable “environment” aloft, typically in waters near and north of 06N. More organized systems (tropical cyclones) will generally track toward the west across the South China Sea, though systems farther north (in the central South China Sea), will at times turn northwest to northward, more so later in the period (in September), as cold fronts become stronger and higher south to southwest winds aloft allow for such “re-curved” of tropical cyclones to occur.

The tropics are still a factor during the fall, though we are moving into a transition period during this time, away from the southwest monsoon, with associated southerly/westerly winds becoming more intermittent and mixing with the northerly and easterly winds synonymous with the wintertime northeast monsoon. Again, winds are light, with speeds generally no more than force 3-4, but higher winds are common within squalls, particularly those associated with west to northwestern moving tropical cyclones. Combined seas are generally wind driven in nature, heights typically from 3-6 feet, though higher seas can occur in and near squalls. Further, long-period north to northeast sets will propagate southward into much of the region. These are often found in the wake of cold fronts passing north of the region, and will tend to be no more than 4-7 feet, tending lower the farther south one travels.

During the winter, we are in the Northeast Monsoon season, with northerly and easterly winds dominant across the region. Winds average anywhere from force 3-5, though will tend lower in more southern latitudes, particularly within...
the southern South China Sea. Surges of higher winds will occur when ridging across much of Asia builds farther to the south and east, usually found after cold fronts pass near and north of the area. These surges will usually be about one to two Beaufort forces higher, especially in the central South China Sea. In addition, combined seas will build during wind surges, reaching as high as 10-12 feet in the central South China Sea, though becoming somewhat lower and longer-period farther south. Although tropical cyclone formation can occur in the western Pacific region during the winter, it is more uncommon during this time of year than during the rest of the year. Any cyclone development will mainly be found south of 1ON, tracking westward toward and across the South China Sea. Otherwise, we find disorganized squalls, mainly confined to waters of the southern South China Sea, generally near and south of 0SN, and will generally track toward the west. Squall clusters, while usually disorganized, can produce localized higher winds and seas, both within and near the squalls.

**GOING WITH THE FLOW: CURRENTS**

The direction and speed of the currents through Korea Strait does not fluctuate much through the year from southwesternly at approximately 0.5-0.7 knots. The typical current pattern in the Yellow Sea is a counterclockwise flow of a stronger northwesterly flow along eastern China, along the Shanghai vicinity and a weaker south to southwesterly flow along western South Korea. The flow does tend to vary and weaken to less than 0.5 knots in late spring and summer across the Yellow Sea. From November through March, currents can become stronger from the northwest to northeast averaging 0.6 to 0.9 knots. The dominant current near Japan is the Kuroshio Current. This strong current extends from eastern Taiwan, northward along the Ryukyu Islands, north-northeastward along the southern coast of Japan, north along central Japan near 37N, and then extends eastward out to approximately 165E. The warm waters of the Kuroshio Current sustain the coral reefs of Japan, the northernmost coral reefs in the world. This current is the second strongest in the world averaging 0.9 to 1.6 knots, as the strongest is the Gulf Stream in the Western Atlantic. Taiwan Strait lies between eastern China and western Taiwan. Current speed through this region averages 0.4-0.8 knots through the year. From October through February currents are mainly from the north-northeast and during the rest of the year are from the southwest. Luzon Strait lies to the south of Taiwan along approximately 21.5N. Currents in this area are strongly influenced by the nearby Kuroshio Current which gives this strait an average current from the southwest to south-southwest at 0.6-1.3 knots. Currents along the eastern Philippines during the winter average from east to northeast at 0.4-0.7kts. During the rest of the year, currents become more from the south-southwest to south-southeast along the western coast and El’I’y along the southern coast, south of Mindanao Island of similar speeds. In the South China Sea, current directions are more of a function of the prevailing winds over a particular time period. For instance, during the period from late autumn through early spring, when the Northeast Monsoon is common, current directions are generally from the north and northeast, current speeds generally running anywhere from 0.5-0.8 knots across much of the direction. Later in the spring and during the summer and through early autumn, current directions shift/change, and are generally from the south and southwest, with current speeds similar to those during the remainder of the year.

**WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?**

Well we have many weather factors to consider here… not surprising given the expansive area we are considering, but when is the best time of year to travel? Where are the best places to go and what must we try to avoid at all costs? This section will summarize the preceding information and hopefully shed a little more light on things. First off, to find (relatively speaking) more optimal weather conditions, one want to travel when the weather regimes are “in transition”. Spring offers one such transition, and in many cases would tend to be one of the better if not the best times of year to travel. Cold fronts become weaker and less frequent farther north (north of the South China Sea), so the effects from such features (and the high pressure areas that follow them), are not as severe as, say, during winter, when the weather tends to be especially volatile on many occasions. Furthermore, as we look into the South China Sea, we are also in transition. The surges of higher N-NE winds that come with the Northeast Monsoon are more intermittent during the spring, and not nearly as strong as they are during the late fall and winter. Also, while we are considering the tropics (we always need to keep the tropics in mind to some degree over the course of the year), cyclone frequency is not quite to the magnitude of the summer season, especially later in the summer when the tropics are even more active. If summertime travels are in your plans, further south, in the South China Sea would tend to be the better way to go. Even with the more active tropical season, cyclone formation, especially in the southern South China Sea is less common, and tropical systems are less of a threat to this region. Also, while we are in the Southwest Monsoon season during the summer, winds and seas associated with this phenomenon are typically not as strong as during the wintertime Northeast Monsoon. What if your plans do take you north of the South China Sea? Well, for the winter season, you’ll want to time your travel in between the passage of cold fronts of course, and keep a very watchful eye on the weather. Look for breaks in the weather as high centers or ridge axes move in and winds and seas ease and abate respectively. As for summer travel, the late spring and early summer rainy season associated with the Bai-U front could make things somewhat concerning for those looking for more pleasant weather, though aside from that, you can find favorable weather windows under many circumstances. Of great importance for the mariner and vacationer this time of year is of course the tropics. Careful observation of the weather situation at hand and proper guidance will allow for avoidance of these systems.
The Philippines is an island nation located in Southeast Asia, in the western Pacific Ocean east of Vietnam. The country reflects diverse indigenous cultures from its many islands as well as European-American influence from Spain, Latin America and the United States. The Philippines constitutes an archipelago of 7,107 islands with a total land area of approximately 300,000 km² (116,000 sq miles). It lies between 116° 40' and 126° 34' E longitude, and 4° 40' and 21° 10' N latitude, and borders the Philippine Sea on the east, the South China Sea on the west and the Celebes Sea on the south. The island of Borneo lies a few hundred kilometres southwest and Taiwan directly north. The Moluccas and Sulawesi are to the south, and Palau is to the east beyond the Philippine Sea. The islands are commonly divided into three island groups: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. The busy port of Manila, on Luzon, is the national capital and second largest city after its suburb Quezon City. The Philippines has excellent diving with magnificent marine sites acclaimed to be among the world’s best. The reefs come alive with streams of neon-colored fish darting through the brilliant coralline forests. The country has been a popular cruising destination for many years and cruising the archipelagos provides superb scenery and unlimited anchorages. Superyacht Services are limited with the Subic Bay Yacht Club being the primary marina and service provider.
Taiwan

Useful Statistics
Republic of China (Taiwan)

GOVERNMENT:
Semi-presidential Republic

LAND AREA: 36,191 km²
(13,974 sq. miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2009) 23,046,200

LANGUAGE: Chinese (Mandarin), Taiwanese

CURRENCY: New Taiwan dollar (TWD)

CLIMATE: Subtropical with average temps from 21-24°C (70-75°F) and high humidity. Mild winters from Dec to Feb. The summer from May to Sept is hot and rainy. Typhoons are most frequent from June to Sept.

UTC: +8

INTL DIALLING CODE: +886

TAIWAN is a country (also known as Formosa meaning “beautiful (island)” located in East Asia off the coast of Mainland China, SW of the main islands of Japan but directly west of the end of Japan’s Ryukyu Islands, and NNW of the Philippines. It is bound to the east by the Pacific Ocean, to the south by the South China Sea and the Luzon Strait, to the west by the Taiwan Strait and to the north by the East China Sea. The island is 394 km (245 miles) long and 144 km (89 miles) wide and consists of steep and rugged mountains covered by tropical and subtropical vegetation in the east and the flat to gently rolling plains in the west that are also home to most of Taiwan’s population. Amongst the number of scenic areas that can be visited, Penghu comprises 64 islets scattered around the Taiwan Strait and affords spectacular views. Located in Pacific Ocean SE of Taiwan, Lanyu and Green Island offer the enjoyment of nature environment, whale spotting and scuba diving. Other highlights include fantastic rock formations at Tungyin, archaeological site at Zoujhen, mud springs of Guanzihling, a number National Parks and ecotourism, and the opportunity to experience the arts and culture of the 5,000-yr Chinese history at the National Palace Museum. Having a well developed indigenous yacht and shipbuilding industry, repair facilities are widely available in Taiwan. There are slipways in all ports and local boatyards offer a whole range of services.
China

Useful Statistics
People's Republic of China

GOVERNMENT: Single Party Socialist Republic
LAND SIZE: 9,596,961 km² (3,705,408 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 1,339,724,852
LANGUAGES: Putonghua (or Mandarin), Cantonese or Yue, Shanghainese or Wu, Fuzhou, Hokkien, Hakka, Tibetan and Mongolian.
CURRENCY: Yuan (Y)
CLIMATE: The climate of China varies greatly. The northern zone (containing Beijing) has summer daytime temperatures of more than 30°C and winters of Arctic severity. The central zone (containing Shanghai) has a temperate continental climate with very hot summers and cold winters. The southern zone (containing Guangzhou) has a subtropical climate with very hot summers and mild winters.

UTC: +8
INTL DIALLING CODE: +86

China in East Asia, is one of the world’s oldest civilisations, consisting of states and cultures dating back more than six millennia. It has the world’s longest continuously used written language system and is said to be the source of some of the world’s great inventions, including the compass, gunpowder, and printing. China is emerging as a major player in the superyacht industry with superyacht construction, international boat shows and world class marinas being developed. Regular superyacht visitation is on the increase, as are marine facilities built for the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008, and there have been many built since. Shanghai is one of the most fascinating cities on the face of the Earth and home to over 13 million people. The streets are packed with people, cars and bicycles, weaving an extraordinary tapestry of humanity. Yet, serenity can always be found – be it a class practicing Tai Chi in a park or the peaceful repose of the city’s fabled jade Buddha. This famous port on the Huangpu River has played a pivotal role in the tumultuous history of modern China. Originally, a chief treaty port inflicted by the West on Imperial China, Shanghai was famed for the Bund, an elegant section of riverbank lined with great mercantile houses and elegant mansions. The city was also the cradle of the Chinese Communist Party, and it is here that the People’s Republic created its vast commercial and industrial bastion. Discover some of Shanghai’s legendary attractions, from exquisite temples and superb museums, to a stroll along the Bund with its elegant 19th century European architecture. The city is also your gateway to the Grand Canal and the famed cities of Wuxi and Suzhou.
Hong Kong

Useful Statistics

GOVERNMENT: Special Administrative Region of China (SAR)

LAND AREA: 1,067 km² (412 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 7,061,200

LANGUAGE: Mandarin and Cantonese (82%). English is also widely spoken and understood.

CURRENCY: Hong Kong Dollar (HKD) – which is pegged to the US dollar, at about 7.8 to the USD.

CLIMATE: A sub-tropical climate characterised by hot humid summers and cool dry winters. Unusual tropical changes in weather are experienced due to monsoonal winds that blow from the north and NE during September to March, and from the SW during April to August. While September to February may be cooler, due to the direction of the wind the skies are usually much clearer during the summer months. Average temperature ranges are from 14°C (57°F) in February to 29°C (84°F) in July or August.

UTC: +8

INTL DIALLING CODE: +852

THE HONG KONG territory comprises 262 islands, and is located on the eastern side of the Pearl River Delta, bordering Guangdong province in the north and facing the South China Sea in the east, west and south. Hong Kong, literally meaning "fragrant harbour", primarily consists of Hong Kong Island, Lantau Island, Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories. The Kowloon Peninsula is attached to the New Territories to the north, and the New Territories spans northwards eventually connecting with mainland China across the Sharm Chun River (Shenzhen River). The narrow body of water separating Hong Kong Island and Kowloon Peninsula, Victoria Harbour, is one of the deepest natural maritime ports in the world. Places to cruise to in HK include: Double Haven in Mirs Bay - with scenery similar to a Scottish loch, Deep Water and Repulse Bays on the south side of HK island; beautiful and good anchorages and Port Shelter where there are several yacht clubs and marinas along with various bays in which to hide. Hong Kong is a dazzling blend of East and West that comes together to create an international city of sophistication and romance. Yachting provides one of the best ways to experience bustling Victoria Harbour in Hong Kong where pleasure boats, junks and sampans all mingle together for an eclectic scenic view. Sights include Central District's Queens Pier or Tsim Sha Tsui's Kowloon Public Pier and the spectacular city skyscrapers, Tsing Ma Bridge, which is the world’s longest suspension bridge, and on to the outlying islands and country parks. Cheung Chau Island is a quaint, thriving fishing community and Lantau Island features exhilarating mountain walks, wonderful beaches and a giant Buddha sitting high on a plateau. Lamma Island has great seafood restaurants in scenic surroundings and Sai Kung is known as Hong Kong's back garden. Hong Kong is one of the safest cities in the world, and English is widely spoken, so communication is not a problem. It's also a year-round yachting destination, with the cooler weather being from the middle of September to the end of February. One of the City’s main sporting attractions, that of the Rugby Sevens, is played over the last weekend in March. Superyachts have been visiting Hong Kong for many years. It is arguably one of the main jewels of the world from a ‘Wow Factor' point of view; a feeling one has to experience in person to understand. Superyachts that have visited Hong Kong recently are discovering an abundance of highly competent personnel in place offering professional services to look after visiting superyachts in the manner they are accustomed. As more facilities and companies are created in the superyacht sector, Hong Kong is becoming one of the most exotic ports in the world to visit aboard a superyacht.
South Korea

Useful Statistics

Republic of South Korea

GOVERNMENT: Semi-presidential democratic republic

LAND AREA: 100,032 km² (38,622 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2009) 48,508,972

LANGUAGE: Korean

CURRENCY: South Korean won (KRW)

CLIMATE: Temperate, seasonal climate, with rainy, hot summers and dry, cold winters. Typhoons can affect the coastal areas at any time, particularly from May to Oct.

UTC: +9

INTL DIALLING CODE: +82

SOUTH KOREA, known as “Land of the Morning Calm”, is a country in East Asia. It is located in the southern region of the mountainous Korean Peninsula, bordered by North Korea to the north, the Sea of Japan (East Sea) to the east, the Korea Strait to the south, and the Yellow Sea to the west. It is among the world’s fastest growing advanced economies and is a world leader in innovation and technologically advanced goods such as electronics, automobiles, ships, machinery, petrochemicals and robotics, headed by big companies like Samsung, LG and Hyundai-Kia. The most attractive cruising can be found along the south coast, between the ports of Kunsan and Pusan, where the coast has countless coves, anchorages and hundreds of small islands. The marina built in Pusan for the Seoul Olympics can now be used by cruising yachts. Pusan, Korea’s principal port and second largest city, is the gateway to the Hallyo Sudo Waterway, a national sea park comprising hundreds of picturesque islands along the coast west of Pusan. South Korea has 20 national parks and some popular nature places like Boseong Tea Field, Suncheon Bay Ecological Park in South Jeolla province.
JAPAN is an island nation in East Asia, located in the Pacific Ocean. It lies to the east of the Sea of Japan, China, North Korea, South Korea and Russia, stretching from the Sea of Okhotsk in the north to the East China Sea and Taiwan in the south. Japan is a country of 6,874 islands extending along the Pacific coast of Asia. The main islands, running from north to south, are Hokkaidō, Honshū (the main island), Shikoku and Kyushū. The Ryukyu Islands, including Okinawa, are a chain of islands south of Kyushū. Together they are often known as the Japanese Archipelago. Its location on the Pacific Ring of Fire, gives Japan frequent low-intensity tremors and occasional volcanic activity. Destructive earthquakes, often resulting in tsunamis, occur several times each century. Hot springs are numerous and have been developed as resorts.

A major economic power, Japan has the world’s second largest economy with high living standards and the longest life expectancy in the world. Japan is one of the leading nations in the fields of scientific research, particularly technology, machinery and biomedical research. Japan has vast array of attractions including many that are World Heritage List and is famous for its traditional attractions including its temples, shrines and gardens. There are also many modern Japan attractions including theme parks, fashion shopping and precincts, architecture and cultural activities. There are also many natural attractions with vast snow covered mountain ranges and their national parks with many famous wildlife attractions like the snow monkeys.

In the early 1990s the government decided to actively develop the yachting industry, more marinas were built, and various international regattas were organised. One major attraction is the Inland Sea (Seto Naikai), a large body of water, connected by three passes to the surrounding ocean, which allows a yacht access into the very heart of the country. The place abounds with pretty anchorages or small fishing harbours, but there are also many marinas as well as yacht clubs, which usually offer hospitality to visitors. Those in the smaller places have only basic facilities, while in the larger towns clubs are on a par with the best yacht clubs in Europe or America. Yokohama in particular has excellent standards of dockage for the larger yachts, but as with the rest of Japan, shorepower for superyachts is not available as yet. Most things are available in Japan.
Land of the Rising Sun

A culture as old and rich as Europe, with modern infrastructure that surpasses first world countries, combined with Southern Island beaches to rival the best of the Caribbean’s, and the Inland Sea that betters the best of the Mediterranean, makes Japan one of the most exciting cruising locations ever.

By Captain Nigel Beatty

I FIRST WENT to Japan in 2001 after a yacht owner asked me to fly down there and deal with a 37m yacht he had just bought from a Japanese owner. We organized a freighter to ship the yacht to the States, but it was going to be over two months before that left. At that point I struck on an idea. I called the owner and said to him “how often are you going to have a yacht in Japan? Let’s go cruising!” and by the end of that week I was at Narita Airport (Tokyo) waiting for him and his wife to step off the plane.

I joined the yacht in Japan; however when visiting, yachts generally approach the islands of Japan from one of two different directions. From the North as they journey down to East Asia from Alaska, the first port of call is sometimes Hakodate on the northern island of Honshu, although many yachts decide to journey an extra day and a half down to Yokohama and Tokyo to make preparations for arrival.

From the south as they make their way up via Micronesia from Australia and New Zealand, or from Hong Kong, the first port of call can be one of many, however most yachts prefer to base in Osaka, as it is easy for guests to fly in and for the yachts to get ready. The best and most established cruising routes are between Tokyo and Okinawa in the southern islands, including the Inland Sea (Seto Nai Kai) which is a completely protected piece of waterway, around 250 NM long, with hundreds of islands in it. These routes afford guests the opportunity to see the best of Japan, with easy access to transportation for land excursions.

We were docked at Yokohama Bayside Marina which has a four to five metre depth, is well protected and can take yachts up to 65 metres. After two days I moved the yacht to a specially arranged berth called Pukarin Sanbashi outside of the Intercontinental Hotel in downtown Yokohama. This is a spectacular place to dock and spend a few days. This area can accommodate yachts of up to 150m easily. Japan’s cities are amazing. So many people and virtually no crime; it makes for a very comfortable environment for guests. While they were there I also arranged for them to take a trip to Nikko in the mountains. This is where there is a cluster of Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines that date back centuries; they spent two full days there. After Nikko we left Yokohama with our all Japanese crew to cruise the south coast of Japan towards the Inland Sea.

My first mate, Matsuda-san (and nick named Matchan) spoke some English and he was my lifeline to get things organised. Most people in Japan say “Hello”, “How are you”, “Welcome”, “Nice to meet you” in very good English; but venture into conversation and they just nod and smile and say “yes” in acknowledgment of your presence.
of what you're saying, even though they do not understand a thing! They are far too polite to stop an English speaker in full babble. To tell someone that they do not understand them can be a mortal etiquette sin! Though the politeness at first is overwhelming, when you actually slide yourself into this culture you suddenly realise that it is one of the most civil societies on the planet. One of the many amazing things about Japan is the understanding of the Japanese departments for pre-approval. He will need to have an understanding of the Japanese departments that this paperwork has to go to. With so much shipping in Japanese waters the government is very strict in all vessels following the correct procedures, however a good agent will get all of this done for you, keep you posted with the right information and it will not feel difficult.

As a yacht cruises through different regions of Japan you must clear out of one area and into another. This can usually be done with a phone call and a fax of ships paperwork by your agent, so it is important to keep in contact with them on a daily basis as you cruise. I enlisted the help of a yacht company called Creation Marine in Osaka to help me and they were brilliant. At that time there were no yacht agents in Japan. Creation did all of our shore-side work for us, checking us in and out of various regions with customs and coastguard as we moved about Japan.

From Wakayama we moved on into the Seto Nai Peninsula. As you round the western side, Mount Fuji comes into view dominating the horizon even before the coastline of mainland Honshu is seen. You can see Fuji from the eastern side too, it is that tall! We anchored in Uchira Bay and the owner invited all crew to have dinner on the back deck as the sun went down by Mount Fuji. Afterwards they went to pay their respects to "Fujisan" by going to the 5th station which is at the tree line, 7500ft altitude, and observing the Shinto shrine dedicated to Princess Komahanasakuya, the daughter of the God of the Mountain. That night, we cruised to Wakayama at the entrance to the Inland Sea. Wakayama has great 'onsen' which is the Japanese name for volcanic hot springs. They are a little disconcerting sometimes for westerners as Japanese people all go in naked, but you can come by secluded areas to bathe. At Wakayama we docked at Marina City which can easily take yachts of 60m or more. It is important to retain the services of an agent that understands yachts. The shipping industry is huge here, but shipping agents will treat yachts the same as a 300 meter cargo ship, so employ someone who has experience in the professional yachting world. Work with your agent a couple of months before you plan to arrive for submission of documents for pre-approval. It is important to keep in contact with them on a daily basis as you cruise.

Paperwork to enter Japan can be complicated.
Our guests were quite fit and up for some exercise, so our next stop in the Inland Sea was on the northern side of the island of Shikoku. Takamatsu is a fairly large city, and close by is a shrine to seafarers. You have to climb more stone steps than you can shake a stick at mind you, however if you haven’t got the strength or fitness you can hire a porter who will carry you up there on his back! They must hate overweight western tourists. At the top you can pray (if you have any breath left) and clap your hands a few times and then pay the local priest some cash for a Japanese charm made of wood and handwritten, protecting your vessel from the dangers of the ocean.

I asked the priest “so this will protect us out there on the ocean, will it?” He said, “yes definitely”, I said (jokingly) “So if something does happen to us, do I get my money back” to which he roared with laughter and said, “If something happens to you, it would have been a lot worse if you hadn’t had my charm onboard!” I guess you can’t argue with that!

From Takamatsu we cruised to Hiroshima, somewhere where I planned to spend a few days. I had arranged to be here during the summer festival of Obon, when the Japanese welcome back the spirits of their ancestors for a few days and have all sorts of celebrations (and most of them get hilariously drunk). But first we took the opportunity to visit Hiroshima City and the Atom Bomb Dome in Peace Park. This is a structure that was just about the only thing left standing when the bomb was dropped and is probably the simplest and most evocative monument to a moment in time that changed the course of human history, and a truly humbling experience.

Across the water from Hiroshima is Miyajima, an island with a very famous shrine out over the water with a massive “Tori Gate” out in the water. It is here they have one of the world’s largest firework displays and we anchored the yacht with hundreds of other boats and joined the locals eating great food and drinking plenty of sake. The morning after the festival we weighed anchor and cruised around to Kure, a smaller city only 30 minutes away. Here we docked at a small marina with one long pier. We were only supposed to stay for one night, but the owners loved the place so much we stayed for three. They had discovered a small restaurant district that they were just blown away with so they had to go back for the next two nights, much to the delight of the chef who had three nights off in a row!

From Kure we cruised on through the Kannmon Kaikyo straights between the Island of Honsho and Kyushu, a very busy shipping lane with ripping currents, and out of the Seto Nai Kai to Hakata, Fukuoka and the marina at Marinoa. We only stayed here one night as the owners wanted to see more nature, but the marina is brilliant and the staff is wonderful. The marina can definitely take large yachts. We cruised on to some stunning islands on the western side of Kyushu called Goto Retto. Here we discovered some marvelous anchorages and the guests snorkeled and dove and made good use of the watersports gear. The water here is warm with coral reefs and the climate is not unlike Florida.

After two days on anchor we did a long overnight run to Kagoshima. I had meant to stop in Nagasaki and explore more of the coastline, but time was running out for our guests and they had to get back. I think I could have spent another two weeks on the western side of Kyushu and in Kagoshima, and, after looking at the charts more, I could spend months exploring the Inland Sea, the cruising potential is incredible.

The owners flew from Kagoshima to Tokyo where they spent a night before flying back to the States. On the way back to Kobe, we stopped and waited until shipping time at Creation (our agents) own little marina in Osaka. The marina was old wooden floating docks and pretty junky, but when we arrived they threw us a massive barbecue party and opened the Tiki bar that they built on one of their docks. A decade on and they are totally renovating the marina there to be a superyacht facility in its own right. I have told the owner to make enough electricity available for one or two large yachts and he has promised me he would, so large boats can come in the future.

While in Japan we used pre-paid mobile phones for our communications, mobile phones will work here if they have 3G (WCDMA/UMTS 2100) capability and your mobile provider allows international roaming. GSM does not work here. Pre-paid phones/SIM packages are the next choice. SIM cards alone are not available in Japan. V-SAT Internet is available through MTN. Also air cards are available through yacht agents that work at broadband speeds and through the mobile networks, and can be rented for unlimited use for the equivalent of around US$100 per month. Bunkering can be arranged through your agent for any part of Japan, however best prices are in Yokohama/Tokyo and Osaka. Fuel is tax free for foreign registered yachts. We used a fuel barge in Yokohama, and then topped up again from a fuel barge in Osaka, both arranged by Creation.

As mentioned, Japan has a very modern marina infrastructure that can cater to vessels of up to 150 metres for dockage. They do not, however, have electrical installations for the large yachts so 99–100 per cent of the time you will be on generator.

Water is often free at marinas and other docks. There are literally thousands of anchorages all over Japan throughout the thousands of islands. One captain described it as “Croatia on acid!”

A huge shipping industry in Japan means that navigation is definitely exciting! Although it is protected from the Pacific Ocean, tidal flows can rip through the islands of the Inland Sea with amazing ferocity and forming good sized vortexes so caution is necessary. These areas are well charted and documented and navigation aids, including massive electrically-lighted signs usually show current speed, direction, increasing/ decreasing, etc. Navigational aids are outstanding and always working. English speaking guides and experienced pilots are available. Charts are available through a local navigational supplier, Cornes & Co. in Yokohama and Kobe.

Tip: buy the Japanese Coastguard charts, they are cheaper than Admiralty and are identical.

The charts have English and Japanese on them. Just before we were about to ship the yacht, Typhoon Pabuk hit Japan. Creation had everything on hand however and had us in a flooded dry dock, roped off in all directions and about four miles up a river in Osaka. We hardly knew that a Typhoon was on us!

Since that first time in Japan I have been back 15 times in eight years and usually spend my summers here working and cruising on Japanese owned yachts, and even now have a Japanese wife! The country is still mesmerising to me even now that I speak a certain amount of Japanese and know the place well. It is without doubt one of the greatest cruising experiences I have ever had; Culture, rich scenery, and so much to do!
The most exciting and undiscovered cruising destination on earth

JAPAN

6,784 islands to explore (3,000 of them within the Seto Naikai - a fully protected Inland Sea, almost 300 miles long); an ultra modern infrastructure coupled with 2,600 year old history and culture; a Mediterranean climate, world class yacht services and a 6 month cruising season.

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In this part of the world offers many weather considerations… From cold fronts to tropical cyclones; the weather can be volatile. However, serenity and tranquility are also words not unknown to this region, and this is common in many areas, often lasting for extended periods of time.

By David Cannon of Weather Routing, Inc.
and much of January), reaching its “peak period during late January and February. Cyclones will normally begin their life cycle as disorganized or poorly organized squall clusters on the south side of the Equatorial Trough mentioned previously, and are generally found in the Indian Ocean waters between 08S and 15S during their formative stages of development. With time, these squalls will initially track southwest to westward, and in many cases become better organized, developing into full fledged tropical cyclones. As they encounter a “weakness” in the ridging to the south, tropical cyclones will tend to turn south to southwestward, and eventually, they will weaken and become non-tropical entities as they encounter the cooler waters and more hostile environment ahead south of 25S.

Given the typical south to southwest turn of tropical systems, one must always be mindful of the possible requirement of evasive action to avoid any potential impacts from such systems. Fortunately, in our advanced satellite age, and with the wealth of real-time data that we Meteorologists have at our disposal, these systems almost never come without warning, and with proper planning and guidance, the chances of any direct impacts is slim to none.

Aside from the tropics, trade winds dominate the summer season. Cold fronts remain well to the south (generally south of 35S) and weaken readily as they move into the extreme southwest Indian Ocean. Persistent high pressure covers much of the Indian Ocean along and south of 15S during December/January, and is about as large and strong as one might expect at any point in the year, showing only the slightest and most subtle changes in coverage and strength, governed mainly by the location of the Equatorial trough and the approach of any weakening fronts farther west (See Figure 1).

East to southeast winds are most commonly found during summer, with speeds generally from force 4-6, and E-SE combined seas averaging from 4-7 feet. Higher winds (more like force 5-6) are found where there is greater interaction between lower seas (toward the lower end of the combined sea ranges), as “fetch” becomes more limited. Later in the year (March through May), we talk less about the tropics to be sure, as cyclone frequency decreases. In fact, by late April/May, we are hardly talking about the tropics at all, but cold fronts do begin to enter the weather picture. Fronts extend farther north than their summertime counterparts, and by May are found as far north as 35S, “emerging” into the southwest Indian Ocean about every three to four days, and weakening as they encounter the persistent semi-permanent ridge off to the east. Speaking of the semi-permanent ridge, it is still a dominant feature this time of year, though at a somewhat weakened state, as compared to winter months. The axis of the ridge during the period is generally found between 32S and 35S, with ridging as far north as 15S-20S. Periodic weakening of the ridge will occur as fronts move into the Indian Ocean, though the ridge later becomes “reinforced” and builds farther north/ west as transitory high ridges from the South Atlantic move in and merge with this ridge. Again, east to southeast trade winds are most commonly found, speeds generally from force 4-6. However, surges of higher SE winds, generally as high as force 6-7 are found farther south (south of 15S), as ridging from high pressure intensifies. This is also common in southeast to south winds, especially in Mozambique Channel, where local “channeling” or funneling of winds exists, after fronts pass near/south of the region. Weakening of the ridge ahead of fronts will induce a veering of winds, generally N-NE-E in direction, with speeds generally from force 3-5.

Combined seas will tend to be from the east to southeast, heights generally from 4-8 feet, though note that the passage of cold fronts and resultant higher wind surges can in fact bring more SE-S seas. These can often reach as high as 8-10 feet, especially toward late April/May, when fronts tend stronger. In fact, southerly seas again the faster north to south currents in and near Mozambique Channel can induce even larger sets, often well in excess of 10 feet when stronger fronts and following transitory highs moving south of the area. Any southeast to southerly seas, will tend to be longer-period the farther north you travel. Again, breaks in E-SE trade winds will occur as fronts pass off to the south. These breaks will normally last one to two days at a time, and will occur in the form of lighter N-NE-E winds, generally from force 3-5. Combined seas in turn will abate and become longer-period, generally easterly in direction, generally from 4-7 feet. Now we move onward through winter (June through August), and the weather during this time can be summed up in one word: active.

Cold fronts are more frequent and stronger during this time, often extending as far north as 25S. Ridding from high pressure tends to be weaker and somewhat farther east as well, allowing fronts to maintain their strength longer as they move toward/through the southern portion of the region, although portions of persistent ridging in the South Atlantic will break away and move into the Indian Ocean in the wake of fronts, eventually merging with the Indian Ocean ridge.

The passage of fronts and approach of following high pressure ridges west of fronts will often bring surges of higher SE-S winds. Gale force winds and large SE-S seas, often as high as 10-15 feet, are common during these times, especially farther south, in and near Mozambique Channel. These larger seas are found farther to the north and east as well, though farther north, the seas will tend to be longer-period and somewhat lower than those farther south.

As transitory ridges move farther east and merging of highs occurs, winds veer, becoming E-SE. Easing of winds and abatement of combined seas occurs farther south, in and near Mozambique Channel, as veering occurs, and as fetch becomes limited. Further easing in winds occurs throughout the area as winds veer further, becoming northerly and easterly in direction as the next cold front approaches from the west (Figure 2).

Figure 1 – Typical summer weather patterns across the Southwest Indian Oceans. The directions of tropical cyclones are denoted by the arrows pointing west to southwestward.
During the remainder of the year (September through October), the weather is certainly active, though cold fronts tend to be somewhat weaker and less frequent than during winter. Generally speaking, one can expect a frontal passage to occur about every three to four days, with fronts extending as far north as 25S-30S, moving well into the southwest Indian Ocean before encountering ridge from high pressure farther east and slowing/weakening later on.

As for our semi-permanent high pressure ridge, that particular feature is still prevalent, and during this period generally extends as far north as 15S. As with winter months, the ridge will be reinforced and intensified some as transitory high pressure ridges farther west move into the Indian Ocean and eventually merge with the semi-permanent ridge, again, inducing surges of higher E-SE trade winds across the region. However, the greatest weather dangers occur as fronts approach and pass farther to the south, particularly in and near Mozambique Channel and much of Madagascar. Post frontal passage S-SW winds can still reach as high as gale force, especially within Mozambique Channel, partly due to local funnelling of winds in the area, and as stronger fronts pass. The faster north to south currents also aid in bringing larger post-frontal passage S-SW seas, with such seas reaching as high as 10-12 feet as S’ly sets run against the faster currents across the area.

Outside of Mozambique Channel, currents across the area generally run from east to west, and northeast to southwest on the north and northwest sides of the South Equatorial Current. By and large, slower currents are found, averaging anywhere from 0.4-0.7 knots outside of the faster current areas mentioned previously.

**SOUTH OF MADAGASCAR / MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL TO SOUTH AFRICA**

We’re looking farther south, and as the more seasoned veterans of the sea can attest to, we’re looking at an area that is not without its weather dangers and bouts of adverse conditions. The worst of the conditions occurs during the winter season, as stronger gales/storms pass off to the south, and their associated strong cold fronts approach and pass from the west. With the approach of fronts, winds veer, becoming north to northwest to west, increasing and often approaching gale force. With the passage of fronts, winds shift, becoming S-SW, and periods of gale to storm force winds often occur, especially along and near the southern African coast. These winds often last about 24-36 hours before high pressure moves in from the west and winds ease.

Post-frontal passage seas are typically from the south, southwest, and west, and can be quite large, often reaching as high as 12-15 feet. Especially large seas will be found within the fast east to west moving Agulhas Current along the South African coast, and in southwest to westerly sets. These winds often last about 24-36 hours before high pressure moves in from the west and winds ease.

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Post-frontal passage seas are typically from the south, southwest, and west, and can be quite large, often reaching as high as 12-15 feet. Especially large seas will be found within the fast east to west moving Agulhas Current along the South African coast, and in southwest to westerly sets. Larger seas typically last for about 1-2 days at a time, abating as lighter winds (from following high pressure ridges) develop and persist. High pressure ridges moving into and across the region between cold fronts bring fairly significant breaks in the weather as winds veer becoming more easterly in direction over time. Winds can be as low as force 3-4 very near the centers or axes of these high pressure areas, and seas then turn abate, leaving mainly residual S-SW swells, which become long-period as time wears on and lighter winds continue to persist. Later in the year, during the Spring and much of the Summer, the weather becomes increasingly less volatile, in that the effects from cold fronts, while still evident, are not to the degree of winter months. Fronts only pass through the region about every four days or so during late spring and summer, often remaining south of the South African coast during the period as well. Pre and post frontal passage winds are typically below gale force, especially during late Spring and Summer, when winds usually max out at force 6-7, and are mainly confined to coastal waters of South Africa, and follow the strongest of frontal passages. Combined seas behind
fringe fronts likewise are not as high during this period as during Winter, though S-SW sets can reach as high as 10 feet along and near coastal South Africa. Similar Westerly seas can be found in larger sets within the Agulhas Current. Transitory high pressure ridges still make their presence known well into the spring, again, bringing continued veering in winds toward more easterlies, and easing conditions as well, speeds again as low as 3-4, generally for one to two day periods before the next front approaches from the west, and winds veer further to more northerlies and increase some. Long-period south to southwest seas become longer-period and mix with and/or give way to more E-SE sets, often as low as 3-6 feet, tending higher the farther south one travels. Late in the summer and during autumn, cold fronts return and become stronger as the weeks and months wear on. Frontal passages occur along the South African coast about every three to four days, bringing northerly and westerly winds that during much of the autumn reach as high as force 6-7 across much of the region. Localized areas of gale force (force 8) winds occur along the South African coast as well. Combined seas become northerly and westerly as well, building and often reaching as high as 7-8 feet. With the passage of fronts, southerly and westerly winds often reach gale and near gale force, with higher winds found the farther south one travels. Combined seas become southerly and westerly as well, building and often in excess of 10 feet in many areas, especially along and near the South African coast. These higher winds normally last for as much as 36-48 hours at a time before further veering and easing of winds and abatement of combined seas occurs as high pressure areas approach/pas, in the wake of fronts. SOUTHERLY THE SOUTH AFRICAN COAST TO KERGULLEN AND VICINITY

Well this area is about as active as it gets in the Indian Ocean, and this region is certainly not for the faint of heart. Frequent gales and storms affect this region, and adverse weather is commonplace as well. “Breaks” in the weather occur, but they tend to be more relative breaks than anything else. Finding calm winds and smooth seas is really a tall order here. Gales and storms generally track from west to east between 455-555, and are generally spaced about 2-4 days apart. They are largest and strongest during the winter season, generally during the July/August timeframe, when the large semi-permanent high pressure ridge in the southern Indian Ocean is strongest. Subsequently, the worst weather in this region occurs during this particular time period. Gale to storm force winds occur as gales/storms pass through and interact with ridging off to the north. Additionally, large seas commonly occur across this region, with heights 12 feet or greater occurring about 60% of the time during the period from May through September. During the summer, the frequency of such large seas is reduced, occurring about 40% of the time during that time of year, as gales tend to be somewhat weaker, less expansive, and track a bit farther south than their winter counterparts. Winds during summer of course tend to be somewhat lighter as well, though individual gales can still bring winds approaching if not reaching gale force (force 8). The concerns of encountering a tropical cyclone in this part of the world are nil. The waters are too cold and the environment in the upper levels of the atmosphere is far too hostile to sustain any tropical entities. However, as tropical cyclones farther north transition and become non-tropical (or extratropical), they can at times affect this region, bringing additional bouts of heavy weather with their approach and passage. Being so far south in the Southern Hemisphere, you might expect the climate to be cold, and you would be right. The climate is cold and windy, with rain, sleet, and snow falling on the majority of the days of the year. It is not excessively cold, and the buildup of sea ice or the passage of icebergs is typically not of concern here. IN SUMMARY: WHERE TO GO AND WHEN

So far, we’ve taken a rather in-depth look at the weather in this part of the world, but what does it mean when it comes to finding the best weather? Well, this concluding section will endeavor to answer that question. Taking everything into consideration, summer is your time of year if you want to maximize your travel options. During that time of year, cold fronts are weaker, less frequent, and do not extend as far north as during other times of the year, so adverse weather naturally does not cover as wide an area during summer. Of course, there’s one very important drawback to consider for summer travels, and that’s the tropics. One will need to keep a close eye on the weather, especially in areas where tropical cyclones are of concern, such as across Madagascar and in the Mozambique Channel. Keep routing options open and consider stoppage or “bail out” ports where necessary to maximize berth around cyclones should they become a factor in your travel plans. Equatorial destinations such as the Seychelles will tend to be a more favorable travel destination during much of the year for those looking to avoid bad weather on a grander scale time wise. Cold fronts are unheard of and the effects from tropical cyclones are more during the formative stages of development of such systems, as they pass off to the south of this region. Seas will tend to be long-period, consisting mainly of easterly and southerly swells, generally in the wake of cold fronts well to the south, and tropical systems farther south. Those travelers farther south (south of 25S) during the period from late autumn through early spring will want to time their travels in between the passage of cold fronts, as centers or axes high pressure ridges approach and pass, bringing lighter winds and lower, longer-period swells. Those who are looking to travel south of the South African coast should certainly be well-prepared for what lies ahead, as adverse weather will quite often be of concern in this region during almost the entirety of the year. So there you have it, a look at the weather of the southwestern Indian Ocean. As you can see, Mother Nature has something for everyone in this neck of the woods. From quiet, tranquil weather, to the active and tempestuous, this region has it all. Hopefully this editorial will educate as to what to look for and what to avoid in finding that perfect travel destination.
Myanmar (Burma)

Useful Statistics
Union of Myanmar

GOVERNMENT: Military Dictatorship
Democracy in its infancy

LAND AREA: 678,576 km²
(262,000 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2010) 60,280,000

LANGUAGE: Burmese plus ethnic
languages Broken English is spoken in
most ports

CURRENCY: Kyat (K)
US dollars widely accepted

CLIMATE: A tropical climate
with three seasons: (1) a monsoon or rainy
season between April and October, (2) the
dry season between October and February,
and (3) the hot season between February
and March. Temperatures are hot all year
round with high humidity while 75% of
rainfall occurs during the SW Monsoon.
Average temperature ranges in Yangon are
from 18-32˚C (64-90˚F) in January to 24-35˚C
(75-97˚F) in April.

UTC: +6:30

INTL DIALLING CODE: +95

Myanmar is located between Chittagong Division of Bangladesh and Assam, Nagaland and Manipur of India
and Nepal to the northwest. It shares its longest borders with Tibet and Yunnan of China to the northeast for
a total of 2,185 km (1,358 miles). Prior to 1989, it was known as Burma. Myanmar is bounded by Laos and
Thailand to the southeast and it has a 1,930 km (1,199 miles) contiguous coastline along the Bay of Bengal and
Andaman Sea to the southwest and the south, which forms one-third of its total perimeter. Much of Myanmar
lies between the Tropic of Cancer and the Equator. Myanmar lies in the monsoon region of Asia, with its coastal
regions receiving over 5,000mm (197in) annually. Slow economic growth has contributed to the preservation
of much of its environment and ecosystems. Forests, including dense tropical growth and
valuable teak in lower Myanmar, cover over 49% of the country. Typical jungle animals, particularly
tigers and leopards, are common. The southern part of the country is the most attractive cruising
destination and is easily accessible from Phuket. The highlight for superyacht cruising is the Mergui
Archipelago which comprises 800 uninhabited islands and covers an area of over 10,000 sq
miles. Permits can be issued through your port
agent to cruise all but a few of the islands, but
must be applied for at least a month before arrival.
Cruising is uncomplicated and safe but a guide
must be taken onboard as part of the cruising
permit agreement. There are unlimited cruising
possibilities among the hundreds of islands and
cays, although facilities for superyachts in the
country are practically non-existent.
Sri Lanka

Useful Statistics
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

GOVERNMENT: Unitary Multi-party Republic
LAND AREA: 65,610 km² (25,382 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 20,238,000
LANGUAGE: Sinhala and Tamil, English is also widely spoken.
CURRENCY: Rupee (SLRs)
CLIMATE: A tropical climate with little seasonal variation in conditions and humidity around 90%. The island experiences the SW Monsoon in May and the NE Monsoon in November.
UTC: +5:30

SRI LANKA, formerly Ceylon, is an island nation in South Asia, located about 31 km (18 miles) off the southern coast of India. Sri Lanka lies in the Indian Ocean, to the SW of the Bay of Bengal and to the SE of the Arabian Sea. It is separated from the Indian subcontinent by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. Sri Lanka is a land of primeval jungles inhabited by leopards and elephants, wondrous ruins of the great civilizations of ages past, and a modern city. Colombo, the commercial capital of Sri Lanka, is where western technology meets the frenzy of a traditional Asian metropolis. As Ceylon, the island became famous for producing the world’s finest teas. Bright fragrant spices, sparkling sapphires, and the colourful trappings of a variety of ceremonies and religious festivals make this a most rewarding destination for those who keep their eyes and ears open. Colombo is fast changing its face. Almost overnight, skyscrapers arise from where old buildings once stood. Yet, in some parts, the old-world charm is retained; a 100-year-old clock tower and several colonial buildings are still to be seen in the city. And thanks to its multi-cultural society, so too are both Hindu and Buddhist temples. Colombo serves as your gateway to the rest of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is a strategic naval link between West Asia and South East Asia and has been a centre of Buddhist religion and culture from ancient times. Famous for the production and export of tea, coffee, rubber and coconuts, Sri Lanka boasts a progressive and modern industrial economy. The natural beauty of Sri Lanka’s tropical forests, beaches and landscape, as well as its rich cultural heritage make it a world famous tourist destination. Sri Lanka is a popular stop for superyachts en route to the Red Sea from Asia. It is a good departure point for cruising the Maldives, Chagos and the Seychelles. The popular port visited by most superyachts is Galle on the island’s southern tip.
India

Useful Statistics

Republic of India

GOVERNMENT: Multiparty Federal Republic

LAND AREA: 3,166,692 km² (1,222,720 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 1,210,193,422

LANGUAGE: Hindi and English

CURRENCY: Rupee (INR)

CLIMATE: India has a tropical climate that is dominated by the Asiatic monsoons with four fairly distinct seasons:
(1) A relatively cool winter monsoon season
(2) A hot and rainless transitional season
(3) A rainy monsoon season and
(4) A humid season. Tropical hurricanes and cyclones are common between April to June and Sept. to December. Average temperature ranges in New Delhi are from 7-21°C (45-70°F) in January to 26-41°C (79-106°F) in May.

UTC: +5:30

INTL DIALLING CODE: +91

India is a sovereign country in South Asia. It is the seventh-largest country by geographical area and the second most populous. Bounded by the Indian Ocean on the south, the Arabian Sea on the west, and the Bay of Bengal on the east, has a coastline of over 7,000km. It borders Pakistan to the west; China, Nepal, and Bhutan to the NE; and Bangladesh and Myanmar to the east. In the Indian Ocean, India is in the vicinity of Sri Lanka, Maldives and Indonesia. India is home to several major rivers, including the Ganges, the Brahmaputra, the Yamuna, the Godavari, the Kaveri, the Narmada, and the Krishna. India has three archipelagos – Lakshadweep, which lies off the south-western coast; the volcanic Andaman and Nicobar Islands Chains to the SE; and the Sunderbans in the Ganges Delta of West Bengal. The Andaman Islands are an archipelago of some 200 islands lying west of Thailand in the Andaman Sea. Superyachts are welcome to stop there and the islands are becoming a popular area to visit when transiting between Phuket and the Red Sea. Mumbai, (formerly Bombay) is the jewel on India’s west coast and is the most exciting starting point to begin a cruise around India. Geographically a western extremity, Mumbai over the years, has in many ways become India’s nerve centre and the financial capital. The bustling metropolis with an area of 440km² and a population of 20 million is a vibrant city with a glorious past. The city of Mormugao in Goa state is situated on the west coast of India. Mormugao Harbour is one of the region’s most impressive natural ports, offering an incredibly romantic view at sunset, especially when approaching from the waters of the Arabian Sea. Mormugao is a peaceful retreat from the larger cities, with its enchanting Portuguese architecture, golden beaches, and exquisite fresh seafood. Renowned for its beaches, Goa is an international destination for sun seekers the world over. Goa is also home to several World Heritage Sites, including the Bom Jesus Basilica.
Maldives

Useful Statistics
Republic of Maldives

GOVERNMENT: Republic
LAND AREA: 298 km² (115 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 328,536
LANGUAGE: Divehi (National language and the dialect of Sinhalese derived from Arabic). English is also spoken by most government officials.
CURRENCY: Ruffiyaa (Rf)
CLIMATE: A tropical climate characterised by hot and humid conditions with little daily variation. The islands are subject to the SW Monsoon between June and August, and the NE Monsoon from November to March. The average temperature ranges are from 25-29°C (77-84°F) all year.
UTC: +5
INTL DIALLING CODE: +960

THE MALDIVES is an island nation consisting of a group of atolls in the Indian Ocean. The Maldives are located south of India’s Lakshadweep islands, and about 700 km (435 miles) SW of Sri Lanka. The 26 atolls encompass a territory featuring 1,192 islets, roughly two hundred of which are inhabited by local communities. Islands housing just hotels, antennae, fuel tanks, and other such premises are not counted as inhabited islands by the administration. The Maldives holds the record for being the flattest country in the world, with a maximum natural ground level of only 2.3m (7 1/2 ft), though in areas where construction exists this has been increased to several metres. Over the last century, sea levels have risen about twenty centimetres (8 in). The ocean is likely to continue rising due to global warming and this threatens the existence of the Maldives. The Maldives has been a very popular superyacht cruising destination for many years and as such has developed a very sound base of service providers who are well experienced in providing the visiting superyachts with everything they need.
Mauritius

Useful Statistics
Republic of Mauritius

GOVERNMENT: Multiparty Republic

LAND AREA: 1,974 km²
(762 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 1,286,340

LANGUAGE: Creole, English, French, Hindi, Urdu and Tamil

CURRENCY: Rupee (MUR)

CLIMATE: Mauritius has a tropical maritime climate
with the SE trade winds prevailing from April to
November. Tropical cyclones occur from November to
March and rainfall is at its heaviest during this period.
Average temperature ranges are from 17-24°C (63-
75°F) in August to 23-33°C (73-86°F) in January.

UTC: +4

INTL DIALLING CODE: +230

Mauritius is an island nation off the east coast of Africa in the southwest Indian Ocean, about 900km (560
miles) east of Madagascar. In addition to the island of Mauritius, the republic includes the islands of St. Brandon,
Rodrigues and the Agalega Islands. The French island of Réunion is 200km (125 miles) to the southwest. Together
with Réunion and Rodrigues, Mauritius is part of the Mascarene Islands. This archipelago was formed in a series
of underwater volcanic eruptions, as the African plate drifted over the Réunion hotspot. They are no longer volcanically
active and the hotspot now rests under Réunion where La Fournaise is still very much active. The island of
Mauritius itself is formed around a central plateau, with its highest peak in the southwest, Piton de la Petite Rivière
Noire at 828m (2,717 ft). Around the plateau, the original crater can still be distinguished from several mountains.
The island’s capital and largest city is Port Louis in the northwest. Other important towns are Curepipe, Vacoas,
Phoenix, Quatre Bornes, Rose-Hill and Beau-Bassin.

The island is well known for its exceptional natural beauty, “You gather the idea that Mauritius was made first and
then heaven, and that heaven was copied after Mauritius”, as Mark Twain noted in “Following the Equator”. When
discovered, the island of Mauritius was home to a previously unknown species of bird, which the Portuguese named
the dodo (simpleton) as they appeared not too bright. However, by 1681, all dodos had been killed by settlers or
their domesticated animals. Nevertheless, the dodo is prominently featured as a supporter of the national coat-of-
arms. Mauritius is a new and emerging superyacht destination well worth visiting.
Seychelles

Useful Statistics
Republic of Seychelles

GOVERNMENT: Unitary Multiparty Republic
LAND AREA: 453 km² (175 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2009) 87,475
LANGUAGE: English, French, Seychellois Creole
CURRENCY: Rupee (SR)
CLIMATE: A tropical climate that is influenced by the ocean. The hot season is from October to April (NW Monsoon brings occasional heavy rains mainly in mid December and early January) and the cool season is from May to September (dry season SE Monsoon prevails). The NW Monsoon is the perfect time to visit: idyllic weather and calm seas, with winds from 5-15 kts and good diving visibility.

UTC: +4
INTL DIALLING CODE: +248

Seychelles is an archipelago nation of 115 islands that are widely scattered in the West Indian Ocean, northeast of the island of Madagascar. It represents an archipelago of legendary beauty that extends from between 4° and 10° south of the equator and which lies between 480 km and 1,600 km from the east coast of Africa. Of these 115 islands, 41 constitute the oldest mid-oceanic granite islands on earth while a further 74 form the low-lying coral atolls and reef islands of the Outer Islands. Thirty-three islands are inhabited. Other nearby island countries and territories include Zanzibar to the west, Mauritius and Réunion to the south, Comoros and Mayotte to the southwest, and the Suvadives of the Maldives to the northeast. Seychelles has the smallest population of any sovereign state of Africa. The principal island is Mahé which is mountainous with towering rugged crests, boulders and cliffs, although sandy beaches surround the coastline. A year-round equitable climate outside the cyclone belt, easy sailing distances between the main islands of Mahé, Praslin and La Digue and their satellites, conspire with favourable moorings and the breathtaking diversity and natural beauty of the islands to make the Seychelles Islands a dream destination for the discerning captain. Seychelles is a wonderfully tranquil destination characterised by pristine azure waters, uncrowded beaches and a friendly people for whom harmony and political and social stability are a way of life. The shimmering atolls, secluded coves and world class fishing and diving where relatively few have ventured is just some of what awaits you. Seychelles is widely regarded as the most beautiful archipelago on earth where an ancient, primeval beauty blends with a modern infrastructure to provide one of the sailing experiences of a lifetime.
Sailing the Seychelles

You will find the Seychelles are pretty much a year-round destination, beautiful, exciting and tranquil. What more could you possibly ask for?

By Glynn Burridge

GENERALLY SPEAKING, the cusps of the trade winds produce fairly wind-free conditions throughout April and again in October. Tides are semi-diurnal and asymmetrical with a gap of nearly six hours between high and low tide. The tidal range is as high as two metres at spring tide and as low as 0.9 metres at neap tide. You will the Seychelles subject to only mild currents averaging 1.5 knots that develop in line with the trade winds and producing a swell that is generally moderate.

I would add that sailing within the inner islands is very picturesque, easy and safe with many secure moorings and sailing distances of under 30 nautical miles. The other principal islands, Praslin and La Digue, and their various satellite isles are just a few hours pleasant sailing from the principal island of Mahé. Together, Mahé, Praslin and La Digue form the Seychelles’ cultural and economic hub and, between them, host the vast majority of the nation’s accommodation and leisure facilities. These range from exclusive five-star resorts and exquisite island hideaways where the optimum in comfort, service and amenities conspire with magnificent natural surrounds to offer a supremely tranquil and memorable vacation.

The Banyan Tree, St. Anne, Le Méridien Fisherman’s Cove, Lémuria, La Briz Silhouette and Maia resorts are already in place while new projects for Four Seasons, Shangri-la and Ephelia properties envisaged. Seychelles tourism industry is visibly taking off and the signs are everywhere. Fabulous island refuges such as those on North Island, Frégate, Denis, Round, Alphonse, Desroches and Bird provide everything from the five-star opulence to the homely comforts of picturesque beachside chalets. What is particularly refreshing is that the Seychelles tends to be very unprocessed as a tourism destination and an authentic island lifestyle is everywhere; in the architecture, customs, cuisine, music as well as in the genuinely laid-back pace of life.

The Coralline or Outer Islands lie in a spectacular, gleaming arc that stretches towards the east coast of Africa, ranging between 120 and 700 nautical miles from Mahé, the Seychelles’ principal island. You will discover this is where sailing still means seeing no other sail but your own and where opportunities for diving, fishing and island-hopping abound in places where few have gone before. Stuning atolls, sand cays and reef islands are the order of the day in these remoter southwestern waters of the archipelago, strung like pearls on invisible lines of surf amid an azure ocean.

1/10,000 scale charts of the ocean surrounding the islands have been published as mooring guides and are available on the mainland but captains are reminded that, due to remoteness of the islands and the infrequency of mapping surveys, the depth soundings are often missing or inaccurate. Special care should be taken to sail cautiously over the mooring zones and in waters surrounding the more remote islands and the printed figures should not be trusted blindly as coral bottoms can vary constantly. The skipper should remain alert to the sounder at all times.

The Seychelles’ amazing diversity is the result of
pristine sanctuary islands such as Aride, known as ‘the seabird citadel of the Indian Ocean’, the twin island reserves of Cousin and Cousine and the northern island outpost of Bird, together host some of the rarest wildlife on the planet. Guided walks and trails through the many national parks will reveal not only stunning land and seascapes but also a host of species not found anywhere else in the world.

You will see that, for the diver, both amateur and expert, the Seychelles diving experience is an unforgettable one, allowing great opportunities for both granite and coral reef diving in virgin waters. Great swim-throughs, caves, wreck dives and spectacular drop-offs are complemented by the possibility of sighting a dizzying array of marine species including that gentle giant of the oceans, the harmless whale shark. And if you don’t want to take the plunge, don’t worry, snorkelling is amazing in what amounts to a giant aquarium – filled with welcoming warm and limpid water! If it’s great fishing you’re after, the Seychelles offers amazing deep sea, bottom (palangrotte) and fly fishing, the latter now considered as being among the best in the world. A fleet of modern craft and experienced crew will bring you to waters where you’ll find tuna, jack, rainbow runner, barracuda, trevally, kingfish, dorado, jobfish, sailfish and even the mighty marlin. With such a mixed bag, you’re surely going to taste some of the finest fish of your life. Throughout the islands you will find numerous restaurants serving excellent creole cuisine with its fusion of French and Eastern influences and drawing from a wide palette of local produce to provide dishes rich in texture, aroma and taste. Most restaurants also cater for an international clientele in settings that range from sophisticated hotel surrounds to the rustic charms of the beachside diner. Whether you prefer to sail, walk, bike, hike or enjoy the air-conditioned comfort of a self-drive or chauffeured car, the diversity of the Seychelles experience will amaze you, as its people for whom harmony and joie de vivre remain a comforting way of life.

its 115 islands (41 granitic and 74 coral) having existed in splendid isolation for much of the time since it broke away from its surrounding landmass some 65 million years ago, proving sanctuary for myriad life-forms that, today, include some of the rarest species of flora and fauna on Earth. The Seychelles are already home to two UNESCO World Heritage sites: the amazing Vallée de Mai, a primeval glade where the Coco-de-Mer grows, a seductively shaped double-lobed coconut in the exact form of the female pelvis that was once believed to be the fruit of an underwater tree. So convinced was the famous General Gordon of its provenance that he claimed that the Vallée de Mai was the original site of the biblical Garden of Eden. The second site is that of fabled Aldabra, the largest raised coral atoll on earth and given its name by the intrepid Arab seafarers of the ninth century who, undoubtedly, first made landfall on this atoll they named ‘the green one’. However, these represent only some of the gems that the Seychelles have to offer. Gorgeous,
Comoros Islands

Useful Statistics
Union of the Comoros

GOVERNMENT: Federal Republic
LAND AREA: 527,968 km² (203,849 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2009) 752,438
LANGUAGE: French, Comorian, Arabic
CLIMATE: Tropical marine, with temps of around 26°C and much rain. Hot and humid rainy season from Nov to Apr and dry season from May to Oct.
CURRENCY: Comorian franc (KMF)
LANGUAGE: French, Comorian, Arabic
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 827,000

THE COMORO ISLANDS are situated off the SE coast of Africa, to the east of Tanzania and NW of Madagascar. The country officially consists of the four islands in the volcanic Comoros archipelago: Ngazidja (French: Grande Comore), Mwali (Mohéli), Nzwani (Anjouan), and Mahoré (Mayotte), as well as many smaller islands. Formerly a French colony, the islands are now independent, except for Mayotte which remains an overseas territory of France and a naval base. The youngest island is Grande Comore, and its volcano, Karthala, is still active, and has one of the largest craters in the world. The Islands are known for their fruit bats, Gecko lizards, Beaked Dolphins, Green Turtles, the Maki (lemur) and the perfume essenses of ylang-ylang, jasmin and orange. The main tourist attractions in the Comoros are the beaches which make for some tourists, to be very nice ecotourism attractions with their coral reef diving and deep-sea fishing, swimming and sun-bathing.

Réunion Island

Useful Statistics
Union of the Comoros

GOVERNMENT: Overseas region of France
LAND AREA: 2,512km² (970 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 1,205’
LANGUAGE: French, Tamil, Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic
CURRENCY: Euro
CLIMATE: Hot and humid rainy season from Dec to Feb and the dry season from May to Nov is the best time to visit, when the trade winds keep the temps moderate.
UTC: +4
INTL DIALLING CODE: +269

RéUNION ISLAND are situated east of Madagascar. The island itself is 63 km long and 45 km wide and has a mountainous terrain rising to 3070 m. At one end of the island is a live and active volcano which can be visited on day tours. In the middle, the three Circles (the joining of three calderas) have stunning views and offer excellent trekking. And on the other side you will find some excellent beaches, great surf, quaint villages and seaside restaurants and bars. Tourism has become an important industry and the culture is French, although with a mix of Creole and exotic island thrown in. The food reflects the island’s culture. Réunion is home to a variety of birds such as the paille en queue. Its largest native land animal is the Panther chameleon. Much of the West coast is ringed by coral reef which harbours sea urchins, conger eels and parrot fish. Sea turtles also visit the coastal waters.
Kenya

Useful Statistics
Republic of Kenya

GOVERNMENT: Semi-presidential Republic
LAND AREA: 527,968 km² (203,849 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 41,070,934
LANGUAGE: Swahili, English
CURRENCY: Kenyan shilling (KES)
CLIMATE: Tropical and hot on the coast: Apr to Jun. is called the season of long rains, Oct to Nov. the season of short rains. Influenced by the monsoons, which also dictate the direction of the currents.
UTC: +3

KENYA is revered as the “cradle of humanity”. Kenya has some 300 miles of coastline made up of amazing landscapes, beaches, mangrove swamps and creeks, and memorable mountainscapes such as the snow-capped peaks of Mt. Kenya. There are also many brilliant lakes, including lake Victoria and Lake Naivasha. Much of the emerald coast is protected by coral reefs, which provide excellent diving, while the beaches are reputed to be the best in Africa. According to diving experts, the SCUBA diving facilities on the beaches of Kenya are among the world’s best. The water is warm all year, so you can dive without a wet suit. The protective reefs, located several miles from the coast, have created calm and safe waters. The reefs are beautiful and in very good condition.

The most popular base for visiting yachts is Kilifi, north of Mombasa. With 40 national parks and reserves there is a unique opportunity to explore the most magnificent wildlife in Africa with thousands of animal species including lions, leopards, buffalos, rhinoceros, zebras, giraffes and elephants. One such reserve is the Masai Mara, where Blue Wildebeest can be seen on their large scale annual migration. There is a wide range of activities such as bird watching, mountain trekking, climbing and many more.

Madagascar

Useful Statistics
Republic of Madagascar

GOVERNMENT: Semi-presidential democratic Republic
LAND AREA: 587,041 km² (226,597 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2001) 21,926,221
LANGUAGE: Malagasy, French, English
CURRENCY: Malagasy ariary (MGA)
CLIMATE: Hot, rainy season from Nov to Apr. Cooler, dry season from May to Oct. SE trade winds predominate; occasional cyclones and violent thunderstorms.
UTC: +3

MADAGASCAR is an island nation off the SE coast of Africa and is home to 5% of the world’s plant and animal species, 80% of which are found nowhere else on earth. They include the lemur, the carnivorous fossa (mongoose), three bird families and six baobab (tree) species. The island offers diverse and spectacular scenery: mountains, deserts, rainforests, dazzling beaches fringing the Indian Ocean and island archipelagos linked by coral reefs and clear turquoise waters. The number of yachts coming through Madagascar is on the increase, with the island attracting a greater number of tourists to its resorts and the authorities encouraging improved services. The most attractive ports and anchorages are on the NW coast where Antsiranana (formerly known as Diego Suarez) has a cosmopolitan atmosphere and a beautiful natural harbour. Further along the coast is Madagascar’s prime attraction, the picturesque island of Nosy-Be, now a thriving tourist resort and facilities for yachts are increasing.
Cruising Madagascar

Madagascar is a remote and reserved island, and although it is the fourth largest island in the world, it remains, in the most part, untouched.

By Captain Anthony Daebritz – S/Y Georgia

The latitudes of Madagascar are from 12 degrees south to 25.5 degrees south. S/Y Georgia can make 200 – 250 miles per day on average. We avoided some of the distances by making night passages to arrive at a further location for sunrise. Note also that we travelled in the month of May which is in the dry season, avoiding subtropical rain and cyclones. Diving is one of the main attractions of Madagascar, and it rates with some of the best in the world. Windsurfing, surfing and snorkelling are also world class in Madagascar. A good arrival point for guests to embark is Morondava on the west coast. Guests arrive and spend the afternoon exploring the fascinating surrounds, known for erotically sculpted tombs that the Menage people built for their ancestors. We departed Morondova to arrive at Kirindy at daybreak – 45 miles (4.5 hours) later.

The reserve at Kirindy is “apparently” the place to see Fosa (Madagascar’s largest carnivore) as well as the striped mongoose and giant jumping rats. Having a guide is compulsory for this area and can be organised in Morondova before arrival. We departed at 2200 hours – northbound – for a 24 hour run.

From this point there are not many towns of interest due to their isolation and difficulty to approach by road. The town of Maintirano – 120 miles – (12 hours), although very isolated, is worth a look. But it may be wiser to head straight for the northwest point of Saint Andre (250 miles – 25 hours). The diving in this area although largely uncharted is amazing. The River Sambao, some 30 miles to the south of Saint Andre, could be interesting to explore with your tenders, and take a morning dive near Cap St Andre, and enjoy water sports & dingy sailing there. To get from Point St Andre to the Islands surrounding Nosy Be is 250 miles (25 hours) and this could be broken by an overnight passage.

Next stop for Georgia was Nosy Lava – 180 miles (18 hours) away. Arriving in Nosy Iranja (Turtle Island), enjoy the crystal clear water with its adjoining sand spit, which is a mating and resting area for large sea turtles. Then off to Nosy Be – 40 miles – (4 hours).
charter yacht friendly and it may be an idea to start your adventure onboard from Mahajamba on the northwest coast. This option would give guests a lot more time to do water sports and less travel time. It depends if they wish to explore a smaller area well, or a large area briefly.

TOILIARA
Most spectacular TOMBS of this area are those of the MASIKORO, a sub division of the Sakalava. Motor Bikes and quad bikes can be arranged from here. It could be an idea to do an overland to the north through Itiaky and Morombe. The Onilahy river runs east from Toiliara and could be explored to the 7 Lakes area. Word has it that the river is wide and deep in most parts. Ifanato “7” lakes can be explored from here. This region also has two large caves of around 80-m diameter and the descent can go almost 90-m. IMPORTANT – permission from the village chief must be gained prior to exploring the area.

MOROMBE
Apparently this town was deserted by the French in the early 21st century and never came back as a tourist spot. Very little about this town is mentioned except its locals are friendly and the fishing village always has fresh product. It may be worth a trip for the experience of visiting such an isolated town.

MORONDova
Cyclone Galifu battered Morondova in 2004. Damage was widespread but the town has since picked up the pieces. This friendly coastal town with clear water is the gateway to the southern region. Home to the famous deciduous forest, Belu su Mer and the Tsingy Bemaraha National Park. There are charter flights from here that can take you to Grande Tsingy where the pilot will then take you over the best areas with amazing views. The area’s name literally translates to “where one must not dive” – crocodiles live here…BEWARE.

BAREN ISLANDS
As the name states these islands are very much that – barren. The diving and clear water in this area is reputed to be wonderful, so it’s a good stop for water sports and activities.

MAHAJANGA
A large, hot but breezy town, with a large Indian population. There is an impressive fort 20-km south of Mahajanga. The historic fort was built by King Radama in 1824. The town of Katsepy across the bay from Mahajanga is worth a visit for one particular reason. Madame Chabaud herself commutes from France to Madagascar and has passed on her culinary skills to her daughter Christine. The restaurant Chez Chabaud is well worth a visit.

NORTH
The islands north and south of Nosy Be are well frequented by tourists and the locals have therefore tried to cash in, blame them or not. The diving in this area and number of good anchorages make it a safe haven for a yacht. The best restaurants on the west coast are in the south of Nosy Be. Madagascar has had a lot of culinary influences, and this is reflected in the cuisine. Various cultures, including African, Arab, European and Indonesian peoples, have all contributed to the creation of unique and interesting cuisine. Seafood, as well as fruit and spices from the various plantations on Nosy Bé, are all reflected in the local dishes. Dried fish, white, green and black peppers and tropical fruits are all featured in some of the local specialities!
SOUTH AFRICA is a country located at the southern tip of the continent of Africa. The South African coast stretches 2,798 km and borders both the Atlantic and Indian oceans. To the north of South Africa lie Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe, to the east are Mozambique and Swaziland. It surrounds the Kingdom of Lesotho, an independent enclave. South Africa is known for its diversity in cultures, languages, and religious beliefs; the population consisting roughly of 80% black, 9% white, 9% coloured and 2% Asian races. South Africa’s convenient position and excellent yachting facilities make it a natural stopover, added to which are the many nature reserves that make South Africa an interesting place to visit. One major drawback is the weather and sailing conditions, the waters around the tip of Africa being among the most dangerous in the world. For any major repair, Cape Town and Durban have a complete range of services. The myriad activities and attractions on offer for visitors include: epicurean and wine tours, hot air ballooning, hiking, white water rafting, diving, paragliding, mountain biking, and wildlife safaris for the active and adventurous. Don’t miss The Drakensberg mountains, the Wild Coast, Cape Town and the wine lands, and Zululand.

Useful Statistics

Republic of South Africa

GOVERNMENT: Constitutional Democracy

LAND AREA: 1,221,037 km²
(471,443 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2011) 50,586,757

LANGUAGE: Afrikaans, English, (Southern Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu)

CURRENCY: Rand (ZAR)

CLIMATE: Considerable variation in climate, but subtropical (sunny days/cool nights) along the east coast with prevailing SE summer winds and W or NW winter winds. Frequent gales.

UTC: +2

INTL DIALLING CODE: +27

SOUTH AFRICA is a country located at the southern tip of the continent of Africa. The South African coast stretches 2,798 km and borders both the Atlantic and Indian oceans. To the north of South Africa lie Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe, to the east are Mozambique and Swaziland. It surrounds the Kingdom of Lesotho, an independent enclave. South Africa is known for its diversity in cultures, languages, and religious beliefs; the population consisting roughly of 80% black, 9% white, 9% coloured and 2% Asian races. South Africa’s convenient position and excellent yachting facilities make it a natural stopover, added to which are the many nature reserves that make South Africa an interesting place to visit. One major drawback is the weather and sailing conditions, the waters around the tip of Africa being among the most dangerous in the world. For any major repair, Cape Town and Durban have a complete range of services. The myriad activities and attractions on offer for visitors include: epicurean and wine tours, hot air ballooning, hiking, white water rafting, diving, paragliding, mountain biking, and wildlife safaris for the active and adventurous. Don’t miss The Drakensberg mountains, the Wild Coast, Cape Town and the wine lands, and Zululand.
The sailing passage between Durban and Cape Town has a reputation of being difficult and one of the most dangerous in the world, but for superyachts that are prepared with the right information and backed by the excellent South African weather forecasting resources, the passage can be extremely rewarding. The number of cruising yachts visiting South Africa has remained stable in recent years as the Red Sea route was preferred by yachts undertaking a circumnavigation. With the return of South Africa to the international fold, this has changed as more sailors are tempted to experience firsthand this country’s many attractions. All round-the-world yacht races now include South Africa on their itinerary.

The weather patterns play a major part in that and Port Elizabeth.

The Agulhas Current
This current is one of the great ocean currents of the world, running mainly from northeast to southwest, following the two hundred metre contour of the continental shelf and dissipating over the Agulhas Bank south of Mossel Bay. The main axis of the current is on or near the two hundred metre line and can run at up to six knots at its fastest point.

The Variable Weather Patterns
These patterns are governed by low and high pressure systems moving across from the Atlantic Coast of South America and travelling eastwards up the eastern seaboard of the South African coast.

Availability Sheltered Harbours and Anchorages
The third factor is the lack of sheltered harbours and anchorages, particularly between Durban and Port Elizabeth. The number of cruising yachts visiting South Africa has remained stable in recent years as the Red Sea route was preferred by yachts undertaking a circumnavigation. With the return of South Africa to the international fold, this has changed as more sailors are tempted to experience firsthand this country’s many attractions. All round-the-world yacht races now include South Africa on their itinerary. As there are yacht clubs in most ports, the clubs are the best source of information on local conditions. The yacht clubs like to be contacted in advance by those wishing to use their facilities. Most yacht clubs, such as those at Cape Town, Durban and Richards Bay, have their own hauling facilities, or will use the facilities of a local boatyard.

You should take every opportunity to explore the interior of this cultural, fascinating country. The Zululand Yacht Club in Richards Bay is a good place from which to visit the Umfolozi, Hluhluwe and St Lucia reserves, while stunning Kruger Park can be easily reached from the Point Yacht Club in Durban.

Hout Bay, located some 20 miles south of Cape Town, is an excellent alternative for those who prefer a smaller port with surrounding beaches, wildlife and scenery to the busy marinas of Cape Town. Almost all repair facilities for smaller craft can be found here as well, often at a better rate and with more attention to detail. Another alternative to Cape Town is Simonstown, on the NW side of False Bay, some 15 miles north of the Cape of Good Hope. Tradespeople from Cape Town come to Hout Bay and Simonstown on a regular basis.

Abnormal ‘Rouge’ Waves
It is a known fact that giant waves occur on the South African coast in the Agulhas current region, where south westerly gales prevail against the southward flowing Agulhas current. Cape Town University analysed the recorded conditions that prevailed each time a number of ships were damaged by exceptional waves, and found that in all cases the dominant waves were always from the southwest. The weather patterns play a major part in that...
The major wind belts around Southern Africa are influenced primarily by two high pressure systems, namely the South Atlantic High (SAH) and the Indian Ocean High (IOH). These high pressure systems form part of what is known as the ‘subtropical ridge’. Because of the effect of Coriolis force, the winds associated with such high pressure systems are deflected to the left in the southern hemisphere, and therefore blow around the highs in an anticlockwise direction. Such systems are also called ‘anticyclones’. In contrast to the high pressure systems, to the south there is a belt of low pressure systems, or ‘cyclones’, with associated winds blowing around the lows in a clockwise direction.

The conditions along the southeast coast of South Africa are unique and superyacht captains planning a voyage here should avail themselves of all information pertaining to the expected weather for their passage.

The most dangerous period occurs when cells of low pressure are moving along the coast in a north easterly direction. These lows are a regular feature of the eastern seaboard and it often happens that during their passage the wind can change from a near north easterly gale to a south westerly gale, sometimes in a matter of minutes. The southwest wind then reinforces the existing waves generated by a short choppy sea, which acts directly against the Agulhas current.

It is the interaction between the strong south westerly wind and the strong south flowing current which at times can reach 6 knots that creates monstrous freak waves, of which the charts warn: “Abnormal waves of up to 20 meters in height, preceded by deep troughs may be encountered in the area between the edge of the continental shelf and twenty miles to seaward thereof”. The warning also describes the necessary evasive action to be taken under unfavourable conditions, namely, to stay clear of the areas seaward of the continental shelf. In other words, move inshore, inside the 200 metre line. This well established rule has given rise to the belief that the bottom topography plays a part in the generation of giant waves, but in fact this only plays an indirect role.

The two main ports on the South African coastline are Cape Town and Durban. S/Y Georgia (48m) recently sailed to South Africa from Southern Brazil and then spent two months in Cape Town, moored in the front of the Cape Grace Hotel/Cape Town Marina. Captain Anthony Daebritz commented that this berth was an ‘awesome’ spot for the yacht but since Cape Town has not had too many superyacht visits in the past, it was not an obvious superyacht port with the associated support industry, so obtaining support and services was a challenge.
Georgia cruised to Jeffreys Bay with crew only and they surfed the famous Jeffreys Bay breaks which was a highlight and thoroughly enjoyed by all who did so. They then stopped in Durban after a quick passage from Cape Town. Situated strategically on the south eastern tip of Africa, Durban is Africa’s premier port, serving a host of commercial and non-commercial traffic. It is the gateway to South Africa’s commerce and also feeds traffic to many landlocked countries. Durban is a regular port of call for traffic between east and west and offers a host of services such as repair yards, dry docks, bunkering and provisioning. Johannesburg International Airport plays host to most of the international airlines and allows for easy access to Durban for crew transfers. Durban’s tropical climate sets the scene for a holiday atmosphere in a vibrant city with an estimated population of two million and is a premier holiday destination for both local and international holiday makers. A true mix of cultures, including African, Indian, Muslim and European make for the rich diversity, with first-class hotels, infrastructure and beaches and a short distance to some of the best game viewing private parks and other spectacular tourist attractions in the country. In addition, South Africa and particularly Durban, is close to the Indian Ocean Islands and is a new and exciting destination for superyachts, seeking both fun and essential services. Del Shipping and Trading act as ships and superyacht agents in all the major ports of South Africa, with its head office based in Durban. Experienced personnel offer a dedicated and professional 24 hour service to clients together with an understanding of their needs and they welcome superyachts to this new destination.

SUPERYACHT AGENT
South Africa is represented by superyacht agent Del Shipping & Trading.
General Weather Conditions of the Northern Indian Ocean

By Amanda Delaney, Mark Neiswender and Brian Whitley of Weather Routing, Inc.

THE NORTHERN INDIAN OCEAN
This region is marked by two distinct “seasons”, both monsoonal seasons (as an aside, it is often a common misconception that monsoons are defined as weather regimes that are strictly related to heavy rain and moisture, but in fact, the word monsoon actually refers to a seasonal change in dominant wind direction). The northeast monsoon develops during late October and continues through early March, gradually becoming more intermittent. Later in the year, typically in April, we begin to see more intermittent S-SW winds associated with the Southwest Monsoon, though the Southwest Monsoon season really is in “full swing” during the period from mid/late May through early October.

Several weather features are responsible for the development and transition of the monsoons. The equatorial trough (low pressure) climatologically resides from 05N to 10S and from 50E eastward across the southern Maldives to Sumatra and western Indonesia. This trough is usually defined by numerous showers and squalls moving westward from Sumatra and western Indonesia, and changes little in strength, while the trough itself remains quasi-stationary throughout the year. However, the trough does have a tendency to be a few degrees farther north in the summer, and a few degrees farther south in the winter. From late October through March, a strong arctic high becomes established across much of northern Asia. An associated ridge of high pressure builds across the northern Arabian Peninsula to the Bay of Bengal, and allows cold air to rush southward. This, in turn, produces enhanced north-northeast winds across the northern Indian Ocean when this ridge interacts with the equatorial trough (see Figure 2A). These north-northeast winds are usually strongest across the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea (east of the Gulf of Aden) with winds of Beaufort Force 5-7 and swells of 9-13ft. However, during December through February sustained gale force winds can develop in these regions when the arctic high is usually strongest. Beaufort Force 7-8 winds and swells reaching 11-16ft are not uncommon during these cases. Also, the Somali coast and Gulf of Mannar are prone to funneling winds, likely sustained Beaufort Force 6-7. Winds and swells gradually ease farther south and closer to the equatorial trough. The tropics allow for winds to shift out of the east and range from Beaufort Force 3-5. Swells in this vicinity are usually out of the east at approximately 5-8ft. By April through early May the arctic high over northern Asia weakens and the equatorial trough begins to migrate farther south. In this time, the northeast monsoon slowly weakens and winds shift to the south-southwest. At the end of May, the winds strengthen from the south-southwest starting the southwest monsoon (see Figure 2B).
monsoons, like everything else in the north Indian
Winds funneling through the Strait of Malacca
highest winds occurring during the late morning
nautical miles from the Yemen coast, winds are generally
from the northeast and east of Beaufort Force
3-5 and swells 4-7ft during the winter. During
the winds shift to more east and southeast of Beaufort Force 4-6 (with the highest
winds occurring over the extreme western gulf) and swells 5-8ft. However, within 2-3 nautical
miles from the Yemen coast, winds are generally
onsore by day and offshore by night with the
highest winds occurring during the late morning
and afternoon hours year round.
Winds tunneling through the Strait of Malacca switch directions during the transition of the
monsoons, like everything else in the north Indian
Ocean. During the northeast monsoon, winds are
generally out of the north and northwest of Beaufort Force 3-5. Swells generally subside
through the strait, with heights generally from 3-6ft. Winds shift to more south and southeast of Beaufort Force 3-5 during the southwest
monsoon and swells are generally 3-5ft. Winds are typically more variable and lighter year round,
especially near the southern entrance of the strait, due to its proximity to the equator.
As the southwest monsoon becomes established in April and May, the threat for tropical cyclones increases across the northern Indian Ocean.
The tracks and frequency of tropical cyclones differ across the Arabian Sea and the Bay of
Bengal. In the Arabian Sea, the tropical cyclone season usually begins in May and lasts through
October. Tropical cyclones generally develop off the southwest coast of India. Once development
occurs, one of two tracks will normally occur: either to the northwest to north-northwest, toward
the northern Arabian Sea; or west to west-northwest towards the Arabian Peninsula. There are
times when a tropical cyclone tracks from the
Bay of Bengal across central or southern India and re-intensiﬁes once emerging offshore the
western Indian coast. The peak in the tropical cyclone season occurs at the end of May through
June and again in October. However, tropical cyclones develop less frequently across the
Arabian Sea averaging only 1 to 3 systems a year.
The tropical cyclone season across the Bay of Bengal begins in April and continues through
December. The peaks in the season occur in May and November during the transition between the southwest and northeast monsoons. Tropical
cyclones usually develop in the southeastern Bay of Bengal (north of approximately 4N) and track either north to northwest towards Bangladesh or west to northwestward to the
eastern coast of India. Overall, the Bay of Bengal generally spawns 3 to 5 tropical cyclones a year. As far as ocean currents are concerned, in
the Northern Indian Ocean the currents are dominated by the overall monsoonal pattern. During the southwest monsoon, the strong southwesterly winds along the eastern Africa Coast thru the Arabian sea drive the current
north-northeastward into the Arabian sea, turning
eastward, then southeastward along the eastern
Arabian Sea, then eastward along and north of
Southwest winds are strongest from the coast of Somalia eastward several hundred miles to
approximately 65E, as well as from southeastern India and Sri Lanka eastward across the Bay of
Gulf. Winds are generally from the south-southwest of approximately Beaufort Force 5-7
and swells 8-12ft across the Bay of Bengal. However, southwest winds will funnel across the
Gulf of Mannar and become more westerly along the southern coast of Sri Lanka of force 6-7.
The coast of Somalia consistently will have the
highest winds (Beaufort Force 8-9) and building swells (15-20ft) during June through August.
Winds are usually lower south of 5N, generally
coming from the west at approximately Beaufort Force 4 or less and swells become westerly 4-7ft. By late September through October the southwest
monsoon gradually weakens, becoming intermittent and eventually transitioning to the
northeast monsoon by the end of November. The
monsoon does inﬂuence other regions outside of the northern Indian Ocean as well. Across the Gulf of Aden winds are generally
from the northeast and east of Beaufort Force
3-5 and swells 4-7ft during the winter. During
the summer, the winds shift to more east and southeast of Beaufort Force 4-6 (with the highest
winds occurring over the extreme western gulf) and swells 5-8ft. However, within 2-3 nautical
miles from the Yemen coast, winds are generally
onsore by day and offshore by night with the
highest winds occurring during the late morning
and afternoon hours year round.
Winds tunneling through the Strait of Malacca switch directions during the transition of the
monsoons, like everything else in the north Indian
Ocean. During the northeast monsoon, winds are
generally out of the north and northwest of Beaufort Force 3-5. Swells generally subside
through the strait, with heights generally from 3-6ft. Winds shift to more south and southeast of Beaufort Force 3-5 during the southwest
monsoon and swells are generally 3-5ft. Winds are typically more variable and lighter year round,
Tanzania

Useful Statistics
United Republic of Tanzania

GOVERNMENT: Presidential Republic
LAND AREA: 945,203 km² (364,898 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 43,188,000
LANGUAGE: Swahili, English
CURRENCY: Tanzanian shilling (TZS)
CLIMATE: Tropical, hot and humid along the coast especially during the NW monsoon from Dec to Apr. SE monsoon from May to Oct. Rainy months are April/ May, Nov/ Dec.
UTC: +3
INTL DIALLING CODE: +255

TANZANIA is a country in central East Africa bordered by Kenya and Uganda to the north, Rwanda, Burundi and the Congo to the west, and Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique to the south. The country’s eastern borders lie on the Indian Ocean. The famous islands of Zanzibar lie just offshore. The major coastal city and political capital is Dar es Salaam which is the major seaport for the country. Tanzania is mountainous in the NE, where Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest permanently snow-capped free standing mountain in Africa, is situated. To the north and west are the Great Lakes of Lake Victoria (Africa’s largest lake) and Lake Tanganyika (Africa’s deepest lake, and known for its unique species of fish). Tanzania contains many large and ecologically significant wildlife parks and game sanctuaries. Tanzania is one of the unique destinations on the African continent with excellent cultural tourism, beach holidays, game hunting, historical and archaeological ventures and certainly the best wildlife photographic safaris on the continent. It is a land of many wonders, unparalleled diversity of fauna and flora, scenery, topography and very friendly people.

Mozambique

Useful Statistics
Republic of Mozambique

GOVERNMENT: Presidential Republic (Multiparty Democracy)
LAND AREA: 801,590 km² (309,496 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 22,894,000
LANGUAGE: Portuguese
CURRENCY: Mozambican metical (MZN)
CLIMATE: Tropical and mostly hot and humid with irregular rainfall. Wet season from Oct to Mar – cyclones common. Dry season from Apr to Sept. SE trade winds blow during the winter (Feb to Jun), while NE winds prevail in summer (Jul to Jan).
UTC: +2
INTL DIALLING CODE: +258

MOZAMBIQUE is a country in SE Africa bordered by Kenya and Uganda to the north, Rwanda, Burundi and Congo to the west, and Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique to the south. It has some 1400 miles of coastline on the Indian Ocean. The island area of Basaruto and the area around Maputo provide some of the best cruising. The coast around the city of Inhambane, is home to many secluded beaches. Gorongosa wildlife park is on the way up North and visitors to Vilanculos will be tempted to linger a while at the luxury resorts of the Bazaruto Archipelago. Mozambique is one of the best locations for SCUBA diving and snorkelling as its waters are alive with many species of marine life including dolphins, manta ray, shoals of tropical fish and the occasional shark. There are many other activities available in Mozambique such as deep-sea fishing, fly fishing, sunsets cruising, sailing, and exploring the Islands. Caution is advised if travelling inland as the presence of landmines laid during the war is a continuing hazard despite de-mining efforts.
Somalia

Useful Statistics
Republic of Somalia

GOVERNMENT: state of flux (lack of a functioning central government) = transitional
LAND AREA: 637,661 km² (246,201 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2009) 9,832,017
LANGUAGE: Somali, Arabic
CURRENCY: Somali shilling (SOS)
CLIMATE: Irregular rainfall and recurring droughts with a year round hot climate. Mean daily temps range from 15-40°C (60-105°F). The SW monsoon (May to Oct) and the NW monsoon (Dec to Feb) are the mildest seasons, but winds can reach gale force and currents can be very strong. The “tangambili” periods in between (Oct/Nov) and (Mar-May) are hot and humid.
UTC: +3 | INTL DIALLING CODE: +252

SOMALIA is a country located in the Horn of Africa. For the third consecutive year, Forbes ranked Somalia as the most dangerous destination in the world, with Afghanistan trailing behind. The Somali civil war and continued fighting (mostly with Ethiopia) for the last 20 years has wreaked the country into a sorry state where millions of Somalis are receiving food aid. Superyachts are strongly advised to avoid passing between the island of Socotra and the African mainland and stay well clear of the coast where piracy near the Horn of Africa and on the northern Somali coast in the Gulf of Aden have been widely and regularly reported. The best approach is to register with the Maritime Security Centre (Horn of Africa), sail in convoy with other ships and try to be in permanent contact with someone ashore who knows one’s position at all times and could alert the authorities in an emergency.

Djibouti

Useful Statistics
Republic of Djibouti

GOVERNMENT: Unitary Multiparty Republic
LAND AREA: 23,310 km² (9,000 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2011) 906,000
LANGUAGE: French and Arabic, plus national languages of Somali and Afar.
CURRENCY: Franc (DF)
CLIMATE: Semi-arid climate that is very hot and dry. There are two seasons; a dry season from May to October and a relatively cool season (with coastal rainfall) from November to April. Average temperature ranges are from 23-29°C (73-84°F) in January to 31-41°C (88-106°F) in July.
UTC: +3 | INTL DIALLING CODE: +253

Djibouti is a small country in eastern Africa. The French Territory of the Afars and the Issas became Djibouti in 1977. The capital of Djibouti is Djibouti City. Djibouti provides services as both a transit port for the region and an international trans-shipment and refuelling centre. Djibouti has few natural resources and little industry. Djibouti is the refuelling stopover port of choice for superyachts transiting the Red Sea.

Superyacht Services

Somalia

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

East Africa Pilot – McPhun 1998
Indian Ocean Cruising Guide 2nd Ed
NP 3 Africa Pilot Volume 3
NP 38 India West Coast Pilot
NP 64 Red Sea Gulf Of Aden

USEFUL WEBSITES

Maritime Security Centre (Horn of Africa): www.mschoa.eu
ICC Piracy Reporting Centre
www.icc-ccs.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=30&Itemid=12

Superyacht Services

Djibouti

COMPAGNIE MARITIME ET DE MAHUTENTION DE DJIBOUTI
T: +253 351028
F: +253 350466
E: comad@intnet.dj

Djibouti Port Authority
T: +253 352331 / 356187
E: port@intnet.dj

INCHCAPE SHIPPING SERVICES ET CIE (DJIBOUTI) S.A.
T: +253 353844 / 353836 / 351960
F: +253 353294 / 253 351670
Tlx: 5843 DJ
E: portagencydjibouti@iss-shipping.com

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- Suez: 1,290'
- Dubai: 1,625'
- Port Victoria: 1,508'
- Colombo: 2,203'
- Male: 1,894'

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

Red Sea Pilot Aden to Cyprus 2nd Edition – Morgan & Davies
Piracy Guidelines

Guidelines for superyachts considering a passage through the Gulf of Aden, Yemeni and Somali waters including the NW Indian Ocean north of 15° south and west of 60° east

**THESE** notes are published in co-operation with the MSCHOA (Maritime Security Centre – Horn of Africa) set up by EU NAVFOR ATALANTA. The notes are for guidance only and a final decision on whether to enter the Gulf of Aden or any waters where pirates operate and how to conduct a vessel in those waters remains entirely the responsibility of the master of each vessel. Superyacht Captains should consult the following two web sites for latest information on Piracy in the region:

**Maritime Security Centre, Horn of Africa** (MSCHOA) www.mschoa.eu

**ICC Commercial Crime Services (CCS)**

www.icc-ccs.org

The danger of piracy and consequent loss of life and property in the Gulf of Aden, Yemeni and the Somali waters (up to 600 miles offshore), is high. See also advice from the UK FCO (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) at www.fco.gov.uk. Piracy has also occurred in the adjoining areas of the Indian Ocean north of 15° south and west of 60° east.

The MSCHOA liaises with anti-piracy patrols being conducted by warships from several nations in the area and UKMTO Dubai principally for the protection of merchant vessels. The patrols operate mainly in the Gulf of Aden and the Somali Basin but may operate anywhere within the area and will provide surveillance and support as far as possible to yachts however no guarantee whatever can be offered as to the safe transit of any yacht through these waters.

A yacht that, despite the risks described, decides to make a passage, should advise their plans with as much notice as possible to the UKMTO Dubai and MSCHOA and provide the information set out in the attached Yacht Passage Advice Form, preferably by email but alternatively by telephone:

**UKMTO**

(UK Maritime Trade Organization) (RN) Dubai

ukmto@eim.ae

+971 50 552 3215

fax +971 4 306 5710

(24 hours)

**MSCHOA**

postmaster@mschoa.org

+44 (0)1923 958547, 39, 35.

Fax +44 (0) 1923 958520 (24 hours)

US-flagged vessels may wish to contact

**MARLO** (Maritime Liaison Office) (USN) Bahrain

marlo.bahrain@me.navy.mil

+973 3940 1395 (24 hours)

In an emergency any of the above numbers (or a warship on VHF 16 or VHF 8 when in range) will respond on a 24 hour basis. Yachts are urged to register at least two weeks before entering a high risk area. Yachts coming south through the Red Sea should report well before reaching Bab al Mandeb and should register before reaching Salagfa/Jeddah.

When a yacht registers its movements, MSCHOA will email to her piracy alerts until she is clear of the area (+72hrs). MSCHOA will pass details of yachts to patrolling warships.

During her passage a yacht should monitor VHF 16 and VHF 8 and report by the means and at the intervals advised by the MSCHOA, or by a patrolling warship. Merchant ships transiting the GoA are being advised to use an Internationally Recognised Transit Corridor (ITRC) in order for warship patrols to be effective. MSCHOA advises yachts to remain close to or within the IRTC as follows:

- The IRTC has two lanes, each 5NM wide and a separation zone between them 2NM wide.
- All intentions and purposes it operates as a Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) although formally it does not have that status. The co-ordinates of the IRTC lanes are:
  - Westbound lane, northern boundary: 12 00N 45 00E 14 30N 53 00E southern boundary: 11 55N 45 00E 14 25N 53 00E Eastbound lane, northern boundary: 11 53N 45 00E 14 23N 53 00E southern boundary: 11 48N 45 00E 14 18N 5300E. The course eastbound is 072°T and westbound 252°T.
- A yacht which has registered her intention to transit the GoA is invited to sail EITHER in the 2-mile-wide buffer zone between the two lanes OR close to the outer limit of the appropriate lane. These options give the best chance of a yacht’s transmission on VHF16 or VHF 8 being received by a patrolling warship, or being relayed by a merchant vessel. However VHF contact is not guaranteed.

A yacht coming from for example Aden eastbound or Salalah westbound may join the IRTC some way from its start point. The area of the IRTC between 47E and 49E is considered the most dangerous and a yacht should ensure she has joined well before the “high risk area” to enjoy the maximum possible protection. The yacht should plan to conduct as much of this part of the passage as possible at night. In the interests of navigation safety, on joining the IRTC mid way along its length a yacht should act as if joining a Traffic Separation Scheme.

It has long been common practice for yachts intending to transit the GoA to form small informal convoys in either Djibouti, Aden or Salalah. It is emphasized that this is a decision for individual skippers but the military forces support this concept. If the convoy approach is to be followed it is suggested that there is a limit of no more than five vessels in any one convoy. This is because vessels will need to keep close to one another if they are to offer any protection through numbers, and close station-keeping for the duration of the voyage through the GoA may prove a strain particularly if short-handed. Carriage of arms is not advised. There is a serious risk of escalation of the levels of violence.

**AIS, COMMUNICATIONS, RADAR, EPIRBS ETC.**

Current advice to ships (which are required to carry AIS class A) is to have it transmitting limited information whilst transiting the Gulf of Aden, restricted to ship’s identity, position, course, speed, navigational status and safety related information. Most AIS class B transponders (commonly carried by yachts) can only transmit limited information and are not configurable by the user. Current naval advice to yachts is to leave it switched on in the Gulf of Aden so that the warships know where they are.

In the Somali Basin or further afield where there are far fewer warships operating an AIS transponder should be switched off unless the yacht is either aware of military forces in their vicinity, or is under attack. Use of AIS should be verified when possible through contact with MSCHOA for the latest advice.

A 406 EPIRB or PLB will quickly draw attention to you but remember these are emergency devices intended specifically for saving life. An SART will show a signal on any nearby marine radar which may include that of pirates. It is legitimate to call “mayday” if under attack (VHF or HF DSC, VHF 16 or 8, Sat-C or any other means). For an early warning call discreet use of a satellite phone to one of the numbers in para 3 above may be the best option. When in transit a radar transceiver should be used in the normal way. A radar target enhancer (RTE) provides an apparently large echo and should be switched off unless there is danger of collision. The possibility of an HF communications facility for yachts in the region is under discussion.

**PREPARATIONS**

Ensure that all systems (in particular the engines) are in good shape, radars and satphones are working properly, that you have plenty of fuel and the ship’s batteries are in good shape. Be
Prepared to motor or motor-sail at your maximum speed for the entire transit of the IRTC. Carry additional supplies (particularly water purification, medical supplies and vitamin supplements) in the event that you are unfortunate enough to be pirated.

Pirates operate from very small craft, which limits their operation to moderate weather conditions. While no statistics exist, it is likely to be difficult to operate these small craft in sea states 3 and above though operation in higher sea states cannot be ruled out. Pirates are less likely to launch attacks in the dark and merchant ships try to pass through the area between 47°E and 49°E in the IRTC during the hours of darkness for this reason. Even during the day, the pirate’s visual horizon is less than five miles; he will see a merchantman long before he sees a yacht.

In a typical pirate attack small high speed (up to 25knot) open boats deploy from a mother ship, often a pirated fishing vessel or dhow. Commonly two or more of these small high speed open boats are used in attacks, often approaching from either quarter of the intended target. Be aware that perfectly legitimate tuna fishermen often employ similar tactics when chasing fish. It can be very hard to differentiate between a genuine fisherman and a prospective pirate; in general, the crew of a fishing boat will have ‘all eyes’ trained on the elusive target; in a pirate boat, the ‘gunmen’ may remain hidden.

Despite the odds being uneven, it is worth making a risk assessment in advance of a transit and making sure everyone has thought through and agreed how they will respond. Guidance on what to do in the event of an attack is available below. Mental preparation is essential. Continuous vigilance and an early call to the authorities if in doubt, is recommended as the arrival of military units (by sea or air) or a VHF call to a warship (even if you cannot see a warship) may cause an impending attack to be called off. If you can delay the pirates from boarding by even 15 minutes, it may give the warships time to react. The time between first sighting a pirate and the commencement of an attack could be as little as 5 minutes. When making a routine call on VHF, do not give your position in Lat and Long, unless you are absolutely certain that the warship is close enough to be able to assist you, or you are making a May Day call. The risk is that in reporting what turns out to be a false alarm, you could alert other skiffs of your position and excite their interest in you.

**UNDER ATTACK**
A vessel is recommended to make a mayday call report immediately to UKMTO Dubai. If possible, the call to UKMTO Dubai should be followed by a call to MSCHOA, and MARLO Bahrain (who focus on US-flagged vessels).

**PIRATES ON BOARD**
- Try to remain calm
- Stay together as far as it is practicable to do so
- Offer no resistance
- Cooperate with the pirates
- Do Not Use firearms, even if available – the risk of escalation is significant.
- Do Not use flash photography, which may be mistaken for muzzle flashes by the pirates or by any military force sent to assist
- Do Not use flares or other pyrotechnics as weapons against pirates.

- In the event that military personnel take action on board the vessel, unless otherwise directed all crew members should keep low to the deck, cover their head with both hands (always ensuring that both hands are empty and visible).

Be prepared to answer questions on identity and status as military personnel will need to differentiate quickly between crew and pirates.

Follow-up Reports should be sent to MSCHOA who will advise on information needed.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**
Piracy, Protection and the Law

In this age of increased need for security at sea, Marcel Vaarzon-Morel and Sam Burton untangle the legal knots around security and liability.

By Marcel Vaarzon-Morel and Sam Burton

Piracy over the last few years has been a re-emerging phenomenon, and the ever present question is whether private boat-owners should choose to arm themselves as a means of protection. Reports from the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) indicate that the frequency of piracy incidents has not waned. In fact, there have been 162 such incidents so far in 2012. While most attacks are reported off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, piracy incidents are also widespread in parts of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The Wall Street Journal reported in January 2010 that large shipping and fishing companies have been forced to resort to employing private security firms to protect their vessels when travelling through high-risk waters. While companies are reluctant to engage in armed conflicts with pirate vessels, the practice of carrying armed guards on board has grown and is deemed by some to be imperative. The problem with this emerging practice, and the reason many companies have been reluctant to embrace it, is that it opens a Pandora’s Box of potential legal dilemmas. Issues of civil and even criminal liability arise, as do questions of jurisdiction given that these boats are moving between the territorial waters of multiple countries. These issues also raise questions as to the traditional responsibilities of a ship’s captain and how these responsibilities apply in the current climate. So what does this mean for the innocent owner of a private pleasure craft? They may still be at risk of piracy. And what happens if they choose to embrace the trend of carrying armed guards on board for protection? Putting aside the issue of self-defence against acts of piracy, this article looks at illegal actions that may be taken by a security guard and the potential consequences for a ship’s owner and captain. Consider this situation: You own a large vessel and are about to embark on a fishing voyage from Darwin to the Philippines. You hire a private security firm who provide an armed security guard to travel with you on your journey. You encounter a small, unmarked vessel several miles off the coast of the Philippines, which appears to have set its course directly for you. You signal for the vessel to identify itself, however, it does not respond as the vessel looms closer and anticipating the worst the security guards open fire believing there are pirates on board the vessel. One of the men on board the stray ship is killed and another two are injured. You continue on your voyage and return home safely. You may now be thinking the money spent hiring the security firm was a solid investment. What you might not have considered are the legal ramifications of the incident if in fact it was not an attempted pirate attack. The security guard has potentially carried out an illegal act and you may be liable for it. The other problem this raises relates to the responsibilities of the Captain. We all know captains and ship owners have responsibilities to ensure the safety and security of the people and cargo on board their vessel. But what happens when such responsibilities are outsourced to a private security firm? To what extent can the legal obligations of the captain be passed on?

The Parties Involved
The first issue to consider is the relationship of the various parties that may be involved in the
safety and security of a vessel. On the one hand, we have the relationship between the owner of the vessel ("the Company") and the captain ("the Master") and the differing responsibilities which may be assigned to each of these parties. On the other hand, we have the independent contractor who is providing security services for the vessel. This party may be contracted on behalf of the Company or the Master and their obligations will be largely controlled by the contract itself. What is clear is that there is an intertwining relationship between the main actors involved in the security of any vessel which, like an unruly web of tangled rope, must be untangled to decipher where the liability of one party ends and the other begins.

**THE CAPTAIN'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

As mentioned above, when security firms are contracted to provide protection on ocean-bound voyages, a question can arise regarding the responsibilities of the Captain for the safety of the passengers on board and whether these responsibilities can be passed on to the travelling security guard.

To answer this question it will often be necessary to look at the actual contract between the ship's owner and the security provider. This will often contain extensive exclusion of liability clauses that seek to protect the contractor from liability for loss or damage sustained by the ship. The result of such clauses may be that, whilst the security firm is contracted to provide security services, the ship's captain ultimately remains legally responsible for the safety of those on board. It would always be prudent to ensure, however, that any contract of this sort contains a clause that protects the captain from liability for patently illegal conduct on the part of the security contractor.

In the case of larger passenger vessels and cargo ships, the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (1974) (SOLAS) recognises that the authority of the Master of any ship extends beyond any other person and that the Master will have the ultimate discretion regarding safety measures to be taken on board. In the case of smaller private vessels, which are subject to less regulation, the situation is much less clear.

**CIVIL LIABILITY**

The next issue is whether the ship's captain may be liable in a civil suit against the injured fishermen. There are two main questions here. The first is what jurisdiction applies to the determination of the captain's liability. The second is whether the captain can be liable for the actions of the contractor.

a) Jurisdiction

Generally, the law applicable in relation to any tort (or civil claim) is the law of the place where the tort occurred (the 'lex loci delicti'). Therefore, if a tort occurs in New South Wales, the laws of New South Wales will apply to the determination of the defendant's liability. Maritime torts, however, pose an interesting dilemma as they can occur outside the strict jurisdiction of any one place. Where the tort is committed inside the territorial waters of a particular country, the lex loci delicti rule will apply as that country's jurisdiction will extend over those waters. A country's territorial sea is the body of water extending 12 nautical miles off the country's coast. Where the tort is committed on the high seas, however, we have a different situation. In this case, the laws that govern the tort will be those of the place or country in which the vessel is registered. This means that, regardless of where the injured fishermen bring their civil claim, the laws of the jurisdiction of registration will be used to determine the liability of the captain.

b) Liability of the captain for the actions of the security guard

Civil law recognises certain situations where one person (A) may be liable for the actions of another (B). The main category of such liability is the case of an employer. It is generally recognised that employers are liable for the tortuous acts of their employees. This liability does not, however, extend to the situation where (A) hires an independent contractor. Therefore, the ship's captain in the example given above would, strictly speaking, not be liable for the actions of the security guard as the guard was hired as an independent contractor. The matter becomes complicated, however, when the lines between independent contractor and employee become blurred.

**CRIMINAL LIABILITY**

The last issue is whether the captain may be criminally responsible for the acts of the security guard. Crimes committed within the territorial sea of any state will generally be governed by the laws of that state. For example, in Australia, the Crimes at Sea Act 2000 (Cth) and the State and Territory equivalents, extend the criminal jurisdiction of the Commonwealth and that of the States and Territories to Australia's territorial sea. This criminal jurisdiction applies to foreign ships in Australia's territorial waters as well as Australian ships. So, in the example given above, if the acts of the security guard occurred in the territorial sea of say the Philippines, can the captain be liable for criminal prosecution? Putting to one side the specific rules of criminal law that may apply in the Philippines, criminal liability (like civil liability) can in some situations be imputed onto one person (A) for the acts of another (B). This can occur when (A) and (B) form an agreement to commit a particular crime. Even if (B) carries out all the necessary acts involved in the crime on their own, (A) may still be criminally responsible. Furthermore, (A) can still be liable for other crimes that are committed by (B) if it was reasonably foreseeable that such crimes could occur during the course of carrying out the agreed crime.

As an interesting twist on our Philippine fishing voyage example, consider this: Before embarking you agree with the security guard that they will bring with them on board several automatic machine guns. In forming this agreement you both know that bringing these on board will breach arms control laws (thereby forming an agreement to commit a crime). The security guard then uses these weapons to kill and injure the fishermen. Was such a result reasonably foreseeable when the agreement was made to carry the arms on board? The situation is much less clear when we consider crimes committed on the high seas outside the jurisdiction of any one country. Certain international crimes do exist; however, generally speaking they relate to broader and more serious acts such as genocide and crimes against humanity.

**CONCLUSION**

As is apparent from the above discussion, the hurricane of potential legal dilemmas that is stirred up when armed security guards are taken on board any vessel is vast and dangerous. The difficulty for a ship's captain is that while they are ultimately responsible for the welfare of the ship, her cargo and all that sail upon her, inadvertently the captain may find themselves in hot water when armed security guards adopt potentially unlawful actions when protecting themselves from suspected pirates.

Legal expert Marcel Vaarzon-Morel is a professional lawyer and Director of Vaarzon-Morel Solicitors, Based in Newcastle, Australia, the company specialises in the marine industry and maritime law.


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If only they could have taken a short cut via the Suez Canal and through the Red Sea, perhaps the world would have been fully charted that much earlier! Although the Persians and Ancient Egyptians did in fact try to dig a canal in ancient times, as far back as 500 BC, it wasn’t until the latter half of the 19th century that work commenced on what was to become one of the engineering wonders of the world and the greatest conduit to global trade seen at that time.

Sailing to or through the Middle East in a superyacht is a unique experience. It is the gateway from the Mediterranean to the south and the great expanse of the Indian Ocean. The Suez Canal represents its own challenges and is a maritime experience one must try to achieve. In the Great Southern Route we have endeavoured to provide first hand advice and key contacts to make the passage as straightforward as possible. Recently, new cruising areas have increased in popularity in the Red Sea including Sharm El Sheikh and Hurghada. Refuelling in Djibouti is commonplace and gives most superyachts the range to then head off into the Indian Ocean and set course for the Seychelles, Maldives and India, or up the coast to Oman and around into the Persian Gulf to visit Dubai, Bahrain or Kuwait. Dubai, with its massive tourism-orientated construction program, is becoming one of the new superyacht destinations with some excellent facilities and many planned and well under construction. “The Palms” and “The World” man-made offshore island communities are an engineering feat of 21st Century proportions and will attract many visiting yachts in the years ahead. Although typically most superyachts transiting the Suez and Red Sea have headed south and east to the islands of the Seychelles or Mauritius or due east to India and the legendary Maldives. Whatever your cruising plans, welcome to the Western Gateway of The Great Southern Route.

The Middle East conjures images of sultans, sand and solitary isolation. Never ending hills of sand and sparse windswept desert. Ancient mosques and bedouin traders. It is a region rich not just in oil but in history, tracing its lineage back to the Great Empire of Persia, and across the Asian continent to the spice lands of India and the Orient. European seafarers have been trading with the Middle East and beyond for as long as there has been civilisation. Many ancient seafarers of the Mediterranean – Phoenicians, Egyptians, Romans, Trojans, Greeks and the Venetians – faced the long and arduous voyage from the Mediterranean, around the Cape of Good Hope on Africa’s southern tip, long before the seafaring nations of Western Europe took to long sea passages to trade with the Far East and beyond.

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The Red Sea and Persian Gulf Weather Conditions

The WEATHER conditions across the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, as well as the northern Indian Ocean, as we will later discuss, alter significantly between the winter and summer months. From late November through March, strong cold fronts track across the northern Red Sea and the Persian Gulf approximately every 3 days. Behind these cold fronts, cold air funnels or “channels” through the narrower waterways through the Gulf of Suez, and farther south into the Red Sea to approximately 18N, and finally across much of the Persian Gulf and into the Gulf of Oman. All of this occurs as a ridge of high pressure builds across northeastern Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula. As a result, enhanced north-northwest winds surge across the Gulf of Suez and the northern Red Sea of approximately Beaufort Force 5-7 and swells will build up to 8-12ft. Behind exceptionally strong cold fronts, winds will increase up to sustained gale force (Beaufort Force 8-9) particularly near the Gulf of Suez and swells will build up to 10-15ft.

Average wintertime winds within the Persian Gulf are from NW, generally at speeds from force 3-5. Ahead of cold fronts, winds turn southerly and can increase to force 5-7. Winds then veer following frontal passages, with post-frontal passage NW winds of force 5-7 common. Winds as high as force 8-9 possible during the strongest NW wind surges (which are known locally as “Shamals”). The strongest of these winds tend to occur along the SW Iranian coast due to the funneling effects of the mountainous terrain of Iran itself. The winds then “wrap around” the southern coast of Iran and through the Strait of Hormuz, becoming westerly to southwesterly in nature in the western side of the strait, and returning to the original northwesterly direction as they exit the eastern side into the Gulf of Oman. Unlike what is found within Bab El Mandeb, the wider space within the Strait of Hormuz reduces the funneling effects and wind speeds within the strait often are fairly close to what is ongoing west of the strait.

By Amanda Delaney, Mark Neiswender and Brian Whitley of Weather Routing, Inc.
Beaufort Force 7-8 through Bab el Mandeb, with the highest winds occurring during the late morning and afternoon hours, then become Beaufort Force 5-7 in the southern Red Sea with swells building up to 10-15ft (highest near the entrance of Bab el Mandeb). Outside of wind surges across the Red Sea, winds are usually highest during the late morning and afternoon hours and then lower overnight during the late spring through autumn months. Also, outside of surge events, winds are generally onshore by day and offshore by night 2-3 nautical miles from the Arabian and African coasts.

During the summer months, NW winds persist within the Persian Gulf and these winds are generally in the Force 3-5 range, though can be gusty in particular in the afternoon/early evening at peak heating. Typical seas build to a general NW 3-5ft range in the southern part of the region. Fronts have little, if any success making the ‘fetch’ within the Persian Gulf is somewhat less than within the Red Sea, so seas tend to be slightly lower here during Shamal-related NW wind surges. Typical seas range 2-4ft in normal northwesterly winds. Ahead of fronts, short-period and "choppy" southerly 4-7ft seas occur near the northern end of the sea, and following frontal passages NW seas build to as high as 8-10ft in the southern sea with 10-13ft possible in the strongest surges. (see Figure 1A).

During April and May, and again in September through early November, the cold fronts are weaker and less frequent, tracking across the northern Red Sea and Persian Gulf about every 4-5 days, also tending to not push quite as far south. The ridge of high pressure that builds over the eastern Mediterranean is also weaker during the spring and autumn; and therefore the arctic air that funnels through these seas in the winter is moderated. Hence, the north-northwest wind surges occur less often and are weaker than their mid/late fall and wintertime counterparts.

From May through early October, a thermal trough of low pressure generally develops from northern Sudan northeastward to the central Arabian Peninsula, and from there extends northeastward across the Strait of Hormuz and along southern Pakistan. This weather feature changes little in strength but does fluctuate its orientation during the summer. For instance, if the thermal trough is across the central Arabian Peninsula and a ridge of high pressure builds over the eastern Mediterranean Sea, then northwest winds will become enhanced from the Gulf of Suez southward to approximately 20N. These winds are generally in the range of Beaufort Force 4-6 (highest near the Gulf of Suez and lowest near 20N) and swells build to 6-10ft across this region. When the thermal trough shifts farther west over the Red Sea, then the northwest winds north of 15N ease and become variable of Beaufort Force 4 or less (see Figure 1B). However, with the thermal trough axis farther west, south-southeast winds also begin to funnel through Bab el Mandeb and surge northward to approximately 15N. Winds can reach up to it into the gulf so the stronger surges are far less likely. Likewise, winds and seas within the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman tend lower during the summer time. The exception to this is as one begins to move toward the e’rn/s’rn gulf of Oman as we will discuss in a moment. In the Strait of Hormuz, seas are often 2ft or less, with the exception during any surges of northerlies in the Persian Gulf. In the Gulf of Oman, winds near shore tend to be dominated by land/sea breeze interactions. As you move farther south and east toward the Arabian sea, the effects of the summertime Southwest Monsoon Season are far more evident. Here, S-SW of Force 6-7 and seas building to 5-8ft as one gets into the e’rn Gulf of Oman during this time of year. Currents within the both the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf tend to be relatively weak, generally not exceeding 0.3-0.4 knots at any given time. Further, currents are often governed by local wind conditions. Due to the relatively high evaporation rate within both oceans, in particular during the winter season, there does tend to be a net movement of water into the Red Sea thru Bab El Mandeb and thru the Strait of Hormuz.

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to notice an enormous increase in the volume of large shipping traffic as all the vessels are funneled towards the Straits of Hormuz. The Straits of Hormuz are very busy, as this is the only entry/exit to the region. The area is highly monitored and care must be taken not to enter Iranian territorial waters without permission. Be aware you’re likely to encounter a tidal stream of several knots during the transit of the Straits.

The Gulf has eight countries that border its shores; Oman, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq and Iran. There are wonderful cruising opportunities in most of these countries, too many to cover in depth here, the region is a vast array of new cultures and sights.

There are numerous commercial ports and also a large number of offshore oilfields with loading facilities in the Gulf. Large oil tankers and other general shipping necessary to service the needs of the eight bordering countries, combined with overall fairly shallow water, reefs and restricted areas mean you could expect navigation to be a daunting prospect. For most part however, the navigation aids are fully operational and traffic zones well respected due to the heavy concentration of professional shipping. The area, while busy, is clear and easy to navigate.

DUBAI is the modern vibrant city on everyone’s lips, but not necessarily on their cruising plan. If you’re planning your upcoming travels, perhaps it’s time you should consider whether it should be on yours. The Gulf region is a treasure trove of beautiful anchorages, spectacular beaches, cities with amazing cultural diversity and historical significance, natural attractions and of course its famed, iconic city of Dubai. In reality it’s an easy detour from the more traditional routes and its private yachting facilities are growing at a rate hard to rival.

The voyage from Europe to Australasia offers the opportunity to visit many different countries on three continents of the world. The commonly used and most direct path passes through the southern end of the Red Sea and makes a course for Sri Lanka. The best time to undertake passages in this region is October to April due to the predominantly calm conditions, but in the gulf region you may still encounter a local wind known as the ‘Shamaal’. These winds can blow up to 35 knots for several days and create three or four metre seas.

Salalah at the western end of Oman is a port frequently visited for supplies and fuel after exiting the Red Sea. Good quality and reasonably priced fuel is available here and a 15 minute car ride into town from the large commercial port will allow you to reprovison at one of the well-stocked supermarkets. Customs and Immigration procedures are very straightforward with Omani officials.

Salalah to Sri Lanka (the typical cruising route) is a distance of approximately 1700 miles. A detour to visit the United Arab Emirates and specifically Dubai will add an additional 1200 miles to the journey. This detour enables you to cruise the Oman Coast, visiting the wonderful capital of Muscat, cruise the fjord-like bays of the Mussandam Peninsula with its multitude of isolated, protected anchorages and abundance of marine wildlife and then enjoy the sights of the vibrant city of Dubai. On the outward leg towards Sri Lanka, the route runs parallel to the Indian coast. You can select a number of cities such as Mumbai or Goa to experience the delights of India, or head down to the Maldives. You can actually clear in and out at Uligan (Uligamu) on the northeastern-most atoll of the Maldives which saves traveling the extra 400 miles to Male if time or distance is an issue for you.

When approaching the Arabian Gulf, it’s hard not to notice an enormous increase in the volume of large shipping traffic as all the vessels are funneled towards the Straits of Hormuz. The Straits of Hormuz are very busy, as this is the only entry/exit to the region. The area is highly monitored and care must be taken not to enter Iranian territorial waters without permission. Be aware you’re likely to encounter a tidal stream of several knots during the transit of the Straits. The Gulf has eight countries that border its shores; Oman, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq and Iran. There are wonderful cruising opportunities in most of these countries, too many to cover in depth here, the region is a vast array of new cultures and sights.

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Arabian Nights

The Middle East is a region that encompasses Western Asia and Northern Africa, offering a huge area to experience rich and varying culture, from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf.

By Captain Mark Hol
The United Arab Emirates gained its independence from the British in 1971. It is made up of seven emirates that cover a region of 80,000 sq km bordered by Oman and Saudi Arabia by land. The Arabian Gulf is on one coast and the Arabian Sea, being the northern region of the Indian Ocean, is on the other coast. Dubai has in the last 10 years become renowned as a popular tourist area and home to many unique and stunning architectural and construction projects. The old town of Dubai is based around the creek which has traditionally been the host of the trading dhows. These traditional vessels, although all motorised now, still ply the waters of the Indian Ocean from India to Madagascar and concentration of fishing activity. This normally involves nets which are strung across the tidal flow near shore but may be encountered several miles offshore, as they can be in excess of a kilometre in length. Usually a small fishing boat will sit at one end with a small flashing light on the other end. As you approach the net he will turn on a spotlight and aim it along the direction of his net towards the flashing light. This system works well when there are not too many nets but when in an area of many nets, it is very difficult to ascertain which light belongs to which boat. It can be impossible to determine the direction in which the net is laid and I believe best to avoid these areas completely. After the spectacular Musandam Peninsula of Oman, the mountains give way to the low flat coastline of the United Arab Emirates. From here the coast runs in a southwesterly direction for over 250 miles to the border of Saudi Arabia. Located 120 miles from the Straits of Hormuz in the Arabian Gulf, Dubai and its neighbour, Abu Dhabi, are well known and popular tourist destinations. The Musandam Peninsula is famous for its spectacular scenery and abundant marine life. There are tours for dolphin watching and snorkelling every day. There are anchorages but few land-based support facilities. After visiting the Musandam Peninsula your next destination in the Gulf would likely be Dubai. The majority of the boats that come into the Gulf tend to stop at Dubai or Abu Dhabi. There are a couple of anchorages along the Dubai beaches that are suitable for overnight stopovers. A great deal of the coastline is protected as the large waterfront reclamation projects provide an artificial barrier to the majority of any swell that may be present. If you want to see more of the region it is possible to cruise down through the waters west of Abu Dhabi towards Qatar. There are numerous reefs and islands to anchor and take shelter en route to Qatar. From here you can also travel on to Bahrain and Kuwait. Charts are accurate except around foreshore regions where charting may not always keep up with the new waterfront development and land reclamation projects. If coming for the first time with no local knowledge, stick to the larger shipping routes for an easy, clear passage. Many regions of the gulf have a high
The local currency AED, known as the Dirham for daily transport. make this a very viable and attractive proposition easy to find and are very cheap by Western shopping and shopping malls, some of which other world class events. It is known for its richest horse race and the richest golf Dubai is known for many things. It is host to evenings below 10 Celsius. winter months, temperatures are recorded in the warm, comfortable dry climate and in the temperatures in excess of 45 degrees Celsius. to Dubai?” Yes, for the summer months it is hot. People sometimes ask me “why should we come included in the bill at establishments. demands of the growing population. The region has become a hub for commercial on the tip of the newly-built Palm Jumeirah. With the constant challenge of “outdoing a rival” it is somewhat of a marriage of Las Vegas and Disneyland with the latest addition being Atlantis on the ttip of the newly-built Palm Jumeirah. The region has become a hub for commercial airlines with an incredible list of destinations available and numerous daily flights available to most destinations. The road network is constantly being upgraded and expanded to meet the demands of the growing population. Taxis are easy to find and are very cheap by Western standards. There is also a new metro system that connects most of the city and the prices will make this a very viable and attractive proposition for daily transport. The local currency AED, known as the Dirham is pegged to the US Dollar at 1 USD = 3.66 Dirham. Baksheesh or bribes are not part of the culture here and usually service charges are included in the bill at establishments. People sometimes ask me “why should we come to Dubai?” Yes, for the summer months it is hot and humid and not uncommon to have daytime temperatures in excess of 45 degrees Celsius. However while Europe shivers, the UAE enjoys a warm, comfortable dry climate and in the winter months, temperatures are recorded in the evenings below 10 Celsius. Dubai is known for many things. It is host to the richest horse race and the richest golf tournament in the world and hosts dozens of other world class events. It is known for its shopping and shopping malls, some of which are tourist attractions in themselves. The Mall of the Emirates is the home of Ski Dubai, indoor snow skiing available year round! You can take a desert safari in a 4WD followed by a stop at a Bedouin camp for traditional food, dancing and a camel ride. Play golf on one of the numerous world class courses designed by some of the biggest names in golf. Take a sightseeing flight from Jebel Ali Hotel and see Dubai by air. The flight will take you over Palm Jebel Ali , Palm Jumeirah, the iconic Burj al Arab Hotel, over The World project, past Burj Dubai which at 860m is the tallest manmade structure in the world. You’ll also pass over Dubai Creek and much more on a 30 minute flight which takes off and lands on the water. There are also double-decker bus tours that enable you to leave and rejoin at any stop of the tour, traditional water taxis, called abras used to cross the creek or dinner cruises along the creek to give you another perspective of Dubai. Adjacent to the creek are the gold and spice souks which have immense range of products that have to be viewed to be appreciated. As I mentioned earlier, there are a large number of hotels in Dubai. The dining options from all over the world on offer at these hotels and of course at a number of other restaurants and venues is hard to imagine. There is something for everybody and don’t forget to enquire about Dubai’s famous Friday brunch. Most hotels offer enormous spreads of delicacies presented and diners “graze” for hours. True decadence! Being as tolerant and aware of tourism as the city is, you will find that most hotels have full bar service, and you will also find the likes of Irish pubs and nightclubs in this cosmopolitan, modern city. Public drunkenness however is not accepted so you would be well advised to enjoy the all inclusive lunches in moderation. The region is used to handling great quantities of commercial shipping but private yachting is still in its infancy in regards to vessels visiting from outside the Gulf Region. Entrance and exit formalities can be completed by the captain and the Customs and Immigration personnel are pleasant to deal with, but in reality I would highly recommend the use of an agent to expedite the whole process. It would also be prudent to ensure a berth is booked before you arrive as space at present in marinas is scarce. As I say this however, there are a number of new marinas that have just come online or are about to, mainly in Dubai and Abu Dhabi emirates. There are two marinas in the heart of Dubai with minimum water depths of five metres catering to boats of up to 35m. These marinas are ideally located within five minutes of the old town and airport. To reach these marinas however you have to pass under two bridges, one opening nightly but the other only operating two nights per week. There are other berths downstream of the bridges that an agent may be able to arrange. A new Maritime City development at the mouth of the creek has recently opened. This has marina berthing and also repair facilities with a syncro lift of 6000 tonne capacity. Along the coastline near the Burj al Arab seven-star hotel and Jumeirah Palm development are several more marinas and more are due in the near future. Further away from the city near the new international airport, due to open late 2010, is Jebel Ali Spa and Golf Resort which has a marina, hotel and nine hole golf course. The new Palm Jebel Ali is offshore from here and has created one of the best all weather anchorages and watersport areas on the coast. Further down the coast at Abu Dhabi there are numerous marinas under construction. The most notable new marina, Yas Island, was developed in association with the new Formula One race track to create an environment similar to that at Monaco, where can watch the race from your yacht. The region is full of opportunities to explore some of the most talked-about places in the world and some of those least well known too. The Gulf is opening its arms to private maritime traffic from around the world and you now have the opportunity to experience all it has to offer with the confidence that the facilities you need are at your disposal.
Dubai

Useful Statistics
Emirate of Dubai

GOVERNMENT: Federation with specified powers
LAND AREA: 4,114 km² (1,588.4 sq miles)
POPULATION: (2010) 2,262,000
LANGUAGE: Arabic (English, Hindi, Urdu, Malayalam and Tagalog are widely spoken).
CURRENCY: Emirati dirham (AED)
CLIMATE: The desert climate is hot and dry. The mean January temperature is 18°C (65°F) and in July is 33°C (92°F). The average annual rainfall is 152mm (6in).

Dubai is situated on the northeast coast of the United Arab Emirates and is roughly at sea level (16 m above). The emirate of Dubai shares borders with Abu Dhabi in the south, Sharjah in the northeast, and the Sultanate of Oman in the southeast. Dubai refers to either: one of the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates in the North mid part of the Arabian Peninsula, or that emirate’s main city, sometimes called “Dubai City” to distinguish it from the emirate. Dubai has the largest population and is the second largest emirate by area, after Abu Dhabi. Revenues from Petroleum and Natural Gas contribute to less than 3% of Dubai’s US$ 46 billion economy (2006). A majority of the emirate’s revenues are from the Jebel Ali Free Zone (JAFZ) and, increasingly, from tourism and other service businesses. With enormous construction and development in various industries, Dubai has attracted world-wide attention through innovative real estate projects, sports events and conferences.

The Dubai International Airport, the hub for Emirates Airlines, services the city of Dubai and other emirates in the country. Dubai is the superyacht hub of the Persian Gulf. The Dubai Boat Show is held in April each year and new marina facilities are being continually constructed.
Abu Dhabi

Useful Statistics

Part of the United Arab Emirates

GOVERNMENT: Islamic federal constitutional monarchy

LAND AREA: 67,340km² (26,000 sq miles)

POPULATION: (est. 2008) 945,270

LANGUAGE: Arabic (official), Persian, English, Hindi, Urdu

CURRENCY: UAE dirham (AED)

CLIMATE: Desert: Jun to Sept is the hot dry period – with temps up to 48°C; Oct to May are more pleasant. Rainfall is almost non-existent.

UTC: +4

INTL DIALLING CODE: +971

ABU DHABI is one of the seven emirates comprising the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the city of Abu Dhabi is the seat of government, the capital and second most populous city in the after Dubai. Bordered by Saudi Arabia to the SW, Oman to the east, and the emirate of Dubai to the NE, Abu Dhabi is a T-shaped island jutting into the Persian Gulf from the central western coast. One of the world’s largest producers of oil, Abu Dhabi has actively attempted to diversify its economy in recent years through investments in financial services and tourism.

It is the wealthiest emirate of the UAE and is positioning itself as the “Cultural hub” of the Middle East it also stages hundreds of conferences and exhibitions each year in its state of the art venues, as well as sporting events including a new Formula One Grand Prix. Visitors to Abu Dhabi will be mesmerized by the splendid natural beauty and architectural brilliance that this city showcases. During 2009 the inaugural Abu Dhabi Superyacht Show was launched, endeavoring to establish the city as the “hub” of superyacht in the Middle East.
Bahrain

Useful Statistics
State of Bahrain

GOVERNMENT: Absolute Monarchy
LAND AREA: 750 km² (290 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 1,234,596
LANGUAGE: Arabic (Gulf dialect), English
CURRENCY: Dinar (BD)
CLIMATE: An arid desert climate characterised by very hot summers with high humidity, while winters are relatively cooler. The Bara wind from the north is a cool wind that sometimes reduces the temperature in June, the Shamal wind from the northeast is a moist wind that dominates all year round and the Quss wind from the south or southwest, is a hot dry sand-laden wind. Average temperature ranges on Bahrain are from 14-20°C (67-68 °F) in January to 29-38°C (84-100°F) in August.
UTC: +3
INTL DIA LLING CODE: +973

BAHRAIN is a borderless island country, a generally flat and arid archipelago of 33 islands, comprising of a low desert plain rising gently to a low central escarpment, in the Persian Gulf. It is the smallest Arab nation. Saudi Arabia lies to the west and is connected to Bahrain by the King Fahd Causeway and Qatar is to the south across the Persian Gulf. The Qatar–Bahrain Friendship Bridge currently being planned will link Bahrain to Qatar as the longest fixed link in the world. Bahrain does not share a land boundary with another country but does have a 161-km (100 miles) coastline and claims a further twelve nautical miles (22-km) of territorial sea and a twenty-four nautical mile (44-km) contiguous zone. Bahrain enjoys mild winters and endures very hot, humid summers. Bahrain’s natural resources include large quantities of oil and associated and non-associated natural gas as well as fish stocks. Desert constitutes 92% of Bahrain and periodic droughts and dust storms are the main natural hazards for Bahrainis. Mina Sulman, on the promontory just south of the capital Manama, is where the two yacht clubs The Marina Club and the Bahrain Yacht Club are located as well as the Al Bandar Resort.
Qatar

Useful Statistics
State of Qatar

GOVERNMENT: Emirate: Absolute Monarchy
LAND AREA: 11,437 km² (4,416 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2009) 833,285
LANGUAGE: Arabic
CURRENCY: Riyal (QAR)
CLIMATE: Mild winters (34°C and 10°C at night) and very hot, humid summers (38-42°C).
UTC: +3

QATAR is an Arab emirate in the Middle East, occupying the small Qatar Peninsula on the NE coast of the larger Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered by Saudi Arabia to the south; otherwise the Persian Gulf surrounds the state. An oil-rich nation, Qatar has the second highest GDP per capita in the world. Qatar’s national income primarily derives from oil and natural gas exports. Qatar has targeted itself as one of the world’s leading sports destinations and continues to expand existing infrastructure and build new facilities to accommodate this growing market niche. Shra’o Island, situated about 48 km NE of Ishat Island, has a small fringed reef and a sandy beach used by turtles to lay their eggs and serves as a haven to thousands of seabirds. This hilly Haloul Island is surrounded by excellent fishing grounds. The seabed is made up of coral reefs with a large variety of magnificent and beautiful coral fish and offers wonderful opportunities for SCUBA divers to observe marine life. A large number of forts and castles provide interest for those with an historical bent.

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Oman

Useful Statistics
Sultanate of Oman

GOVERNMENT: Absolute Monarchy
LAND AREA: 309,500 km²
(119,500 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 2,782,435
LANGUAGE: Arabic with minority languages of Farsi, Urdu and Hindi while English is also widely understood.
CURRENCY: Rial (RO)
CLIMATE: An arid subtropical climate. The coastal areas are hot and humid from April to October while during summer the interior is hot and dry with temperatures as high as 54°C (130°F). Average annual precipitation is 50-100mm (2-4”) depending on the region and the prevailing summer wind is the Gharbi which makes the heat more oppressive. Average temperature ranges in Muscat are from 19-38°C (66-100°F) all year.
UTC: +4
INTL DIALLING CODE: +968

THE SULTANATE of Oman is a country in SW Asia, on the SE coast of the Arabian Peninsula. It borders the United Arab Emirates in the NW, Saudi Arabia in the west, and Yemen in the SW. The coast is formed by the Arabian Sea in the south and east, and the Gulf of Oman in the NE. A vast desert plain covers most of central Oman, with mountain ranges along the north and SE coast, where the country’s main cities are also located. Oman is a spectacular country with striking contrasts. Activities from deep sea fishing and dolphin and whale watching to sunset cruising and diving are set amidst spectacular surroundings. With its diverse terrain of mountain cliffs, deserts, and seascapes, as well as its great museums, cultural events and fine cuisine, Oman is a gem of a place with a soothing, magical and mystical feel. With its wide range of international hotels and wealth of things to see and do, Oman has quickly become a desirable yachting destination. It is safe and friendly, welcoming visitors from around the globe. Oman’s more than 500 forts, castles and towers in diverse architectural styles are proud witnesses to the country’s glorious past. And with more than a thousand miles of coastline, Oman offers some of the most stunning beaches you could hope for. The capital city of Muscat is a living example of coexistence between a rich past and an open present. The best time to visit Muscat is between October and April when the weather is pleasantly warm during the day and cool at night. Most superyachts visiting Oman are en route for the Red Sea; the route from India, particularly Mumbai, passes very close to Raysut. Many new tourist facilities have been developed in the past 2-3 years in Oman, mostly around the Muscat area and in the country’s interior. Yachts are most welcome and can stop at Port Salalah, Mina Gabbas (Muscat) and Marina Bander Al-Rowdha (just to the east of Muscat), at the heart of Oman’s recreational fishing, diving, and whale watching area.
Yemen

Useful Statistics
Republic of Yemen

GOVERNMENT: Democratic republic
LAND AREA: 527,968 km² (203,849 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2008) 23,822,783
LANGUAGE: Arabic
CURRENCY: Yemeni rial (YER)
CLIMATE: Subtropical: May to Sept. is the SW monsoon – humid and rainy. Easterly winds predominate from Oct. to Feb. which is drier and cooler.

UTC: +3
INTL DIALLING CODE: +967

Yemen is a country located on the Arabian Peninsula in SW Asia, bordered by Saudi Arabia to the north, the Red Sea to the west, the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden to the south, and Oman to the east. Its territory includes over 200 islands, including the Hanish Islands, Kamaran and Perim, and the largest which is Socotra, about 415 km to the south of Yemen, off the coast of Somalia. Yemen is the only republic on the Arabian Peninsula. Among Yemen’s natural and cultural attractions are four World Heritage sites: The Old Walled City of Shibam, the ancient Old City of Sana’a at an altitude of more than 7,000 ft, the historic and archaeological town of Zabid, and the Socotra Archipelago which is home to 192 bird species, 253 species of coral, 730 species of coastal fish and 300 species of crab and lobster!

Saudi Arabia

Useful Statistics
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

GOVERNMENT: Islamic absolute monarchy
LAND AREA: 2,149,690 km² (829,996 sq miles)
POPULATION: (est. 2010) 27,136,977
LANGUAGE: Arabic
CURRENCY: Riyal (SAR)
CLIMATE: Very hot summers from Apr to Sept.(avg. 27-43°C). Cooler winters (avg. 8 – 20°C) and the weather in coastal areas is very pleasant.

UTC: +3 INTL DIALLING CODE: +966

Saudi Arabia is an Arab country and the largest country of the Arabian Peninsula, bordered by Jordan on the NW, Iraq on the north and NE, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates on the east, Oman on the southeast, and Yemen on the south. Saudi Arabia is a strict and very conservative Muslim country, difficult to visit by foreigners, except Muslims on a pilgrimage to Mecca. In order to preserve religious purity, tourism is actively discouraged. This includes cruising yachts. Anyone intending to sail to Saudi Arabia must approach the authorities in advance to obtain the necessary permission. It is best to avoid its waters, unless forced to make an emergency stop there.
Egypt

Useful Statistics

* Arab Republic of Egypt *

**GOVERNMENT:** Military junta

**LAND AREA:** 1,001,449 km² (386,559 sq miles)

**POPULATION:** (est. 2011) 81,015,887

**LANGUAGE:** Arabic

**CURRENCY:** Pound (EP)

**CLIMATE:** Desert climate which is hot and arid. There are two seasons, the cool winter season from November to April, and the hot summer season from May to October, although temperatures are often tempered by strong offshore breezes. The period between March and June is subject to the Khamis which is a dust laden sandstorm that blows from the Sahara in the south. Average temperature ranges in Cairo are from 8-18°C (46-64°F) in January to 21-36°C (70-97°F) in July.

**UTC:** +2

**INTL DIALLING CODE:** +20

**EGYPT** is a country in North Africa that includes the Sinai Peninsula, a land bridge to Asia. Covering an area of about 1,001,450 km² (386,560 square miles), Egypt borders Libya to the west, Sudan to the south, the Gaza Strip and Israel to the east. Egypt’s important role in geopolitics stems from its strategic position: a transcontinental nation, it possesses a land bridge (the Isthmus of Suez) between Africa and Asia, which in turn is traversed by a navigable waterway (the Suez Canal) that connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Indian Ocean via the Red Sea. Egypt is the 15th most populous country in the world, and the second most populous country in Africa (after Nigeria). Egypt is famous for its ancient civilisation and some of the world’s most ancient and important monuments, including the Giza Pyramids and the Great Sphinx of Giza; the southern city of Luxor contains a particularly large number of ancient artefacts such as the Karnak Temple and the Valley of the Kings. Today, Egypt is widely regarded as an important political and cultural centre of the Middle East. Most superyachts visit Egypt in order to transit the Suez Canal. A popular cruising destination for superyachts is in the regions surrounding Hurgada, Safaga and Sharm El Sheikh in the Red Sea.

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  - E: info@abutig-marina.com

- **Barwil Egytrans Shipping Agencies**
  - SAE Alexandria
  - T: +20 34 84 35 10
  - E: wss.portsaid@wilhelmsen.com
  - E: barwil.alexandria@barwil.com

- **CBS Yachting, Abu Tig Marina**
  - T: +20 653580580
  - M: +20 123126831
  - E: info@cbs-yachting.com
  - W: www.abutig-marina.com

- **Felix Maritime Agency, Port Said**
  - T: +20 66 3333132 / 3248283
  - M: +20 12 2119365
  - E: felix@felix-eg.com / flx@link.net

- **Hurghada Marina**
  - E: info@hurghadamarinaredsea.com

- **Meesa Egypt**
  - T: +20 1 22 345 12 58
  - info@meesaegypt.com

- **Port Ghalib Marina, Red Sea**
  - T: +20 65 3700240
  - M: +20 103434708 /122128242
  - W: www.portghalibmarina.com

- **SuperyachtGLOBAL Egypt**
  - T: +20 12 3300146
  - E: portsaid@ibramar.com.eq
  - W: www.ibramar.com

- **Travco Marina, Sharm El Sheikh**
  - T: +20 69 366 1500
  - +20 69 366 3053

**RECENT SUPERYACHT VISITORS**

- Arctic P, Georgia, Octopus, Athena, Kingdom 5KR, Zenobia, plus many others

**APPROXIMATE DISTANCE IN NM FROM SUEZ TO:**

- Djibouti 1,290’
- Dubai 2,804’
- Sharm El Sheikh 168’
- Hurghada 179’
- Singapore 5,644’

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- Red Sea Pilot Aden to Cyprus 2nd Edition

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- http://touregypt.net
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Suez Canal & the Red Sea

The Red Sea stretches 1400 miles in a northwest to southeast direction and is geologically part of the East African Rift, a fault line that runs from Lebanon through the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba down the eastern length of the African continent all the way to Mozambique.

By Captain Christoph Schaefer

**THE RED SEA** is characterized by steep shores dropping off to depths of over 2000 meters and shallow coastal flats, which are the home to some of the most prolific coral formations found on our planet and it is rightly considered to be one of the world’s top diving destinations.

The shores of the Red Sea and its hinterland have been witness to many dramatic events in our short human history and Egypt to this day fascinates us with its enigmatic culture. When Napoleon set out to conquer Egypt in 1797 a sudden burst of interest in ancient Egypt spread across Europe. During the 19th century archeology developed and much of our knowledge of Egypt is based on the findings during the last 150 years. Henry Carter’s sensational discovery of the untouched burial tomb of Tutankhamen in 1922 was one such find, which sparked a worldwide Egyptomania. However, much of our picture of Egypt is based on the stories of the Tora and the Bible as it has been told for thousands of years all over the world, where ever Jewish and Christian parents raise their children. I believe that most readers will recall having as a child heard the story of the ten plagues that God sent to Egypt to force the Pharaoh into letting the Israelite people go, their flight from Egypt, Moses parting the sea with his staff and the subsequent dry crossing. Then in the grand finale the Red Sea closed in on the pursuing Egyptians and drowned the Pharaoh and his warriors, complete with horses and chariots. This story of the Jewish people is so deeply rooted in our collective (western) memory that it has been retold not just in religious circles but also has become part of our pop culture and it has been repeatedly made a theme in extravagant Hollywood productions.

As one enters the Suez Canal southbound at Port Said the significance of this location is striking - the meeting of two great continents, the cradle of three major world religions, the very roots of our modern society with its code of ethics and morals lie here. The fertile Nile oasis with the pyramids, the Karnak temple and the Valley of Kings lies to our right side in Africa, Israel, the Holy Land and Mount Sinai where Moses received the ten commandments lies to our left on the Asian side. While you ponder this, reality strikes swift and hard. As one enters the general bustle of the waterway that dissects Port Said the cries for more Marlboro Red seems to smother any sensation of historic significance. The pilots tug on your sleeve asking for more bak shish, while you dodge the cross canal ferries and the fishing boats, I will not get into any detail and will not provide hints and tricks on how to deal with the pilots and their helpers, some of who camp on your aft deck and open their portable bazaar. It is entirely up to the captain on how many cartons of cigarettes, shampoo, deodorant or cash he hands out. That you will need to hand out some, and that it will be substantially more than the commercial ships, that ply this route on a regular basis, have to give is only natural. Do not even try to attempt to get away with giving nothing. It will not only get you into trouble and cause delay but will add frustration to what is decidedly an enjoyable experience. If you are unsure consult your agent what is acceptable and what should be considered as highway robbery. You will soon get a feeling for how it all works.

So much has been written about the Suez Canal, the transit and the procedures that I will refrain from repeating what has been written so often before. My best advice is to relax and enjoy the canal - it certainly is one of the finest nautical morsels to be enjoyed and the general madness that you submerge in for a few hours is just as much part of the canal as are the sand dunes on both sides. The motto of our agent Ibrahim greatly amused me: German efficiency and Egyptian creativity. While the efficiency part is probably not readily apparent at first glance one certainly is surrounded by creativity. But as one goes along one marvels just how well this whole canal and the transit really runs. It is a well honed and finely tuned operation and one always has to keep in mind: the yachts are just simply an insignificant part of the traffic transiting this canal daily. The system in place works well, not only for commercial ships but also for yachts, so just relax and enjoy the ride.

One aspect however that I would like to point out, is that the timing of your canal transit is critical. For many years I have repeatedly heard stories of pilots taking vessels aground on purpose and finally found the explanation on my last transit. Where the northbound convoy does not stop the southbound one does, to let the northbound convoy pass. There are two stops. One in the Great Bitter Lake and the other one in the Al Ballah Bypass. The Al Ballah Bypass is relatively narrow and they tie the ships to shore, which poses no problem for a cargo ship. They just touch the sides of the canal and rudders, props and stabilizers (which they usually do not have) are not an issue for them as both ends of the vessel protrude into the deeper water off the canal bank. We ended up with all three hull appendages in the mud - it is soft but it should be avoided for obvious reasons. Our port sea chest also sank into the mud and we required tug assistance to get off the bank. This tug service is provided free of charge. If you transit on the second convoy that departs Port Said at 0700 be prepared to go aground in Al Ballah. The better option is to go on the first convoy - you get to anchor in the Great Bitter Lake which is no problem at all. The biggest frustration during this incident was that the pilot insisted that the vessel would not touch the canal bank. How do you explain to a pilot that the vessel does not
end at the waterline and that not only the shiny topsides are a critical part of the boat? The only other option they gave me rather than going aground was to turn around and pay another time and go south on the first convoy. Once we put a snorkeler in the water to assess how deep we were in the mud and if we could get off under our own power. The poor pilot just about hemorrhaged. While the locals happily swim in the canal it is strictly forbidden for any one off a ship to be touching the water - maybe there is a deep rooted fear that the waters will part the moment some foreigner touches it - I mean it happened before already so why should it not happen again? The disastrous effects this has on the locals have been well documented. I have stayed several nights in the canal but do not rate it. Once you pop out the southern end a night sail through the Gulf of Suez takes you to the Red Sea proper. You now have a choice of stopping at several full-service marinas on the Egyptian mainland or turning to the east towards Sharm el-Sheikh and its superb commercial port and its resorts. A trip to St Catherine monastery at Mount Sinai is possible from here but it is a 3 to 4 hour drive. Sailing further northeast through the Straits of Tiran the Gulf of Aqaba takes you towards Jordan and Israel. Halfway up the gulf lies Nuweiba that offers an excellent anchorage. From Nuweiba it is only a 1.5 hour drive to St Catherine and a 3am start will give you time to climb Mount Sinai to see the sunrise. From the gulf lies Israel to the west and Jordan to the east. El Gouna and Port Ghalib both feature excellent marinas and are ideal staging areas for a trip to the Nile. Both have international airports and there are several flights daily connecting the coast to Luxor, Assuan, Abu Simbel and Cairo. Private jets for charter are available out of Cairo. It is also possible to do this trip by car. The drive will be somewhere around 3 to 4 hours depending largely on how deranged your driver is.

Ports of entry are Sharm el-Sheikh, El Gouna, Port Ghalib and Taba Heights. At the time of going to press Taba Heights has been closed until further notice as a port of entry. I have however included it in this section for future reference. Check with your agent for an update on the Taba situation.

CLEARANCE PROCEDURES
Clearing in and out of Egypt can be a bit of a drama. There is a huge amount of red tape in the commercial ports, as well as the private marinas that are set up for clearing. One question, that took me by surprise, is that they ask you if you have VIPs onboard. I have learned to say yes. Things run much smoother. But bring with you patience, buckets of it. And be prepared for some efficient Egyptian creativity. It appears that no matter how well prepared and informed you are, there always is a problem and if there isn’t one it is efficiently created. Ibramar in their efficient way always create a solution. So the creativity and the efficiency work both ways. I always found it quite amusing and the owner and his guests were always taking bets on which direction the problem would arise from next. I feel the most important is to keep your cool. I got yelled at more than once by various officials. The stress they find themselves under is hard for us to comprehend, but it is nevertheless there. Under Mubarak the entire system was overtly corrupt and the entire country was run on fear. It will change but change will not come overnight. Notoriously underpaid, government officials are afraid of losing out and try to fill their pockets once the opportunity arises. At the same time one false move can spell disaster for them. An omnipresent police, equally underpaid and equally paranoid constantly apply pressure on harbor masters, immigration and custom officers etc. With a population of 60 million and 1,7 million police officers, one in 35 Egyptians is a police officer. Just a few privileged at the top earn enough money to make a decent living. This is the reality of everyday life in Egypt and it is not only us on the yachts who are constantly in trouble. Bullying and corruption are a reality of everyday life one has to live with in this wonderful country. At heart though, the Egyptians are a truly friendly, polite and welcoming people. In all your dealings with officials always keep this in mind. The following information is geared towards the large yacht, smaller family type yachts will meet with different clearance procedures.

- You need an agent
  - Essentially you need to give a minimum of 24 hours advance arrival notification, including a crew and passenger list, certificate of registration. Any thing less than 24 hours can lead to delays and dramas unless they know you from before and procedures have been established. The agent needs to be present in person. You cannot do it yourself - at least not in Sharm El-Sheikh.
  - Clearing in when first arriving can take anywhere from 2 to 6 hours. Give them time. You will have to buy entry visas for all your crew. Make sure that you get visas for crew and passengers that need them. I had a Filipino aboard and it was a major drama not having a visa. It was a drama getting her the visa. Once we got her the visa it was still a major drama. Visas on arrival run at 13 USD, multiple entry visas at the embassy cost around 20 USD. I found that with multiple entries it made things easier to have the visa.

- The first time you check in or when they do not know you expect a customs official to search the yacht. It is more of a sight seeing tour, rather than an inspection. It is a pain but they insist; refuse them and they get real weird.
- Make sure all your paperwork is in order. Get a quarantine certificate in Europe otherwise you have to buy one locally.
- In Taba Heights all the crew had to leave the boat and report to the immigration office. The boat was left unattended at the dock. There was no arguing the point. The second time round they were better about it.
- You need to clear into each port you arrive at. Immigration will check all passports, certificates might get checked and copied, certificates of competence of the crew might get checked. So arriving from say El Gouna and stopping in the Sharm area they will call you into port for the procedure and clear you out of the area again. It is not a cheap process. In Sharm it costs around 1500 USD each time. In Port Ghalib and Taba about 300 USD each time.
- Clearing into Egypt appears to be different each time you arrive, even at the same port. However, they usually require anywhere between 4 and 10 crew and passenger lists, 3 copies of captains passport and 3 copies of the registration papers. Best is to have 3 of each ready by time of arrival.

DIVING
Diving is of course another not to be missed in the Red Sea. There is some quite decent diving along the shore but the real deal are the offshore reefs and islands such as the Brother Islands, Daedalus Reef and Zabargad in the south close the Sudanese border. Of the numerous shoals lying closer to the mainland we did dive the Fury Shoal. The charts are vague and one needs good light moving around the numerous detached reefs of the shoal. But the diving is very rewarding and well worth the effort to go out of your way a few miles and find the reefs. There is some confusion regarding the permits needed to visit the offshore islands and reefs. Permits are being sold by the relevant authorities.
in Hurghada port. It is best to get in touch with one of the local dive shops. The confusion arises as there are strict laws regulating the local dive industry. We were told that we needed the same permits which can take several months to obtain. However what is needed is a permit issued by the navy. It is more of a security clearance rather than a dive permit. Not all dive shops and agents are aware of this arrangement. If you do not manage to obtain one, a small tip to the light house keepers at Daedalus Reef and on Brother Islands will usually fix the problem. Do keep in mind that they will try to maximize their trouble whatsoever. Just the opposite they made us feel genuinely welcome to this spectacular water world. They would not accept any gift, bar a cup of coffee on the bridge, which they greatly did appreciate.

ANCHORING
Anchoring is strictly prohibited within national park limits in Egypt. The only exception is when there is clearly an all sandy bottom or in case of an emergency. If you need to anchor in coral areas anchor in depths well beyond recreational diving depth (60 meters plus). The danger is however that you might lose an anchor. We lost a reef anchor in 115 meters of water in December 2010 off the Brother Islands.

What is an acceptable method to moor a boat is described below. I also just stood off, for hours on end, when the conditions did not seem right. What is an acceptable method to moor a boat is described below. I also just stood off, for hours on end, when the conditions did not seem right. What is an acceptable method to moor a boat is described below. I also just stood off, for hours on end, when the conditions did not seem right.

From the seaward end of the channel, the first set are fixed buoys on metal structures placed on the reef edge (Lights: 1 flash every 5 seconds, flash length 0.5 seconds), then the next two pairs are floating buoys (Lights fixed) and the last two are fixed buoys on structures each side of the marina entrance (Lights: 1 flash every 5 seconds, flash length 0.5 seconds).

TABA HEIGHTS
Taba Heights Marina is the preferred point of entry into Egypt in the northern Gulf of Aqaba. Nuweiba is another possibility but is entirely run by Egyptian government officials. Checking in and out could turn out to be a long drawn out procedure. At Taba Heights the private investors of the development have a positive influence on the officials. Nikki Priestly is the public relations manager at the Marriot Taba Heights. She was the initial contact at Taba. She also has a mail contact at Sindbad the tour operator in Tala Bay Nikki at Sindbad Jordan.

Osama El Hawry is the manager at Taba Heights Marina. He needs to be informed 48 hours before arriving at the marina to arrange for clearance. Emad El Sharouey is the operations manager of the Pro Tours office in Taba Heights. He can arrange for any travel for guests or crew, he can set up activities such as golf at Taba Heights, supply you with anything you need in terms of drinks or food, an address for packages, etc. Tarek Rihan is the general manager at Taba Heights +20 12 312 2473.

PORT GHALIB
Captain Sherif Fawzy is the marina manager at Port Ghalib Marina. It is important to establish a good relationship with him as he has a lot of clout at the development with the hotels and the airport. He has opened up more than one door for us.

We have had good luck with the staff at the Intercontinental Palace Port Ghalib. As the staff changes frequently I am not including any contact details. The Executive chef provided fresh vegetables and fruit through his contacts on the Nile River. The hotel gets supplied twice a week with fresh produce. It is a bit of a pot luck to get good stuff. The first time round they were at the end of the cycle and the selection was very sad. The second time round it was fresh supplies, and we got good quality produce at a reasonable price. The hotel can also arrange for airport transfers in nice cars. I tried to use the marina office for this and got a Bedouine Taxi which was not up to the standard. They charged an arm and a leg for a Mercedes they got down from Hurghada. The hotel has at least one 5 series BMW but of course it is not always available so book early.

Waleed from ZAS Z Aviation Services is the ground handler for private jets arriving at Marsa Alam Airport. His cell phone contact is +20 106 577 588. There is no special VIP terminal at Marsa Alam Airport; private jet travelers exit through the normal arrival gate.

SHARM EL-SHEIKH
The commercial port at Sharm has a great dock. Security is good at the port. Clearing in was easy enough with the agent taking all the papers and returning a few hours later with everything processed. While the clearance is much easier than Taba Heights the price is about 5 times more. Charlie Parker is the manager at the Four Seasons Hotel. They have a large mooring buoy installed in front of the hotel. It is a private buoy and you need to ask for permission to use it. The cost is 500 USD for a 24 hour period.

Ahmed Askary is the man in charge of the mooring. Mail him you arrival details once you have cleared it with Charlie Parker. Ahmed’s cell is +20 10 388 7565. The hotel phone contact is +20 693 603 555. Charlie’s cell is +20 10 004 5070.

TIRAN ISLANDS
The two lagoons in Tiran are perfect anchorages. The way the light conditions are the north lagoon is a best entered after 1200 and departed before 1200. The entry into the lagon is at 142°T. It is a tight entry and you have strong currents. I had about 1.5 knots setting north as I went in. There is enough room but it is tight. The south lagoon is straight forward. Set a parallel index of 027°T at 0.62nm port onto the FL(2) green marker in the Grafton Channel. It is set in concrete. I set another parallel index of 027°T on the cardinal mark at 0.35 nm but it is on a chain and moves. The green lateral mark is the one to choose. The shallow coral patches are easily spotted even from a distance. There are also a number of mooring buoys that make identifying the reef easier. The bommies just to port on your way in are difficult to spot - they do not even show up on the satellite picture. I am not sure of the depth over them but consider them a real hazard.

NUWEIBA AND DAHAB
Both Nuweiba and Dahab offer excellent anchorages with the possibility to tie up large mooring buoys. Expect a visit from the local authorities, who are super polite. Nuweiba is a commercial port and a port of entry. Ferries connect to Aqaba, Jordan and to Saudi Arabia. I have never attempted to check in there as the only agent there was not interested in dealing with us.

Both Nuweiba and Dahab would make an excellent staging point for a trip to St Catherine.

SOMA BAY MARINA
I have not been into Abu Soma Bay, however the Soma Bay Marina looks good. They have one dock of 45 meters and have confirmed that they can accommodate large yachts, shore power is not yet set up. Soma Bay Marina is an ideal staging point for the reefs and east of Safaga. Contact Jamil Saad for reservations.
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