

ATLANTIC SPAIN AND PORTUGAL – Henry Buchanan, 8th edition. Published in hard covers by Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson [www.imray.com] at £45.00. 352 A4 pages in full colour throughout, ISBN 978-1-8462-3964-9. Also available in Spanish and French, and as a 360 page e-book at £29.25, ISBN 978-1-8462-3966-3

Before we say anything else about this book, we must shout out that it comes with a free one-year subscription to the full set of electronic Imray charts for the region that it covers. Imray has released a new app for iPhone and Android for the display of their charts, and it's pretty interesting. This is a game changer for a book that costs £45.

The guide covers the region from Cabo Ortegal to Gibraltar and is the essential companion for yachts on passage from Northern Europe to the Mediterranean or onwards to the Canaries prior to an Atlantic crossing. It is also vital for yachts closing that coast following an Atlantic crossing from the Americas, and is a comprehensive cruising companion for anyone visiting the delightful cruising grounds found along the Atlantic coast of the Iberian Peninsula.

Atlantic Spain and Portugal is the classic guide to this varied coast which includes the Rías of Galicia, the estuaries of the Douro and Tejo with Lisbon, the Algarve and then the coast of Andalucia down to Gibraltar. It's one of those books that you refer to daily when planning your cruise and while underway.

It is a typical pilot book, with information about the anchorages and marinas but little about the shoreside activities. As happens with any book that has detailed information, it starts to go out-of-date as soon as it is in print and for this reason a free supplement is available online twice a year with updated information. It has fallen prey in a few places to the dreaded predictive text and spellchecker monster, with errors such as substituting 'chartered' for 'charted'. There are also some inconsistencies when it comes to finding information such as which channel a marina monitors, but we took these in our stride given the volume of useful information contained in the book. There are many new photos, and most of the plans incorporate changes accumulated over the four years since the last edition was published, although not as much has changed in the infrastructure over that period.

As mentioned above, the book includes a voucher to download Imray Chart set ID40 for the Imray Navigator app. Once you download the app from Google Play and set up an account, you'll have to navigate to subscriptions in the app to select the charts to download. Be warned, the two sets of charts contain over 1GB of data and took over an hour to download over wifi and several failed attempts with 4G. Normally each collection of Imray charts for the app costs £22.99 for a one-year subscription.

It's not a perfect world though. Although the digital maps appear to be faithful to the paper ones, there is a glitch in the zoom level when moving between maps. Essentially, the two sets of charts in the two digital downloads for the region don't match up exactly. This often happens with paper charts, but it is not expected nor does it inspire confidence with the digital ones. There are prominent warnings about not using the charts for navigation, of course, but they are still useful as a back-up and to have along in the dinghy. The first version of their app was only launched on 1st June so glitches are to be expected.

Imray notes on Google Play that “The charts in the app do indeed match the paper charts. Our paper chart coverage is drawn at scales most pertinent to the coverage (rather than being seamless across a whole zoom level), which is why you get the jumps in the app. Seamless coverage for the app is being worked on for future versions.” They have plans for including tracking, route planning, waypoints, full tidal predictions when used in conjunction with Imray’s Tides Planner app, sharing across devices, content from Imray pilot books including marina and anchorage details and sailing directions, and AIS and NMEA integration.

In July this year the 7th edition was on sale from Bluewater Books & Charts in the US for \$83.95 (±£67) and on amazon.co.uk for £38.85 secondhand, so at £45 with the free software, the 8th edition is a bargain.

AMB & DOB

NB: The Publisher greatly values feedback from users of this and their other books. This particularly applies to updates and corrections.

