

The Chesapeake...a great area to Cruise!

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I would share my experience and recommend an extended cruise to the Chesapeake. We spent 21 days on this trip and what an experience it was. The area has so much to offer and weeks' worth of cruising adventures. There were four boats that started this adventure earlier this year of which none had been to the Chesapeake before. We began as a group from the Washington area to Dowry Creek in Belhaven as our first stop. The next day we separated into three different groups of boats after we made it to the top of the Alligator River. One boat went to the dismal swamp, another to Coinjock (you must try the prime rib at Coinjock Marina), the last two boats were on their way to Norfolk for a Great Loop Convention that lasted 4 days. I will write more on the Loop in coming articles. The other two boats in our group went on to Manteo for a couple days then they ventured on to Coinjock and Hampton.

After the Looper convention, three boats meet up at Cape Charles which was a small marina with a great restaurant. We also stumbled onto a Bourbon Distillery which worked great for the Bourbon folks while the others went shopping. The town also had a community theater performing Mary Poppins, I was a bit skeptical, but it was really top notch and sometimes you just have to take a risk.

We all then moved on to Onancock for a few days. We needed to switch crew on one of the boats and this was the best location for that switch. A few of us did an excursion ferry boat to Tangier which is an island in the middle of the Chesapeake that is slowly disappearing as the islands are actually sinking. We were able to gain knowledge about the history, experience the island and meet the locals which was wonderful. Two of the four boats then departed to head back to their home port.

The other two boats went on to Kilmarnock. As there are so many areas to explore it is very hard to pick where to go. We provisioned in Kilmarnock which ended up being an adventure in itself. When you have a car, you must explore, what a great town to check out. Then we decided to go on to Solomon, which has many marinas back to back full of boats and things to explore. Our first boat we ever owned was at Solomon, so we had to check it out. What great memories seeing your past vessel. In doing so we were testing out a dingy and its electric motor. Three guys put zing around at 2 mph checking out all the marinas and boats. This encouraged us to take out the dingy more often to explore.

It was time to begin our cruise home. We had a recommendation to check out Urbana next and what a great recommendation it was, very good marina, great folks and cute town.

We checked out restaurants a farmer's market and there was to be a band playing. Then back to Norfolk, where a few of us that were able to take the Naval Base tour by water and/or tour the battleship Wisconsin. Both were great and would highly recommend these tours as well.

This trip allowed us all to learn more about our Boats, navigating on waters unfamiliar to us, navigating software like Aqua Maps and Navionics, understanding the value of Rules of the Road and watching the weather, not to mention eating out a lot and enjoying the great restaurants. From all that we learned by taking many courses available through America's Boating Club of the Pamlico made this experience and cruising easier, better and more prepared. I hope others have seen these benefits as they gain practical boating knowledge and safely and choose interesting destinations for their cruising.

If you have ever thought of getting a boat and cruising, it is so exciting to explore by water seeing things and places from a different perspective. This article is given the courtesy of your local America's Boating Club of the Pamlico. A Basic Weather Seminar (2-1/2 hr.) is being offered July 25th. To register or learn more information contact Kelly at pspsed@gmail.com. We also invite you to visit our website at <https://pamlicosailandpowersquadron.org> to learn more about what we can offer you.