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BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

YACHT GUIDE

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Promenade LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Crewed Yachts
A SAIL FOR ALL SEASONS

Reaching Farther Afield

Skipper's Tips
Hurricane Forecasting

Charlie The Chandler
Bareboat Secrets

Mini Me
A Model Match

Photos by Kerry Lynn Hucal unless otherwise specified.



Main Picture: Promenade at anchor in Deadman's Bay. Left: Few charter boats have the accolade of appearing on BVI stamps. Promenade was one of the first.



Photo by Dougal D Thornton, UltimateBVI.com

PROMENADE

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE



Local knowledge means sunset sails and quiet anchorages, waking to the sounds of birds (not to mention the smells of coffee and freshly baked bread), and walking on a beach where the only foot prints are your own.

Local knowledge means drift diving with the currents along steep island drop-offs as you live-dive from the yacht or fish the deep northern margins.

Local knowledge means the difference between just another anchorage and a night spent alone in a secluded bay gently kissed by the tropical breeze where the only lights are the stars above and the bioluminescence below.

Promenade's Captain Rich Rome sums it up, "If people want it to happen, it'll happen. It's the *Promenade Way*."

Begun by owner Kerry Lynn Hucul, the *Promenade Way* means that the crew engages with the guests to provide whatever they can to make an enjoyable and memorable vacation. It also means the boat has the diversity of activities to allow it all to happen. Think of it all like a giant toolkit for making fun! The concept must be working, judging by the number of guests that come back year after year for a week or more of this ideal environment.

On a recent charter, a group of eight guests with broad interests were kept constantly entertained with a variety of activities. While one was heavily into diving, three others spent hours snorkelling, and some enjoyed constant water sports where others were beachcombing,

sunning, and lounging. At the end of the week, the group had managed to keep the crew busy using every toy on the boat. Laughing heartily, Rich said "I think that's the first time that's ever happened."

Behind the scenes, Kerry and her partner "Bazza" Cooper are continually upgrading and improving the boat itself. As a small example, consider that *Promenade* has an onboard water maker ensuring enough water for showers and washing equipment down without ever having to visit a busy marina to take on water. Then there are items like the full-boat sound system and projection home theatre. All these add-ons assist with providing a seamless vacation for guests, whatever their favoured relaxation methods are.

But it is definitely *Promenade's* three-person crew that keeps the action going. When chef/dive instructor Lisa Dixon says, "We're having as much fun as the guests are!" she means it. Whether it's Rich setting the spinnaker for a downhill rollick, Lisa guiding a dive group through Grand Central Station (her personal favourite), or Brad Griffiths towing another first-time slalom skier behind the 50hp tender, the guests love the energy and enthusiasm that the crew puts into it.

The crew, with extensive experience and local knowledge, spend a great deal of time tuning and tweaking each day's activities to the guests'



CONTACTING PROMENADE

Promenade does term charters to a week or more. Her layout handles groups of twelve guests comfortably, whether family, friends, or corporate group. Breakfast, lunch, afternoon appetizers, 'blender sports', and dinner daily – all the highest quality served in family style – are all included, as are the extensive open bar, soft drinks, juices, etc. All activities and toys (except scuba diving – it's extra) are included in the charter price.

For short-term visitors or island residents wanting to get away from Tortola for a bit, *Promenade* offers day charters from 9am to 5pm (including one-ways from Virgin Gorda to Road Town). Lunch, drinks, and all activities other than diving are included in a fixed price.

Per-cabin sailings are also available for singles or couples.

Promenade can be found on the web at www.yachtPromenade.com and the crew's blog can be followed at www.saildivebvi.com/serendipity.

Check them out and find out why their slogan is "We have more fun!"



Main: Local knowledge assures seclusion and privacy in a little known anchorage. Below: The three-man crew provide guests with a variety of thrilling adventures on a daily basis.



desires. When you go geocaching, for example, you might be in for an easy walk on graded trails or you might need a machete (they'll provide one) to scramble up the hills of one of the BVI's uninhabited islands.

Similarly for the divers, you might have uncrowded, off-hours diving at the *Rhone* or a night dive on the *Chikuzen*. For the children, it's "Survivor BVI," and for everyone it's fritters made from the conch you snorkel and pick yourself.

Ask Rich to describe a 'typical' charter and he smiles and says, "I don't know. We try not plan more than 3 hours in advance."

Many things make *Promenade* uniquely suited to BVI chartering, starting with the fact that she was built 27 years ago in Bristol, England, specifically for sailing in the British Virgin Islands. And she's been here ever since, doing just that. Not many boats can make that claim; fewer still, have the distinction of having appeared on a BVI postage stamp.

The three hulls of *Promenade's* trimaran design provide a stability that will suit all sailors, whether seasoned or novice. Where waves make catamarans continually rock and monohulls monotonously roll, *Promenade* is persistently unperturbed. Besides the obvious comfort, stability means many more anchorages to choose from – anchorages that most other boats can only sail past.

Then there are the practical pleasures. Things like three-times the deck and cockpit space of a similarly sized monohull, spacious cabins with queen- and king-sized berths, and a large air-conditioned saloon with ample bar and wine locker makes it great for group activities and at the same time simple for quiet solitude as well.

And now, let's talk about the toys. Three kayaks, two dinghies, three sets of water skis, wake board, fishing gear, snorkelling gear, scuba gear (and onboard compressor!), Banana, Predator, and an 8-person Pal Lounge for afternoon blender sports on the water. Of course those are merely the *water* toys. One can't forget the big-screen projection home theatre with hundreds of DVDs, an iPod station that feeds sounds anywhere on the boat, photography equipment, video games, board games, a Sky Scout, and even wireless Internet access.

Combine local knowledge with the crew's unique skills (ask Brad about Formula 1 boat racing in South Africa) and broad experience (or ask Rich about sailing in Croatia), mixed with the BVI's stunning variety of islands, sailing conditions, and anchorages, seasoned well with the yacht's unique capabilities and diverse amenities and you begin to savour the alluring potential of the *Promenade* Way. This is what guests love and why they come back time after time after time.