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What is a Bareboat Charter?

Chartering a sail or powerboat to take on your own. You are the captain and your friends and family are crew. The boat may come with linens, safety gear, an operations manual, a full tank of diesel and water but that's where the frills stop. All the extras such as kayaks, food, beverage or even a captain are ala carte. Why, you ask, would a charter company let a stranger take a large, expensive cruising yacht for the week? All applicants are screened by submitting boating resumes and checked out dockside by the fleet manager to ensure the charterer isn't a danger to the yacht or to himself! If this isn't quite what you were looking for in a vacation, "Crewed Charters" may be just what you're looking for!

Why Call Bay Breeze?

Besides giving you an additional 5% off above and beyond any offer or discount you might find on your own, we can help you save precious vacation time! We've met the staff, toured the boats, gone thru the checkouts, know the ferry schedules, know where to get watersports equipment and can arrange ground transport. Basically, by calling us, not only will it save you money, it will save you a tremendous amount of time. And that's time that can be spent relaxing, sailing and enjoying instead of setting up the logistics of your vacation.

In addition, we will ask you questions to match you and your group to the perfect yacht. Even if you've bareboat chartered for years, we could turn you on to possibilities you never knew existed. What do you do if you run out of ice while anchored off a quiet, remote beach? Who's got beachside internet access? Who makes the best "Painkiller?" We know of ferry schedules not published in the guides! Call us!



About The Virgin Islands

Located about 1100 miles south of Florida, the Virgin Islands enjoy consistently warm, sunny weather, the average varying only about 5 degrees between summer and winter. The best trade winds blow usually from mid November thru early June but the sailing is typically top notch year round. Sunny and dry weather in the 80's is the norm but it has been known to rain for a week at a time.

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Known throughout the world for first rate sailing, sandy beaches, crystal clear waters, snorkeling & diving, this small chain of islands offer endless possibilities.

The islands are split between the US and the British governments. Crossing borders is not a problem with a passport or proper identification. You'll hardly notice a cultural difference between the islands but you will notice a slower, more carefree pace compared to most anywhere in mainland USA! The best thing you can do, immediately upon debarking the plane, is slow down! Walk slower and talk slower and relax a little. This may help how you're received by the locals! Locals like to be approached with a little cordial dialogue before asked of something. "Good afternoon, how's it going today?" will break the ice before you ask for a taxi or for directions.

Swimsuits are not appropriate attire around the towns or in restaurants or shops without a t-shirt or sarong or something to cover up a bit. Once out of town, most anything goes but if you venture into town for any length of time, its best to cover up.

English is the main language but with the accents and dialects of the West Indians, it can seem like a different language! The US dollar is used in both the US and British Virgin Islands. Credit cards are becoming more widely accepted but there are still many beach bars, restaurants and local stores that aren't set up to take credit cards. Your local check won't cut it once on the island, but the captain and crews will accept a check for gratuity at the end of charter. Travelers Checks and Cash are the way to go!



Am I qualified to Captain a Bareboat?

The best way to start shopping out boats is to look at your past experience and what size and type of boat you're comfortable with. Then fill out the online boater resume (or we can mail one to you). Even if you want to make a step up to a larger boat, complete the boater's resume, and we'll talk with the fleet manager to see if you qualify for the boat you want.

If your skills are a bit rusty, we can arrange for captains or sailing guides that can spend anywhere from a few hours to the entire week with you.

Choosing a Bareboat Company

There are about a dozen or so bareboat companies in the Virgin Islands. Some are based on the US Island of St. Thomas; the others are based on Tortola in the British Virgin Islands. Choosing a company may depend on what you're looking for in a bareboat. Some companies have the newest, latest production boats and charge accordingly, others have older model boats at a discounted rate. The Bay Breeze Yacht Charters Staff have personally seen the boats, met the staff and can recommend from first hand experience what company would be best for you.

There are a few companies that are based closer to the "Spanish Virgin Islands" (Vieques & Culebra) which are more off the beaten path. If going to these islands is on your itinerary, we'll recommend the best charter companies to base out of.

Most companies adopt the same policies regarding damage deposits required, qualifications to skipper a bareboat, reservations and cancellations. But companies differ when it comes to check outs and returns (briefings and debriefs) and with the boats they offer. What island you fly into may depend on where your



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yacht is based (although there are a number of inter-island ferries). Without proper planning, you could spend the first day of charter trying to get to your yacht!

Some fleets have older model boats (in the bareboat business, older model may be mid 1990's) which may not have inverters, air conditioning or other amenities found standard on newer boats. These are still great sailing boats that may not look showroom new but that comes with a greatly reduced price. Most fleets have a combination of the newest and the not-so-new boats.

Call us and we'll steer you towards the company that will give you exactly what you're looking for in a bareboat.

Choosing a Boat

The three biggest factors in choosing a boat are 1) What are you qualified to captain? 2) How many people do you have in your group? and, 3) What is your budget?

Also consider where you are flying into and the boating experience of the people you're bringing along. If you have a group of first time sailors or have small children, catamarans may be better for your group. What you give up in "pointing" and "heeling" is made up for with stability, almost no seasickness and a smiley, happy crew! If you and your crew have a long history of sailing together, a spirited monohull may be just what you're looking for. Performance under sail may make up for a small galley!

How do I book a Charter?

Booking a bareboat charter is simple. After talking with us and selecting the boat you want to charter:

- 1) We'll send you a contract and sailing resume (or you can download it online). Return the signed contract and the completed sailing resume along with a security deposit of 50% of the charter fee to the Bay Breeze office.
- 2) You are now confirmed for charter. The charter fee balance is due within 45 days of the start date.

Hiring a Captain

All bareboat companies offer captains that can skipper the boat for just a day or for the entire week. This is a good option if:

- ✓ You're looking for real local knowledge on where to cruise
- ✓ You're a bit rusty and need a refresher
- ✓ You've never sailed before!
- ✓ You're stepping up a size in charter yachts
- ✓ You just want to sit back and relax. Let someone else worry about the anchor!

Charter companies screen their captains not only in regards to qualifications but to personality as well. A Captain is normally good natured, knows the lesser known areas, pilots the boat and tends to the sailing. They are not cooks or stewardesses, although some may have a favorite local recipe they would be happy to make for the group. The captain should have his or her own stateroom on board or at least the converting settee (if the captain agrees to it and the boat has one). The charterers need to include the captain in with meal planning which includes eating ashore. Even if the captain is staying with the boat while the group dines ashore, there should be a food aboard for the captain.

Captain fees can vary but are roughly \$150/day. ASA Sailing School Captains are around \$165/day if you're looking for more of an instructional cruise. A gratuity is expected at the end of the week as well.

Provisioning & What to Bring

Provisioning is a service that will stock the boat for you with food and beverages of your choice before you arrive so you can simply get on and go. If provisioning is desired, we will send you a food and beverage preference sheet so you can tell the provisioning service exactly what you like. Provisioning is becoming



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increasingly popular considering the surcharge is well worth your time saved in the grocery store and taxi fees! If you don't want to hire out provisioning, we can direct you to the grocery closest to the marina.

Most yachts aren't designed with ample storage space so packing light is better. Some formal resort restaurants require a sport coat but most places just like clean and casual. Pack shorts and t-shirts and a swimsuit and maybe a light, long sleeved shirt in the event you should sunburn. A sun hat is also a good idea. Sunscreen is a must. Avoid tanning oils as they can stain teak decks and cushions.

Soft luggage is the only way to go. Not only to compact down for storage but it's easier on the interior of the yacht. But please be careful, the wheels and hard plastic corners on even soft luggage can damage woodwork, cabin floors and decks

SCUBA & Water Toys

Bringing your own snorkel gear is only necessary if you have a fondness for your own set but usually the charter companies have snorkel gear. Dive equipment can be brought aboard but please notify us first. The charter company may have to arrange lines or baskets to secure the equipment. Also, some companies charge an extra security deposit when tanks are brought aboard to protect against the damage weights and tanks can do to decks.

Kayaks, extra dinghys, windsurfers, even RIB's that can pull a skier!, can all be arranged with enough notice. The rental companies typically bring the equipment to your boat on the first day of charter and pick them up when you return.

Customs & Immigration

US citizens flying into St. Thomas do not have to clear customs until they enter the British Virgin Islands. Customs and Immigrations offices are conveniently located in popular harbors in the BVI. Every person on board is required to have either a passport or an original birth certificate accompanied by a driver's license.

US citizens flying into Tortola will clear customs and immigration at the airport. It is then only necessary to clear again if going to the US Islands.

The US and British Islands are very close to each other and without looking at a chart, it can be confusing as to which is which. It is required that whenever crossing borders (visiting an island in another countries territory) that you check in with customs and immigration.

For more information, go to www.travel.state.gov on the internet and click on "international"

Taxes & Information Sources

USVI: no sales taxes apply, \$20 per night for mooring balls in the National Park system. No charge for day use of mooring balls in the Park system.

BVI: Cruising taxes (payable when you check in at Customs) \$4.00 per person per day in BVI waters. National Park Trust Permit for US flagged vessels \$50 per week up to 4 passenger, then \$5 for each additional passenger. For BVI flagged vessels, \$25 per week up to 4 passengers, then \$5 for each additional passenger. For those visiting "The Baths" in Virgin Gorda, \$3 for adults, \$2 for children.

USVI Department of Tourism

(800) 372-8784 / (340) 774-8784 / www.usvi.net

BVI Tourist Information

(800) 835-8530 / (284) 494-3134 / www.bviwelcome.com

US Virgin Island Hotel & Tourism Association

(340) 774-6835 / www.virgin-islands-hotels.com