

## Feeling Free

We all think about cruising, we dream of leaving our dock and feeling free on our boats, on a cruise. But then life always seems to come along and change plans, the plans that we are dreaming of. So what is it that we want? Is it few days of different anchorages, a new creek, and exciting day or two on the bay?

If that's what you want and are thinking of, why not go and experience and sail the Intercoastal Waterway, the ICW. It awaits you and beckons to you, and it's really a great trip. I have done it from the Long Island Sound to southern Florida, and many times in small passages that suit my moods or needs. It's a piece of delicious pie to be sampled in bites, and digested slowly.

We start with a short trip to Solomon's Island, and cross the bay, watching for crab pots and freighters, and waterman. All the while wondering what you'll find as the days roll along, what you'll see, the conditions of the bay and crossing the mighty Potomac the next day; it's 13 miles from Point Lookout to the Virginia line, the currents, the history, and now you're closer to Norfolk and Hampton Roads than ever before! Find a creek or a marina, there are plenty, and they are all so new to us. You study your charts, knowing that the next day, you're in Hampton Roads, and this may be one of the most exciting days of your sailing life. Imagine seeing and sailing among the world's largest war ships, you will, and it's thrilling.

You enter at Old Point Comfort, the Bridge Tunnel to the east separating you from the Atlantic Ocean. Spend time in Hampton; the Hampton River has great marinas, and great anchorages, not to mention restaurants and showers. Or try Portsmouth or Norfolk or Newport News (you can make a side trip to visit Williamsburg!), and you're now 12 miles into this leg of the ICW as it moves through the tidal estuary of the Elizabeth River. Next on to your first time in a lock, the water rises, and you're off to North Carolina, a few bridges having opened, and with waves and hoots to the other sailors along your way, they are doing what you are doing. This is a dream sail, an adventure unwinding as the clock ticks off the minutes, and you sail and you smile now feeling free. This is just the fourth day, or could be!