

THE CARIBBEAN, THROUGH MY CAMERA ROLL

Ellie's Caribbean Guide

Where I'd go, what I'd do, the routes I'd take and the yachts I'd choose.

An Ahoy Club members' guide · 2026 to 2027 season

How we do a Caribbean week

The Caribbean is about life on the boat. You go ashore for a long lunch or a sunset drink, then you are back on the tender, because the water is the point and the next island is never more than a couple of hours away. That shapes everything we plan here.

These are the things we do every time, roughly in the order they happen, and the ones I would hand to a friend before their first week down there.

The Caribbean is raw, rustic and remote. Tiny islands, untouched nature and little beach shacks, with St Barths thrown in when you want a hit of Mediterranean energy.

Ellie Malouf
Ahoy Club



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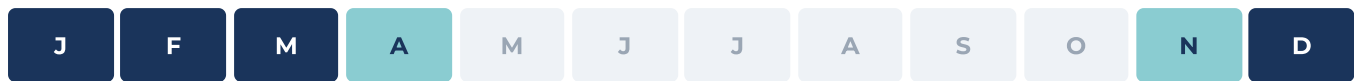
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December to March, one chain a week



■ Our months ■ Some boats ■ Closed

December

The season proper, building to New Year in St Barths, the most competitive week in yachting. Book that one by June.

January to March

Our months. Trade winds, warm water, and far fewer boats than the Med ever has. March brings the sailing back to St Barths.

November and April

Some boats take charters while the fleet crosses to and from the Mediterranean. Good value if the dates line up. April has Antigua's Classics and Sailing Week.

May to October

Closed. The boats are in the Mediterranean.

Getting there

St Maarten (SXM) is the door: direct from the US east coast and Europe, and the boat is waiting in Simpson Bay. For the Windwards, fly to St Lucia or Grenada. Most islands have a small strip for propeller planes, so an early leaver flies back to St Maarten rather than the boat turning round.

The Leeward Islands

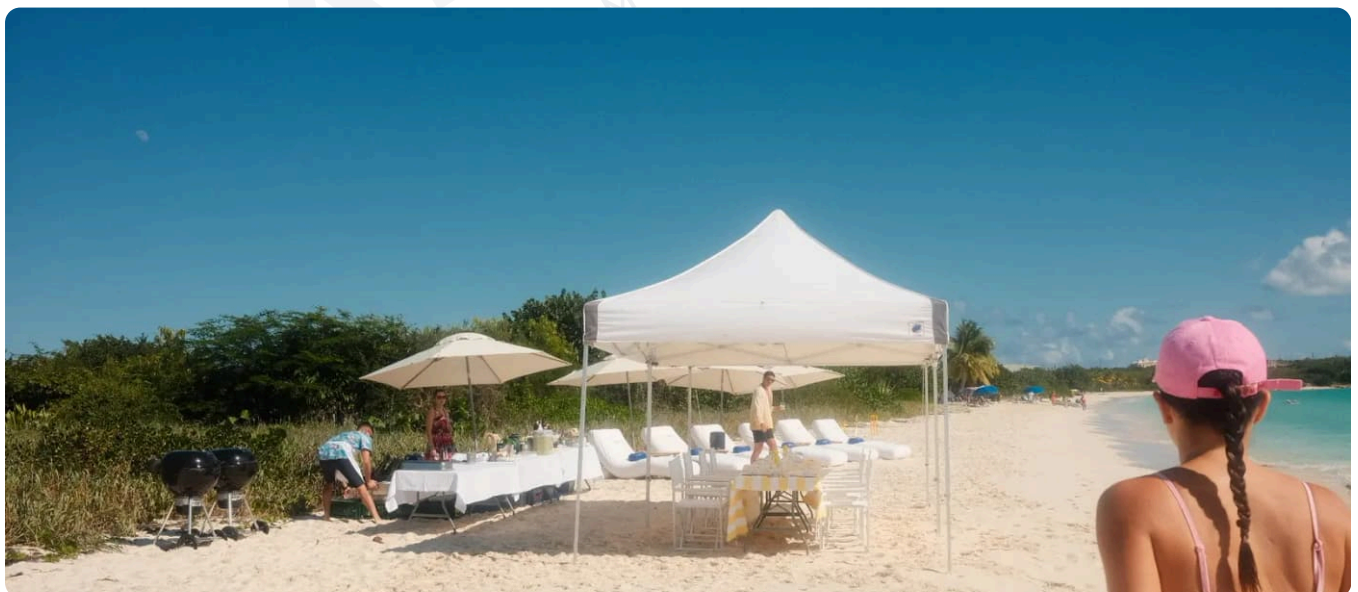
The northern chain, and where most Caribbean weeks happen: Anguilla, St Barths, St Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, a few hours apart. The Virgin Islands sit a day's run west and are a week of their own.

The Windward Islands

The southern chain. Greener, wilder and better sailing: the Pitons, Bequia, Mustique, the Tobago Cays and Grenada, run one way.

One chain per week

There is no right order within a chain: avoid going back and forth, so run a loop, or go all the way up and come slowly down. Two weeks joins the chains.



Eight things I'd hand to a friend

01

A night or two in Miami first

Flights into St Maarten are limited each day, so the schedule usually needs a stop somewhere, and we use it to land properly rather than arrive on the boat jet-lagged. With 24 to 48 hours in Miami my go-tos never change: a Miami Heat game if they are at home, a day on Miami Beach at the Faena, the Design District for shopping, then dinner at Casa Tua and the bar upstairs for a nightcap. You step onto the yacht already on holiday. We have also done Cuba on the way once, and if you want the week to start with a bit of culture before the beaches take over, that is the one.



Faena, Miami Beach



Dinner at Casa Tua

02

St Barths over a weekend

We plan St Barths across a Friday and a Saturday so the beach clubs and the nights out have some atmosphere, because midweek it can go quiet. Nao is my favourite beach club for a lunch that drifts into the afternoon, and Shellona on Shell Beach is the other table we always book. Two nights is plenty. Then you leave the scene behind and head back to the quiet islands, which is the whole point of the Caribbean.



Nao, St Barths



Shellona, Shell Beach

03

A beach picnic in Anguilla

Anguilla has some of the best beaches in the Caribbean for a picnic, and the crew set the table on the sand while you are still in the water. Stay for the afternoon, then go round to Rendezvous Bay for sunset drinks at Elvis' shack: a piña colada, locals, music, hammocks, and the sun going down behind the bay. It is my favourite evening of the week, every time.



The picnic, Anguilla



Elvis' shack, Rendezvous Bay

04

At least one themed night on board

Because the Caribbean is about the boat rather than going ashore, we always plan at least one themed day or night, and I am usually the one hosting. I brainstorm ideas with the crew before the charter and they do the rest, costumes, decorations, the lot. Pirate night is the one we keep coming back to, and the grown-ups commit to it far harder than the kids.



Pirate night on board

05

A guided ATV tour round St Kitts

Half a day on ATVs with a guide, up into the green hills and back down to the coast. It is a completely different way to see an island than from the water, and after a few days of beaches everyone is glad of the change. Go in the morning before it gets hot, and be back on the boat for a swim by lunch.



ATVs, St Kitts



With our guide

06

A forest trail and a waterfall in Dominica

Dominica is the island most people sail straight past on the way south, and it is the one I would stop at every time. Ask the crew to arrange a guide and walk up one of the river trails through the rainforest, with tree ferns closing in overhead and a rope line to steady you where the path crosses the water. At the end there is a waterfall you can stand under, and it is cold enough to make the whole group shriek. Then back to the boat for a hot shower and a long lunch.



The river trail, Dominica



Under the falls

07

Zip lining in St Lucia

When the group needs a day off the beach, St Lucia's rainforest is the one for it. The zip lines run through the canopy above Soufrière with the Pitons showing between the trees, and it suits everyone, from the teenagers to the grandparents who swear they will only watch and then do not. Half a day, then back to the boat anchored under the Pitons for a swim.

08

A beach picnic on Mustique

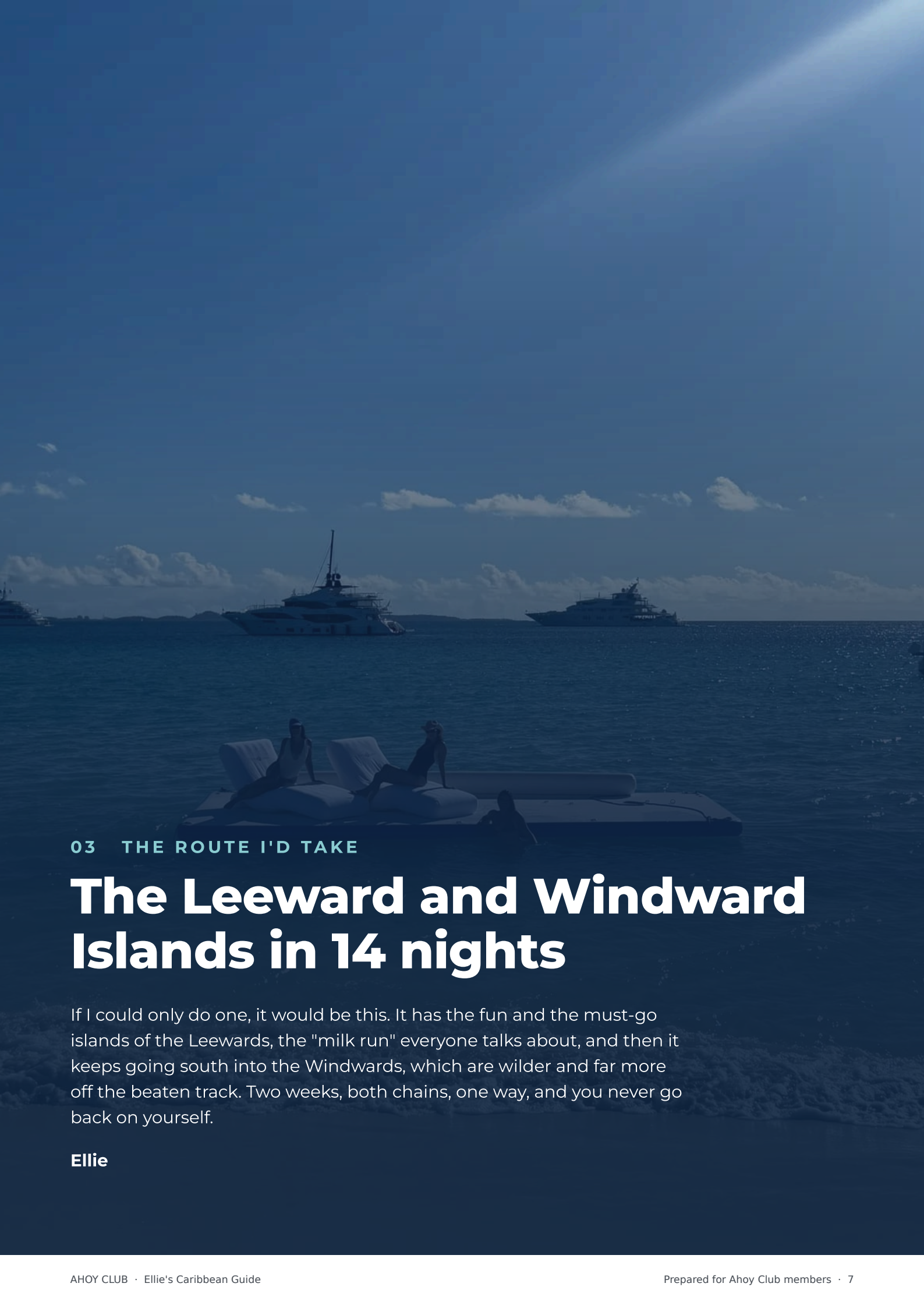
Mustique does the beach picnic better than anywhere in the chain. The crew set the table under one of the thatched huts on the beach, or in a bay with nobody else in it, the MISCHIEF chairs go out on the sand, and lunch runs for most of the afternoon. An Aperol spritz in a coconut, a swim between courses, and Basil's Bar on a Wednesday night if the dates line up.



Lunch under the hut, Mustique



The MISCHIEF chairs



03 THE ROUTE I'D TAKE

The Leeward and Windward Islands in 14 nights

If I could only do one, it would be this. It has the fun and the must-go islands of the Leewards, the "milk run" everyone talks about, and then it keeps going south into the Windwards, which are wilder and far more off the beaten track. Two weeks, both chains, one way, and you never go back on yourself.

Ellie

The Leeward and Windward Islands in 14 nights

Simpson Bay, St Maarten to St George's, Grenada



The two weeks that make the Caribbean make sense. Start in St Maarten and run the whole chain south one way: St Barths for the glamour, St Kitts and Nevis for the green quiet, Barbuda for lunch at Nobu and Antigua for the dockyard, then the French islands and Dominica as the bridge, the Pitons, the Grenadines, and Grenada to finish. Fourteen nights, about 485 miles, and never the same anchorage twice. Be honest with yourselves about the middle. Nights ten to twelve, from

Dominica down to Bequia, are three days in a row with five or six hours at sea each: the mornings are on passage, the afternoons and evenings are the islands. Everything either side is a few hours. Superyacht charters start on any day of the week, so the route stands on its own. If you want the crowd and the DJs in St Barths, we line your dates up so those two nights fall on a Friday and Saturday. Legs are approximate, at a steady ten knots, and the captain adjusts them for the weather on the day.

St Barths → St Kitts → Nevis → Barbuda → Antigua → Guadeloupe → Les Saintes → Dominica → Martinique → St Lucia → Bequia → Tobago Cays → Grenada

DAY 1 ST BARTHS 16 nm · 1.5 h

St Barths

Board in Simpson Bay and cross to St Barths in ninety minutes. The quiet north-west corner for the first night: no road, no building, turtles under the boat. Ninety minutes to St Barths · The quiet corner · Turtles under the boat

DAY 2 ST BARTHS 2 nm · 15 min

St Barths

Into Gustavia for the day and the night. Lunch at Nao, Shellona or La Guérite, the boutiques, a swim at Shell Beach, dinner at Bonito and the DJ night if it falls on a weekend. Lunch at Nao or Shellona · Gustavia's boutiques · Bonito, then the night out

DAY 3 ST KITTS 44 nm · 4.5 h

St Kitts

South-west with the wind behind, lunch on the move. The afternoon is the guided ATV tour up through the cane fields and rainforest with Mount Liamuiga above, then into Christophe Harbour's marina for the night and dinner at the Pavilion. Guided ATV tour · Christophe Harbour marina · Dinner at the Pavilion

DAY 4 NEVIS 7 nm · 45 min

Nevis

Across the Narrows in under an hour. Pinney's Beach for the day, Sunshine's beach bar for a Killer Bee, and dinner at one of the old sugar plantation houses in the hills. Pinney's Beach · A Killer Bee at Sunshine's · Dinner at a plantation house

DAY 5 BARBUDA

52 nm · 5 h

Barbuda

Five hours east across to Barbuda, the one leg against the wind, with a late lunch at Nobu on Princess Diana Beach as the reward. The frigate bird colony by tender in the late afternoon, and seventeen miles of pink sand with nobody on it.

Lunch at Nobu Barbuda · The frigate bird sanctuary · Pink sand, nobody on it

DAY 7 GUADELOUPE

45 nm · 4.5 h

Guadeloupe

Into the French islands. Stop at Pigeon Island, Cousteau's reserve, for the snorkelling on the way down the coast, then anchor off Deshaies, the fishing village with the botanical garden above it and the best rum shop on the route.

Snorkel the Cousteau reserve at Pigeon Island · Deshaies and its botanical garden · French provisioning

DAY 9 DOMINICA

20 nm · 2 h

Dominica

Two hours to Prince Rupert Bay at Portsmouth. The Indian River by rowing boat under the bloodwood trees, a waterfall in the rainforest, and the chance of sperm whales offshore; Dominica has them all year. The adventurous stop of the trip.

The Indian River by rowing boat · Waterfalls in the rainforest · Sperm whales offshore

DAY 11 ST LUCIA

57 nm · 5.5 h

St Lucia

The second sea morning, down Martinique's leeward side and across the channel to Soufrière, where the Pitons rise straight out of the sea. Anchor beneath them, the sulphur springs and the drive-in volcano ashore, dinner with the biggest view of the trip.

The Pitons from the water · Sulphur springs · A night under Petit Piton

DAY 13 TOBAGO CAYS

28 nm · 3 h

Tobago Cays

An hour to Mustique for lunch and Basil's, then on to the Tobago Cays: five uninhabited islands behind a horseshoe reef, turtles under the boat, the clearest water of the trip. A lobster barbecue on the beach with the local boatmen at sunset.

Lunch on Mustique · Turtles at Baradal · Lobster barbecue in the Cays

DAY 15 GRENADA

Alongside

St George's

Alongside at Port Louis Marina. Twenty minutes to the airport, direct flights to London and the US.

Port Louis Marina · Twenty minutes to the airport

DAY 6 ANTIGUA

28 nm · 3 h

Antigua

Three hours south to English Harbour and the Georgian dockyard Nelson commanded. Alongside for the night, Shirley Heights for the sunset view over the harbour, and dinner at the Admiral's Inn or Catherine's Café.

Nelson's Dockyard · Shirley Heights at sunset · A night alongside

DAY 8 LES SAINTES

31 nm · 3 h

Les Saintes

Three hours to the little archipelago south of Guadeloupe. Bourg des Saintes is a French village with no cars, a fort above it and a bay the UNESCO list calls one of the most beautiful in the world. Pain de Sucre beach, a scooter round the island, dinner in the village.

Bourg des Saintes · Fort Napoléon for the view · Pain de Sucre beach

DAY 10 MARTINIQUE

54 nm · 5.5 h

Martinique

The first of the three sea mornings. South along Dominica's coast and across to St Pierre, the town Mount Pelée buried in 1902, with the ruins still in the streets. The market, a rum distillery, and dinner at a table with French bread.

St Pierre and the ruins of 1902 · A rum distillery · French dinner

DAY 12 BEQUIA

56 nm · 5.5 h

Bequia

The last sea morning, past St Vincent's volcano and into Admiralty Bay. From here everything is an hour or two. Bequia's waterfront path, the boat builders, Jack's on Princess Margaret Beach for the evening.

Past St Vincent's volcano · Admiralty Bay · Sundowners at Jack's

DAY 14 GRENADA

45 nm · 4.5 h

Grenada

South past Union and Carriacou, with lunch at anchor off Sandy Island, a sandbar with a few palms, and on down Grenada's leeward side to St George's. The Carenage for the farewell dinner, nutmeg in everything.

Sandy Island off Carriacou · St George's and the Carenage · Farewell dinner on the Spice Island

Five more we love

Two weeks isn't always possible. These are the shorter routes we run most, a week or ten nights on one chain. Every day of each is on ahoyclub.com for members, or ask us and we'll send the one that fits.

10 NIGHTS · ANTIGUA TO ST MAARTEN

The Leeward Islands in ten nights

Antigua to St Maarten, downwind the whole way: lunch at Nobu on Barbuda, Nevis and St Kitts, a weekend in St Barths and Anguilla's beaches to finish.

7 NIGHTS · FROM ST MAARTEN

A week in St Barths and Anguilla

Three nights in St Barths over the weekend, Anguilla's beach picnic either side, and an uninhabited island in between. Six hours of cruising all week.

7 NIGHTS · ST LUCIA TO GRENADA

A week in the Grenadines

The Windward Islands, St Lucia to Grenada one way: the Pitons, Bequia, Mustique, the Tobago Cays and the Spice Island. Greener, wilder and far less spoken about.

7 NIGHTS · FROM ST THOMAS

A week in the Virgin Islands

From St Thomas: St John's park, the Caves at Norman Island, the Baths, Anegada's lobster and the Soggy Dollar. The first charter we recommend to most families.

10 NIGHTS · TEN NIGHTS, TWO REGIONS

St Barths then the Virgin Islands

A weekend in St Barths and Anguilla's beach picnic, an overnight passage downwind, then a week in the Virgins. St Maarten to St Thomas.

My picks for the season

Most of the Caribbean fleet crosses from the Mediterranean in November and goes back in April. These are the boats I'd put my own family and friends on this season, largest first. Dates go quickly, so ask us early.



ELLIE'S PICK 1 OF 8

CORAL OCEAN

238' (73m) / Lürssen / 1994, refit 2022

12 guests · 6 cabins · 24 crew

From €495,000 per week + expenses

- Ahoy Club's flagship, reborn in a €35 million transformation in 2022
- Her original Bannenberg design restored, with the feel of a brand-new yacht
- Vast deck spaces, a sun deck Jacuzzi and every water toy, made for days at anchor off St Barths



ELLIE'S PICK 2 OF 8

ROCK.IT

197' (60.05m) / Feadship / 2014, refit 2023

11 guests · 5 cabins · 15 crew

From \$350,000 per week + expenses

Winter base: Sint Maarten · Cruising: Caribbean

- A central skylight that dims with the sun, and sliding panels that shelter the dining area from the wind
- Main-deck master suite with its own marble entrance lobby and his-and-hers bathrooms
- Sun deck with circular Jacuzzi and bar, a circular wine bar in the salon, and a movie theatre
- Interiors in backlit white onyx, Statuario and Portoro marble



ELLIE'S PICK 3 OF 8

FELICITA

163'9" (49.9m) / Mangusta / 2025

12 guests · 5 cabins · 11 crew

From \$295,000 to \$330,000 per week + expenses

Winter base: St Maarten · Cruising: Caribbean

- Brand new for 2025, with a foredeck swimming pool and a beach club that opens on three sides to the sea
- Full-beam master suite with a private sea-level terrace
- Steam room and gym in the beach club, plus a sun deck Jacuzzi with al fresco dining
- Williams jet tender, two Sea-Doos, Seabob, Fliteboards, an electric surfboard, wakeboard and waterskis



ELLIE'S PICK 4 OF 8

ALPHA WAVES

133' (40.54m) / Benetti / 2023

10 guests · 5 cabins · 9 crew

From \$190,000 per week + expenses

Winter base: Fort Lauderdale · Cruising: Caribbean

- The only Benetti built to be fully wheelchair accessible, without compromising on design
- 40' Invincible tender set up for diving and fishing
- Sun deck Jacuzzi plus a dedicated foredeck lounge
- E-foils, Seabobs, jet skis and an outdoor projector and screen



ELLIE'S PICK 5 OF 8

OCULUS

122'5" (37.3m) / Numarine / 2024

12 guests · 6 cabins · 7 crew

From \$180,000 to \$210,000 per week + expenses

Winter base: Simpson Bay · Cruising: Caribbean and Central America

- Explorer yacht with a rare six-cabin layout for 12 guests and a 6,000nm range
- Waterslide straight from the bridge deck into the sea
- Beach club with a private sauna, plus a sea-view gym
- Sea-Doos, Seabobs, Fliteboard and jet surf



ELLIE'S PICK 6 OF 8

NECTAR

112' (34.1m) / Sanlorenzo / 2022

9 guests · 4 cabins · 6 crew

From \$95,000 per week + expenses

Winter base: Miami · Cruising: Caribbean · Open over Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year

- Dine-in galley with a Hibachi grill for interactive cooking
- Sea-level beach club with fold-out terraces, sunpads and a gym area
- Flybridge with retractable sunroof
- 37' Axopar tender with cabin, head and shower



ELLIE'S PICK 7 OF 8

MAREA LA NAUTICA

87'10" (26.78m) / Azimut / 2022

10 guests · 5 cabins · 4 crew

From \$80,000 per week + expenses

Cruising: Caribbean

- Interiors by Achille Salvagni with custom-made furniture
- Flybridge with Jacuzzi and bar
- Split-level master suite with floor-to-ceiling windows
- 28' Boston Whaler tender



ELLIE'S PICK 8 OF 8

INDABLU

74' (22.55m) / Sunreef sailing catamaran / 2017, refit 2023

7 guests · 3 cabins · 4 crew

From \$58,500 per week + expenses

Cruising: Caribbean

- A crew of four for just seven guests, with a stewardess trained in yoga who offers Ayurveda massage on board
- Hydraulic aft platform that launches tenders and Seabobs and doubles as a swimming and lounging area
- Forward terrace off the salon with sunpads, sofa and table
- Two doubles and a twin with an extra Pullman berth, each with its own ensuite

Like the look of one? Tell us your dates and your group and we'll check who's free, hold the dates and send you everything else on board.



05 PLAN YOURS

Tell us the group and the dates

Every route in this guide is a starting point. Tell us who is coming, when, and what kind of week you want, and we'll match the yacht and shape the days around you.

The A Team

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This guide is for Ahoy Club members and is not for sharing. Routes, timings and seasons are a guide only; your captain chooses each anchorage on the day for the weather and the sea.
ahoyclub.com/destinations/caribbean

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