

A vibrant sunset over a calm body of water. The sky is filled with streaks of orange, pink, and purple, with scattered clouds. A small sailboat is visible on the horizon. In the foreground, there are green tropical leaves and branches.

# RMJ Travels

## Windward Islands Flotilla

One Way, St Lucia to Grenada

April 5 – 15, 2022

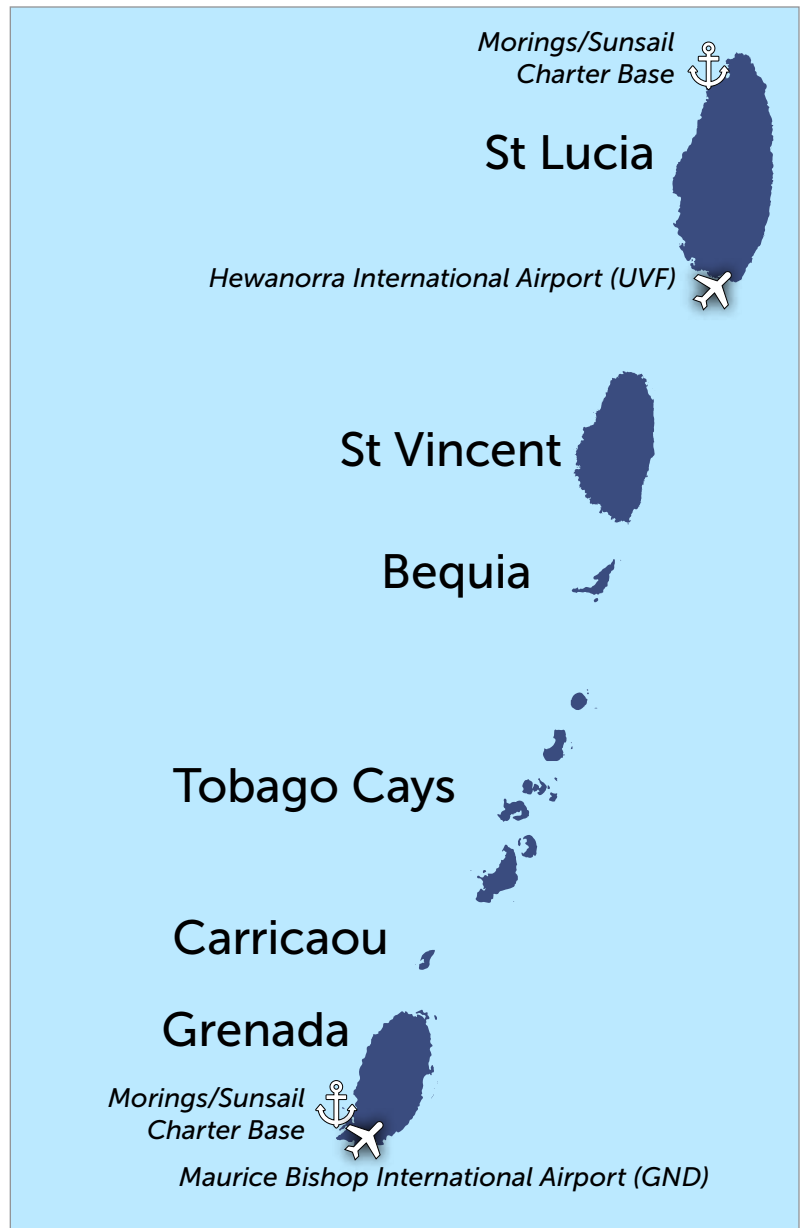
*Escorted by Rich Jepsen, former OCSC CEO*

# Overview

This chain of islands is the most remote section of the Caribbean and also the most culturally diverse, with three different countries represented in the dozens of islands, sand bars and islets we will visit. Located in the South East corner of the Caribbean, the three island countries are St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada, itself.

These islands are much less visited by tourists, cruisers and charterers even though they host some of the most beautiful beaches, landscapes, snorkeling/diving areas in the Caribbean. There are towering rock formations, such as the Pitons on St Lucia - sister peaks bookending a half-moon beach anchorage. You will experience remote anchorages inside the Tobago Cays reef where you anchor in calm water but with no land between you

and Africa, traditional Caribbean fishing sailboats being built on the shores of the incredible island of Bequia (pronounced Bek-We or Bek-Way) and so much more. Enjoy a Lobster Pizza at world famous Mac's Restaurant in Admiralty Bay, Bequia. Stroll on one of the most beautiful beaches in the world at Salt Whistle Bay. Purchase fresh lobster and other seafood from fishermen and boat-borne hawkers of food, beverages and trinkets from your anchored yacht.



*Windward Islands cruising area*

# Cruising in the Windwards

One of the big attractions of this location is the orientation of the island chain to the easterly trade winds at that latitude. The islands are mostly in a line from St Lucia in the north, heading South Southeast to Grenada. While there are some longer passages of several hours and open ocean passages between islands, they are all reaches with virtually no upwind sailing. Wind averages 15-25 knots from the ENE this time of year, so the sailing is great. While skippers and first mates should be a bit more experienced than what might be needed in the BVI, this area is perfectly comfortable and manageable for other crew regardless of skill set. Air and water temperatures are normal for the Caribbean, highs of 78-86 for the air and 78-82 in the water.

## Charter Operator and Yachts

We are sailing with the twin operations of Moorings and Sunsail. They operate together in the same marina on St Lucia as a single operation making it very convenient for all our crews. We have sailed with Moorings since 1985 as well as Sunsail since 2006 and have experienced the best prepared yachts and the most engaged service of any charter companies we have used.



*Anchorage at St. Georges*

# Highlights of the Islands

Here are a few highlights to give you a taste of the unique quality of this island group.

**Marigot Bay**, on the west coast of St Lucia, lies about 12 nautical miles (NM) from the Moorings/Sunsail base. It is a beautiful, protected bay that makes for a very convenient and comfortable first night anchorage after spending some of the day preparing yourselves and the yacht for the cruise. There are restaurants and bars and one of the most iconic sunset scenes in the Caribbean.



*Overlooking Marigot Bay*

**Pitons** is one of the most awe inspiring anchorages you will ever see. Located another 10 km south of Marigot Bay, the Pitons stand guard at the north and south ends of the anchorage, where you drop an anchor off the beach and tie the other end of your yacht to a tree on the beach. Romantic and beautiful. There's a wonderful beach for beachcombing and a few beachfront establishments for you to enjoy, as well as therapeutic mud-baths and an internationally famous restaurant in nearby Soufriere.

Remarkable, beautiful and romantic, **Bequia** is home to Admiralty Bay, beautiful, placid and convenient. There's enough to do and see that you may decide to spend two nights: Watch boat builders on the shore of the bay use adzes and chisels to shape traditional wooden fishing sailboats; hire a taxi to tour the island's many natural wonders and the old sugar plantations that are now resorts and restaurants; consider ordering a boat model. Ensure you take the time to experience the best Lobster Pizza in the Caribbean here in Admiralty Bay.

**Tobago Cays** (pronounced "Keys"), an archipelago of five tiny islands, is protected by a huge reef to the east, creating one of the best snorkeling playgrounds in the world. You can moor in locations that have only Horse-shoe Reef between you and Africa and a completely placid anchorage of crystal clear water and "off-the-yacht" incredible snorkeling. Many of you will decide to remain for a second night, it is so beautiful and romantic.



*Pitons as seen from Anse Chastenet*

**Mayreau** boasts more than one incredible beach, but Salt Whistle Bay is the one mentioned by travel magazines. A sunrise or sunset walk on this beach is an absolute must. Plenty of beachfront establishments to have a cocktail or dinner, depending on your whim. There's a hike to the top of Mayreau for unparalleled views of the rest of the island chain.

Other magical spots exist on other islands, as well. Explore the jet set island of Mustique or the authentic Old Caribbean flavor and culture found on St Vincent, Union, Canouan and Carriacou Islands. In the run-up to our trip we will do deep dives into the magic of these islands as well as we prepare you for your adventure.



*Lobster for sale in Salt Whistle bay*



# Flotillas

If you haven't been on a flotilla before, here's how it works.

We reserve several boats for the location and we will hold a series of virtual planning parties (via Zoom) to explain the details and answer questions from anyone who is interested.

Some members choose to reserve a whole boat with their friends and family; some hook up with other singles or couples to form their own boat; a third option is to charter a cabin on a boat skippered by a professional skipper from Rich's list of instructors and captains.

These planning meetings are the best way to decide which option works best for you. We suggest that you use them to meet potential shipmates, other skippers, and the personnel who will be leading the flotilla.

Flotilla charters are ideal for first-time skippers since Rich helps in cruise planning, introduces individuals to others interested in sharing a yacht, and sends an experienced 'group leader' along. The security in this type of 'buddy-boating' is a primary reason for flotilla-style chartering, but the ease of participation and 'instant parties' make a first charter that much more enjoyable.



# How to Get Involved

There are three ways to get involved. You can charter your own yacht, let us help you hook up with other members and sailors, or book a cabin on an Flotilla Leader's yacht.

## Option 1

With a 15% deposit, you may reserve a boat with your friends or family, or reserve a boat and let us help you find crewmates.

## Option 2

If you want to go but need to hook up with others on the flotilla, we will help you meet some other sailors to join a boat or set up a crew.

## Option 3

If you like the idea of learning more while you relax, consider reserving a cabin on one of the Flotilla Leader yachts. All flotilla leaders are qualified sailing instructors with years of cruising experience. They make wonderful skippers, and are perfectly willing to make the experience as educational as you like.

# Giving Back to the Environment

Since the beginnings of OCSC, Rich and Cecilia have been committed to environmental protection. We have always felt that especially since these trips built on enjoying nature, we are compelled to support organizations that work as guardians for all of us. Part of our approach has been to focus our efforts and appreciation on areas that we are privileged to visit on our bareboat flotillas. To this end your participation in our flotilla includes an additional contribution of \$50 per person. The funds we collect are donated to an environmental protection initiative in the region we visit.







## Travel Details

As the distance to fly and the itineraries can be complicated to get “down island” and most flights are red-eyes from the West Coast, we suggest you consider whether you come in a bit early or create an extended layover partway to Paradise. As the flotilla leader I always try to arrive with two nights in a local hotel to provide cushion for flight delays, baggage delays or just to knock off the jet lag.

## Flights

Available on Delta, American and United, flying through a number of American cities. You will fly into Fort Vieux, Hawannora Airport (UFV) in South St Lucia and home from Maurice Bishop (GND) in Grenada.

## COVID 19 and our April 2022 trip

With a year of experiencing COVID under our belts, we are in a much better position to forecast what the COVID world provides, with vaccinations and increased competence on health measures. To ensure we have the option to actually enjoy the islands, obtain boats and air tickets, it is important to plan now, while also being careful to stay abreast of the latest news from our government, airlines, our charter operator and the governments of the Windward Islands. Moorings/Sunsail has

a firm track record of crediting charters that they must cancel because they can't serve clients and our plan. Our experience has been that we received a per boat credit for a future charter.

Rich Jepsen, the flotilla leader, is handling all arrangements. You can reach him at [richardjepsen@gmail.com](mailto:richardjepsen@gmail.com)

# Pricing

Pricing varies with boat size and number of crew. Detailed sample invoice upon request.

## Bareboat Cost Samples

These will change depending on the size and age of the boat.

- Approx \$12,000\* for a 45', 3 cabin monohull to \$24,500 for the very new, deluxe 45' 4 cabin catamaran.
- Approx \$6115\* per cabin, if you wish to join a professional skipper on a 48' 4 cabin catamaran.

*\* This pricing estimate is exclusive of misc. costs, such as airfare, mooring and anchoring fees, shopping, tours, etc. Food, beverages, and other miscellaneous fees such as park fees are also not included. **Repeat Adventurers save 5%***

## Please note

Costs will vary depending on the number of crew and the size of yacht you charter. Crew on skippered yachts will have only an additional skipper fee as part of the trip cost.

# Payment Schedule

- To confirm your reservation for a boat or a cabin, 15% deposit
- September 7, 25% of balance is due
- December 7, balance is due

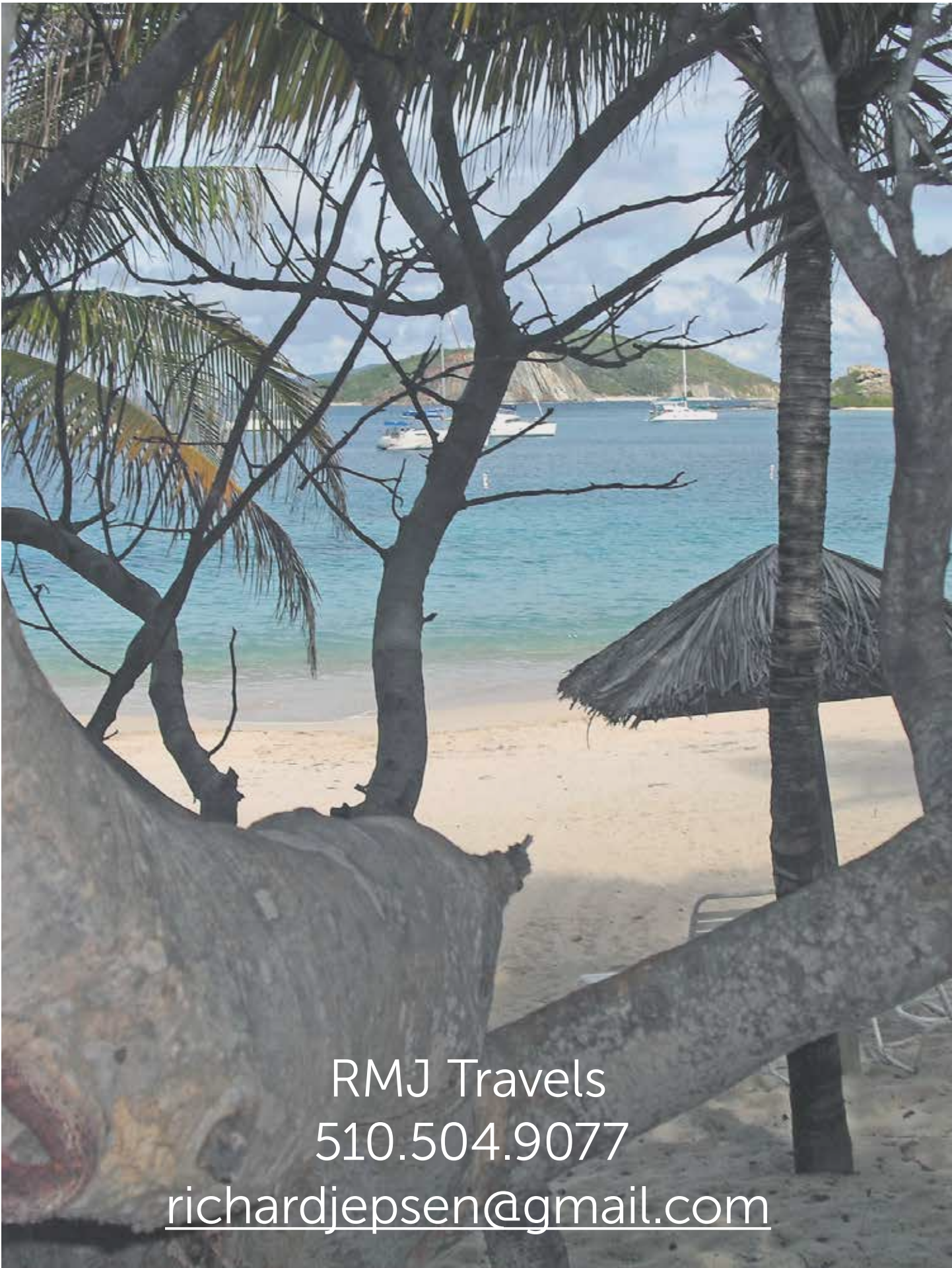
# Refunds

## If you charter your own boat:

1. Through September 6 you have only \$500 of your initial 15% boat deposit at risk. After the 6th, all fees paid are non-refundable, subject to '2' below.
2. If you were to choose to cancel your reservation, you would get a refund of fees, minus \$250 service fee, if, subsequently, we sell out the six boat fleet.

## If you join a skippered boat:

1. Through September 6 you have only \$500 of your initial 15% cabin deposit at risk
2. After that, fees are nonrefundable
3. If you were to choose to cancel your reservation, you would get a refund of fees, minus \$250 service fee, if, subsequently we are able to fill all cabins on your boat.



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