

Chartering a Bareboat in Croatia,

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Part Two

In The Part One, I forgot to mention one small detail. Since my Co- Captain has a special connection with spiritual world, our first night on the boat Dora conducted some spiritual Witch Craft Ceremony? I was curious what is going on so I asked Dora and all I heard was "Stay out of this it is not your business". I replied "OK" and went back to study the chart for next day. I think Dora was asking all Croatia's Gods of Wind (Bura, Jugo, Mistral, Tramuntana) to be gentle for our "Prophecy" during next two weeks.

Well, I do not know what my Spiritual Co-Captain did but instead Gods to be gentle I think she pissed them off. I do not quite see 25 kts, or more wind to be gentle. Any way let's get back to ACI Marina Milna and docking procedure.

I had my reasons that as a first stop of our journey I selected ACI Marina Milna. First the town and marina are located deep in the island, just like our Huntington Harbor. We motored in to the harbor for about 15 minutes. Marina was surrounded by houses, buildings and high grounds so as we motored in I was hoping that we get less wind as oppose to the open sea. In Croatia it is a custom that after 12 PM all ACI marinas have a crew standing by on the dock and waiting for boats to arrive so you do not have to hail them on VHF and ask for slip assignment. They mastered this to the science. As we entered into the harbor we already spotted at least fifteen boats docked at the pier and marina's crew was waiving to us and showing where we suppose dock. We were docking astern next to 40 foot Bavaria on her starboard side with all possible fenders out. As prudent mariners we deployed our fenders on the portside and starboard side just to be ready for anything then I said to myself "looked -out people Prophecy is coming".

I checked the wind and it dropped to 15-18kts., blowing on our starboard beam. I turn to my First Mate and shouted "Whatever you did last night with Gods of Adriatic Sea, I think is working; they are giving us a break". Going astern I had to give myself at least four to five length of the boat to put her in straight line. At the first attempt in a half way through unfamiliar 45 foot sail boat just cut me off and I had aboard the mission. Gee ... I thought things like that happened only at Huntington Harbor. I guess I was wrong. Anyway, after second try we safely landed next to friendly Bavaria gently kissing her fenders. Mission accomplished. I heard someone voice from the bow "Good job skipper, we safely made to our first stop" that was my Co-Captain Dora tying up a bow mooring line. I replied "thank you for the compliment, could not do it without you, I think this accomplishment deserve to pop a bottle of Champagne", and I took one from the fridge with two glasses. As you can imagine minutes after minutes boats were coming to the marina one after another and every one was going through the same scenario. Soon we had over 50 boats tied up next to each other. Next things we started hearing all kind of languages going across the decks. Crews started talking to each other exchanging experiences and just talking about life. Not to mentioned a lot of vine and beer. By the way there is no specific time for the cartel hour. Another words in Croatia the minute you tied up your boat to the dock the cartel hour is on.

Milna is a town located in a wide bay on the western part of island Brač and 18km away from town Supetar where you can take a ferry to main land or other islands. The main activities for locals are fishing, seafaring and tourism. The town itself has many restaurants, stores and small boutiques. Milna is a quiet and very relaxing town. After exploring the town next day we rented a car and toured the island for all day.

We drove to Boll which is the oldest town on the shore of Island Brač. It is located in the central part of the southern side of the island. The town stretches for a few kilometers along the shoreline and is known for the crystal clear water and numerous beautiful beaches, the most popular of which is "Zlatni rat". It is one of the most beautiful and biggest natural attractions on the Adriatic. It is said that it is the only one in the world which was formed in a way that spreads vertically towards the coast. It stretches for a half a kilometer into the sea clarity. Bathing here is a true experience. Boll is full of restaurants, stores, and night clubs. Can you imagine stepping off your transom straight to the restaurant table or night club? Or better the waiter will serve you a dinner on your boat.

Well next stop was Town Hvar on Island Hvar. It is a town that everyone must stop and visit at least for a couple of days if you are sailing in Central Dalmatia. We checked the weather for next day and decided to cast off as early in the morning as possible to get to Hvar before noon. Hvar doesn't have actual marina. There are few options for docking. One is the town dock which is a prime spot where everyone wants to be including mega yachts. Second is town moorings and third anchoring in the harbor. We were aiming for town moorings.

We left ACI Marina Milna 0700 and took the bearing for Hvar. The weather was gorgeous. We sailed for a few hours and then motored in to the harbor. Upon arrival as I suspected the town dock was mostly occupied by big yachts and mega yachts, but there was plenty of room at town moorings so it was perfect. We had a very light wind at the harbor and like I mentioned before there are no tides in Croatia.

The tie up at the town mooring is similar to the astern docking. Normally the procedure is as follows:

Start backing up the boat to the pier, half way through one of the crew needs to pick up the mooring and tie the mooring line on the bow. By the way the mooring buoy has a metal loop that you need to pass your own mooring line through and bring back to your cleat. So make sure that one end is already tied up on the port or starboard cleat. Once this is done keep continuing back until you are close to the shore, then you need to take the stern lines to the shore and tie them up on the shore. Normally the backing boat will pass the stern line to the neighborhood moored boat then deploy the dinghy and take the lines to the shore. At least that is how it is supposed to be done. Well, we did not quite follow this procedure. We picked up the mooring the usual way bow in instead of going astern because there were few empty moorings around so we had lots of room to swing either way. Once we secured our mooring we had to take our stern lines to the town dock. Instead of deploying our dinghy I decided to take a line with me and swim about 100 feet or more to the shore. The only reason I decided to do that was because we had a 32 foot boat not 40 feet. About ¾ to the shore I found out that the line is too short. Gee, I wonder how that happened. So I swam back half way and asked Dora to tie another line to my line. Assuming that my Co-Captain knows how to tie two lines together I was not paying attention to the task and

continued enjoying swimming in delightful crystal clear water. When I got to the shore and started pulling on the line to bring "Prophecy" astern to the shore, I found out that both lines were ...

To be continued ...