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Antigua and Guadeloupe Cruises

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The Cruising Club of America hosted two excellent cruises: in Antigua 9-16 March, in company with the New York Yacht Club and in Guadeloupe 16-22 March. The Antigua Cruise was organized by Nick Brown (BOS) (who unfortunately was unable to attend the Cruise) and Heather McHutchison (BOS); the Guadeloupe Cruise was organized by Andrew and Hilary Armstrong (CHE).

Antigua Cruise

The Antigua Cruise convened at the Boom Restaurant for a cocktail party overlooking famous English Harbour. The fleet consisted of 25 boats of which one was skippered by CCA Commodore Gowell and 16 by other CCA members, including five CCA members' boats; there were 130 participants.



The Cruise itinerary was flexible, with ample lay days; some participants circumnavigated Antigua while others spent more time on the protected west coast. Everyone found excellent snorkeling in warm, clear water. Launching the dinghy into the surf was occasionally interesting – ask Steve James why he needed to dump sand out of his hat. The weather, as always in Antigua, was great and predictable: “winds east 10-15 knots, chance of showers [although few of us needed foul weather gear], high temperatures in the low 80s F.” Everyone enjoyed good sailing every day.

Many participants enjoyed a beach front rum keg party on Great Bird Island in North Sound.



The full fleet reconvened at Green Island at **The Reef Restaurant**, run by Mill Reef Club, for an outstanding cocktail party and great dance band.



The final dinner was at the spectacular **Carlisle Bay Resort**, just west of Falmouth.



Commodore Gowell presented awards of appreciation to Heather, Doug Renfield-Miller, NYYC Coordinator, and Richard Archer, Commodore of Antigua Yacht Club, who helped guide part of the fleet who desired local knowledge in some tight navigation.

Guadeloupe Cruise



On Saturday, March 16th the Guadeloupe cruise started with a sporty sail for most of the fleet from English Harbor Antigua down to Deshaies Guadeloupe. 40 NM due south across the strait of Guadeloupe with east winds blowing 15 to 25kts.

Andrew and Hilary Armstrong on *Billy Ruff'n* and Lawrence Trimingham and Cinde Pereira on *Bermudian Escape* met the fleet in Deshaies from the south.

Once everyone arrived in Guadeloupe, we had 12 boats and 58 members in attendance.

On Sunday the fleet was treated to a wonderful, guided tour of Le Jardin Botanique. A comprehensive 2 hour walking tour of the beautiful gardens where our guide explained all the plants of Guadeloupe as well as the impact of the banana and sugar crops on the local economy. As Guadeloupe is a region of France, most of these exports are to France rather than to North America.



After the tour, we sat down for a buffet dinner at the restaurant in Le Jardin Botanique and Commodore Gowell welcomed the fleet to Guadeloupe.



On Monday the plan was to sail to Pigeon Island and spend the day diving and snorkeling in the Jacques Cousteau underwater park. Apparently, we were not the only people with that plan and when we arrived, the moorings were all taken and the anchorage full. Some boats anchored in the south anchorage and dinghied over. Others anchored in Bouillante to luxuriate in the warm geothermal waters and snorkel.

On Tuesday the Fleet arrived in Iles Des Saintes. A group of small islands just south of the main island of Guadeloupe (they are a part of Guadeloupe). For many, this was the highlight of the two weeks. A beautiful town, large anchorage, many hiking trails and great French food.



On Wednesday Andrew and Hillary organized a beach side lunch and cookout on the island of Ilet a Cabrit. After lunch many in the group climbed to Fort Josephine which has a commanding view of “the saints”, while others snorkeled along the reef.



Then on Wednesday evening, our closing dinner was at Ti Kaz La. The restaurant that Mark Myers (CHE) declared as the best restaurant in all of Guadeloupe. We had the place to ourselves for the evening. And while the seating was tight, once the French wine started flowing the fun began and lasted for hours and included much music and dancing.



Commodore Gowell presented parting gifts to Hilary and Andrew Armstrong for their amazing job organizing the week and to Roel Hoekstra for helping with the administrative load.

And with that, the cruise was over. On Thursday the fleet began its two day sail back to English Harbour.



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