



# **Bluewater/Coastal Cruising**

## **A Starter Guide to Living Your Sailing Dream**



# **Why Bluewater/Coastal Cruising?**

It's a dream for many, but a reality for the few who prepare and commit.

Yes, it takes work – but the freedom and satisfaction are unmatched.

Long days, tough repairs, and unpredictable weather... worth it for a life under sail.



# **Learning to Sail: Start Here**

No need to own a boat! Take a beginner course at a local sailing school.

Learn on small dinghies – they teach balance, sail trim, and awareness.

Already have some experience? Volunteer as crew at local regattas or yacht clubs.

Look for “Crew Wanted” notices at marinas or online forums and sailing Facebook groups. Eg - <https://www.crewseekers.net>



## **Gaining Experience by Crewing**

- Sail on different boats to discover what suits you.
- Real-time sailing experience beats any dockside tour.
- Learn what's essential vs. what's just luxury.



## **Choosing Your Bluewater/Coastal Cruising Sailboat**

No one-size-fits-all answer. Your perfect boat depends on:

- Budget
- Crew size
- Comfort needs
- DIY skills
- Sailing routes

Traditional advice: full keel, skeg rudder, 35–45ft range.

Today's reality: any seaworthy boat, properly maintained, can go far.

Our boat? A 1974 Hallberg-rassy Monsun 31 nothing fancy but perfect for our needs.



## Where To Sail? How To Get There?

- The world is yours: Med marinas, Arctic anchorages, or tropical islands.
- Follow seasonal cruising routes (e.g. Start here in Malaysia cruise SEA, World ARC, Pacific Puddle Jump).

Pro tip: Always sail when weather is good, not just when books say to go. Take note when is “sailing season”.



## Visas, Check-Ins & Legal Stuff

- Every country has its own clearance rules. Stay updated.
- Use trusted resources like:



Noonsite: global entry requirements, safety updates



Digital Cruising Guides: routes, anchorages, GPS tips, and local advice

Pro Tip: Respect customs. Plan paperwork in advance.



## Weather & Safety

- Weather is king. Learn to read forecasts, not just follow apps.
- Use multiple weather apps + learn the basics of wind, swell, fronts.
- Safety gear: EPIRB, life jackets, harnesses, VHF, AIS — don't skip it.



## Provisioning Like a Pro

- Not just food! Include cleaning, hygiene, and medical supplies.
- Bring special treats (spices, snacks, condiments) to lift morale.
- Stock sustainably. What goes down your drain goes into the sea.

Pro Tip: Water planning is essential: know your tank capacity + backup options.



## **Fresh Water: Watermakers 101**

These require electricity to run which may mean upgrading batteries, solar or buying a generator and carrying extra fuel which then leads to storage and space.

- Consider investing in a watermaker for independence at sea.
- Brands to look into: Spectra, Village Marine, Sea Recovery, BlueWater.

Pro Tip: Always carry emergency bottled water. There are many circumnavigators that choose not to have a water maker onboard because stuff breaks. Difficult to fix in remote areas.



## **Bluewater/Coastal Cruising FAQ**

### **What does “bluewater” mean?**

- Deep ocean sailing — long-distance, offshore cruising.

### **What’s a good size for a bluewater boat?**

- Ideally 30–35 ft minimum; 50–70 ft for comfort and capability.
- Needs to be seaworthy, self-righting, and well-equipped.

### **What are some affordable bluewater boats?**

- Look into Hallberg-rassy, Cape Dory, Sabre, Contessa, Tayana, Island Packet
- Good balance between safety, price, and reliability.

### **Who makes top-tier bluewater cruisers?**

- Hallberg-rassy, Oyster, Hylas, Jeanneau, Beneteau, Lagoon, Fountaine Pajot

## What does Coastal Cruising mean?

- Coastal cruising means sailing close to the shore, staying within sight of land, and making frequent stops at harbors, marinas, or anchorages. It's characterized by shorter sailing distances, easier navigation, and generally less extreme weather conditions compared to offshore or Bluewater cruising.

## What's a good size for a coastal cruising boat?

- Depending on usage - Day Sails or seasonal months of sailing. Day sails do not require storage space for extra food, water, spares etc size can be smaller.
- Size ideally 25–41ft depending on your comfort level
- Smaller sailboats equal less maintenance hours and money, also lower marina fees.

## What are some affordable coastal cruising boats?

- Look into Hunters, Maxi, Catalina ...
- Good balance between safety, price, and reliability.



## Final Thoughts

- You don't need to have it all figured out.
- Take small steps: learn, crew, ask questions, explore boats.
- Your boat life begins the moment you decide to chase it.
- Subscribe to SAILS TO TALES as we talk to real sailors, share real stories insights and boat buying tips that could save you a lot of money buying the wrong boat and more.



## Dream Big. Sail Far. Live Free.

Download this guide. Keep it handy. Let it remind you:  
You can go bluewater cruising — one step at a time.