

Tips and Etiquette for Group Cruising

Frequently Ask Questions

1. Do I get charged for not cancelling a marina reservation?

Most Marinas understand that poor weather or mechanical breakdowns can interfere with plans. Marinas do expect to be notified immediately if your plans change and most do not charge for not showing. Some marinas maintain a record of NO SHOWs though, which might be slightly embarrassing the next time to want to reserve a slip. When travelling with a group, marinas expect the cruise director to manage the group booking and provide a full list of vessels, name, length and duration of stay in order to plan for assigning slips together in the marina.

2. What is the fender and tying etiquette for rafting in an anchorage?

The first vessel will set their anchor and tie a stern line to shore before accepting other vessels. Incoming vessels should contact the raft master for instructions. When instructed to come in to join the raft, you may be asked to drop an anchor and back into the port or starboard side of the raft.

- The incoming vessel will be instructed which side to join the raft.
- The incoming vessel should set 3 fenders AT THE RUB RAIL and 3 long lines (15-25') on the side she is joining. The captain or admiral should eyeball the height of the two vessels rub rails to be certain the fenders will adequately protect each vessel.
- The joining vessel always throws/using their lines to tie. In most cases the mid ship line should be thrown first and wrapped on a mid ship cleat to help bring her in (unless of course you are Popeye). The stern then bow lines follow and the stern line is tied/locked first to align the swim grids before tying the mid ship and bow.
- Caution – (and not the hot chicken kind) the larger the vessel, the larger the fenders you need to protect her. Wind and waves or wakes can cause considerable movement in a raft up.
- When setting fenders – check for windows or exhaust/drain outlets on the hull of both vessels to avoid blocking them.
- Always offer to assist another vessel with catching a line.
- If you are going to purchase a stern line, 600' of brightly colored floating line is recommended. One never can be sure how far up the shore one has to climb to round the closest tree.

3. What is the rafting etiquette without a stern tie?

Ask the anchored vessel if you can raft. Typically no more than three vessels can raft on one anchor which would be the center vessel. Under no circumstances should more than one anchor be set as the raft will spin on the tide or wind. Caution – Avoid rafting with Boy'N Sea, Chel Sea or any new

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boat that Jim Church might acquire in the future because they do not abide by this rule.

4. Is it okay to cross other vessels in a raft?

Absolutely. In fact the best etiquette is to ask for permission to cross the first time you board another vessel and also to make an effort to cross the entire raft to greet your fellow boaters provided you are able to do so.

5. Can I pull out of a raft if I am in the middle?

Yes you can but it requires some effort and planning. If you know you will be leaving early, its best to not have a main stern line or anchor set. Ideally you would try to be on the outside of the raft in order to peel off. This is not always possible because the smaller boats (now referred to as the fast boats) are toward the outside ends of the raft. Nothing is impossible though and it is not a hard and fast rule that you are stuck until the raft breaks up.

6. Is there any privacy in a raft?

Yes but this is usually inside your own boat. Rafting is a very social gathering so if you are travelling with the group and prefer your privacy, no one would be offended if you prefer to anchor near by and visit by dinghy.

7. What types of activities are there?

Depending on the time of year and location there is good swimming and you might want to bring a float toy. There is also crabbing, prawning fishing, kayaking (if you have one), hiking dinghy rides/exploring.

Although Geocaching is not new, it's a new addition to our family friendly events as a competition to find the most hidden treasure, or just to hone your navigational skills and explore the area. A PMPSS geocaching tour guide booklet of qualifying GPS coordinates is made available for download from our website at the beginning of each cruising season.

Make sure to always have your camera handy ...waterscapes and animal poses make great candidates for our photo contest, or to submit with your boating adventure story for The Quarterdeck Newsletter or affiliated publications. Also, unsafe or embarrassing boating incidents provide wonderful photo and story writing opportunities.

8. Are there dock parties? What do I bring?

There are often impromptu or planned dock parties at marinas. You need to

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bring your own deck chairs and since many look the same, it is a good idea to write your vessel name under the armrest. A small folding table for your appies and happy hour refreshments is also very handy. Sometimes the dock parties have a theme and we dress up ourselves and our boats accordingly.

9. **What is the best way to manage your water and garbage on extended trips?**

Marinas all accept garbage and often charge per bag. We find that separating dry garbage from wet garbage makes storage and odour much more manageable. On extended trips with limited water availability, we find that paper plates and army showers cut water use by as much as 75%. Organic waste that does not float should be pitched overboard while underway. No one likes floating garbage in an anchorage or marina.

10. **When should I run the generator to charge the batteries?**

Typically during cooking times from 8:30 – 10:00 and 17:00 – 19:00.

11. **What is the purpose of a Captain's meeting and who calls it?**

A Captain's meeting is to discuss what time the raft is breaking up and who is going where. Any Captain that wants to host the meeting can call it and it typically takes place around dusk. Bring your bottle of scotch to share if you wish and a cigar if the host boat permits cigar smoking.

12. **What is a green jacket award?**

It is an award given to the most popular boater in the squadron each year at the Change of Watch (COW) dinner. Always remember that you are the Captain of your boat and only you are responsible for your boat and damage caused to others. If someone tells to you do something that does not seem right to you, don't do it! You may earn the green jacket at the next COW because your incident was the most popular boating blunder of the year! If you do make an embarrassing mistake you first TAKE DOWN THE PMPSS BURGEE!. Since PMPSS objective is teaching boating safety, we practice what we teach so if you forget your life jacket when you go for a dinghy ride, be forewarned that you might have your picture taken.

13. **Is there a dog treat etiquette?**

Boaters are also dog lovers. It is not unusual to carry a box of dog treats on your boat, even if you don't own a dog. It is always wise to ask the owner if

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you can give the dog a treat, as some of the marine dogs are very old salty dogs on special diets. They only eat yam wrapped in duck sphincter.