

A Passage to Nevis with my Yacht Club

I always thought "lumpy" meant lumpy custard or lumpy soup; I never realised "lumpy seas" was hold on tight with both hands for 8 hrs and trust in your skipper that you will eventually get to your destination!

Swells and surfing 3 metre waves, plus 18 knot winds made for a most enthralling journey to Nevis. Interestingly, when reaching the extremely pretty island it still took 2 hrs along the coastline to arrive at Pinneys Beach. Never has a "Killer Bee" cocktail in Sunshine's Bar tasted so good! In fact I had to have three. Two other boats from the Jolly Harbour Yacht Club made the rendezvous. Food was delicious, reasonable and the company great fun. Vervet Monkeys met us on the beach when going ashore in the dinghy. A brief exploration of Charlestown whilst Skipper did the port duties and an interesting encounter with a lively local lady followed by a taxi ride to the Botanical Gardens and Golden Rock made for a pleasurable morning. Good fish wraps for lunch at The Lime Beach Bar.



On to St Kitts: Moored at Whitehouse Bay by "Salt Plage" Beach Bar. Phew..... a great place with super sunsets, but watch the prices! Met the daughter of the Commodore of St Kitt's & Nevis Yacht Club, and JHYC burgee was duly presented to the Vice Commodore. A whistle stop tour was made of Christophe Harbour, a large self contained development of luxury properties, moorings, etc.



We then explored St Kitts on the Sugar Train, a must for St Kitts, drinking rum punches whilst chugging past beautiful lush landscapes, churches, sugar mills and kids waving along the trackside. Departure at 0515 the following morning in monsoon conditions and high gusting winds of 25 knots through Christophe Harbour made for another exhilarating and memorable moment.

The second long crossing of lumpy seas actually meant I held on with only one hand, leaving the other one free to eat a lunchtime sandwich. Did this mean I was getting the hang of things? Arriving at St Maarten by 2 pm meant we were here in ample time to get through the entry bridge for Simpson Bay Marina. A few days relaxing gave the opportunity to explore the shops of Philipsburg, get the bus to the French side (Baie de Marigot) and enjoy marvellous croissants, pastries, quiches, etc. I did ask the proprietor of one establishment if she would like to open such a bakery in Jolly Harbour, no comment!

However, the maddest bit was to stand on the beach at the bottom of the airport runway and watch the planes come right over your head to land. Not only that but when the KLM 747 took off with thrusting engines... you got blown off your feet – almost like a hot sand storm! Actually the Jet Blue A321 was even worse (or better!) as the engines were closer together. Much hilarity was had by all when we recovered from the experience. Where else in the world could you do this? An 'elf and safety' nightmare in the making.



By now getting the hang of things the return beat wasn't as nerve racking as the outbound trip. Only 9 hrs back to St Kitts, Frigate Bay, where the mooring was 'rock n roll' all night. A short sail back to Nevis for breakfast on board whilst watching the spectacular volcano before the final gripping sail home. En route three playful silver green dolphins jumped out the water on the port side swimming along with us for a while. What a joy to see. Only 11 hrs back to Antigua watching Nevis disappear in the sunset and stars lighting up the sky. Huge thanks to our hosts and our travel companions for a truly impressive, diverse and fun trip.

Now..... what was the talk about "lumpy and rough" seas on the way to Guadeloupe?

