

C34 Fleet 12 Guide to Cruising /Rafting

Planning:

Information on upcoming cruises is available in the C34 Fleet 12 published schedule and on the Fleet 12 website. Information on an upcoming cruise goes out via email to the membership covering such things as the destination, the theme, if there is one, and the VHF hailing and working channels to use. The cruise captain ask members planning to join the cruise to contact him or her in advance to facilitate planning.

You are urged to contact the cruise captain/host via email/cell phone/VHF with any questions you may have. Hail the cruise captain on VHF 16, or other channel he may designate, and let him/her know you will be joining the cruise. Weather can change the best of plans, so it is a good idea to check in with the cruise captain before you go, or enroute to the destination.

To cruise, you will need, at a minimum, a paper chart of the central portion of the Chesapeake Bay. Some form of GPS would be helpful; a small hand-held GPS (eg Garmin) is sufficient. Chesapeake Bay Magazine's **Guide to Cruising Chesapeake Bay** is updated annually, and contains all the local knowledge you need to find Baby Owl Cove and any other cruise destination.

Rafting at a Cruise Destination:

Rafting is a very informal affair. You may anchor alone or join a raft as you prefer. Rafts tend to be composed anywhere from 2 to 7 boats, depending on the size of the boats, the weather conditions, and personal preference. The skipper of the anchor boat is the raft captain and should insure that the ground tackle can hold several boats. It is the raft captain's decision to determine the number of boats on the raft and each boat's location. Matching size and weight on starboard and port sides is an important consideration for the anchor holding ability, security of the

raft and safety of the rafted boats. Rafts or partial rafts may be pre-arranged by members (e.g., families with same age children wishing to raft together), or formed on a first come-first served basis, with additional rafts being formed as more boats arrive at the destination. No one is obliged to raft up, however, so if for some reason you require rafting with someone else in order to participate in the cruise, you would be wise to pre-arrange this with another registrant.

When arriving at a destination anchorage, you may contact the cruise captain for rafting instructions/advice or contact a boat you may wish to raft with to request permission to raft up. If radio contact cannot be made, slowly come within hailing distance and talk to the anchor captain. Or, drop your own anchor and let arriving boats know they may raft with your boat. You indicate your willingness to take on boats by placing fenders on whichever side of your boat you would like the other boat(s) to tie up.

A boat arriving at a raft should put out fenders on the appropriate side. Cloth fender covers help to avoid annoying squeaks from the fenders during the night. More fenders can be added if needed. A boat joining the raft is responsible for providing the necessary lines to safely secure to the anchor boat (1 bow line, 1 stern line, and at least 1 spring line). Have these lines ready and attached to cleats before coming alongside the boat. Once alongside and standing off a short distance, pass the looped end of the bow and stern lines to the host boat and, once secured at that end, breast your boat over to the fenders. Then run the spring line(s) with the boats' masts offset.

While most rafts stay together throughout the night, winds, weather, poor holding ground, or anything that could lead to dragging anchor or excessive boat motion is cause for breaking up the raft. The raft captain will decide if and when a raft will be broken up, and has the responsibility to communicate clearly the decision to all boats in the raft.

Individual boats may also break off from the raft in the evening to anchor or leave. If you have special rafting needs or a desire to break off

in the evening or early morning, please inform the raft captain before joining so that provisions can be made to accommodate your needs.

Once you have joined a raft, you have given implicit permission for others, in the raft, to cross your boat. Good manners dictate that such crossings should be made forward of the mast, across the bow, and that crossing not be made when you might expect raft mates to be sleeping. Permission should be requested to visit or cross through the cockpit. Be careful where you are walking to prevent tripping or fouling the other boat's gear.

Cruise Social Parties:

The cruise captain decides, communicates and coordinates where and when the cruise social party will be located. This information is provided via email announcements prior to the cruise, on the Event Calendar link when you register, or during the cruise. Those desiring to attend can radio the cruise captain for the particulars. In general, most cruise parties start about 5:30 PM and are held on the boat/raft of the cruise captain. Sometimes another boat on the cruise (especially a larger one) is designated the host boat and depending upon the cruise destination, social parties may be held on a beach, if one is available. There are no hard and fast rules on exactly what the social party entails... that's what makes it fun!

Members anchored alone or part of rafts other than the host raft, should dinghy to the host boat or appropriate location. If you are new to cruising and don't own a dinghy yet, you can perhaps arrange IN ADVANCE with another registrant to 'taxi' you to the host boat. Most members are more than willing to assist a newcomer, but this is not something you should assume will happen.

Each member boat attending the party brings an hors d'oeuvre to share and their own drinks, unless the cruise captain has specified otherwise. Hors d'oeuvres can be whatever you like, such as chips & dips, cheese & crackers, pizza, pate, sweet & sour meatballs or stuffed mushrooms. Simple or elaborate, anything is welcome and appreciated. Remember to

bring non-breakable serving pieces (plastic, acrylic, wooden, etc.), not glass. Care should be taken in passing food and drinks around, so that clean up after the party is not a nightmare for the host boat(s).