



VOYAGING THE INDIAN OCEAN & RED SEA

REFLECTIONS FROM SV SALTY GINGER

JULIE AND GRAHAM PERRY

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Outline



Salty Ginger

- 48 Foot Island Packet 465
- Cutter Rigged
- Center cockpit
- Full Keel
- 5 Foot Draft
- 75 HP Yanmar
- Auto Pilot
- Spinnaker pole





Big Picture: Overview of the Passage

Departure Date	Departure	Arrival Date	Arrival	Days at Sea	NM
Jan 17	Phuket, Thailand	Jan 25	Galle, Sri Lanka	8	1100
Feb 4	Galle, Sri Lanka	Feb 7	Dhapparu, Maldives	3	425
Feb 8	Dhapparu, Maldives	Feb 18	Socotra, Yemen	10	1265
Feb 20	Socotra, Yemen	Feb 27	Djibouti	7	689
Feb 27	Djibouti	Mar 5	Suakin, Sudan	6	650
Mar 12	Suakin, Sudan	Mar 14	Marsa Umbeila, Sudan	2	189
Mar 16	Marsa Umbeila, Sudan	Mar 18	Marsa Alam, Egypt	2	222
Mar 25	Marsa Alam, Egypt	Mar 27	C1 Anchorage, Suez	2	332
Mar 28	C1 Anchorage, Suez	Mar 28	Ismailia, Egypt	0.5	47
Apr 14	Ismailia, Egypt	Apr 16	Larnaca, Cyprus	2	290
				42.5 Days at Sea	5209 Total NM

MARITIME SECURITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR (MSTC)
 Due to the highlighted risk associated with transiting through waters the maritime security transit corridor has been established. The MSTC encompasses the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) 75°W in the Strait of Bab el Mandeb and 70° West and South of Ras al Khaima. This is a new transit corridor along the IRTC and 75°W in the Strait of Bab el Mandeb. For further details, mariners should refer to ADMIRALTY List of Radio Signals and the Mariner's Handbook (NP100).

MARITIME SECURITY PLANNING CHART
 This planning chart provides the mariner with Security of Navigation routing information to enable effective passage planning through an area of, or having the potential for, increased risk. Due to the likelihood of rapid escalation and complexity of security threats it is important that mariners use this chart in conjunction with ADMIRALTY Security Related Information to Mariners (SRM).
 While every effort will be made by military authorities to promulgate information to mariners via navigational warnings this may not always be possible due to the type and complexity of the threat.
 A Maritime Security Planning Chart should be used in conjunction with nautical charts and publications.
WHAT IS SECURITY OF NAVIGATION?
 Security of Navigation can be broadly described as methods for the mitigation of those man-made threats which can influence or affect the safe or timely passage of merchant shipping, as distinct from hazards posed by the natural environment of the sea.
SECURITY OF NAVIGATION INFORMATION
 Further Security of Navigation information is available online for this and other regions from the ADMIRALTY Maritime Security Portal (www.admiralty.co.uk/maritime-security), including pdf downloads of all IHO Maritime Security Charts and templates for reporting. Additional advice and guidance is also available through the Security Related Information to Mariners (SRM) covered in this portal.

SafetyNet BROADCASTS ON INMARSAT C
NAVAREA VII – Co-ordinator: INDIA
NAVAREA IX – Co-ordinator: PAKISTAN
 See ADMIRALTY List of Radio Signals (ALRS) Volume 3 (NP268 (III)) – Maritime Safety Information Services, Volume 5 (NP265) – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)
Ships in the UKMTD Voluntary Reporting Area (Suez Canal/10°N/78°E) should ensure that their INMARSAT C terminals are set to receive navigational warnings from both NAVAREA VII and IX to be sure that they receive all alerts. In addition ships should programme their NAVTEX to receive navigational warnings from all appropriate NAVTEX stations.

SECONDARY CONTACTS
– IMSC HQ
 Maritime Security Centre – Horn of Africa
 Email: secmaster@imc-hoa.org
 Tel: +33(0)298 220220
 +33(0)298 220130
 Fax: +33(0)298 220171
 Website: www.imc-hoa.org
– NATO Shipping Centre
 Email: wfo@shipping.nato.int
 Tel: +44 (0)1921 950 574
 Fax: +44 (0)1921 950 575
 Website: www.shipping.nato.int
– US Naval Cooperation And Guidance for Shipping (NCGS) Subron
 Email: usnavy_coopsub@navy.mil



Security and Reporting Strategy

Registration & Daily Reporting

- Registered with MSICO and UKMTO before departure.
- Sent daily position reports to both organizations (cc'd together).
- Monitored UKMTO incident reports regularly.
- Added UKMTO phone contact for quick access in an emergency.

Planning & Documentation

- Created a **sail plan** with routes + contacts and shared it with onshore support team.
- Reviewed the UKMTO Best Management Practices Guide (2020) – outdated but still useful.
- Used Soggy Paws website as a key info resource.
- Soggy Paws -Red Sea Compendium**
- Soggy Paws tracks and waypoints**

Buddy-Boating & Routing Choices

- Buddy-boated with friends, keeping within a few miles all the way to Sudan.
- Found close proximity very reassuring.
- Stayed inside the shipping lanes for: * More visibility * Proximity to warships * Higher likelihood of assistance
- Accepted extra motoring and lane-crossing as worthwhile trade-offs for safety.

US Navy NCAGS Reporting

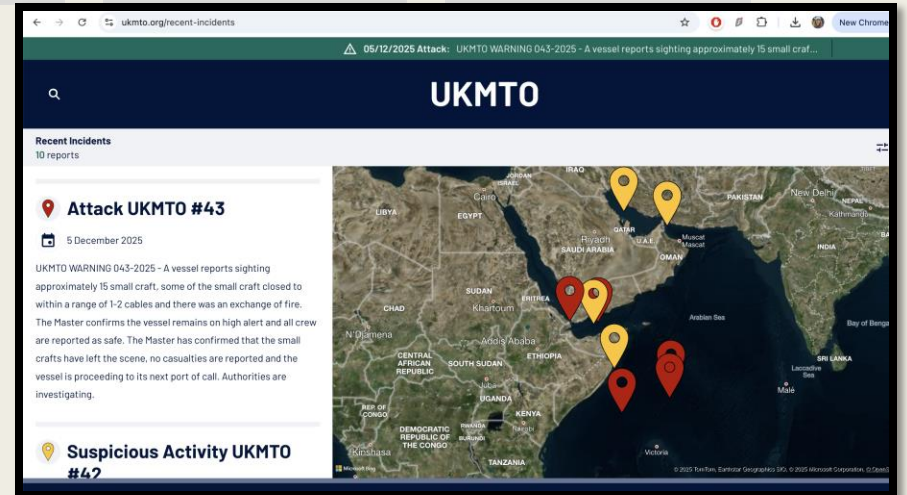
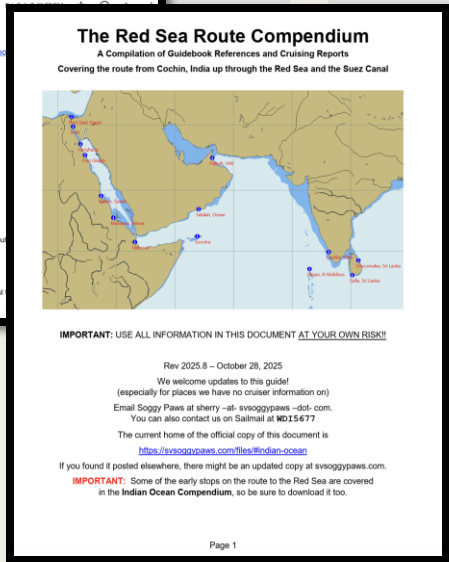
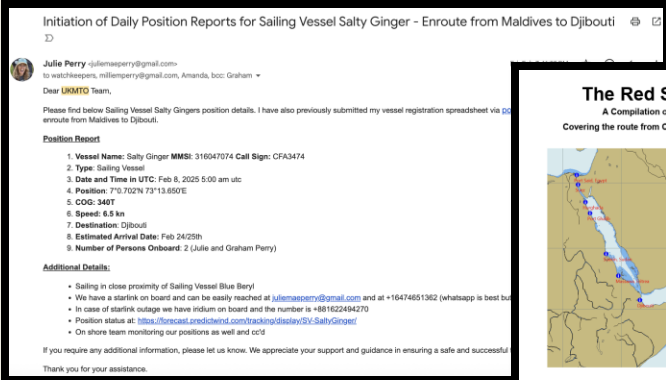
- As we approached the Red Sea, emailed daily position reports to US NCAGS. * Although not Americans, the response was supportive and quick.
- Gave additional peace of mind knowing they had our details.

Biggest Safety Factor

- Weather was the main concern, not piracy.
- Patience & timing each hop is key to safe and comfortable passage.

Key Contacts

- UKMTO – UK Maritime Trade Organisation (Royal Navy) * Email: watchkeepers@ukmto.org * Phone (24/7): +44 (0) 2392 222060
- MSICO – Maritime Security Centre Indian Ocean * Email: postmaster@mscio.eu * Phone: +33 298 220 220 US NCAGS –
- US Navy 24/7 Support * Email: M-BA-NAVCENT-NCAGS@US.NAVY.MIL * Watchfloor: +973-1785-0033 * VOSIP: 308-439-2362 * Emergency (Battle Watch): +973-1785-3879



- c. Boat Name - Hal ... +61 41 012 662
- d. Boat Name Serenity Now - Ch <https://chat.whatsapp.com/G...> are no longer travelling with u reach out to for assistance with Number +61 4931 ...
- e. We have a whatsapp group th same route. Send a whatsapp know you are family of Sailing regarding our whereabouts at other boats.

4. Join the Boat Watch FB page and mak



- 5. If we are overdue, something's weird with us, have no other info about our destination or local vessel contacts, or serious risk: then it's time to contact free: 1-800-267-7270 or Telephone: 6 name "Ailsa of Northwick". I think we just in case.
- 6. Additionally, you can call
 - a. UKMTO: +44 (0) 2392 222060
 - b. MSICO: 0033 298 220 220

IF YOU RECEIVE A CALL BECAUSE OUR EPIRB

The EPIRB is our emergency distress beacon manually. Either of these triggers could be de

- 1. Try to think happy thoughts because
- 2. We have 2 EPIRB's. One is fairly new a Canada and is our primary EPIRB. The registered it in UK with all our deta Amar... R... M... A... C... D... CG and UK CG will ask for a f
- 3. The CDA CG and UK CG will ask for a f

our details. Emergency contact #1 ... number as well) #3 Roge 1 ... his cell # as well)

Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs): We each have PLBs on our location will show as an AIS target on our chart plott

Life Raft: 4 person ISO ocean safety life raft – recertified doc. Orange with yellow bottom Serial # R2061141A21

Ditch Bags *2: Contents of ditch bags located at: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/.../edit?usp=sharing>

CREW DETAILS

Name	Age	Gender
•		
•		

YOUR ROLE

IF WE DON'T ARRIVE BY end of day Monday, January 27 Everything is probably fine. A weather change may have and wait for better conditions. We'll provide news of int arrival. However, if we are overdue for arrival, please do

- 1. Check out our position. We may just still be on the position info in section 1"
- 2. Attempt to contact us:
 - a. **IMPORTANT: We have heard that our sta day or so around the Andaman islands so for us for a couple days enroute.**
 - b. Whatsapp, imessage, facebook messenger
 - c. Email to saltya@myiridium.net – If fo working we will resort to using our satellit emails, texts and phone calls to a specific to receive though and we typically only ch iridium number here once we update it.
- 3. If you don't reach us, attempt to contact a boat t may know of our location:
 - a. Boat Name – Blue Beryl – Sander and Yve time as us. Sander Whatsapp +31 6 6000
 - b. Boat Name - Dancer - Lee and Nick- They starlink and whatsapp at +64 21 72 128

- Username: [\[Redacted\]](#)
- PW: xxxxxx

OWNER DETAILS

Captain/Owner: Julie Perry
Birthdate: Mo / 10 / 1971 **Age:** **Place of Birth:**
Passport #: xxxxxx
Issued Date: Jan 12 2008 **Expiry Date:** Jan 12 2008
Crew/Owner: Graham Perry
Birthdate: Feb 11 1977 **Age:** 51 **Place of Birth:** R
Passport #: xxxxxx
Issued Date: Sep 12 2007 **Expiry Date:** Sep 12 2007
Home Address: 55 366 4th St W Burnaby BC

SAILBOAT DETAILS

Sailing Vessel: Salty Ginger **Registration #:** 844439 **H**
Port: Victoria, BC, Canada
Type: Monohull – Cutter Rigged - Long keel w/rudder on skeg.
Length: 14.90 M or 48.9 feet **Breadth:** 4.44M or 14.57 feet.
Gross ton: 11.43 **Net Ton:** 10.86 **Avg Speed:** 5.5 to 6.5 Knot
Hull Color: Ivory or Cream **Hull Material:** GRP or fiberglass
Bottom Paint: Blue **Ballast Type:** Lead
Inboard Engine: Yanmar 75 HP **Outboard Engine:** Suzuki
Bow Thruster: Vetus 75 kgf bow thruster 7512 – 4.4 HP
Fuel: 160 gals / 606 L **Water:** 260 gals / 984 L
Insurance: Global Yacht Insurance – C...
Coverage Dates: Nov 18, 2024 to Nov 17, 2025
Broker: Dolphin Insurance Services Inc – Burnaby BC
Total Sum Insured: 356000.

SAFETY AND COMMUNICATION

Call Sign: CFA3474
MMSI #: 316047074 (associated with our AIS)
SSB: We have an SSB and will be transmitting via 4125 kHz in
AIS: yes we have an AIS that transponds and receives
Fixed onboard VHF/DSC radio: Associated MMSI number: 23
Grab Bag Handheld VHF/DSC radio: Associated MMSI number
Sat Phone (Iridium Go): +8816 3306 60 text and voice
Radar: Raymarine RD18
EPIRB 1: ACR RLB-41 Hex code: 278CA... Purchase with all our details. Emergency Contacts: Mom, Amar...
EPIRB 2 (In ditch bag permanently): ACR GlobalFix Pro RLB-3 1D... This was the original owners, and I hav

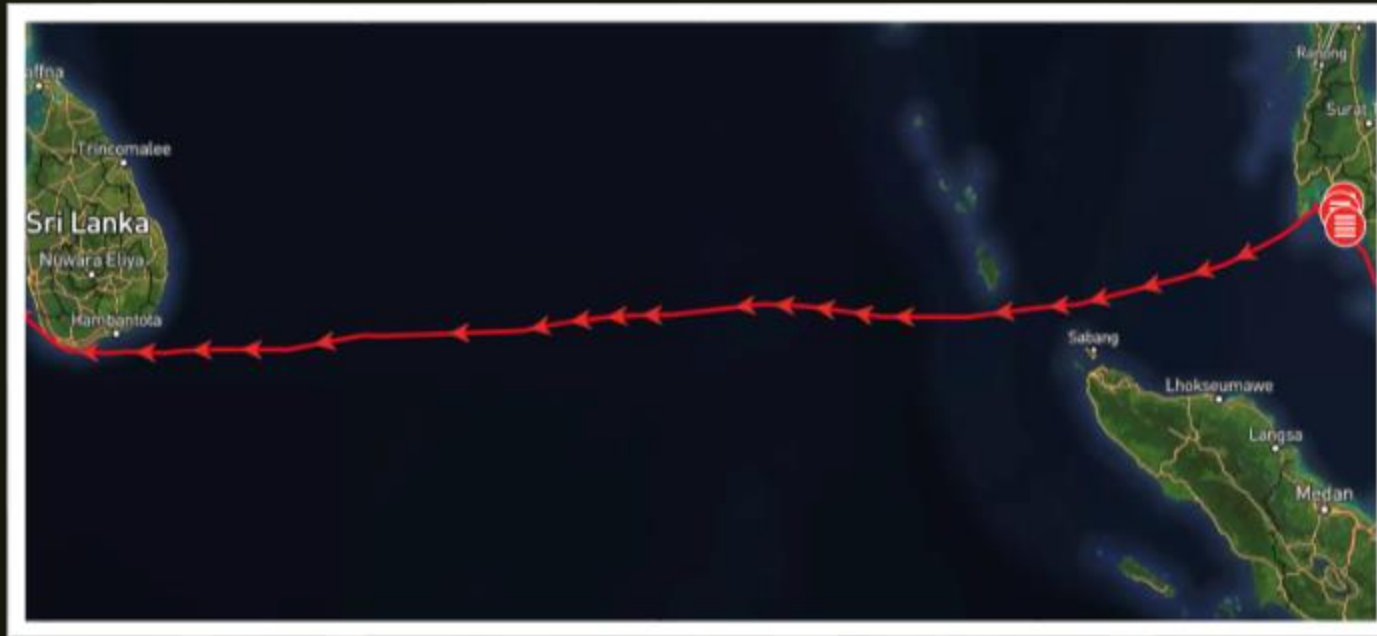


Thank you for supporting us from shore on our coming passage! We have entrusted you to contact the Canadian Coast Guard if we do not arrive as expected. The first half of this document is a summary of key details officials will want to know first; the second half is additional information to help you understand our plans, and your options.

VESSEL ITINERARY

- **Depart From:** Chalong, Thailand (7 48.643N - 98 23.037E)
- **Heading To:** Galle, Sri Lanka
- **Depart Date/Time:** Friday, January 17th - 12pm
- **Name in Navionics:** To Galle (but we rerun the routes often on Navionics so most often just the most recent dated route)
- **Estimated Arrival Date/Time:** January 25th but could be 2 more days if we don't get the wind we are expecting
- **Estimated Distance:** 1100 Nautical Miles averaging 6 nm/hr would be 8 days (if we go slower will take longer)
- **How to see our position:**
 - Our position should be automatically updated at <https://forecast.predictwind.com/tracking/display/SV-SaltyGinger/>
 - You can also log into Predict Wind: <https://forecast.predictwind.com/> (or download the app)
 - Username: [\[Redacted\]](#)
 - PW: XXXXXXXX
 - Goto Local Knowledge and do a search for Salty Ginger. This uses our AIS position and should be updated regularly. It receives our most recently received AIS transponder ping. From here you can also see other boats in the vicinity
 - Or we also manually update No Foreign Lands at: <https://www.noforeignland.com/boat/saltyginger/journey?sid=5139350876585984&tc=1697672718136>
- **How to see our planned route and possibly tracks:**
 - Navionics: <https://webapp.navionics.com/?lang=en#boating> (or download the app)
 - Username: [\[Redacted\]](#)
 - PW: XXXXXXXX
 - Goto menu and then routes and I will try to name my routes so you can easily see which one. On the app you can also view tracks which I will try and name appropriately. (note we will redo route often underway so it will usually be the latest route that we are using)
- **How to update our Iridium Satellite Plan:**
 - We may need you to upgrade our plan when we are at sea if something goes wrong with our Starlink. Once you log in the "Change Plan" button is on the home page. Below are the login details:
 - URL: <https://satellite.predictwind.com/dashboard/account>

THAILAND TO SRI LANKA



Well note to self....never say passage is going well until you arrive lol. 😂 last night we got smacked with a system. Air temperature drop significantly and wind clocked around 270 degrees and went from 10 to 30 knots and the sky opened up and dumped so much rain on us 😂. Oh the fun we had. We went 2 hours with 20-23 knot wind on the nose? Finally back to dead downwind light wind but doing 5 knots. Still targeting Sat morning arrival. 248 miles to go

- Maximized favorable currents by routing south of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, while staying north of the shipping lane.
- Maintained continuous Starlink coverage, unlike some boats who reported temporary outages.
- Friends who transited Sombbrero Channel were hailed by a warship and told it was a restricted area – worth researching before choosing that route.
- [Encountered several areas of unusual turbulent water along the passage - lasted ~20 minutes each time.](#)
- Motion was odd and unsettling in darkness but completely manageable once seen in daylight.
- Weather was unsettled, with intermittent rain and variable conditions.





Galle, Sri Lanka

- Be sure to call on 16 for permission to enter at least 1nm out
- Team of fellows to take your lines, no dinghy in water to assist
- Med moor to both cement dock and a floating blue pontoon
- A few "side to" spots as well
- Use Achintha as your agent! Awesome

Sri Lanka Highlights – Quick Cruisers’ Guide

🚗 Getting Around

- Uber cheap, fast & reliable in Galle (Tuk Tuk to Fort ~250 LKR).
- Gate drivers charge 2x+, sometimes accept 500 LKR.
- Long-distance Uber: Galle–Ella \$75, Galle–Colombo \$40.
- PickMe app works well when Uber unavailable.

🚂 Trains

- Easy system; book ahead when possible.
- 3rd Class Reserved (TCR) best for scenery (open windows/doors, Ella–Kandy ~\$4).
- 2nd Class: Comfortable seats but often crowded/standing.
- 1st Class: AC + reclining seats but limited window opening (less ideal for scenic routes).
- Online tickets: phone display OK.

🏠 Great Stays

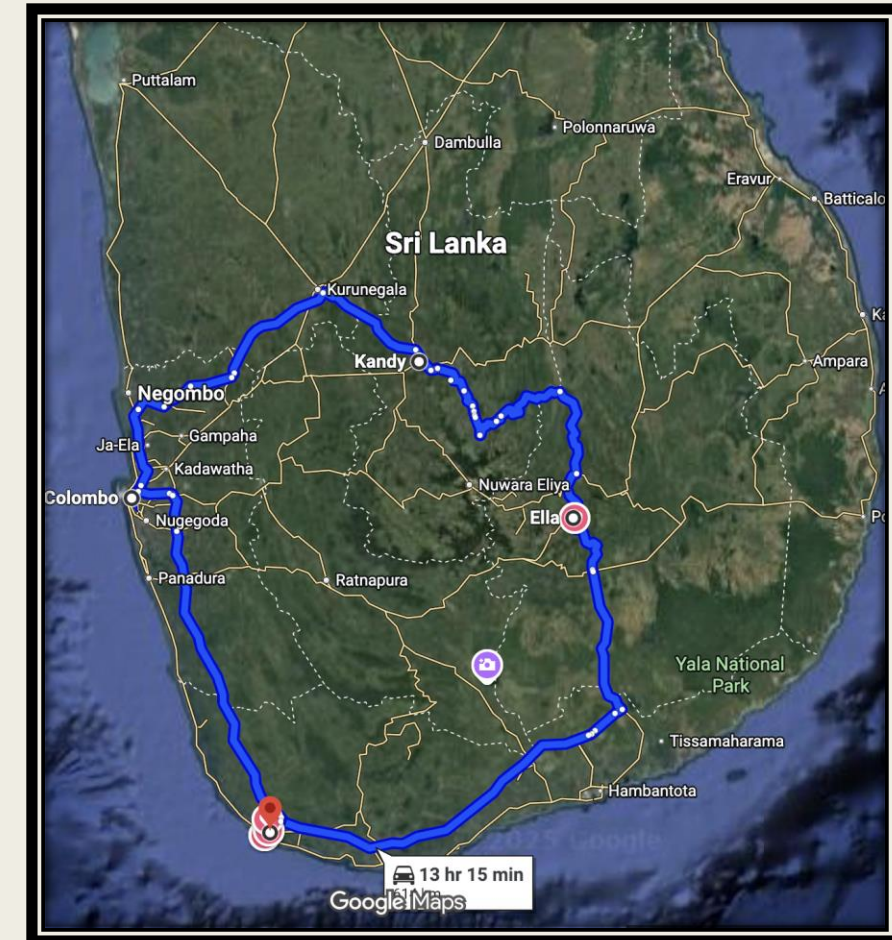
- Ella – Moon Rock B&B: Clean, central, AC/fan, great breakfast; ~\$60.
- Kandy – Devon Rest: Lakefront, excellent food, very clean; ~\$95 with breakfast.

🍴 Good Eats

- Cafe Chill (Ella): Iconic, big menu, great curries; lunch ~5000 LKR.
- AK Risotto (Ella): Lovely balcony dining; pizza 1800 LKR, steak pricier.

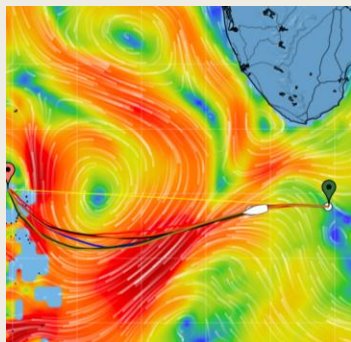
🏞️ Easy Hikes

- Nine Arch Bridge: 20-min trail, great lookout; can be slippery after rain.
- Little Adam’s Peak: 15–20 mins, wide path; zip line nearby (~1500 LKR).



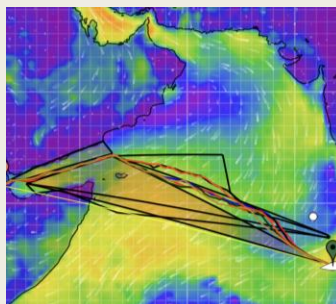
NoForeignLand has lots of info regarding Sri Lanka





SRI LANKA TO MALDIVES TO SOCOTRA

- From Sri Lanka we went North up the coast and then took the current south of the rhumb line (the best we could) and put wind behind the beam as we approached Maldives
- Departed Maldives on Feb 8, timing that gave favorable wind and wave angles for a mostly direct route to Socotra.
- Added a boundary in PredictWind to avoid routing west of the rhumb line – kept clear of the Somali coast.
- Began daily reporting
- Passage was comfortable overall, with a few slower stretches but generally very pleasant.
- About halfway along the route, encountered a large fishing fleet:
 - *Found a clear corridor between two groups and passed without issues*
 - *Other boats experienced fishing lines, close approaches, and interaction from fishing vessels*



Socotra

Overall Experience

*Epic and highly memorable stop – anchorage sits in front of a **massive sand dune**.*

Beautiful landscapes; great intro to the Arabian Sea.

***Starlink worked perfectly** the entire time.*

Anchorage & Conditions

*Anchorage can be **uncomfortable in northerly winds** → best not to linger too long.*

Two-night stop worked well.

Clearance & Visas

*Chose **not to clear in** (no visas).*

*Saves **\$165 USD per person**.*

*Staying **~48 hours without clearing in** appears acceptable; another day likely fine.*

*Cannot leave the **gated port area without the agent** if not cleared in.*

Agent (Ghanem)

*Very friendly and helpful – provided service **even without formal check-in**.*

*Organized a **full-day tour** of the island (beautiful).*

*Arranged **diesel**, shopping trips, logistics, etc.*

*Payments sent easily via **Wise**.*

\$ Costs (Approx.)

***\$120** – Island tour
\$30 – Shopping trip to town & return*

***\$150** – Agent fee*

***\$5** – Socotra flag*

***\$1.50/L** – Diesel*

Provisioning

*Stocked up on **fresh fruit and vegetables**.*

Some cash withdrawn in town (for groceries), but most paid via Wise.

Bottom Line

***Absolutely worth the stop** – stunning, safe, helpful agent, easy logistics.*

Great short layover before entering the Red Sea routing.



Socotra to Djibouti

■ Routing & Strategy

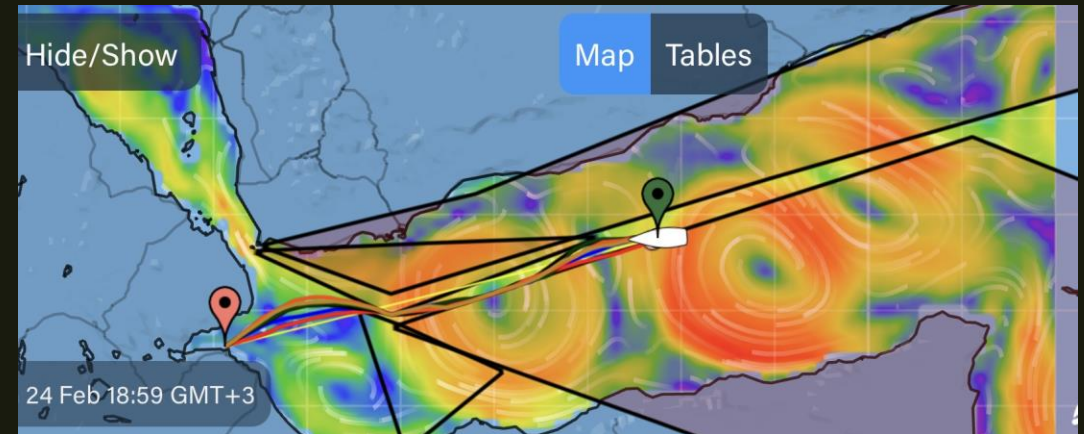
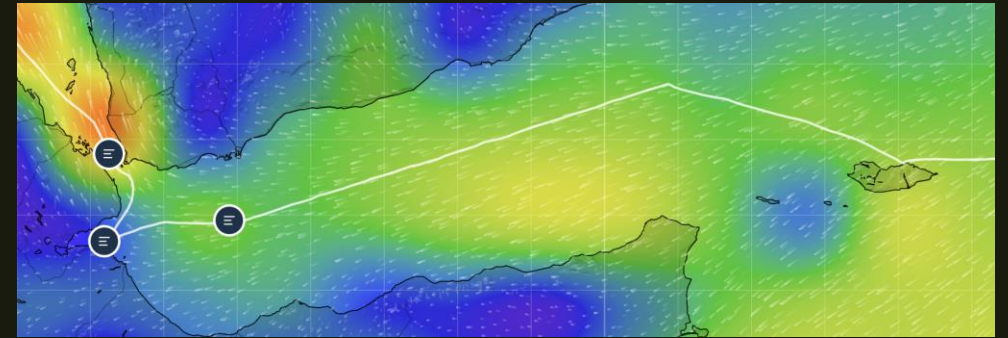
- Departed in a light-weather window
- Chose to sail mid-IRTC separation zone (2 miles wide)
- Avoided north (adverse current); some boats sailed south with no issues
- Left the IRTC to head for Djibouti right after we turned the corner to head north
- Stayed just south of the Moucha islands as we approached

■ Currents & Sailing Conditions

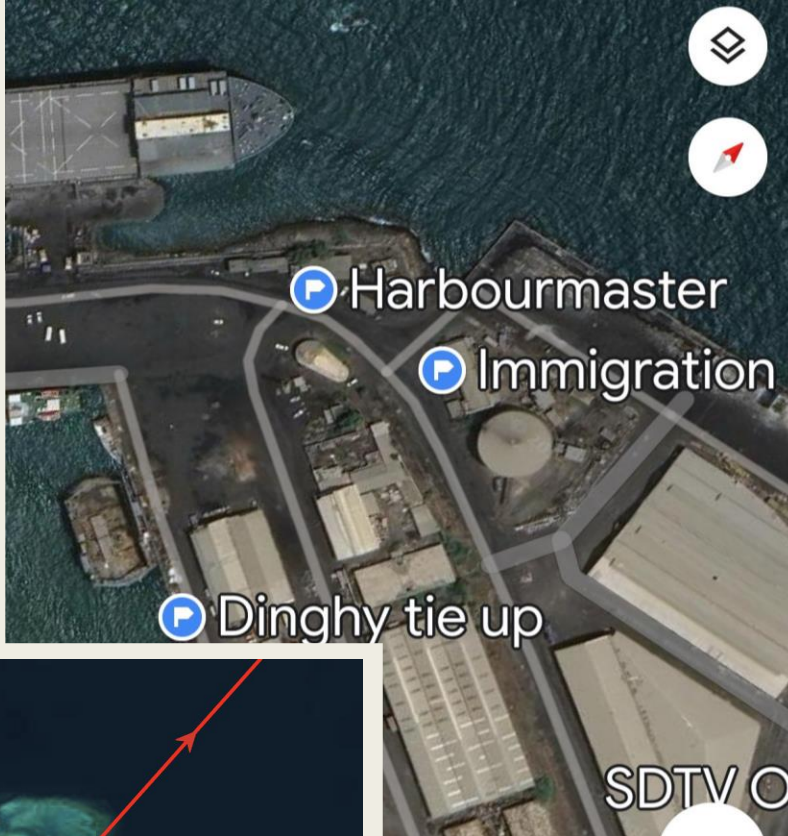
- Crossed multiple rotating current zones
- Frequent gybes due to shifting current + downwind angle
- One short period of chaotic seas; motored briefly for control
- Overall calm, slow, low-stress

■ Traffic & Security

- Minimal vessels inside separation zone
- Busy traffic in outer lanes (cargo ships, warships)
- Encountered AIS-off fishing boats at night—no issues
- Sightings of warships, drones, and military aircraft



 We had whales with us for a bit and acrobatic dolphins



DJIBOUTI

■ Check-In / Formalities

- *No agent needed – simple & cheap (≈ \$30 USD, exact cash).*
- *Offices (Harbourmaster + Immigration) are 3–4 minutes apart; both efficient.*
- *Checked in/out at the same time by stating departure within 24 hours.*

■ Anchorage

- *Large, protected anchorage with excellent holding (mud).*
- *Anchored around 11° 35.991'N / 43° 7.828'E in ~16 ft.*
- *Industrial feel but safe – warships and US Navy vessels present.*
- *Watch out for wrecks on Navionics; they appear at low tide.*

■ Dinghy Landing

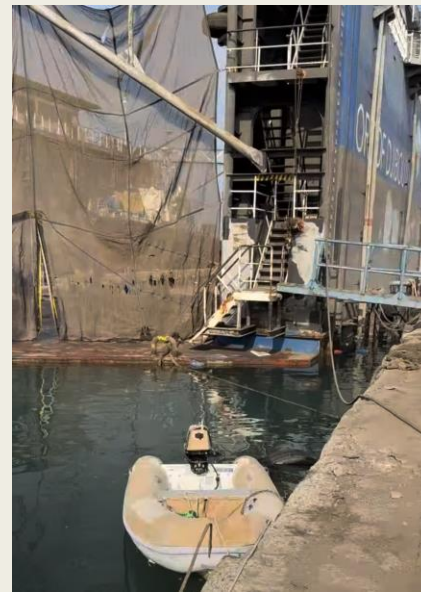
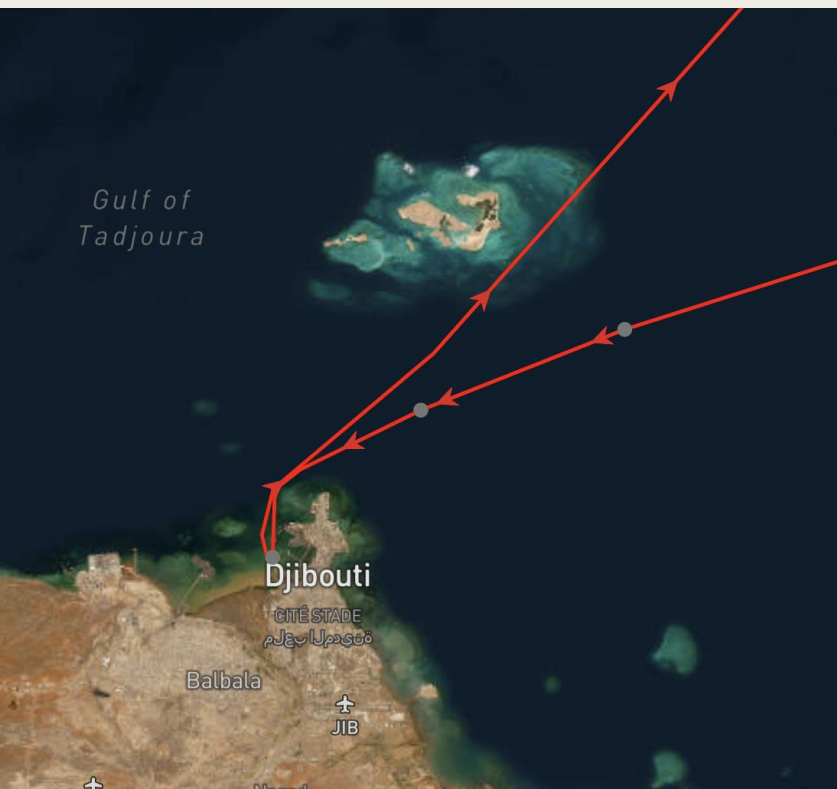
- *Tie to cement wall with large tires behind floating “Port of Djibouti” platform*
- *Climb can vary with tide but manageable; no issues.*

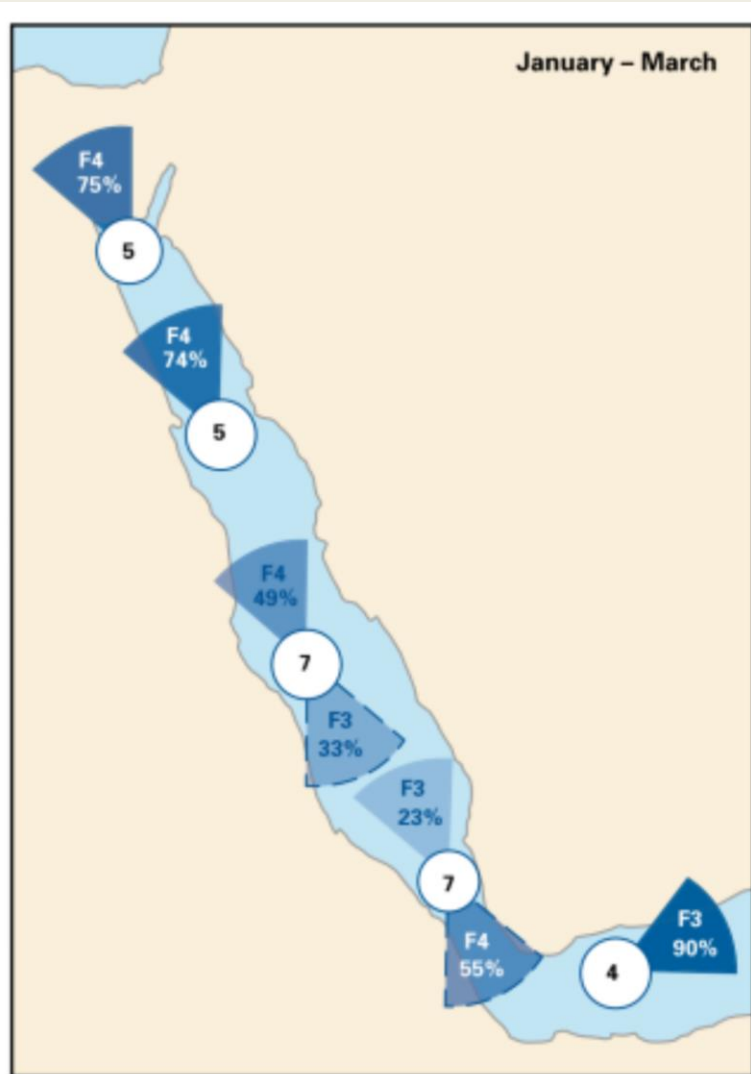
■ Groceries & Supplies

- *Walk 15 min to the mall; large supermarket with good basic selection*
- *Prices higher than average*
- *Card payments accepted; restocked treats & essentials.*
- *Fast food options available (Burger King, Pizza Hut).*

■ Cash & Connectivity

- *Didn't use local currency – USD + cards worked everywhere.*
- *Starlink worked perfectly at anchorage.*





- We followed Jimmy C's advice from "World Cruising Routes"
- Our goal was to be positioned in Djibouti by end of February and awaiting the best weather window to get through "The Gate" Bab el-Mandeb.

Red Sea Northbound Passage – Key Considerations

■ Season & Wind Patterns

- Best arrival window: January–February
- Jan–Feb: Convergence zone reaches Suakin/Port Sudan; occasional calm periods
- April–May: N-Quadrant winds weaken and extend farther south – April is often the best month to continue North from Suakin
- Daily pattern from Suakin: NNE in mornings, NW in afternoons, lighter at night

■ Routing Realities

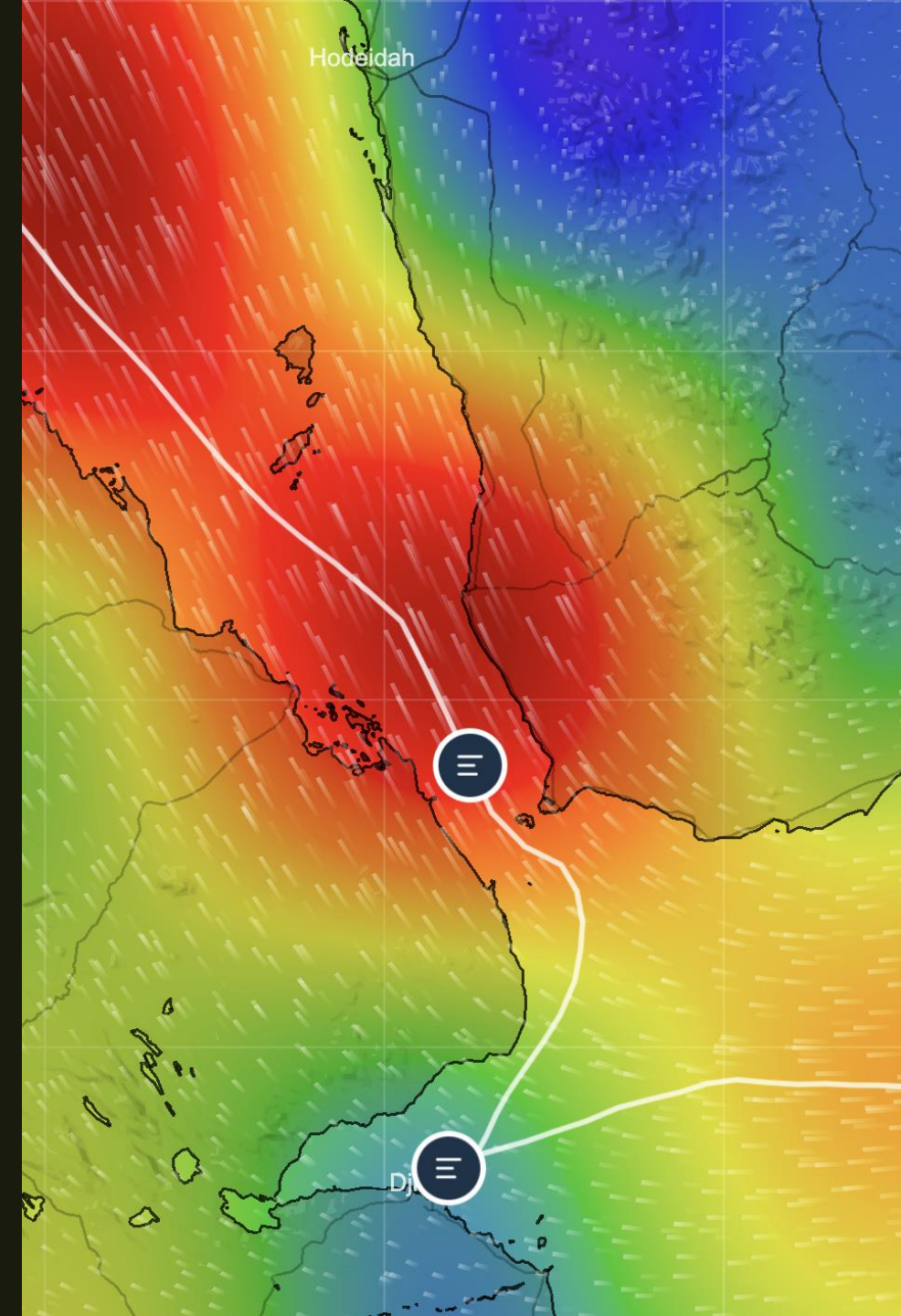
- Expect contrary winds for at least half the northbound passage
- Most boats head north Feb–Apr, aligning with spring easing + Mediterranean warming

■ Navigation Challenges

- GPS jamming encountered:
 - Incorrect or shifting positions
 - AIS displaying false vessel movement/clustering
 - Affected: iPhone, iPad, Mac, Raymarine Axiom Pro II
- Uncharted reefs & areas – constant vigilance required

Bab El Mandep – The Gate

Weather Strategy	<p>Entered after a north → south wind shift with lightest forecast winds. Aimed to reach Hanish Islands before stronger following winds arrived. Considered +10 kt acceleration zone effect, so chose the calmest window. Entered at daybreak for visibility and maximum favorable current.</p>
Routing	<p>From Djibouti, made a wide turn into the IRTC. Sailed with two poled-out headsails, mainsail stowed. Separation lane is ~1 mile wide but manageable. Observed several large ships without AIS, often escorted by a warship.</p>
Conditions & Hazards	<p>Saw 18–24 kt winds with 8–10 kt boat speed thanks to current. Favorable conditions carried us past Hanish Islands to outer Eritrea. 3 rock islands inside the lane near Hanish and Rocks on the east side at the lane's northern exit. Zoom in and mark.</p>
Tools & Comms	<p>ECMWF was the most accurate weather model. Starlink reliable throughout (also works in Suakin). Contacted US Navy NCAGS for situational awareness; sent 4-hourly positions</p>



Eritrean Islands to Suakin



- Conditions After Eritrean Islands
 - *Light headwinds developed; rollers shifted from the north*
 - *Long wave period = comfortable motion (monohull “hobby-horsing” better than rolling)*
 - *Followed the current to maintain speed and comfort*
- Routing Decisions
 - *After Hanish Islands, aimed for SE corner of Eritrean outer reef*
 - *Chose South Fork of IRTC to stay farther from Yemen*
 - *Avoided sailing between Eritrean islands (not recommended)*
 - *Opted to head further NE to use the current and avoid oncoming stronger winds*
- Approaching Sudan & Suakin
 - *Chose outside route around South Sudanese islands/reefs for safest water*
 - *Buddy boat used middle island route*
 - *Navigation into Suakin is straightforward; charts + satellite imagery accurate*
 - *No response from Port Control – agent confirmed not essential*
- On entering Suakin Bay:
 - *Pass the iconic rubble bank*
 - *Favor the side near the Bank in the narrow section*

Suakin, Sudan

Anchoring

- Large, protected bay; needed a couple attempts for good hold.
- Anchored in **16 ft** at **19°6.498'N / 37°20.291'E**.
- Several cruising boats present; area felt **very safe**.
- Clear water — suitable for **watermaking** and swimming.
- Locals enjoyed watching buddy boat **kite surf**.

Agent

- **Mohammed** handles everything efficiently.
- Delivered diesel, bread, and processed check-in within hours.
- Assists with shopping and currency exchange (favorable rate).
- Requires **1 day notice** for checkout.

Shopping & Services

- Agent provides **car transport** to local fruit/veg markets.
- Produce plentiful and excellent quality; friendly, honest vendors.
- Easy to request additional items (eggs, etc.).

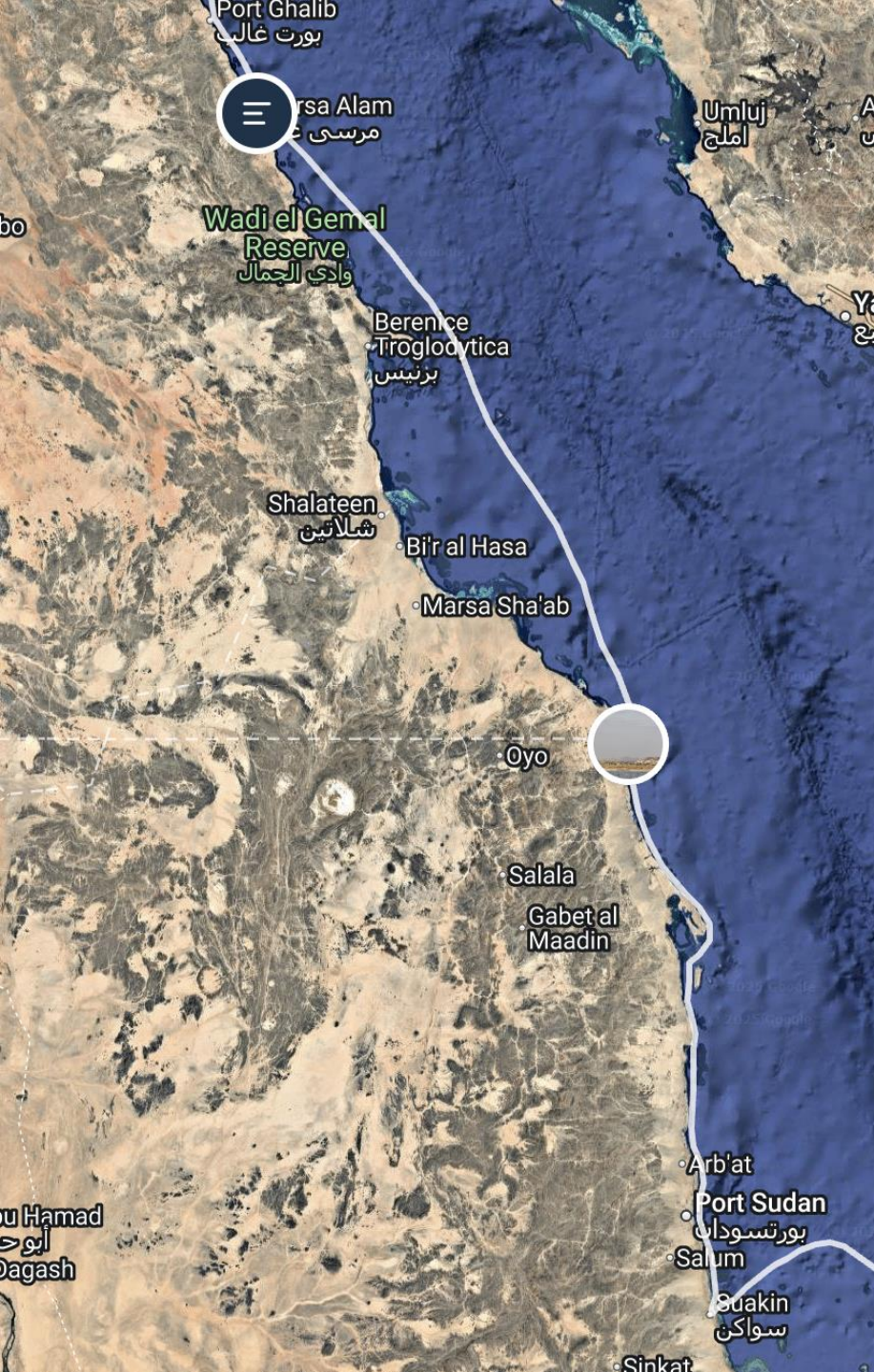
Things to Do

- Explore **Old Suakin Island** — abandoned, historic, atmospheric.
- Easy walk to town; locals warm, welcoming, and curious.
- Cultural etiquette appreciated (modest clothing, basic Arabic).
- Many residents displaced by war — very hospitable despite hardship.
- Avoid bringing garbage ashore (local disposal unsuitable).

Overall

- **Sudan has been a highlight** of the journey — safe, welcoming, culturally rich.





Suakin - Marsa Umbelia - Marsa Alam

- Departing Suakin
 - Departed during a light wind window, leaving at sunset for calmer conditions.
 - Followed **Ganesh's Soggy Paws track** along the coast — excellent protection (draft 1.5 m).
 - Experienced GPS Jamming from Suakin to just north of Port Sudan
 - Despite checking into Sudan, going ashore is prohibited (war-related)
 - Friends who landed at Marsa Oseif had to speak with authorities and pay a fine.
 - Kayaked/walked only at Marsa Umbeila where there were no people, only camels.
- Marsa Umbeila, Sudan
 - Last anchorage in Sudan — wide, easy entry and space for several boats.
 - Needed to reset anchor; acceleration zone in the bay.
 - Desert scenery with wild camels onshore.
 - Downloaded eSims (from holafly) for Egypt here and had them all ready to activate when we lost starlink in Egypt.
- Marsa Umbeila → Marsa Alam, Egypt
 - Waited for light winds.
 - Motored almost the entire passage



Marsa Alam, Egypt

Anchorage & Conditions

- Beautiful, well-protected bay; **reef blocks swell and waves**.
- Experienced **20–30 knots** for several days with excellent holding.
- Plenty of room to anchor; entrance is **narrow** — use **good light + light winds** or ask **Abdullah** for dinghy guidance.
- Slight current inside; anchored in **20 ft at 25°04.989'N, 34°53.677'E**.
- **Fly yellow flag** — *you cannot check in here*.

Authorities

- **Plain-clothes police** visit by unmarked dinghy.
- Provided them a letter stating “waiting for good weather”; they checked passports and left professionally.

Services via Abdullah

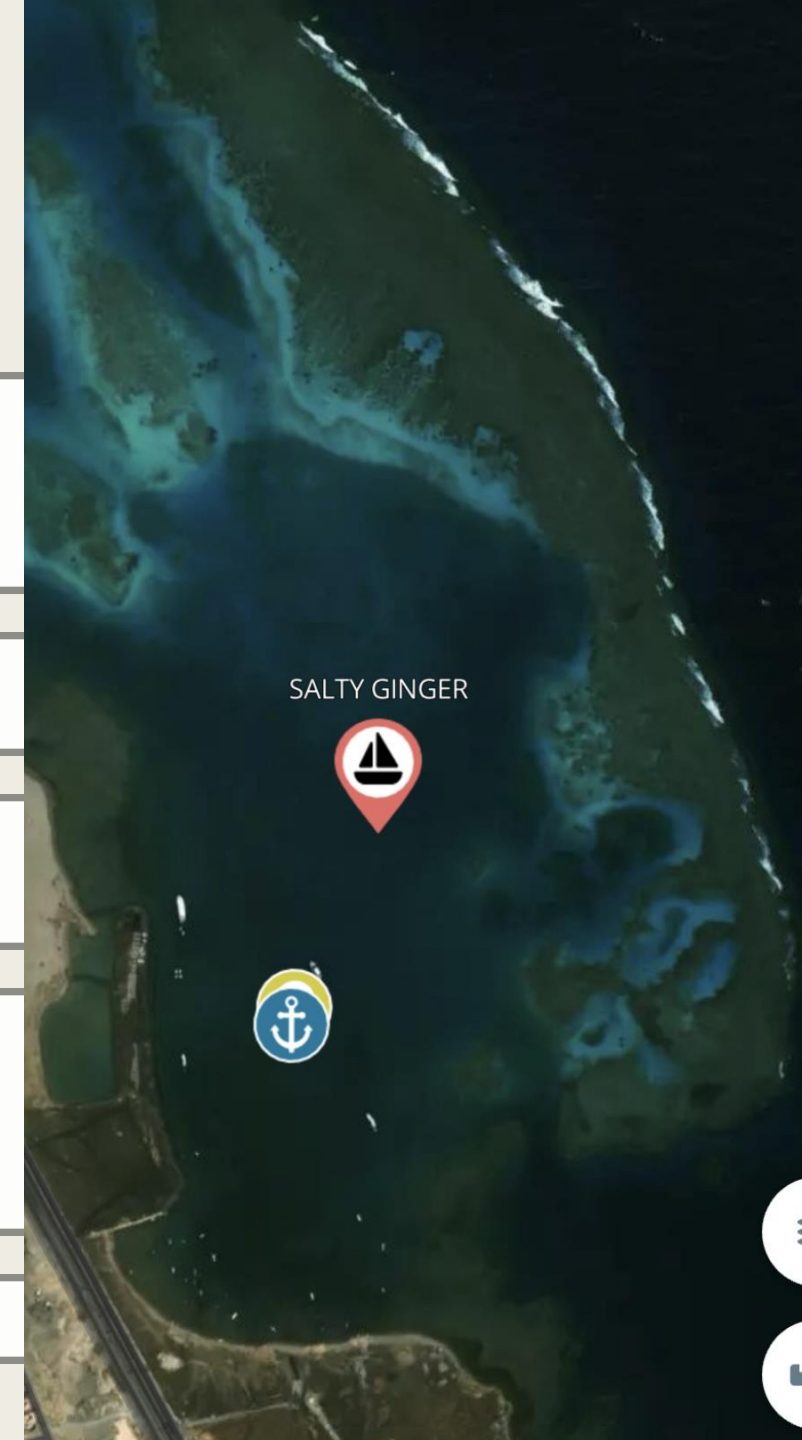
- Contact: **WhatsApp +20 115 153 4755**.
- Brings diesel (**\$1.50/L**), groceries, beer, wine, and can **fill dive tanks**.
- Example order: **\$140 USD** for groceries + beer + wine.

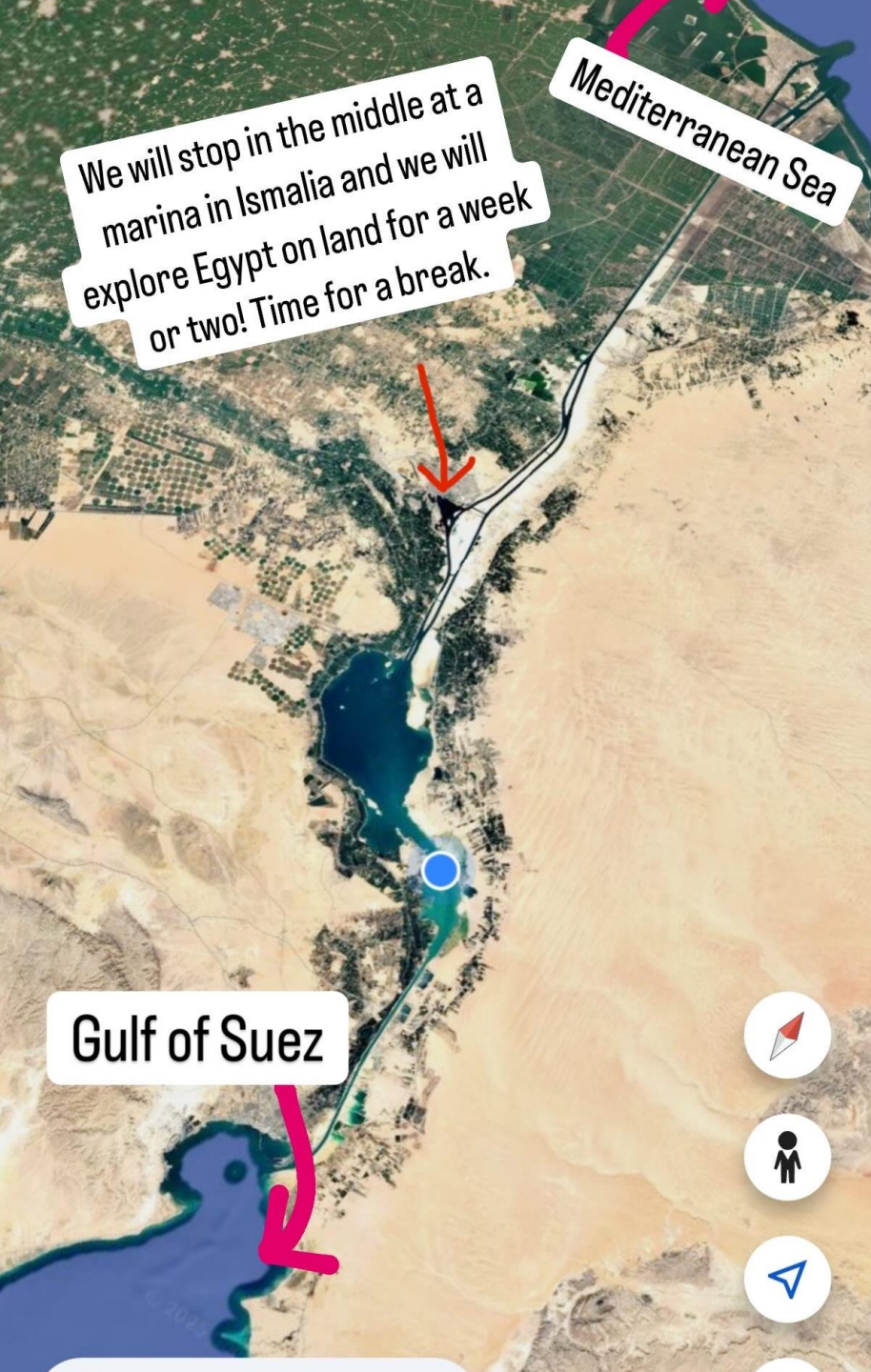
Connectivity

- **Starlink stops immediately** when anchored in Egypt — have your **eSIM activated beforehand**.
- Holafly Egypt eSIM recommended:
 - **\$83 USD / 30-day unlimited**, uses **Orange network** (fastest).
 - Works via router for full-boat Wi-Fi; minimal dropouts from Marsa Alam → Ismailia.
 - Support chat offers **small discount code**.
 - Ensure you buy the **Egypt-only plan**, not full Arabia.

Other Notes

- Egypt has a list of **approved anchorages** — get the **latest updated version**.





We will stop in the middle at a marina in Ismailia and we will explore Egypt on land for a week or two! Time for a break.

Mediterranean Sea

Gulf of Suez

Suez Canal

Anchoring at C1

- Arrived at **Charlie 1 (C1)** at **9 pm** — easy due to ambient light from ships + shoreline.
- **Issue:** Measurer attempted to board before anchoring — **firmly tell them to wait.**

Pilot Onboard

- Pilot boards in the morning; can **navigate or drive** to Ismailia.
- **Tipping:**
 - Officially *not required* (per Capt. Hebi).
 - In practice, pilots typically **ask for a “gift”** near Ismailia.
 - Cruisers report giving **\$25–\$40 USD**, though refusing is possible but awkward.
 - One boat reported rough treatment after refusing a tip.

Agent & Payments

- Agent: Several available we used **Captain Hebi**.
- Payment options: **cash or bank transfer**; other agents may accept **credit card**.
- Fees appear **negotiable** depending on your bargaining ability.

Fuel

- **Refuel upon arrival** in Ismailia to avoid morning delays.



Suez Cost Breakdown

- \$353 – Canal measurement
- \$183 – Port Clearance
- \$80 – Immigration
- \$80 – Security
- \$25 each – Visas
- \$10 – Customs
- \$15 – Bank fee
- \$25 – Agent fee (check-in)
- \$50 – Agent fee (Suez transit)

Total \$849 USD

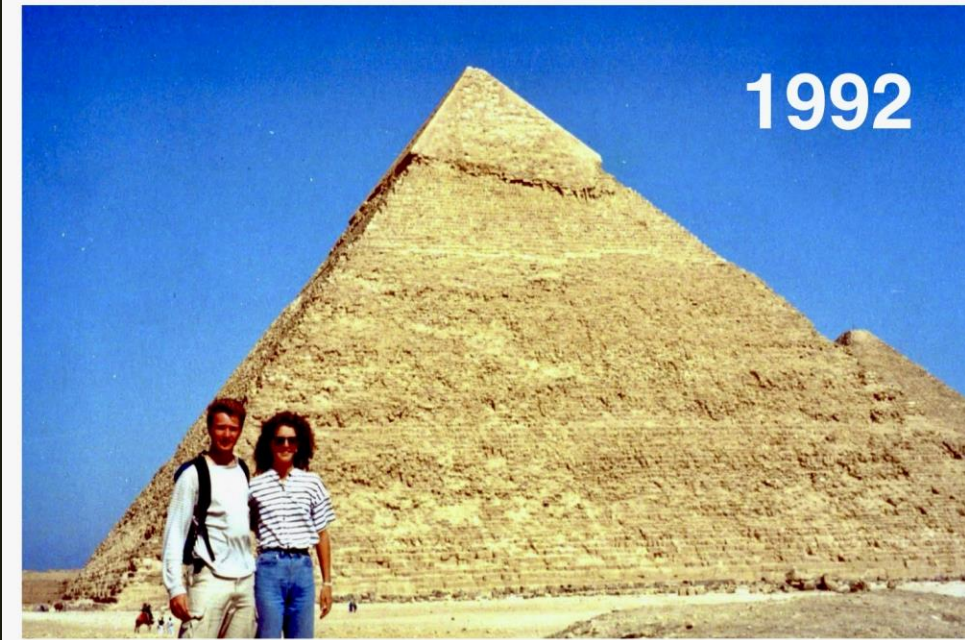
Ismailia, Egypt

- **Modern, clean marina** with few boats and plenty of space
- **Very safe** for leaving your boat while traveling inland
- Marina is within an **immigration-controlled zone** (gates locked)
- **Entry/exit requires permission**, scheduled times, bag scanning, and paperwork
- Leaving Ismailia town requires a **police escort**
- Procedures can feel **unusual and a bit unsettling**, but they are routine
- Expect significant **dust accumulation** on the boat due to desert conditions



Travel Tips for Egypt

- **Where to Stay:**
In Giza, Kemet Boutique Hotel offers affordable rooms with pyramid views but some traffic noise. Upscale options include Mena House Marriott. In Aswan, Aswan Nile Palace is budget-friendly with Nile views, and in Luxor, Steigenberger Resort Ahti is a good 5-star choice.
- **Getting Around:**
Uber works well in Cairo; inDrive is reliable in Aswan and Luxor. Traffic near pyramids is heavy, so walking can be quicker.
- **Sightseeing:**
Visit the Great Pyramids via the downhill route from the pyramid to the Sphinx. The Grand Egyptian Museum and a day trip to the Citadel, Al-Azhar Park, and Khan el-Khalili Bazaar are recommended.
- **Local Interactions:**
People are welcoming, especially during Eid; stay friendly but cautious.
- **Activities in Aswan:**
Try felucca sailing (~400 EGP/hour) and Nile cruises (~\$70 for 2 nights). Elephantine Island is best for a day visit.
- **Flights:**
Domestic flights from Cairo to Aswan or Luxor cost around \$50, offering a quick alternative to buses or trains.
- **Miscellaneous:**
Free audio tours are available; avoid pushy guides; sunrise hot-air balloon rides in Luxor cost about \$50.





Ismailia to Cyprus

- Pilot on board from Ismailia
- Tip to pilot prior to getting off at end of Suez
- Pilot boat also wants a tip
- Overnight to Cyprus
- A bit sloshy
- Larnaca is an awesome town and marina

Reflections

Cons

- Many days of motoring required. Engine health is critical.
- Approximately 1400M against the wind and a couple days motoring in the canal.
- Service and spares are all but non-existent.
- Uncharted areas
- Stressful – always “on”
- Patience required when waiting for weather windows
- A lot of time onboard
- Hard on your boat

Pros

- Best spinnaker sailing we’ve ever had
- Breathtaking landscapes and sunsets
- Most unique experiences with local people
- Experiencing historical sites that we’ve spent our lives reading about
- Feeling of achievement for overcoming a huge challenge
- Comradery with cruising community

The image features a central sunset scene over a body of water, with a white L-shaped frame on the left and right sides. The text "Q & A" is centered in the middle of the image.

Q & A