

Be a Good Cruising Guest

Jeanne Harrison

Jeanne sailed around the world on her yacht Northmoor from 1987-1994. She met Squadron member Colin Harrison on New Address in the Canary Islands in 1994, and has been sailing with him through life every since. They have entertained friends on their boats in countries around the world. Recently they were guests of Faye and Mike Harman aboard Minke II through Indonesia.

Over many years of cruising, we have experienced the joys of entertaining friends onboard, and of being royally entertained onboard other cruising yachts. Here are a few tips which may help you and your guests stay friends before, during and after the cruise.

Before the Cruise

You may be unable to confirm details of your cruise until close to departure, so be flexible. Dramas ranging from engine failure to adverse weather can alter the most carefully prepared schedule.

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Expecting a yacht to arrive at a specific location on a given date is not always realistic. While single-handing up the Red Sea against the wind, engine trouble and adverse weather delayed Colin by a whole month! Our daughter, who had planned to join Colin in Hurgada, Egypt, left a note for him to call her when he arrived and went off exploring! Flexibility is important.

Consider the availability of transport along the intended cruising route. When Jeanne's parents arrived Capetown,

weather held us up east of Cape of Good Hope. Rather than risking a windward dash to meet the plane, driving a hire car to Capetown for the rendezvous made life easier for all. Guests need to consider:

- how to communicate with the hosts before joining the yacht, especially in remote locations.
- how expenses will be shared. Guests may be asked to contribute to expenses. Ensuring everyone is clear about this upfront will get your voyage off on a good note.
- what stores and equipment are needed for the yacht. Priority should be given to these items in baggage allowances. Compressible luggage such as duffle bags work best, as personal space on the yacht may be small.
- what visa, customs and immigration requirements and restrictions exist for the countries being visited. Skippers are often required to carry copies of passports, visas and return tickets for all guests. Many countries require a letter stating your crew status and travel plans, signed by the skipper, for presentation to immigration upon arrival or with your visa application, especially if your return air ticket is from another country.
- special medical issues for all countries enroute. Clearly inform the skipper of your special health or medical needs and provide a list of prescription drugs you are carrying.



Mike Harman resting up on New Address mid-Pacific - we enjoyed reciprocating in Indonesia on Minke II
Photo: Jeanne Harrison

During the Cruise

Respect. Many cruising yacht owners have considerable sailing experience and have long-established systems and procedures for boat handling and watches. Guests can greatly enhance smooth sailing by familiarising

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themselves with these systems rather than 'taking over', though respectful suggestions and assistance are usually appreciated. Remember: in any difficult situation and especially in an emergency, there is only one way – the owner's way.

Chores: It is important that guests keep their own gear stowed and tidy. Guests should also help with boat chores. Enroute to Tasmania one year, our favourite guest noticed the toilet wasn't working and unbelievably offered to repair it!

Food and Water: Great friends sharing stories and a fine meal together in a remote anchorage is one of the pleasures of cruising. The ideal guest eats whatever, whenever, and perhaps even brings the key ingredients to prepare a favourite meal for the hosts.



Minke II in Penang Marina in Dec 06, located a short walk from Little India and the centre of town. Helsall II was moored across the way. Photo: Ian Moncrieff

Expecting to cook and dine individually, or to have personal likes or dislikes catered for, will generate friction very quickly. Beef, pork, lamb, gourmet dairy products and even chocolate may be in short supply; your long-term wellbeing should not suffer from a short-term change in diet. If you do need a special diet, be sure to clearly communicate this before joining the yacht. Guests and hosts should also discuss their expectations regarding alcohol consumption during the cruise.

Fresh water is the single most important commodity on a cruising

yacht. Clear communications on the use of fresh water during the cruise helps. Good personal hygiene is essential but water limitations may necessitate saltwater bathing, so soap and shampoo that lather in salt water can be handy. Ideally, with two cups of fresh water a guest can brush teeth, bathe and wash undies.

As both hosts and guests, we have enjoyed many 'trips of a lifetime' with cruising mates. We wish the same for you!



Mike and Fay Harman, now cruising Thai and Malaysian waters are preparing for the Andaman Islands. Photo: Ian Moncrieff



A day in the life of... *Tarpan*

continued from page 24

nothing was happening. Slowly, slowly the carrier eased away from the wharf.

Once the ship was in the middle of the channel, *Tapir* disappeared around the ship's bow to pull in the other direction, and both tugs then slowly spin the ship around 180 degrees to face the gulf. Ten minutes after the lines were first attached they were cast off, and our winch engaged with a loud clunk, winding the line back in. It seems all very routine. Years earlier, tow lines were steel cable or poly prop rope and would sometimes part without warning, recoiling viciously. The synthetic line used currently has a breaking strain of 130 tons and simply drops if the line parts. Safety is obviously a high priority - lines are constantly inspected for wear and the crew could recall only 4 lines letting go on tugs in the Port since 1967. One of them was a steel cable which whipped back and broke both legs of an unfortunate crew member who was in the wrong place at the wrong time. PFDs are now worn on deck at all times.

Later when heading back up the river towards the Port, Marcus pointed at a spot on Snowdens Beach. 'A couple of weeks back we were following a tanker up the river, and passed a couple who had set up a tent and BBQ just there, a metre or so up from the waters edge' he chuckled. 'The ship was fully laden and as she passed by, she displaced a large quantity of water. Like a mini tsunami the water swamped the beach, washing the esky, tent & barbie out into the river!' The crews on both the ship and tug loved that one...



Tarpan takes the weight.

