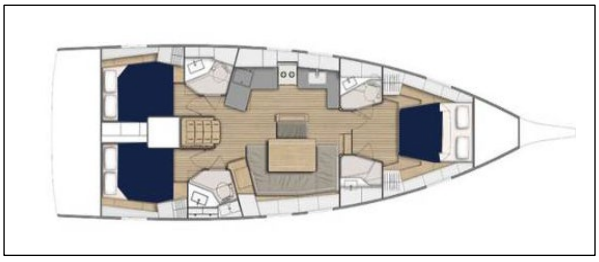
Block Island
COMMUNITY SAILING

Caribbean Cruising Sailing Course / Vacation in the British Virgin Islands!



Block Island Community Sailing is pleased to offer US Sailing Basic Keelboat, Basic Cruising, and Bareboat Cruising Certification Courses in one of the most fabulous sailing venues in the Americas. Our one-week charter / sailing course features seven days of cruising instruction aboard a chartered 46' luxury monohull sloop sailing from Tortola to Virgin Gorda and back, stopping at some of the most spectacular cruising harbors in the BVIs.

- Onboard accommodations include three private staterooms, each with a double berth, private head, and hot shower. The vessel also features a full galley and main cabin with table seating for 8. Our students can bring spouses or friends who can participate in our local sail-training day sails or enjoy shore side activities (like beaching, hiking, or going on a dive boat tour) while we are out sharpening our sailing skills.



- The charter yacht is fun to sail with dual helms, advanced chart plotter, roller reefing jib, anchor windlass, fold down transom / swimming platform, 12' foot dinghy with a 15 hp

motor, ice box with additional refrigeration, WIFI, phone charge plugs, and an additional hot shower on the enormous swim platform.

- The yacht comes fully provisioned with food and beverages as requested by our participants. Do you have a favorite tropical drink? You got it! Our Itinerary includes stops at Norman Island, Cooper's Island, Brandywine Bay, and Leverick Bay in Virgin Gorda, all scenic harbors which offer casual or fine dining along the cruise route.
- Charter / Sailing Course cost is all inclusive for all activities on the yacht. Travel, lodging, and meals ashore are not included. Cost is approximately $2,500 per person, based on six participants, depending on the date of the booking and vessels available.
- Charter / Sailing Course departs "The Moorings" our Bareboat Charter base in Road Town, Tortola on Sunday at noon and returns there on the next Sun. at 11 AM.
- The Charter / Sailing Course is hosted by BICS as part of our regular sailing program with US Sailing Certified Cruising Instructor Henry duPont, as your Skipper / Instructor. Henry Is a USCG Master Captain, has a US Sailing "International Proficiency Certificate" and has been offering these sailing charter / vacations for four years now.
- Successful completion of the US Sailing courses offered will award each student with their US Sailing, Basic Cruising, and Bareboat Cruising Certificates. These will qualify our students to get their US Sailing International Proficiency Certificate (IPC) which will qualify them to skipper a bareboat charter, without a professional captain and crew, in most parts of the world.
- All the above comes with a special BICS guide to cruising which tells you what to bring, what to expect onboard, and how to enjoy one of the most memorable sailing vacations available anywhere. This offer is inexpensive because BICS is a nonprofit organization. Comparable live-aboard sailing courses in the BVIs are considerably more expensive.

How to get to the British Virgin Islands
You can fly from Providence, Boston, Hartford or the NYC airports to San Juan Puerto Rico (SJU) and then InterCaribbean Airlines to Beef Island Tortola. (EIS). R/T flights cost between $600 and $900 depending on the proximity to the departure date.

Prospective Itinerary:

Saturday: Depart NYC, PVD, BOS, or BDL airports to San Juan, Take a connecting flight from San Juan to Beef Island Airport on Tortola. Spend Saturday Night in Road Town Tortola. Our pre-charter hotel in Road Town is the Village Cay Marina Hotel, which is within walking distance to our charter base at The Moorings, for $225 a night.

Sunday: Morning: Explore Road Town, and shop to get last minute personal items. Lunch at The Moorings Bar and Restaurant in Wickham's Cay II while we provision the yacht. Afternoon: Sail to The Bight, Norman Island. Mooring Ball or Anchor. Explore "the Caves" a spectacular snorkeling site on Norman Island, relax on the boat, or visit Willie T's floating Bar / Restaurant.

Monday: Set sail to Peter, Salt, and Cooper's Island stopping for snorkeling at the best sites. Stop and moor at Manchioneel Bay on Cooper's Island for the night. Cooper's Island Beach Club has a terrific bar and restaurant renowned for its spectacular sunset venue.

Tuesday: Morning: set sail to Virgin Gorda stopping at the magnificent "Baths" famous for its enormous house size boulders, caves, tidal pools, and a beautiful beach,
Afternoon: sail a short distance to Spanish Town to reprovision if needed. Continue sailing to North Sound on Virgin Gorda spending the night at our base, the Leverick Bay Resort and Marina.

Wednesday: Spend the day sailing in Virgin Gorda's North Sound. which has dozens of lovely anchorages with good snorkeling and swimming beaches. Stop for a drink at the Bitter End Yacht Club which has been completely rebuilt since Hurricane Irma. Spend the night in Leverick Bay at our Virgin Gorda base at the Leverick Bay Resort and Marina.

Thursday: Spend the day sailing in Virgin Gorda's North Sound. There are fabulous islands like Mosquito, Prickly Pear, and Eustacia, with lovely beaches, scenic hiking, and beautiful reefs to snorkel on. Stop for a cocktail at Saba Rock, a famous restaurant in North Sound. Spend the night back at our base at the Leverick Bay Resort and Marina.

Friday: Set sail for Trellis Bay, well known for its local beachside artist's community.

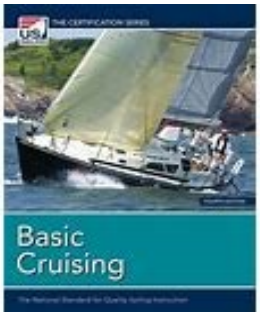
Saturday: Sail to Brandywine Bay on Tortola with dinner at a 4-star French Restaurant.

Sunday: Return our yacht to "The Moorings" in Road Town Harbor by 11AM. Take an afternoon flight to Puerto Rico to transition back to the Northeast. Or spend a night in Condado, a beach resort near the San Juan airport, or stay in historic Old San Juan before connecting with a Monday Morning flight back to your home airport.

Sailing Course Description

Our US Sailing Basic Cruising and Bareboat Cruising Certification Courses prepares you to sail your own big boat and charter cruising boats, on your own, without a professional captain and crew aboard. Depending on weather conditions and the learning pace of others in your class, the following knowledge and skills are learned and practiced. These follow the curriculum and lesson planning in the US Sailing Basic Cruising, and Bareboat Cruising Course Books. See: US Sailing Bareboat Cruising Education for more information.

- Planning a cruise including provisioning, itinerary, weather forecasting
- Familiarization with boat layout and sail plan
- Operation of engine, stove, and head
- Routine engine maintenance, and fueling techniques
- Electrical System, including battery and charging systems
- Fresh water system including use and onboard water conservation
- Use and location of thru-hull fittings
- Maneuvering under power and sail with emphasis on safe boat handling in close quarters
- Big boat docking, mooring, and anchoring techniques



- Proper and safe handling of halyards and lines
- Proper and safe use of winches
- Weather forecasts and their impact on cruising route and sail selection
- Sail shape and trim
- Inter-crew communication when trimming sails, mooring, docking, and anchoring
- Genoa roller furling use
- Emergency procedures including steering system failure, grounding, overboard recovery.
- Big boat heavy weather and reefing techniques
- Sailing wing and wing on bigger boats including boom preventer use
- Knot tying proficiency and which knot to use in any application
- Maintaining a ship's log
- Piloting techniques including set, drift and leeway calculations
- Navigation including the use of charts, navigation markers, and GPS navigation
- Rules of the Road
- Coast Guard requirements
- VHF radio use
- Using lights and sound signals including distress signals
- Use of safety harness



Some Links to Explore:

BVI Sailing Itinerary (bareboatsbvi.com) (nice guide including dozens of links to each day's destinations)

Moorings 46.3 - 3 Cabin Monohull | The Moorings (our Charter vessel)

Leverick Bay Resort & Marina (leverickbayvg.com) (our marina destination in North Sound, Virgin Gorda)

Basic Cruising - US Sailing (The national standard for sail training in cruising yachting education)

How to Book Your Sailing Adventure:

Many charter weeks are still available, but they are booking up quickly. For the best pricing, six people are optimum to sail on the Cruise. You can take the lead by selecting a week which fits into your schedule, and by inviting some of your friends to accompany you and if you have less than six, we can put you in touch with other BICS Members who also want to participate, so you can all realize this opportunity.

Call BICS at 401 741-5136 to get availability and definitive pricing for any given week and for the latest information on air travel to, and lodging in, Tortola.

Comparable Virgin Island Sailing School Certification Course.

Blue Water Sailing school	$4,995.00
Saint Thomas Sailing Center (resort based, not live-aboard cruising)	$3,900.00
Offshore Sailing School at the Scrub Island Resort, BVI	$5,430.00



Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Are the charter dates and itinerary destinations flexible?

A: Yes. The BVI cruising itinerary provided above is just an example. Any range of dates, including a 10-day sailing charter which could include Jost Van Dyke Island, is possible. Check with BICS to for charter yacht availability and rates on your planned vacation schedule.

Q: Do I have to take the sailing proficiency certification courses if I just want a relaxing Caribbean sailing cruise / vacation without any sailing instruction?

A: No, the sailing course instruction is offered to our charter guests who want to learn big boat handling and become proficient as prospective bareboat charter skippers, at no extra charge. If you only want a relaxing sailing vacation, the itinerary can be adjusted to achieve just that.

Q: What are the live aboard arrangements like?

A: Our charter yacht has three private staterooms each with its own shower and head, plenty of ventilation, personal storage space, USB and AC inverter powered outlets. The skipper bunks in the settee berth in the main cabin. If you like to sleep under the stars, comfortable cockpit cushions make that possible. On nights when we are docked in a marina slip, AC power is available on board. WIFI is available over the entire charter range through a dedicated hot spot on the yacht. This opportunity allows our guests to experience the “charter lifestyle” for the first time.

Q: Who selects and prepares the food and beverages onboard?

A: Years of chartering experience guides us to provision the yacht with food and beverage selections which are local, fresh, sumptuous, and completely flexible. BICS will work with each charter party to develop menus, provision the boat accordingly, and assist with the food preparation. On some nights, when we are docked at a resort marina you may wish to sample the casual or fine dining that these resorts offer ashore.

Q: What kind of weather can we expect on the Cruise?

A: The weather in the BVIs is remarkably consistent. Daily temperatures: High 83 / Low 75. Mostly sunny with some fair-weather clouds. Wind E 12-18 kts. Water temp: Feb 77, March 78.

Q: What are the best flights from the Northeast to Tortola?

A: The least expensive flights are direct flights from Providence, Boston, NYC or Hartford to San Juan Puerto Rico, (SJU) connecting to InterCaribbean Airlines from San Juan to Beef Island Airport on Tortola (EIS) for about $750 R/T.

Q: What are our skipper’s qualifications?

A: Henry duPont has been sailing on cruising yachts from a young age and has logged over fifty cruising voyages sailing to local destinations in the Northeast and on blue water sailing voyages to Bermuda, Nova Scotia, and the Chesapeake Bay. Henry is a founding Director of Block Island Community Sailing, holds a USCG Master Captain’s License, with a Sailing Endorsement, and is a US Sailing Certified Cruising Instructor for teaching: Basic Keelboat, Basic Cruising, Bareboat Cruising and Coastal Navigation courses. Henry has been taking our students on these sail training cruises in the BVIs as well as to local cruising destinations like Newport, RI, Wickford RI, and Mystic CT. He has also worked professionally on clean energy projects in the British Virgin Islands and is very familiar with the charter itinerary waters. He will ensure that your charter experience is safe, educational, comfortable, and fun!

Some photos from some of our recent BICS Sailing Charter Vacations.



March 24 Charter Party, Coopers Island Beach Club



Stilt Dancers at the Leverick Bay Resort & Marina



Bitter End Yacht Club Bar, Virgin Gorda, BVI



Saba Rock Bar and Restaurant Sunset



Trellis Bay Bar and Grill, Tortola



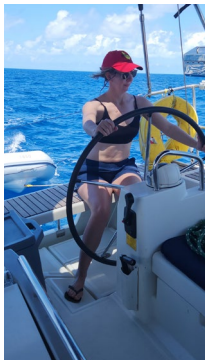
Crudité served onboard, Norman's Island BVI



Caves at "The Baths" Virgin Gorda



Our boat at Brandywine Bay, Tortola



Aspiring New Skipper





Map of the British Virgin Islands showing the route of a typical 2027 BICS Cruising Course Itinerary