

## Chartering a Bareboat in Croatia,

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### Part Three

Ok, so where are we, aha something about pulling the line while I'm half submerged in delightful crystal blue-green water? In a few moments I realized that something is not going right with the line and soon I found out that both lines were... not attached together properly and I ended with other bitter end of the rope in my hand. Hmm, someone forgot how to tie an "Easter Bunny Knot" or properly called Bowline knot or at this point any knot that will keep two lines together. I was not a picky about the knots, believe me. Well there was nothing left for me but swim back with the line back to the boat. This time I made the knot. Swam back to the shore pulled the "Prophecy " astern, than get another stern line tide up to the shore and the job was done. Let me tell you something, I was done with my cardio/endurance workout for the day.

Finally we could enjoy few days at Hvar. In order to get on shore we had to deploy our dinghy. We were about 50 feet from the shore. I guess my Co-Captain Dora felt bad about the mishap with lines she decided to deploy the dinghy herself and set everything so we can go to town. Dora did a very good job taking the dinghy from the deck and lurching into the water. I guess the months of pre-trip preparations ,working out with P90X3 and dancing Zumba worked well. I did not move even one finger. She did all by herself. We actually did not need an engine. There was no reason for it. In the dragnet of many stern lines from other boats it will not be easy to navigate dinghy with running engine. We did not even use the oars. It was enough to pull your-self by using a stern line. After all it was only 50 feet.

Let's talk little bit about Hvar Island and Town Hvar. Yes both have the same name. Town Hvar is the Mecca of the yachtsman of the Adriatic Sea. Anyone who sails in Adriatic must go there. There are yachts and boats from all over the world. The island of Hvar is the queen of the Croatian Dalmatian islands. It has been famous since the antique because of its important strategic and nautical position, the rich of the various historical periods, the culture and natural monuments and the literature. Rich cultural and historic heritage of Hvar, that dates back to pre-historic times, unique gastronomy, beautiful beaches and bays , crystal blue sea. There is so much history and places to see that we decided to stay three days. The best way to explore the other parts of the island was by the car so we rented one for entire day. We had so much fun driving through the narrow streets and cliffs of the mountains. Definitely it is worth to see other towns of Island Hvar like Stari Grad, Vrboska and Jelsa. Jelsa was the town where Dora filmed the aero plane taking off and almost clipped off the mast of incoming sail boat. This was posted on Dora's face book. Neither captain of the sail boat or the aero plane shows any stress passing the mast in about three feet. It was a normal standard procedure, no panic. Island Havar is very famous for the wild growing lavender. Local people made many fragrance products from lavender, like soaps, aromatic oils, perfumes, etc. As we drove through the island there are small stands and boutiques where local people sales their home made products. As you can imagine thanks to Dora we came back home with separate suitcase of lavender products. I did not know how did we passed the custom at JFK.

Town Hvar is amazing itself. There are plenty things to do during the day and of course at night. It takes few hours to visit the castle that is situated on top of the mountain and guarding the Hvar harbor with his magnificent cannons. Build thousand years ago it was pretty amazing that we were able to walked and follow the footsteps of the Roman's and Greek's.

It will be completely wrong not to mention that Town Hvar is a party town. The nightlife is amazing. Every bar, pub and restaurant plays the music or has a life band. It is not a boring town plenty to do for everyone. The best part was meeting people perfect strangers like us looking to have a good time.

But like with everything else that starts and ends we had to leave the Hvar and head up for Island Korcula . Our target was ACI Marina Korcula right on the main street of the Korcula Town. This was actually the longest passage about 36 miles from Hvar to Korcula. After spending already few days in Croatia and figuring out the weather and the wind we came to one conclusion. Leaves the last stop as early as possible, while there is no wind and arrives in the afternoon at the next stop where there is nice light breeze, before wind picks up later . We applied this system for the rest of the trip and worked as a Swiss clock. Of course we still monitored the weather at all the time.

Just the idea of passing 36 Nm in unknown waters was very exciting. It felt like Marco Polo or Christopher Columbus. On the way we passed Island Scedro on the portside. Island Scedro can be very helpful in case sailors are looking for a safe place. Island Scedro have few great harbors that are going deep into the island and offers great protection. That was one of the reasons I choose that route. Always have plan A, B and C ready. After Island Scedro we passed small island Plocica on the starboard side and then we entered Korculanski Canal which is between Island Korcula and Peljesac peninsula that is connected with a main land. We had a great passage .On the way few big motor yachts passed us with topless ladies on the fly bridge waving to us. Awesome scenery everywhere. After all we were in Adriatic and it is very normal that ladies goes topless anywhere, boat, beach, water you named. There is nothing like European vacations. It reminded me my youth time when I was young and restless traveling through the European beaches. Ok, enough of that. Let's get back to navigation through Korculanski Canal after all we have to bring our "Prophecy " to the ACI Marina Korcula and docked astern again.

We entered marina's channel going astern and followed hand signals of the deckhand where to bring the boat. In the mid afternoon marinas are usually less crowded so we had more room for maneuvering. Still it was a challenge every time, but at that point we did pretty well.

Korcula is one of the greenest islands in the Adriatic Sea. It is also one of the most popular travel destinations in this part of Croatia. The vicinity of Dubrovnik as well as Mljet gives visitors to Korcula unique opportunity to spend time at this unspoiled Island as well as to visit effortlessly Mljet, national park, Dubrovnik, UNESCO's city or Mostar and Neretva River. As usually there was so much to see and also we decided to take a trip to Dubrovnik utilizing high speed catamaran instead actually sailing to Dubrovnik. As like any other towns and cities Korcula was a strategic point with her castle and cannons facing different directions and guarding the passage of the ancient ships. Marco Polo museum and the main cathedral with magnificent bell tower that you can climb all the way to the top are one of the many places to see besides small shops, boutiques, jewelry stores and art galleries. Not to mentioned restaurants with great food and vines.

Food in Croatia is simple and delicious from meat lovers to seafood lovers everyone will find something to eat and of course ice creams everywhere. They were so delicious that I ate them almost every day.

Little bit about fueling. Not every port has a fuel and some of them let's say did not have a friendly fuel dock. They were either too crowded or not enough water for the sailboat. We did fuel in Milna (which has a great long fuel dock and deep water) so I knew that I will have enough fuel to get to Korcula and come back but I wanted to have a full tank just in case. Korcula has a fuel dock that was not located near our marina so we will have to motor out to another harbor. However we met very nice local people and we became friends after few bottles of Sauvignon Blanc. When I told them that we want to get some fuel they offered to drive us to the gas station. Well that was great but we did not have any jerry jugs. However we had two empty 5 gallons plastic water jugs. So guess what I pumped 10 gallons of diesel into those jugs and brought back to the boat. Sometime you just have to be creative. I'm not sure if that trick will work in US. I may have to try that one day.

Trip to Dubrovnik on high speed catamaran was fantastic. We got there early morning and came back late evening. Dubrovnik is amazing city with century old castle and stunningly intact walled city on the Adriatic Sea coast of the extreme south of Croatia. For hundred years Dubrovnik was the only city in Adriatic that could equally compete with Venice. If anyone has plans to go to Croatia than you have to spend some time in Dubrovnik.

We spend three beautiful days in Korcula. We have seen again more beautiful places and made some friends that we keep in touch. It was time to move on and take a course on Pakleni Islands to ACI Marina Palmezana where we met our challenge with frisky deck hand. To be continued ...