

Southern Gulf Islands Saunter

August cruise (August 16-18, 2024)

Winter Cove, Sage Hayward Winery, Pender Island, Home

We welcome all to join us on this cruise through familiar waters in mid August and visit one of our favourite GI lunch spots coupled with potentially good breezes through Plumper Sound and maybe south Pender. It's a favourite on our annual cruising itinerary and this will be 50 years since we first anchored in Winter Cove. Our itinerary is somewhat flexible depending on the prevailing weather, and how much wine we drink at the winery (er, no skippers drinking please). We are mostly on a flood tide which will carry us nicely home, but may slow some of us down as we head south.

We sail a 26ft Nonsuch named Cato, unmistakable with an unstayed mast on the foredeck and one giant 420 sq foot sail to catch the breezes...it's a cat rig. I'm open to suggestions re VHF channel to use for keeping in touch...we're not used to keeping in touch with anyone other than Ch 16. I also have a cell phone 1 250 514 7325 that I plan to take along. Please provide your contact number when you register, if you have one.

Friday: Head to Winter Cove. We often stop at Dinner Bay on Mayne Island to spend a few moments of tranquility in the splendid Japanese garden there. Anchoring is not as easy as it used to be due to the number of buoys now in the bay. We anchor amongst them, but there is also good holding ground further out. In your dinghy, keep left, to the park beach and the garden is right there.

Winter Cove is a splendid anchorage, protected in almost all weathers. But it is shallow, so watch your depth sounder and invite the Admiral to the bow. We usually anchor close in to the jetty, since I am the dinghy motor and Mr Max, the dog, sometimes decides that a midnight stroll on shore would be good for his constitution. Don't anchor too close to Boat Pass, it runs quite a current when it gets going. The park is on the south side of the cove. The north side is private property, usually rigorously patrolled.

On shore we have the park (GINPR) picnic tables and a pleasant walk to witness the rushing waters of Boat Pass. I thought perhaps we would try to rendezvous at the picnic tables, say at 5pm for appies followed by a walk to Boat Pass. Those with musical instruments, including voices, are encouraged to bring them along for later night entertainment.

Saturday: The Highlight, as we head for our lunch at Sage Hayward Winery at Breezy Bay (wonder why it's called that??) on Saturna, for 12 pm.

We usually anchor off the beach and walk the 300 yards or so to the winery. There are also now expanded facilities in the Bay with five mooring buoys and 140 ft of dock space available for the winery. That will help!

Then we must decide whether to overnight at Browning or Beaumont? For us, it usually depends on the winds. With good winds we'll round south Pender and anchor in Beaumont. If things are not quite so lively we may just chug across to Browning for the night. Both anchorages offer reasonable protection and also moorage for those who prefer to be tethered. They also both have pubs, which may be useful for the evening meal and nice walks. However, if we have a sizeable group we should try to get some idea of preference beforehand (Browning or Beaumont) as both pubs will be busy at that time of year. For the energetic and of sound body, a hike up Mt Norman is not to be missed from either anchorage. When you register please indicate your preference for Browning or Beaumont and we'll go with the majority and whether you would like a pub booking for dinner.

Sunday: We float back on that flood tide...hopefully with a following wind taking care to respect the new Orca protection zone off the Pender bluffs.

We welcome any and all suggestions regarding the cruise itinerary, especially from those more used to cruising with others. This is our first time.

Please let us know if you are interested in joining us (contact us at the phone number in the yearbook or through cruising@saltspringsailing.ca) as we have to give the winery some idea of group size. Also please don't hesitate to make any suggestions re potential changes to the above.

We anticipate that all cruise participants are capable of reading a chart and finding their own way to our rendezvous locations and also know how to check the weather and tides themselves and always do so prior to any marine adventure. We don't believe in second hand weather interpretation. Do it yourself. Always.

We'll have a good time on this cruise but we also want to think that everyone will come back (yeh!) knowing a little more about this most beautiful part of the world we are lucky to call home.

Cruise Leaders. Phil and Jittiya Dearden. Phil has been cruising these waters for 50 years and Jittiya for over 30 years. Phil was a Professor in the Geography Department at UVic for over 40 years and has been, and still is, closely involved with many marine conservation initiatives around the world, including GINPR. Jittiya is Thai and was the organiser of the Thai Night at the SSISC clubhouse a couple of years ago. She will bring her culinary skills to bear on the appies and potluck.