

YACHT

1D 7440D

DM 5,50
Niederlande hfl 7,-
Italien L 5900,-
Österreich öS 45,-
Spanien Ptas 500,-
Finnland Fmk 19,-
Printed in Germany

DK

Dellus-Klasing Verlag
Bielefeld-Hamburg-
München

21 11. Okt. 89
86. Jahrgang

**Sonderausgabe
zur hanseboot**

**Duell der
J-Klasse-Giganten**

**Kauf-Ratgeber:
Decca, Loran, GPS?**

**Formeln für die
Bootsanschaffung**

**Bordfahräder
im YACHT-Test**

**50 Extra-Seiten
Fahrtensegeln**

SCHWEDEN





Islands in the Aegean

For the serious performance sailor, chartering in the Greek Islands is akin to sailing between Homer's Scylla and Charybdis; if the beauty of the islands doesn't distract you first, the excitement of meal after delectable meal will soon convince you that there's more to life than hard-core voyaging. By George A. Eddy

If the fates have been kind, and you have chartered in the South Pacific, most of the Caribbean, Corsica, and the Riviera, what do you do for an encore?

Answer: The Greek Islands!

The time was now. The international scene was calm; the dollar/drachma rate was favorable; TWA offered an appealing two-for-one promotion; and the dreaded "Meltemi" wind never appears in June.

But which islands? There are 2000, more or less, and they divide into three basic groups: the Sporades in the northern end of the Aegean Sea, the Dodecanese from Rhodes along the Turkish coast, and the centrally located Cyclades.

We chose the Cyclades (pronounced KEE-KLAH-DAYS if you're a name-dropper) because they promised a rich and varied mix of antiquities, fascinating shops, dramatic vistas, and ports quite different from elsewhere in the Med.

The Cyclades decision was not impulsive. Our homework

over many months included six volumes ranging from the lyrical *Greek Islands* by Lawrence Durrell to the factual *American Express Guide*. Each added a dimension to our knowledge and helped form the master plan. Once in the islands our favorite was the Cadogan Guide, also called *Greek Islands*, by Dana Facaros—a nice blend of history, mythology, what to see, and what to do.

Next we had to research the who and how. I called an experienced charter broker with international knowledge, Jo Anne Russell. She said, loud and clear, "Kiriacoulis Mediterranean"—an eight-year-old family company, which operates a fleet of 85 Jeanneaus and Gib'Seas, and offers one-way options and crew if needed. That sounded perfect...and it was.

We decided a bilingual captain would

be a smart move. The Greek language bears no relationship to anything you studied in school (it's easier to learn Greek dancing than their alphabet). We also had no local sailing knowledge, and some uncertainty about the mooring techniques. Our wives said, slyly, "Wouldn't you like authentic Greek cooking?" We took the bait...and added the captain's wife.

Our first stop by Olympic Air from Athens was a very special island—Mykonos. Famous for its mosaic of whitewashed chapels, windmills, sandy beaches, cafe-surrounded harbor, and shop-filled walkways (where you bargain fiercely), Mykonos is a Resort with a capital R.

Here, in early June after three days of R & R, we met our yacht *Captain Nekos*, and Christos and Anna Speis.

What a break!

Christos had been European Lightning champ five years running, and was once Captain of George Coumantaros' beautiful old *Baccara*. He had sailed these waters for 20 years. As

time went on we realized he knew someone in every port and on every crewed Greek boat, sail or power. What a network! Anna proved to be a great chef, and her dinners aboard were classic Greek, as we'd hoped.

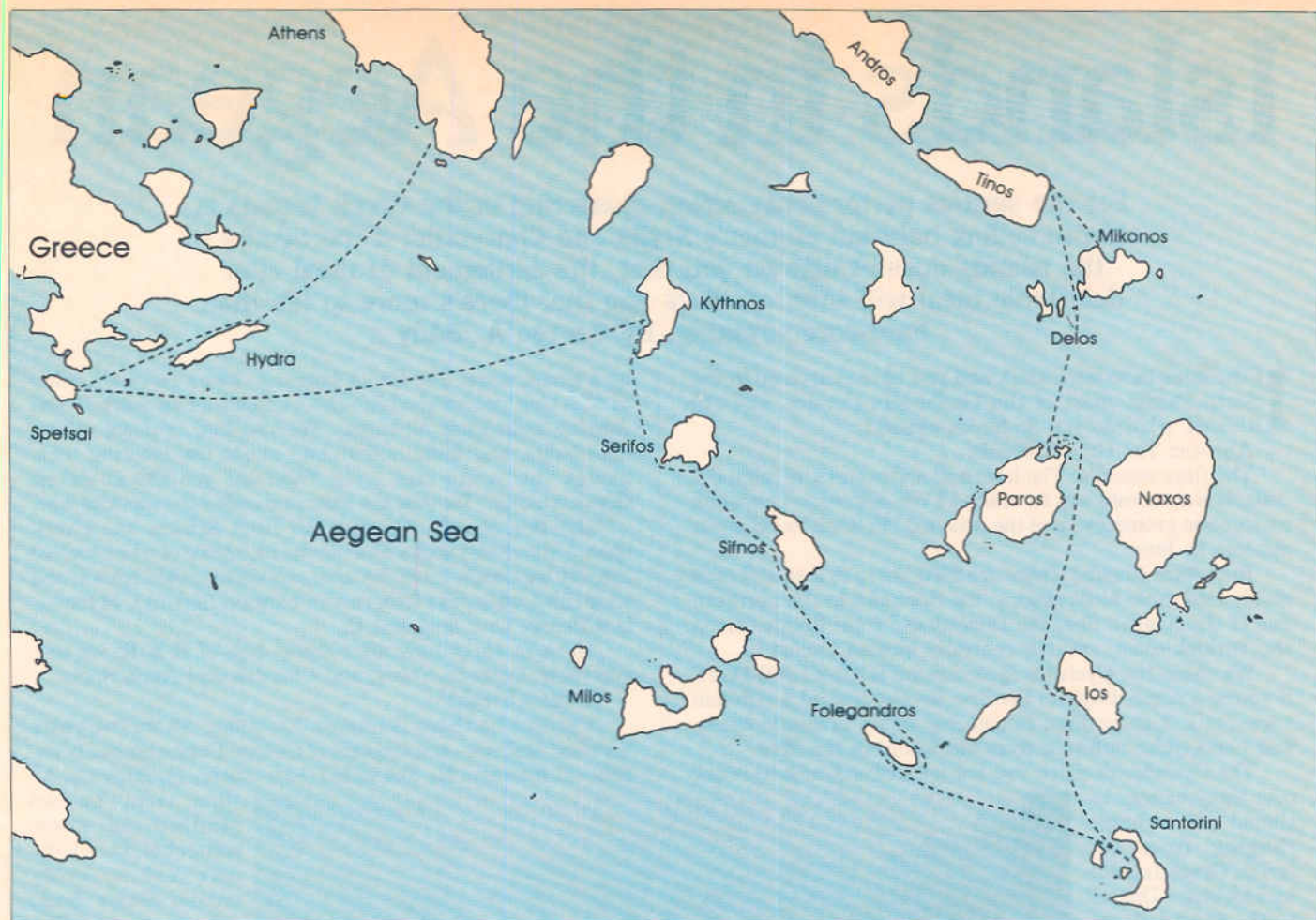
Eight of us were comfortable (and cozy) in the four-cabin/two-head layout of our Jeanneau 45. Actually, the dinette and cockpit were quite roomy. Everything worked. The 55-h.p. Perkins never missed a beat, and we used it about half the time, because we were being pretty aggressive about completing our itinerary: With an average objective of 35 miles a day, there was little chance to enjoy the relaxing pleasure of sailing in light air.

Overall, even though we encountered light breezes as often as not, there was plenty of good sailing: Two days of



Facing page: The town at Santorini sits 1000 feet above the shore, and can only be reached aboard a donkey or cable car. Above & below: The islands are rugged, and at Santorini, the harbor is 1300 feet deep, which makes anchoring impossible.





strong, exciting wind (25 knots plus) when one or two reefs were needed and the genoa was partially roller-reefed, and three days when we could use full sails and make at least five knots. The Jeanneau sailed well in all these conditions.

Nine days later we had spent the night—anchored or moored—at eight different islands, and stopped to swim at another three. Our log showed 326 miles. The weather was superb, the water was clear, and water temperature coolish. The first person overboard would sucker in the rest with the familiar line, “It’s OK when you get used to it.”

On the last lap from Hydra to Athens, the six of us played “Which was your favorite island?” There were five different answers, attesting to the charm and appeal of the entire area.

There was no debate that Santorini was the most spectacular. It presents the awesome sight of a volcanic crater, partially submerged by the sea. Over the centuries its shape has been altered by catastrophic earthquakes and eruptions. Some scholars theorize that Santorini was part of the fabled Atlantis.

Here Christos’ skill and experience were especially valuable. The shore is so bold and the water so deep (1300 feet) that no one can anchor—even huge cruise ships. There are very few sailboats in

this harbor!

The mooring drill is to nuzzle your bow up to an eight-foot-diameter steel buoy and attach a long line, then back down to the quay. Each new arrival adds to the “fan” (see photo). The capacity is maybe 10 total. At eight in the morning, everyone unties so that those departing can get away. Those remaining tie up again.

“The Cyclades promise a rich and varied mix of antiquities, fascinating shops, and dramatic vistas.”

The town of Thira sits above the harbor, high on a crest, about 1000 feet above the port, and can only be reached by teleferique (cable car) or by donkey. We donkeyed up for dinner and walked down—587 steps—dodging the droppings as best we could in the darkness.

The shops here displayed enough gold jewelry to rival Fort Knox, plus, of course, hand-crafted linens, ceramics, sweaters (\$25 for a handsome heavy wool

number), T-shirts, and souvenirs. A high percentage of the people were young, wearing hiking shoes and toting back packs—Germans and Scandinavians mostly. We were the only Americans in evidence. The smaller town, Ia, on the far end of the island, was quite different—less touristy and well worth a visit. Santorini has a major archaeological find that is well developed and interesting, if you are into digs.

At the other end of the spectrum was Folegandros—indeed a treasure! The small harbor was a welcome haven after reaching 30 miles in 40-knot winds. I asked Christos if this was the start of a Meltemi. He didn’t think so.

Since we had averaged 10 knots, we arrived in ample time to swim, belt a Mount Gay or two (the one essential to bring from the U.S.), and hike up to the quiet village with its typical white-washed buildings, small market, and tree-shaded plazas. Dinner here, with non-stop Greek white wines, reds, and rosés was...\$55 for eight of us! Prices ranged up from here to \$120 for eight in Santorini.

Our other favorites were as follows:
—Delos is today a rather desolate tourist attraction, but the ample ruins and museum portray an incredible history of over 3000 years, complete with



Here's a local vegetable dealer on his way to the market in Mykonos.

a commercial era around 1200 B.C. and legends of Zeus, Apollo, and other notables of the time. The impact of Delos is to remind you that life, for each of us, is very transitory.

—Ios was a swim stop, with the nudiest beach in Greece. Sorry folks, the really long zoom lens was at the intercollegiate championships in San Francisco!

—The first night, in Tinos, included the great sponge purchase. I asked our women what was so appealing about sponges, and received the answer: "If you don't know, we can't explain it to you." With Christos' adept negotiating, we cornered the sponge market for our own use and gifts at home.

My favorite shopping excursion at most stops we made is one of the simple pleasures of charter cruising in any foreign land—the provisioning routine. Invariably you deal with two or three butchers to find the meat you want, a green grocer or a veggie truck vendor, a wine store, and a "super" market. Feta cheese is critical to the Greek salad, and we would sometimes sample several stores before Anna was satisfied.

—Kythnos is up in the hills, and is another remote and appealing island where an American is as unusual as Crocodile Dundee at the Plaza. Very quiet lifestyle here. Wonderful people treated us like ETs. But there was one surprise: When we stopped for a beer in the ancient mountain-top village, the England-Ireland championship "football" game was on color TV. Later we anchored to swim in a little cove and decided to sail to Hydra overnight (another advantage of having a captain along).

Only instead of Hydra, I had privately worked it out with Christos to go to a different island...Spetsai. This had

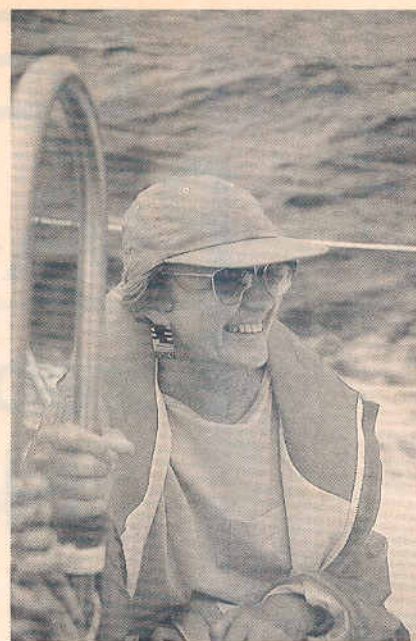
been Kay Eddy's one request, to which I had turned thumbs down because it was too far off our route to Athens. By sailing at night, however, we had enough time. While everyone else was sacked out below, we changed course. When they awoke...Presto! Spetsai!

"We had averaged 10 knots, arriving in ample time to swim, belt a Mount Gay or two, and hike up to the quiet village."

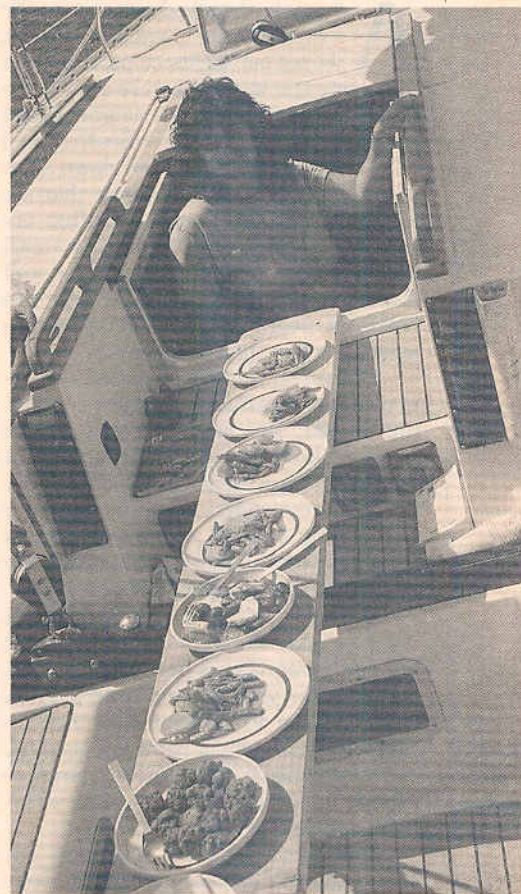
—Spetsai is to Athens as Catalina is to Southern California or Martha's Vineyard to Boston...the summer retreat. Stylish villas, very active tourist town, beaches, night life, and at least one fantastic restaurant. Another lousy piece of Paradise!

—Finally, Hydra, my favorite. The harbor is more reminiscent of the smaller ports in France and Italy—very pretty, cosmopolitan, jammed with boats of all flags. It was our last night, and Anna's dinner was a banquet: keftedes (meat balls with mint), sauteed pepper and eggplant with tomato sauce, and Greek salad.

As we pulled into the Kiriacoulis area of the Athens marina the next noon, I reminded Christos we hadn't weathered a Meltemi. "I haven't seen one in five years," he said. So much for sea stories. But that's not what you come to Greece for anyway.



George A. Eddy photos



Aboard the Jeanneau, the sailing was fine, and the food was finer.

What you do come to Greece for is a most unusual and satisfying charter cruise. We would rate the area, the charter company, our broker Jo Anne, the Jeanneau, and Christos and Anne... a perfect 10. Greek island-hopping by sailboat—a truly memorable experience. Try it!