



RCC PILOTAGE FOUNDATION



A CRUISING GUIDE TO FRENCH GUIANA, SURINAME AND GUYANA

Martin Dixon-Tyrer



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Positions and Waypoints

All positions and waypoints are to datum WGS 84. They are included to help in locating places, features and transits. Do not rely on them alone for safe navigation.

Chartlets & Plans

We recommend cross-reference with more interactive electronic chart apps or to the free chart viewer at <https://webapp.navionics.com/>

Additional Caution: Charts and Surveys

Charts in these regions must be used with particular care, since they rely on ancient surveys for their data. Additionally, river bottoms and profiles change much more rapidly than in the ocean.

The waypoints given in this publication were accurate as of late 2014, but the same principle applies regarding river navigation.

Bearings and Lights

Any bearings are given as °T and from seaward. The characteristics of lights may be changed during the lifetime of this book. They should be checked against the latest edition of the UK Admiralty List of Lights.

Combination plans

Some river plans have been combined to give a better overview of routes along them. However, the join points are approximate and as for all plans, they should not be used for navigation.

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THE RCC PILOTAGE FOUNDATION

The RCC Pilotage Foundation was formed as an independent charity in 1976 supported by a gift and permanent endowment made to the Royal Cruising Club by Dr Fred Ellis. The Foundation's charitable objective is "to advance the education of the public in the science and practice of navigation". The Foundation is privileged to have been given the copyrights to books written by a number of distinguished authors and yachtsmen. These are kept as up to date as possible. New publications are also produced by the Foundation to cover a range of cruising areas. This is only made possible through the dedicated work of our authors and editors, all of whom are experienced sailors, who depend on a valuable supply of information from around the world by generous-minded yachtsmen and women. Most of the management of the Foundation is done on a voluntary basis. In line with its charitable status, the Foundation distributes no profits. Any surpluses are used to finance new publications and to subsidise publications which cover some of the more remote areas of the world. The Foundation works in close collaboration with three publishers – Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson, Bloomsbury (Adlard Coles Nautical) and On Board Publications. The Foundation also itself publishes guides and pilots, including web downloads, for areas where limited demand does not justify large print runs. Several books have been translated into French, Spanish, Italian and German and some books are now available in e-versions. For further details about the RCC Pilotage Foundation and its publications visit: www.rccpf.org.uk

FOREWORD

Cruising information for areas such as this can sometimes be sparse or difficult to get hold of. In making this available as a free download the RCC Pilotage Foundation hopes that anyone cruising the area will benefit from the shared information. We would really appreciate ongoing feedback from other cruisers who explore the coasts of French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana to help us to build on the information. Contact us at info@rccpf.org.uk

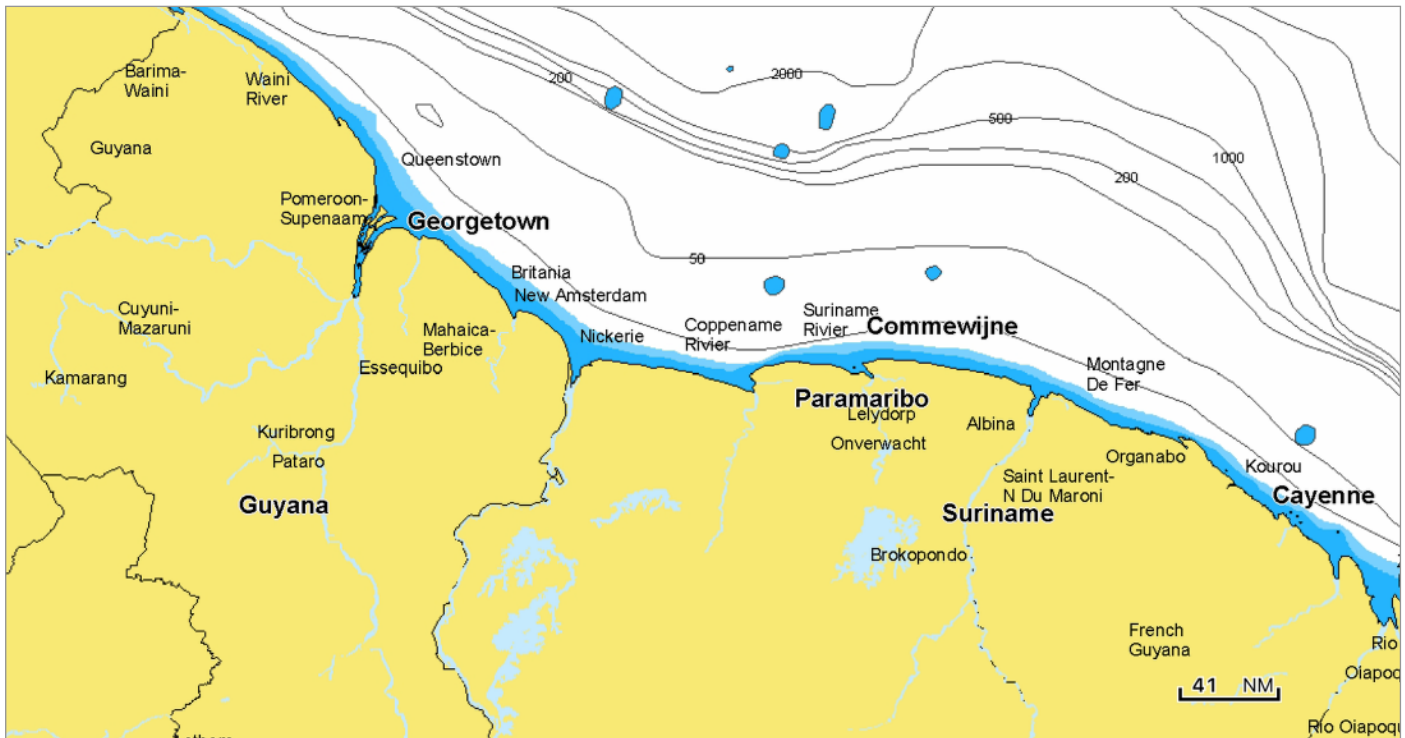
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Martin Dixon-Tyrer

FRENCH GUIANA, SURINAME AND GUYANA



PLAN 1: French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana



Introduction

The countries of French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana form a cruising ground that is still well off the beaten track. Cruising boats visiting these countries number only a few hundred each year, and the majority of cruisers visit just a handful of anchorages. The rest of the region is almost unvisited by tourists or by cruisers. It is generally undeveloped, and provides an opportunity for cruisers to experience pristine rainforest with abundant flora and fauna, small towns, and jungle settlements of considerable cultural interest. None of the “cruiser fatigue” all too often the norm in the Caribbean islands to the north will be found in these countries.

Coast and Rivers

The South American coast from the Brazilian border at 4°12'N to the Venezuelan border at 8°24'N covers approximately 600M. The area has numerous rivers, several of which are very large. Most are navigable for cruising yachts some distance inland and form the main cruising grounds in the three countries.

The sea floor shelves gently away from the land and depths are generally shallow within several nautical miles of land, except in river entrances. There is significant depositing of silt from the river mouths, and charts are not necessarily completely

up to date with the position of constantly moving sandbanks.

Aside from the few small islands in French Guiana, there are no coastal anchorages in the area covered by this guide due to lack of protection from swell.

Climate

The climate is tropical: hot and humid through the year. There is a recognisable rainy season from December to July, with peak rainfall in May-June. August to November forms the dry season, with September and October being the driest months.

Given the proximity to the equator, the temperatures change little throughout the year, with highs of 27-33°C (81-91°F) and lows of 22-24°C (72-75°F). Humidity is high all year, typically 80-85% during the rainy season and 70-75% during the dry season.

In the rivers, the wind typically dies overnight and starts up again late morning. Once the sun has risen, mornings can be uncomfortably hot due to the lack of breeze. Afternoons are warm but manageable with the breeze, and evenings are delightful.

Winds and Currents

There are two seasons for winds. From November to July the prevailing winds are E to NE. From August

to October the prevailing winds are E to SE. Wind strength is typically F3 to F5 (10-20kt), occasionally F6. Gales on this coast are rare, showing 1% on pilot charts February to April and 0% the rest of the year.

The south of the area covered by this guide is affected by the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) during the northern hemisphere summer, leading to reduced wind speeds and higher squall activity. In very general terms the winds are lighter in the S of the region and become more established as one travels N. The area is not subject to hurricanes.

The Guyana Current runs steadily NW/W at about 1.25kt, occasionally more. It is strongest 60-120M offshore, although strong currents inshore can occur (up to 3kt reported on occasion). In addition there are tidal currents associated with river mouths all along this coast.

Water deeper than 1000m occurs typically 50-90m offshore. Outside the 100m line the ocean bottom shelves rapidly to more than 1000m. The SE, E or NE swells pile up because of this rapid change in depth, and shorter period waves are often encountered between 60m and 20m depth. Given the generally benign weather conditions in the area these waves are more a discomfort rather than a danger. However heavy groundswell from the NE (typically from distant storm systems or hurricanes in the north Atlantic) can cause perilous breaking seas in water around 10m deep off this coast.

Heading NW along this coast makes for generally pleasant sailing conditions between a reach and a run at any time of the year with the Guyana current adding at least a knot. A large reaching sail, e.g. a gennaker, is helpful to have onboard and will improve boat speed, particularly in the southern area of this guide.

Heading SE along this coast is somewhat more challenging, being between a beam reach and a beat, and progress is slowed by the Guyana current. As these countries are far enough south to not be affected by hurricanes they are a good option for continuing cruising during the Caribbean hurricane season.

How to reach the area

Offshore passage from the Caribbean

The distance from Tobago to the northernmost point of this guide, the Waini River entrance in Guyana, is about 180M, and to the southernmost, the Oyapock River entrance in French Guiana, about 700M.

Getting to the countries from the Caribbean means sailing against the Guyana current. If the

wind is from the NE the passage is a close reach, but wind any further E or SE becomes increasingly difficult to sail without beating. As one proceeds further the winds become lighter, and by the time French Guiana is reached motoring will be the norm.

Note that favourable NE trade winds in the first part of the passage will be opposing the current, leading to choppy seas that are uncomfortable but not dangerous. Stronger than normal winds or high swell from offshore storms can lead to breaking waves off the coast and passages closing with the shore should not be attempted in such conditions. These occurrences are infrequent, but if caught out unexpectedly, remain at least 20M off the coast.

There is a small annual rally, Nereid's Rally, organised from Tobago to Saint Laurent du Maroni, French Guiana with several stops on the way. More details can be found at www.marinasm.com/rally.

Inland river route through Venezuela

As an alternative to an offshore passage there is an intriguing inland river route through Venezuela. This involves entering the Macareo River on the Venezuelan coast just south of SW Trinidad and following this river to its confluence with the Orinoco, which is then followed towards the sea, when the Barima River is taken to the Guyana border. The journey has been done by at least one yacht and is the subject of the book "Around The Next Bend" by Bernie Katchor.

The security situation in Venezuela must be understood before attempting such a passage, although it should be noted that in late 2014 at least two foreign flagged sailboats were cruising regularly between Trinidad and the Orinoco Delta without any security concerns.

From Europe

The route from Europe is straightforward, being a trade wind Atlantic crossing from any suitable departure point (e.g. Gibraltar, Canaries, Cape Verdes). The passage would ideally be made between December and May to avoid the risk of a north Atlantic hurricane, although a passage during hurricane season is possible if a more southerly route is taken, heading S to reach 10°N before turning W across the Atlantic. The position of the ITCZ (Inter Tropical Convergence Zone) / doldrums needs to be monitored as you approach the destination countries, and it would be reasonable to expect to motor for at least part of the final approach. If provisioning is not an immediate need, the Îles du Salut in French Guyana would make a suitable landfall. If provisioning is required, Degrad des

Cannes, Cayenne, or Kourou would be good choices.
From Brazil

Sailing to the Guyanas from the NE corner of Brazil is relatively easy, with a favourable current and mostly favourable winds. The passage will have moderate SE trade winds until the ITCZ is met N of the equator. The ITCZ often extends into French Guyana, so sufficient fuel should be carried to allow for motoring through calms along the way. An offshore or coastal route can be taken as desired although, on approach, there are very few coastal anchorages and either commercial harbours or rivers will need to be entered to gain protection from the ever-present swell. It is important to note that there have been several instances of violent crime and robbery against cruisers on the north coast of Brazil, and it is essential to have an up-to-date pilot book or to have done appropriate research to understand which anchorages are considered safe.

Once in the countries, distances between anchorages are generally short, and one can time passages to take advantage of winds and tides. Serious weather is in practical terms almost never encountered, and in any case the river anchorages are generally well protected.

Forecasts

There are limited marine forecasts available for this area.

GRIB files, produced from the US NOAA GFS model, can be readily accessed using tools such as zyGrib and uGrib. The GFS model is known for being somewhat less accurate around equatorial zones. zyGrib provides a useful wave/swell forecast from the FNMOC WW3 model as well.

Buoyweather.com has maritime forecasts for Cayenne, Paramaribo and Georgetown.

GMDSS METAREA IV, covering the North American eastern seaboard and the Caribbean, includes the area of this guide at its southernmost limit.

There are no NAVTEX stations in the area covered by this guide.

Buoyage

IALA-B throughout the area (red to starboard coming into a harbour “Red Right Returning”).

Health

Mosquitoes are a feature of life along the whole of this coast and the interior, and avoiding mosquito bites is important not just for comfort but because of the risk of malaria and dengue fever.

Anchoring off rather than tying up helps reduce the problem significantly, often to the extent that it is no longer a concern. However, if mosquitoes are encountered, a multi-pronged approach is best. Screens over hatches are highly recommended, and one might seriously consider mosquito nets for sleeping, burning citronella candles in the cockpit, coils in the cabin, 240V mosquito repellent devices (run from an inverter), and DEET or other mosquito repellents applied to uncovered skin.

Malaria prophylaxis and treatment should be discussed with your physician prior to arriving. Surprisingly, prophylactics are not readily available in any of the three countries.

Coastal areas are generally low risk, and one could consider not taking prophylactics. Travel inland, including travel on the jungle rivers which are such a feature of cruising these countries, is higher risk, and prophylactics are generally recommended by health organisations. The decision to use or not use prophylactics is personal. The usual choices are Malarone, Lariam or Doxycycline. One might also consider carrying emergency malaria treatment, such as Riamet/Coartem or Artesunate.

The problem should be kept in proportion but not ignored. We found the issue to be manageable and not excessively onerous during the three months we spent in these countries.

Aside from mosquito borne illnesses, even with the best precautions it is possible that you will contract food borne infections at some point. Eating the very interesting street food is one of the pleasures of these countries, but of course there is a higher risk of food borne infections. Usually no more than some hours or a day or two of diarrhoea and/or nausea which can be managed with bed rest, liquids and perhaps Imodium. It would be prudent to carry a good selection of antibiotics, especially if travelling inland or to smaller towns. Advice should be taken from your physician.

Yellow Fever has occurred in these countries, and a vaccination certificate is a requirement for entry into French Guiana and Suriname.

Special Hazards – Navigational Aids, Fishing Boats, Nets and Stakes, Rocket Launches

To the extent they exist, navigational aids are generally well maintained in French Guiana and Suriname. In Guyana aids are not always maintained, and in some cases the tops of buoys have broken off, leaving a metal base floating just at water level. If a channel is moved and rebuoyed, sometimes the old aids are left in place, unlit and unmaintained!

Needless to say coming across any of these at night increases one's heart rate markedly. The approach to the Berbice River is particularly notable in this respect, but it is not the only instance in Guyana.

Fishing boats are a hazard along the coast and especially in river entrances. They are sometimes lit, correctly or incorrectly, and sometimes not. The incidence of unlit fishing boats increases as one proceeds northwards, particularly N of the Suriname River.

Because of this, coastal night passages are best avoided when possible, although the reality for most cruising vessels is that overnight passages will be required between many of the rivers in these countries. Inshore fishing vessels show up on radar to some extent, although as one would expect it does depend on size. A bow light, or some form of powerful searchlight, is useful. It is not safe to assume that there is someone on watch on a fishing vessel, and if the vessel has a net out it is unlikely to be able to manoeuvre out of the way.

Fishing vessels with nets attached typically have a black flag at the outer end of the net. This flag is anchored and the boat is attached to the other end of the net, effectively making the net a long anchor warp. The anchoring system does drag, and the fishing boat will therefore move backwards slowly with the tidal flow or the wind. Passing astern of a fishing boat in this situation is safe, but do remember that tide and wind are both factors in determining the lie of the fishing boat and net.

Nets are not always accompanied by boats, however. In such cases they are usually (but not always) marked, rarely in a high visibility way, but with the usual small float with a black flag marking the end of a long net. It is possible, but not usual, to come across nets in marked channels.

Fishing stakes are encountered in river entrances and less frequently in rivers themselves. These take two forms. The first is a straight line of stakes across a river with gill nets, and the second is two lines of stakes in a V shape with nets funnelling fish into a

Fishing net marker buoy and floats in the Oyapock River, French Guiana



smaller area for harvesting. Surprisingly, fishing stakes seem to show up fairly well on radar. Stakes are usually logically laid out in straight lines, so navigating around them is reasonably straightforward. Note, however, that old sets of stakes which have been damaged are often left in place, so it is good to have a high degree of suspicion if considering navigating through apparently clear gaps with a few odd stakes visible at random.

For all the above reasons, night approaches are generally not recommended, with a few exceptions noted in the text. These are primarily the larger and busier commercial harbours where commercial traffic would destroy nets and fishermen therefore do not place them in channels. It is very useful to have a powerful bow light fitted quite low to avoid glare illuminating the pulpit or bowsprit, with an on/off switch at the helm position.

Further offshore, small fishing boats, generally but not always lit, may be encountered in waters up to 60m deep. The radar return from the smallest of these boats is minimal as they are effectively open wooden boats. Larger boats show up well on radar, and a handful transmit AIS messages. Nets are also found offshore, but less frequently than inshore. Offshore we have found (so far) that there is always a fishing boat at one end of the net, so a practical strategy when offshore is to maintain a good 1M distance from fishing boats.

The Guiana Space Centre at Kourou launches rockets into space approximately monthly. During the day of the launch, anchoring is prohibited around the Îles du Salut for safety reasons. A local patrol boat clears the islands during these periods. The next launch date can be found at: <http://www.arianespace.com/news/mission-status.asp>.

Navigating Tropical Rivers

Navigating these rivers is not especially difficult, but it is not the same as normal navigation with up-to-date charts and good buoyage. One should not be hesitant about navigation, just more alert and active with regard to the depth sounder/forward looking sonar and whatever clues can be gained from the terrain and the water surface. It makes for interesting if somewhat tiring navigation.

Broadly speaking there are two types of rivers encountered in jungle countries: fast-flowing rivers and slower-flowing winding rivers.

Fast-flowing rivers

These are generally deep and U shaped in profile once past the entrance shallows. Such rivers are

typically easily navigable and become progressively shallower the further one is from the entrance. Apart from obviously impassable obstacles such as rapids, waterfalls, etc, the main challenges will be found in the entrance shallows, which can be tricky to navigate.

As these rivers normally get deeper beyond the entrance mouth, an effective strategy if constrained by draught is to enter the river close to high water and anchor when deeper river water is found to wait for the next flood tide to ride upriver.

Slower-flowing winding rivers

These are more difficult to navigate as the deeper streams often take tortuous paths within the river. As a rule of thumb, the deepest water is often found close to the outer bank of bends, and towards the centre in straight passages, but there are many exceptions and one cannot navigate by this rule alone. In some cases, the composition of a river bottom, for example, can cause channels to form on the inside of a curve rather than the outside. This is not discernible from above the water.

River entry

When at all possible rivers are best entered with a rising tide, providing a favourable current and rising water in the unfortunate event of running aground. Running aground in a fast flowing river can be problematic, as the reverse engine power on most sailboats will not be sufficient to counteract the current and free the boat from the grounding. At worst, it is possible that the boat will pivot beam on to the current and be driven even further aground at an angle. If you are travelling without other boats, the only options at this point are to stabilise the boat with anchors upstream from the dinghy, wait for the current to moderate or reverse with the change in tide, and then try to kedge off. A situation best avoided.

Anchoring

River bottoms are typically silty mud. Initial setting of the anchor is easy, but the anchor will usually slip very slowly through the mud. The more substantial the ground tackle the better.

It is recommended to always set a GPS anchor alarm. In general boats are unlikely to run into too much trouble dragging anchor in the inland rivers for short distances, even with debris attached, but swift action to get the situation under control is always a good thing. It is helpful to keep a second anchor with a long rode ready to deploy.

Anchoring presents some hazards in deep rivers. Large trees become waterlogged and sink in the

rivers, rotting slowly on the river bed. If your anchor is caught in one of these it can be difficult or impossible to free it. It will not be possible for a typical cruising boat windlass to raise a tree from the river bottom. Diving to free the anchor is a possibility. If the anchor cannot be freed it will need to be abandoned.

When anchored, boats will normally lie to the tidal/river flow rather than the wind. In river anchorages with a tidal flow, which is most of them, the anchor chain and snubber will often wrap around each other with each change in the flow, resulting in a mess to sort out when retrieving the anchor. If anchored for many days it would be worthwhile sorting this out from time to time to prevent it increasing.

River characteristics

- Current tends to be stronger in deeper water, and slower near banks and shallow areas due to increased friction.
- Turbulence in water often signals an abrupt change in depth and merits caution, although the abrupt change may be quite deep. Surface turbulence can also result from other factors such as intermingling of currents.
- Many of these rivers are unbuoyed.
- The upstream end of a river island will typically have deeper water very close to it as the river divides around the island. This deeper channel will extend some distance along the side of the island. Immediately downstream of a river island there is normally a shoal area extending from it.
- Where two channels combine, for example when a side river joins the main river, or where flows recombine after an island, there is often one dominant and one lesser flow. There will be a bar where the lesser flow combines with the dominant flow, and this bar can extend some distance out into the river. A line of small cresting waves may show the position of the bar. It is sometimes possible to bypass the bar on the opposite side of the river.
- The water upstream of a tributary joining a main river is usually less muddy than downstream of it.

River hazards

Some jungle rivers present floating hazards such as trees, logs and branches, as well as other debris (e.g. refrigerators!). On occasion, floating debris rafts together forming small floating "islands". These hazards are worse after rainfall and especially after flooding.

Logs and river debris will tangle with the chain and

bridle at waterline level. A sharp pointed boat hook or similar device can be used to push off the logs and debris (the typical plastic boat hook end fitting found on cruising boats is not suitable and will slip rather than dig into the log). An everyday garden hoe (a sharp chopping blade on a pole) can be used to cut off vegetable matter from the anchor chain.

When navigating narrow rivers, which are typically quite deep, take note of overhanging trees and branches. At best, hitting a branch will result in leaves, twigs and insects being showered on the boat; at worst, rigging could be damaged. Also be aware of current in narrow rivers when turning around – it is easy to be carried by the current into the obstacle you were trying to avoid when turning.

During the three months we visited these countries and with much less information on the rivers than given here, we grounded about a half dozen times gently and uneventfully on soft mud in rivers, and had one hard grounding on an uncharted rock in Saint Laurent du Maroni.

Marinas

There are currently three operating marinas in the area covered by this guide:

- Degrad des Cannes, French Guiana. Essentially always full.
- Kourou, French Guiana. Essentially always full.
- Waterland Marina, Suriname. 12 spaces. Space often available, but during hurricane season sometimes full.

Availability of berths is a problem, and if intending to leave a boat unattended in this area it is essential to book a place in advance.

A marina is in the planning stage at St Laurent du Maroni, French Guiana. In October 2014 there was no evidence of work having been started, but it was apparently imminent. Check www.marinaslm.com for updates.

One could also consider leaving a boat unattended on a mooring at Domburg, Suriname, or anchored off Hurakabra Resort, Guyana, both of which are in safe and sheltered areas with people ashore to check on the boat.

It is worth noting that in 2014 an unattended yacht on a mooring in Domburg was dragged some distance downriver when large floating tree debris snagged the mooring chain. This was an exceptional occurrence. The boat was successfully recovered by staff and other cruisers with almost no damage.

Spares and Repairs

Yacht repair services are very limited in all three countries.

Local craft mostly consist of pirogues with outboards and fishing vessels, and what services there are mostly relate to these craft. Finding an outboard mechanic is not difficult, but parts may be more challenging. A repair-rather-than-replace approach is taken locally. Inboard engine mechanics are available in fishing harbours.

Mooring ropes are available, often polypropylene, but running and fixed rigging is not easily found. Marine refrigeration is oriented towards commercial fishing boats, not the small systems found on cruising vessels. Leisure market yacht products, such as electronics, autohelms, watermakers, etc, and the associated skills, are more or less non-existent.

Refitting a yacht in any of these countries would be challenging, although in the industrial areas around Cayenne/Degrad des Cannes and Paramaribo it would be possible with some effort and ingenuity.

Carrying a reasonable selection of spares is recommended. Shipping of spares is of course possible but difficult, time consuming and expensive. For significant work it would be best, if practical, to sail to Chaguaramas, Trinidad where extensive yacht services are available for any need.

Fuel, Water, Cooking Gas and Electricity

Diesel and petrol are easily available in all three countries. In practical terms alongside filling up is not possible other than for large vessels. Carry jerry cans on board.

Indicative diesel prices per litre in late 2014 were:

- French Guiana EUR 1.51
- Suriname SRD 4.60 (EUR 1.13)
- Guyana GYD 230 (EUR 0.88)

Water is available alongside at a few places in French Guiana and Suriname, and by jerry cans everywhere else in both countries. Tap water in Guyana is not safe to drink, so it is advisable to arrive in Guyana with full tanks. Bottled water is ubiquitous in all three countries.

Watermaker use is problematic because of the high levels of silt and sediment in the water along the coast and especially in the rivers, where water is often coffee coloured with dissolved mud until a considerable distance up river. If watermaker use is contemplated very fine prefilters should be used (e.g. 5 microns) and increased wear and reduced seal life should be expected. As noted earlier, watermaker

supplies and repair services are not available in any of these countries.

Propane is the usual gas in South America. It is sometimes possible to find Butane in French Guiana but it is expensive. Filling gas cylinders in French Guiana is restricted, and as in most European countries exchanging an empty cylinder for a full one is the norm. In Suriname and Guyana refilling of cylinders is the norm and unrestricted, but the necessary adapters for all fitting types may not be available at the refilling plant.

It is worth considering purchasing a set of GasBoat adapters (www.whayward.com) which will allow any cylinder to be used on board if you are unable to get your own cylinders refilled.

The boat needs to be self-sufficient in electricity generation, as the only realistic possibility for shoreside electricity is the Waterland Marina in Suriname. Given the air and water temperatures the vast majority of electricity usage on a cruising boat in these areas will be for refrigeration.

Almost all navigation in rivers will be carried out using the engine. Battery charging via the alternator will therefore occur whenever the boat is moved. Installing a high output alternator can be effective for increasing the charge going into the batteries.

Solar panels work well this close to the equator and produce moderate amounts of electricity even with cloudy skies. Wind generators are of little to no use as there is insufficient wind most of the time.

Those with an installed diesel generator will of course have no electricity concerns. A small portable petrol generator could be considered as an alternative. Such generators are used extensively in these countries and purchasing one is straightforward and relatively inexpensive, however take care that the correct output voltage is produced as both 110V and 220V devices are used.

Domestic (deep cycle) batteries should be in good condition when arriving. Although automotive and truck starter batteries are easily found in all three countries, we did not find deep cycle batteries anywhere.

Dinghy

Realistically it is not practical to cruise the area covered by this guide without a dinghy. There are very few places to tie up alongside and only one (Nieuw-Nickerie, Suriname) with provisioning nearby.

Those who prefer to row or who use a small outboard will need to be aware of river currents

when considering dinghy transfers. It would be wise to carry a small anchor in the dinghy to stop drifting with the current in the event of outboard failure or oar loss.

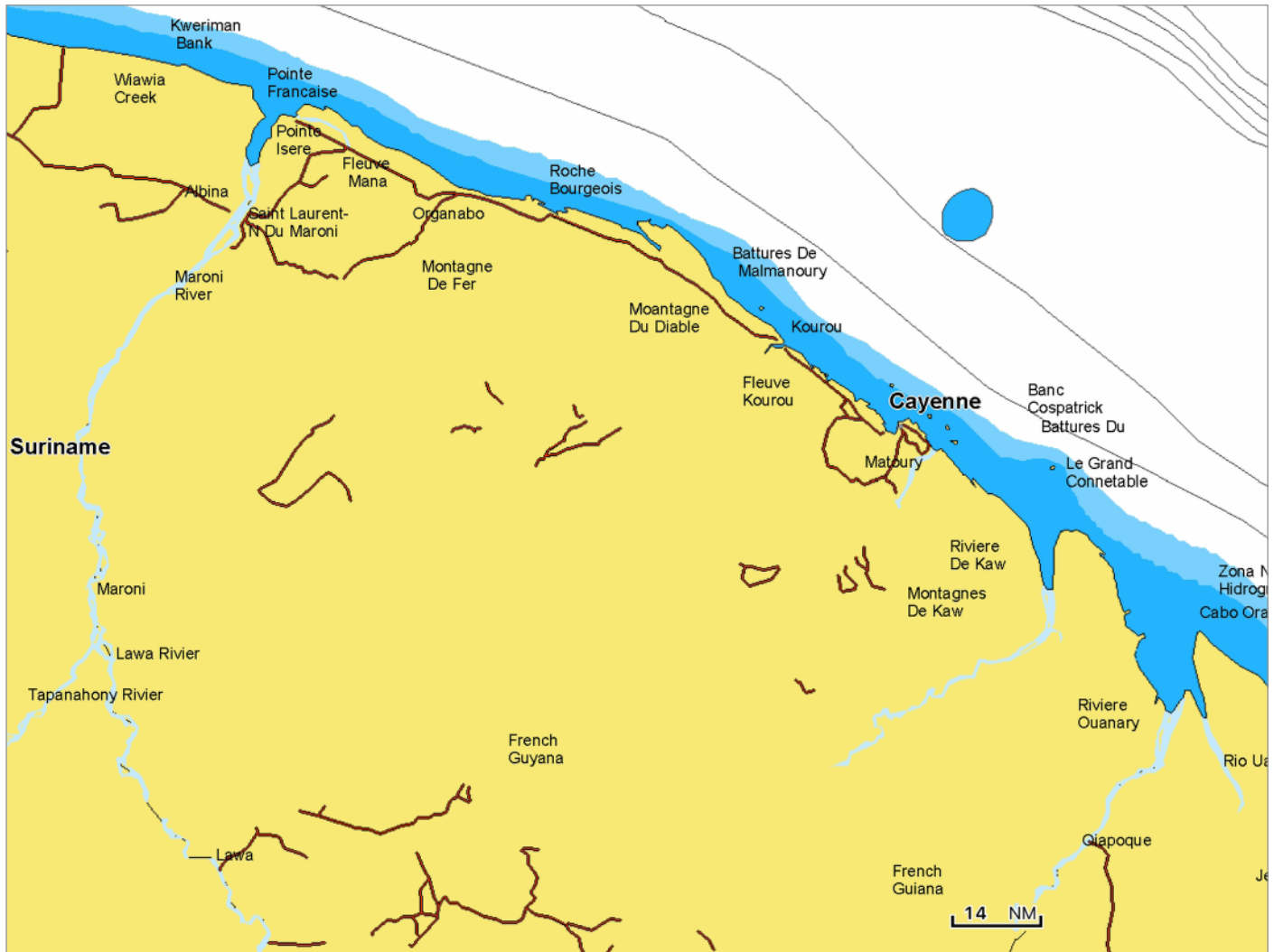
Ashore & infrastructure

Ashore there is considerable cultural interest and sufficient choices, especially ecotourism activities, to maintain interest. Tourism has barely touched these countries so far, and the number of cruising yachts visiting is still small. In many of the places mentioned in this guide, times between cruising yacht visits are measured in months or years, a refreshing change from the Eastern Caribbean.

Costs in Guyana and Suriname are low (substantially less than Trinidad or Grenada) while costs in French Guiana are comparable to French Caribbean islands.

The downside to cruising this area, to the extent there is one, is the almost total lack of yachting infrastructure and services. Boats need to be largely self sufficient in terms of spares and repairs. That said, Trinidad, with its outstanding range of yacht services in Chaguaramas, is an easy stop when heading N to the Eastern Caribbean islands.

FRENCH GUIANA



PLAN 2: French Guiana



Introduction

French Guiana (Guyane française) is one of France's overseas departments, and as such a part of the European Union. It is the largest overseas department, and an ethnically diverse country with 60%-70% of the population Creole, 15% European, 4-6% Asian, and 3-4% Amerindian. The remainder are diverse ethnic groups of (historical and current) immigrants.

The currency is the Euro. The official language is French, although dozens of other languages are spoken in particular communities. English is not widely spoken, and it would be difficult to cruise French Guiana without at least basic French.

As in mainland France the major religion is Roman Catholicism. Traditional beliefs remain significant among some segments of the population.

The population is 250,000 with about half living in the Cayenne metropolitan area. Most of the remainder live along the coast and the rivers. The

inland area, mostly rain forest, is very sparsely populated.

Time zone is UTC-03

The terrain is mostly low lying with occasional hills. Far inland, hills rise to a maximum elevation of 851m.

GDP per capita is about \$20,000, the highest in South America. The French government directly and indirectly subsidizes many aspects of the economy. The Guiana Space Centre, for example, accounts for about 1/6th of GDP. Significant export industries are gold mining (32%, largely the Montagne d'Or mine) and fishing (5%). Unemployment is approximately 20%.

Brief history

Amerindians inhabited French Guiana before colonisation began in 1604. Initial colonisation was not particularly successful, and it was not until 1664

that a permanent French settlement was established at Cayenne. Even then, the colonisation process did not proceed smoothly, with tropical diseases taking a high toll on the colonisers. Once established, France remained largely unchallenged in its colonisation, with only a brief period of Portuguese rule between 1809 and 1814.

France settled Hmong refugees from Laos in French Guiana in the 1950s after its withdrawal from Vietnam, and decided to build a Space Centre near Kourou after withdrawal from Algeria to ensure a location near the equator for rocket launches.

Formalities

French Guiana formalities are very relaxed. There is no apparent concern about when boats clear in or clear out, and the whole process is simple and practical. There are no fees for boats or people.

A passport with validity for the length of stay is required.

For EU/EEA citizens no visa is required regardless of length of stay. Visas are not required for stays of up to 90 days for many other nationalities, including US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Japan, South Africa, and dozens of others. Detailed information can be found (in English) on the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs website http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/france/coming-to-france/getting-a-visa/article/foreign-nationals-holding-ordinary#sommaire_2

A Yellow Fever certificate is required for entry for all visitors.

Clearance is handled through customs (Douane) and can be completed at St George, Degrad des Cannes, Kourou and Saint Laurent. No clearance from a previous port is required.

Immigration formalities are necessary only if a visa is required, in which case the Police aux Frontières should be visited at Cayenne airport, St Georges or Saint Laurent when convenient.

EU and non-EU yachts are permitted to remain in French Guiana for up to 6 months. After that time it is necessary to pay a local tax (octroie de mer) of 17.5% and another tax of 2.5% on all vessels (total 20%). It is permissible to clear out of French Guiana, travel to Suriname or Brazil for a few days, then return and formally clear into French Guiana, thereby resetting the 6 month clock.

Bringing animals into the country is comparable to France, i.e. they must be microchipped and have a valid health certificate and rabies vaccination.

Firearms, ammunition, etc must be declared. According to the Douane, personal defence firearms

are normally permitted to remain on the boat after declaration.

Technically, meat, meat products, milk and dairy products are prohibited without an import permit. As a matter of practicality normal boat provisions are unlikely to be questioned.

Crime

Crime levels in French Guiana are generally low. Daytime travel and exploration is safe and comfortable. The limited serious crime that does occur is mostly related to illegal gold mining and occurs in the interior.

There have been isolated reports of muggings in Cayenne late at night, especially in the poorer areas. As in cities anywhere in the world, at night, avoid less frequented areas, do not display jewellery, etc.

Outboard and dinghy theft does occur. We personally experienced an attempted outboard theft in St Georges, but our view is that this was opportunistic and partly our own fault. We also learned about one dinghy and outboard theft in Kourou during our stay.

Normal Caribbean precautions apply, e.g. chaining and locking the dinghy while ashore, lifting it out at night when at anchor. No special security considerations are required beyond this.

Communications

The country code is +594.

SIM cards for mobile phones are available from three operators (Orange, Digicel, Only). Coverage is good in towns and villages of any size and in the Îles du Salut. In jungle rivers outside populated areas, coverage is very limited.

Internet access is available from SIM cards, and Wi-Fi is available in at least one café/bar in the towns of St Georges, Cayenne, Kourou and Saint Laurent.

Repairs and Chandleries

Yacht support services are limited in French Guiana.

Marine et Loisirs is a chandlery located 200m before the main entrance to the commercial port in Degrad des Cannes, with a selection of outboard motors, small boats, fishing equipment and limited general chandlery.

Compas is a small chandlery just off the main road between Cayenne and Remire-Montjoly. In 2014 there was a hand painted sign visible on the main road indicating its location.

Nautic Auto is a basic chandlery on the main road a short walk from the customs dock at Pariacabo,

upriver of Kourou, with outboard motors (including a repair shop), ropes, some chandlery items, and recreational fishing gear.

Repair services aimed at fishing and commercial boats, e.g. engine repair, welding, can be found outside the main harbour of Degrad des Cannes and at Larivot, the fishing harbour near Cayenne. There is a travel lift for fishing boats at Larivot. A small, very basic boatyard is located near the anchorage at Kourou with a railway for hauling boats, although it appears to be in poor repair.

A number of sailing yachts were seen on the hard near to the marina at Degrad des Cannes and at the defunct Club Nautique in Kourou, presumably lifted with a mobile crane.

Importing Spares

There are no customs duties payable for spares imported from Martinique or Guadeloupe. Spares from any other source, including EU states, will attract a 20% tax.

A DHL office can be found on Place des Palmistes in downtown Cayenne.

Fuel

Alongside fuel is not available for yachts anywhere in French Guiana.

Fuel is available by jerry can at Kourou (a 900m walk or taxi ride from the marina dock), at Degrad des Cannes (taxi/car needed), in St Georges from across the river in Brazil by dinghy or water taxi, and in St Laurent from Albina, Suriname by dinghy or water taxi.

Water

Potable water is available on the jetty at the marina in Degrad des Cannes. As the marina is usually full, enquire from one of the boats on the outer jetty about rafting alongside.

Similarly in Kourou there is potable water at the marina. Either use jerry cans or tie alongside when one of the tourist catamarans has vacated its berth.

Potable water is available in almost all places by jerry can, either from a standpipe or by asking a local homeowner. Water in French Guiana is noticeably chlorinated.

Provisioning

Provisioning in French Guiana is good but expensive, with prices comparable to the French Caribbean islands and slightly higher than mainland France. The selection is excellent in large chain supermarkets

such as Carrefour and Super U. Leader Price offers a more limited selection. High quality French cheese, other dairy products, and charcuterie are particular treats.

Substantial provisioning is best done in Cayenne, Kourou or Saint Laurent, while modest provisioning is possible in St Georges.

Health

A yellow fever vaccination is officially required for entry, and if arriving by air will be checked.

Malaria is not considered a risk in Cayenne and the Îles du Salut. Risk is generally low on the coast, but inland it is more prevalent, and prophylaxis is recommended by US CDC and other authorities for inland travel, including travel along the Oyapock and Maroni rivers. US CDC reports drug resistance to Chloroquine.

Cayenne, Kourou and Saint Laurent have hospitals. Costs for ad hoc emergency room visits are modest (€27.60 in October 2014 in Saint Laurent, as an example). Dentists, doctors and pharmacies are also readily available in these towns.

As in mainland France most drugs require prescriptions, including anti-malarials.

Public Holidays

- 1st January: New Year's Day
- Mardi Gras and the following day (Ash Wednesday)
- Easter Monday
- 1st May: Labour Day
- 8th May: Victory Day
- Ascension Day
- Whit Monday
- 10th June: Abolition of Slavery
- 14th July: Bastille Day
- 15th August: Assumption
- 15th October: Cayenne Festival
- 2nd November: All Souls' Day
- 11th November: Armistice Day
- 25th December: Christmas Day

Transport

The main airport (IATA: CAY) is located a short distance south of Cayenne. There are daily flights to and from Paris (technically a domestic flight within France). Flights also operate to the French Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, as well as Suriname and Guyana.

There is a paved through road from Brazil all the way through French Guiana to the border with

Suriname. A bridge crosses the Oyapock River to Brazil. Crossing the Maroni River to Suriname is by ferry.

Car rental is possible but is not common. Budget have an office in Cayenne. Driving is on the right, as is the case throughout South America with the exceptions of Suriname and Guyana, who drive on the left.

Taxis in French Guiana are expensive, comparable to northern European prices. Buses and minibuses are inexpensive.

River Charts

There are no river charts available in French Guiana other than for the main rivers leading to the commercial ports of Degrad des Cannes, Kourou and Saint Laurent, each of which have buoyed channels.

We visited the Service Fleuvial (River Service) at the Capitainerie in Degrad des Cannes, and were shown aerial photos of the rivers (similar to Google Earth), but no hydrographic charts were available even for viewing. The Gendarmerie Maritime advised that they have few charts, and that those they have are over 50 years old and so are of limited use now due to shifting river bottoms, sandbanks etc. The military apparently have produced charts for their own use but unsurprisingly we were not able to gain access to them.

Fishermen regularly use many of the rivers in French Guiana and are a useful source of information on navigation. It can also be effective to observe and follow fishing boats into rivers, although be aware of the difference in draught between smaller fishing boats (less than 1m draught) and fixed keel cruising vessels.

Tides

Tidal predications are available online at www.tide-forecast.com and www.tides.info

for the following locations.

- Cayenne (port of reference)
- Îles du Salut
- Les Hattes
- Macouria
- Mana
- Matoury
- Remire-Montjoly



FLEUVE OYAPOCK/ST GEORGES (3°53'.0N 51°48'.0W)

A rarely visited river with many anchorage opportunities leading to a pleasant small town.

The Oyapock River forms the border between Brazil and French Guiana. The entrance is the wide Baie d'Oyapock north of the lighthouse at Cabo Orange (lighthouse 4°25'.91N 51°32'.53W). The flood current is WNW and the ebb current NE, at up to 3kt. Tide times at Mont d'Argent are 45 mins later than Cayenne.

The river is navigable to St Georges 3°53'.0N 51°48'.0W with a controlling depth of 1.4m + tide. After St Georges there is a bridge with 15m air clearance.

There are no navigational aids on the river. Fishing nets may be encountered in the entrance and in the river itself with unlit black flags. Night entry and navigation is inadvisable.

Approach

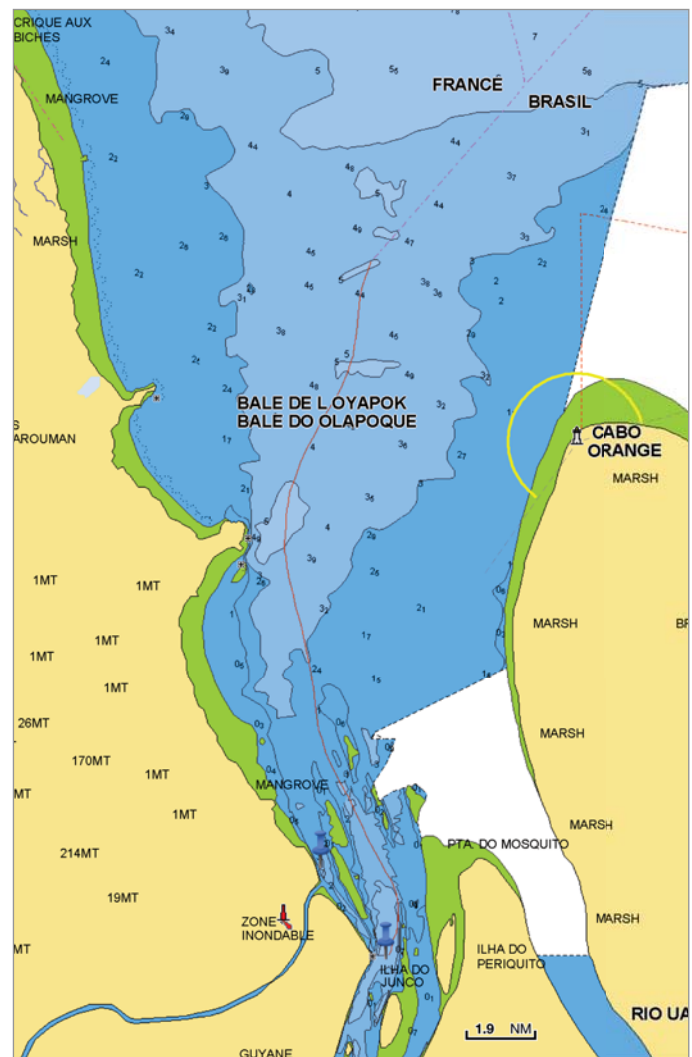
A suitable approach waypoint is 4°33'.84N 51°38'.50W. From here, sail 191° for 10.5M to 4°23'.28N 51°40'.62W in front of Mont d'Argent, which is easily identified from 10M away as the leftmost of the two obvious closer hills. It is a designated anchorage although note that there is a 6M fetch with the prevailing wind which in normal conditions (10-15kt) produces a small chop.

River entrance and Ouanary anchorages

There is a much better anchorage 9.1M further upriver on a heading of 172° at 4°14'.30N 51°39'.38W in 3.5m next to the entrance to Rivière Ouanary. The fetch at this point is down to 2.5M and the small wavelets on the beam in 10-15kt of wind were not sufficient to be uncomfortable.

The Rivière Ouanary can be followed SW to the village of Ouanary about 1.5M from the entrance. There is at least 1.8m over the entrance bar towards the N bank, so at high tide there is about 4m of water. The river deepens quickly to more than 8m

Rivière Ouanary anchorage and river entrance



PLAN 3: Ouanary entrance



after the entrance bar. Anchor anywhere in jungle surroundings. There is a jetty at Ouanary including a modest floating dock that can be used for tying up a dinghy or possibly a sailboat.

The small colonial village lies 1km inland along a paved track from the jetty and has a single bar/restaurant that opens on request (ask a villager) but otherwise no services. Limited internet access may be available via a dial up connection (32kb) at the house of the *professeur*.

Mont d'Argent seen from the approach



Rivière Ouanary to St Georges

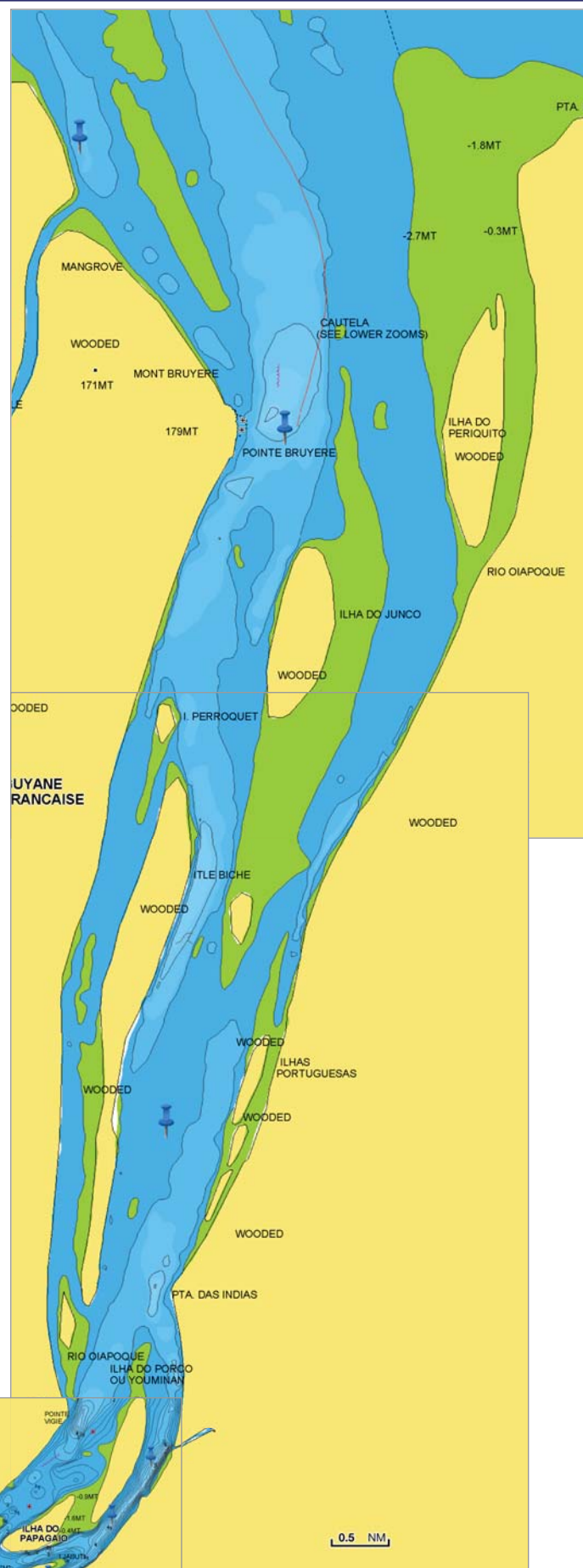
Navigation from the Rivière Ouanary anchorage to St Georges will take the best part of a day, covering 28M. Controlling depth is 1.4m + tide, but for most of the route there are depths of at least 2m + tide. Tide timing will be important for most cruising boats at the small areas that have 1.4m, or about 3m at high tide. In several places the route is very close to shallower water, and where noted the waypoints should be followed with particular care.

There are numerous anchorage possibilities in the river between Ouanary and St Georges including near the jungle islands in the river. There are no services ashore. Fishing boats will be encountered, mostly Brazilian, and our experience is that they are very friendly and often offer fresh fish.

Currents in the river can be up to 3kt. Tides at St Georges are about 2½ hours later than Cayenne. The river water in St Georges is clear.

Tampack

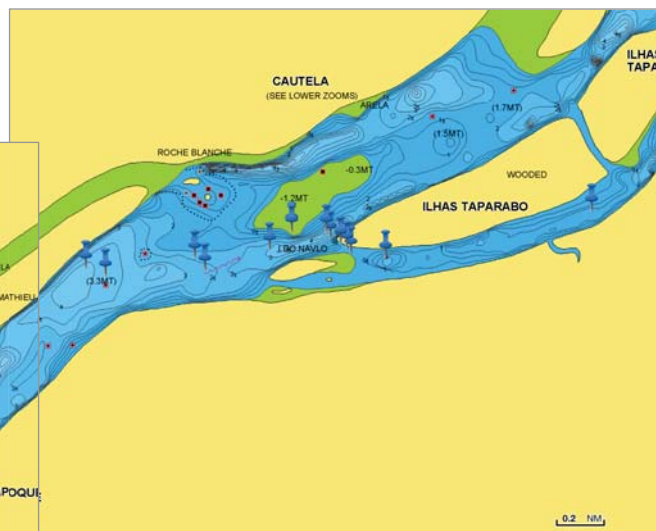
The tiny hamlet of Tampack 3°56'.74N 51°47'.06W, about 4M before St Georges, has a floating dock with 2m water that is large enough to take one cruising sailboat (alternatively anchor in the river and dinghy ashore). The village is simple and attractive, and has a small chapel. Potable water is available at a public tap a short walk from the jetty - jerry cans would be needed as it is too far for a hose. There are no other services in the village.



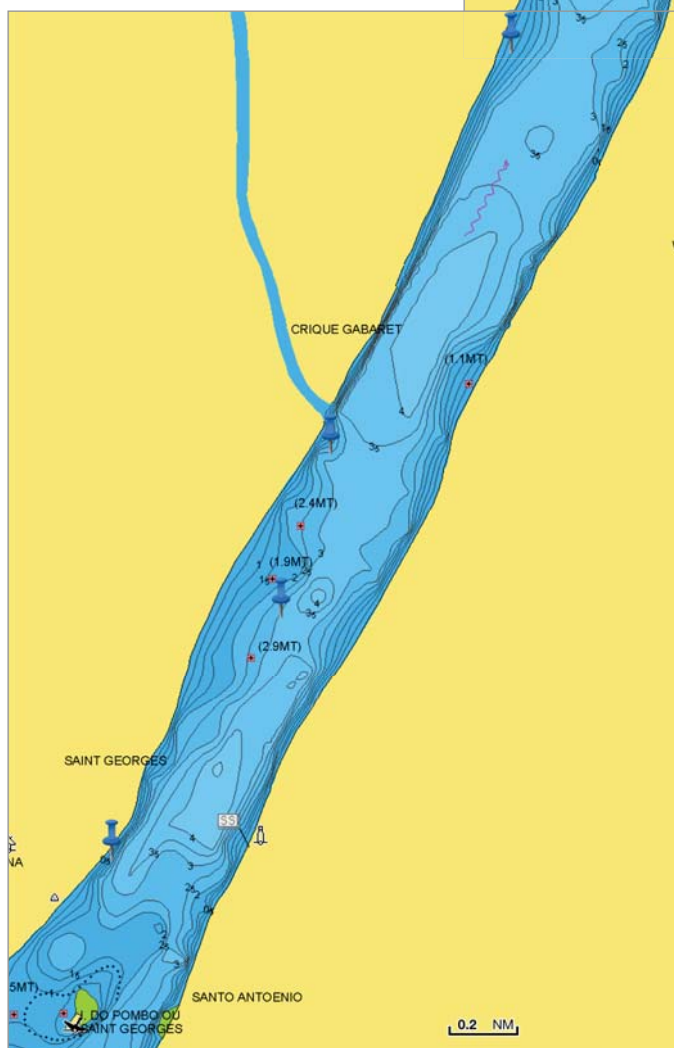
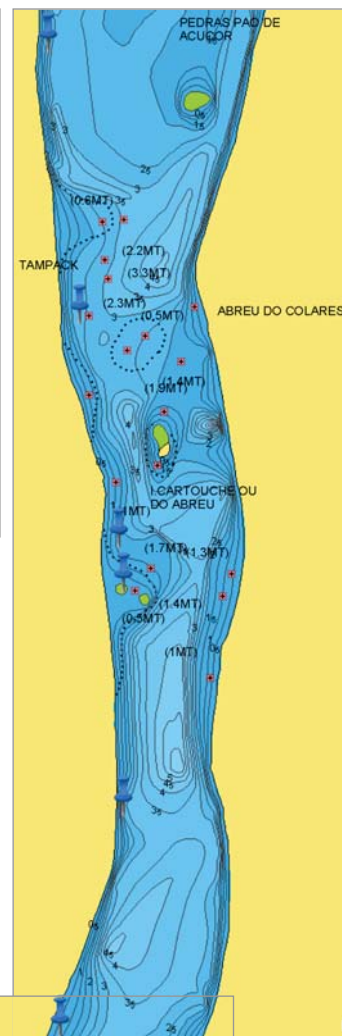
PLANS 4-6:
Ouanary entrance
to Ilhas Aparabo



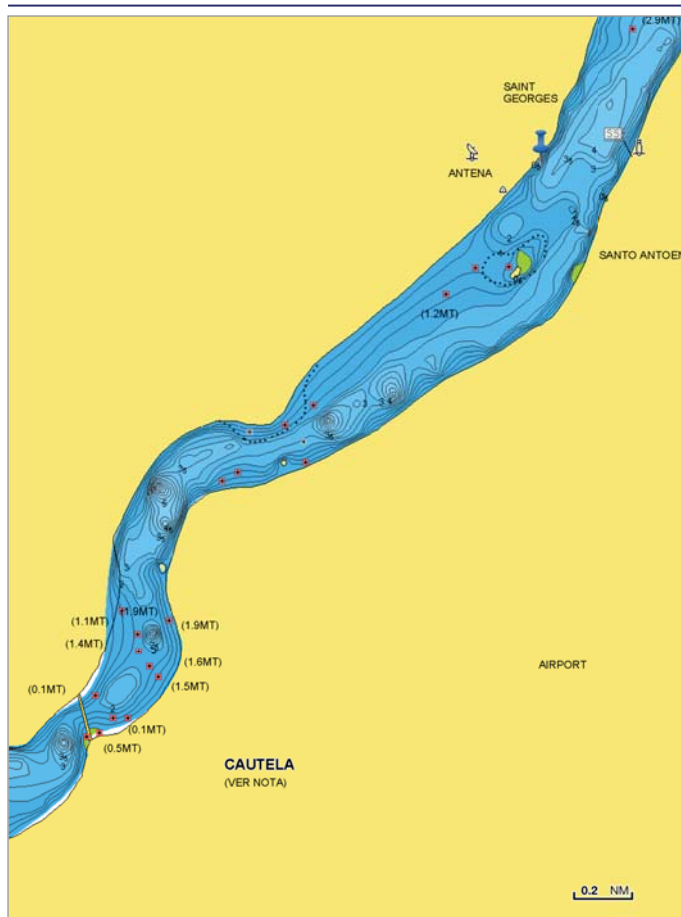
(river continuation - see top right hand corner)



PLANS 7-8: Ilhas Taparabo to Acudor



PLANS 9-10:
Acudor to St Georges



PLANS 11-12: Acudor to
St Georges (overlay opposite)

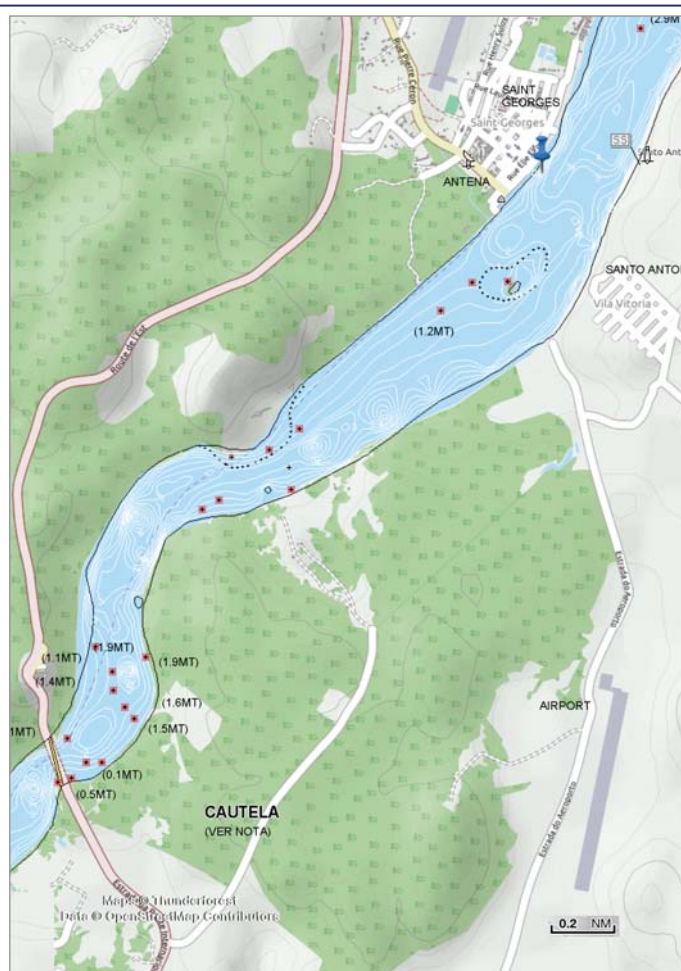


Shortly after Tampack there are two large rocks in the river which are submerged for a couple of hours either side of high water. From Tampack aim for $3^{\circ}56'.23N$ $51^{\circ}46'.97W$ and then precisely for $3^{\circ}56'.13N$ $51^{\circ}46'.96W$ some 180m further on, which will take you safely through the gap between the rocks. Note: the Navionics chart shows deeper water to the east of the two rocks. We did not have this chart when navigating the river, therefore cannot confirm the chart soundings.

St Georges

The mobile phone mast above St Georges is clearly visible as you approach. Anchor off St Georges (pop 4,000) in 5m. Holding is only fair in soft mud, however there is little that would cause dragging in this calm river. Land by dinghy at one of the water taxi jetties. There is a floating dock, but as the walkway ashore has fallen off it is not usable.

The Douane (customs) office on the waterfront has a person speaking French and limited English. Clearance is possible here but only when the relevant official is in town. Immigration, if needed, is in the Police aux Frontieres building on the edge of the town, opening times 0800-1200 and 1400-1800 7 days a week.



A small grocery store will be found on the main square, and a small fish and vegetable/fruit market at the N end of the waterfront. The terrace of Chez Modestine is an agreeable place to sip a drink and watch life in the town, and free Wi-Fi is available to customers.

Beyond St Georges the river is shallower and should be attempted close to high tide. We found depths of 2-3m at high tide staying close to the bank on the French Guiana side. There is a shoal area 50m out from the bank in front of the last jetty at St Georges. Stay close to the shore passing through $3^{\circ}53'.17N$ $51^{\circ}48'.11W$. A small area of confused water is reached 1.3M after St Georges before rounding the corner to the newly constructed Oyapock River Bridge linking Brazil to French Guiana, which has vertical clearance of 15m.

Oyapock River Bridge



Route Rivière Ouanary Anchorage to St Georges Anchorage

This is the better of the two routes we tried. While exploring we took several detours that had unpassable shoals. There are undoubtedly other

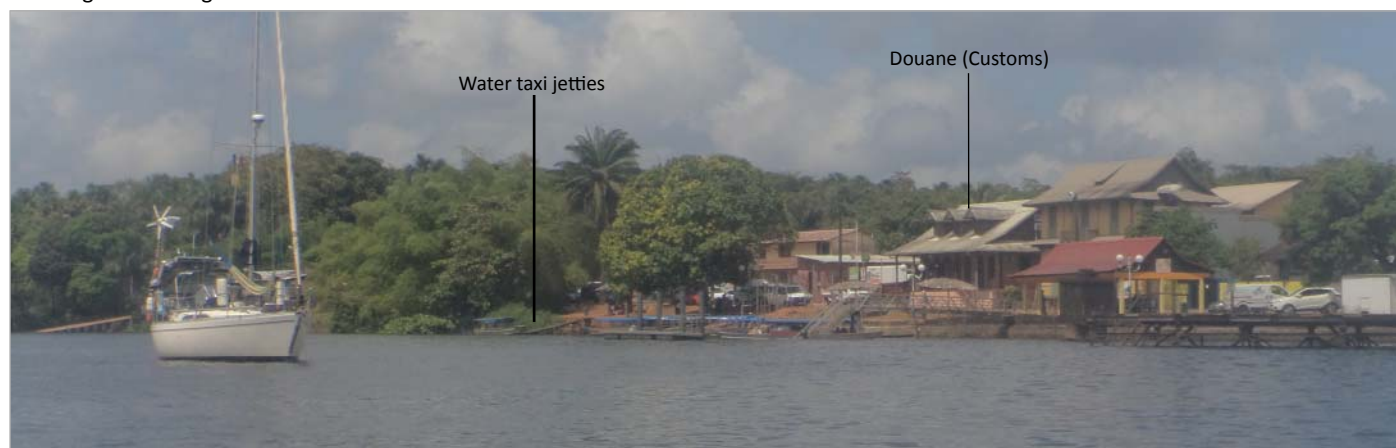
routes along the river which may offer somewhat deeper water in parts. Watching the tracks taken by fishing boats is helpful too.

Waypoint List

	Waypoint	Course	Distance	Cumulative distance	Notes
1.	4°14'.30N 51°39'.38W			0 m	
2.	4°11'.83N 51°37.64W	145°	3.0M	3.0M	
3.	4°05'.93N 51°38'.64W	190°	6.0M	9.0M	
4.	4°0'.12N 51°38'.77W	183°	2.8M	11.8M	
5.	4°02'.61N 51°39'.11W	214°	0.6M	12.5M	
6.	4°02'.07N 51°39'.67W	226°	0.8M	13.2M	
7.	4°01'.98N 51°40'.35W	263°	0.7M	13.9M	
8.	4°02'.11N 51°40'.32W	12°	0.1M	14.0M	
9.	4°02'.38N 51°40'.52W	324°	0.3M	14.4M	
10.	4°02'.14N 51°41'.04W	246°	0.6M	14.9M	
11.	4°01'.67N 51°4'.35W	213°	0.6M	15.5M	
12.	4°01'.61N 51°41'.34W	174°	104m	15.6M	
13.	4°01'.22N 51°41'.64W	217°	0.5M	16.1M	
14.	4°00'.45N 51°42'.30W	221°	1.0M	17.1M	Small village on the Brazilian bank
15.	4°00'.22N 51°43'.32W	258°	1.0M	18.1M	Depths of 1.5m + tide, soft mud bottom.
16.	4°00'.24N 51°43'.49W	274°	0.2M	18.3M	
17.	4°00'.27N 51°43'.51W	327°	77m	18.3M	
18.	4°00'.29N 51°43'.54W	301°	56m	18.4M	Go within a few metres of the end of the island, next to the pole in the water. Narrow channel, depths shoal quickly away from the island.
19.	4°00'.32N 51°43'.59W	307°	110m	18.4M	
20.	4°00'.35N 51°43'.61W	315°	72m	18.5M	
21.	4°00'.36N 51°43'.78W	273°	0.2M	18.6M	

22.	4°00'.35N 51°43'.78W	182°	28m	18.7M	
23.	4°00'.26N 51°43'.89W	231°	0.1M	18.8M	
24.	4°00'.16N 51°44'.21W	252°	0.3M	19.1M	
25.	4°00'.22N 51°44'.26W	320°	163m	19.2M	
26.	4°00'.13N 51°44'.70W	258°	0.4M	19.7M	
27.	4°00'.17N 51°44'.80W	292°	0.1M	19.8M	
28.	3°59'.71N 51°45'.32W	229°	0.7M	20.5M	
29.	3°59'.10N 51°46'.02W	229°	0.9M	21.4M	
30.	3°59'.06N 51°46'.17W	256°	0.2M	21.5M	
31.	3°58'.26N 51°46'.87W	221°	1.1M	22.6M	Min depth 1.4m + tide for a short distance
32.	3°57'.36N 51°47'.13W	196°	0.9M	23.6M	
33.	3°56'.74N 51°47'.06W	173°	0.6M	24.2M	
34.	3°56'.23N 51°46'.97W	170°	0.5M	24.7M	
35.	3°56'.13N 51°46'.96W	175°	185m	24.8M	Passes between two large rocks submerged at high water – follow carefully
36.	3°55'.62N 51°46'.96W	180°	0.5M	25.3M	
37.	3°55'.12N 51°47'.10W	195°	0.5M	25.8M	
38.	3°54'.21N 51°47'.51W	205°	1.0M	26.8M	
39.	3°53'.84N 51°47'.62W	196°	0.4M	27.2M	
40.	3°53'.29N 51°48'.00W	215°	0.7M	27.9M	

St Georges Anchorage



FLEUVE APPROUAGUE/REGINA (4°18'N 52°08'W)

A river with a very shallow bar lacking up to date charts

This information is provided for reference only, and is based on the US Navy pilot and local knowledge. We did not enter the river.

A wide river with a shallow entrance among extensive mud flats. The entrance has extremely shallow depths, including either a drying bar or just 0.2m + tide. The two charts that are available are not detailed, are old and contradict each other.

Once the entrance is negotiated, the river is reported to have a channel with up to 5m depth at high tide on the E bank for about 10M to the area of Guisanbourg (4°23'N, 51°55'W) where a creek joins from the SE.

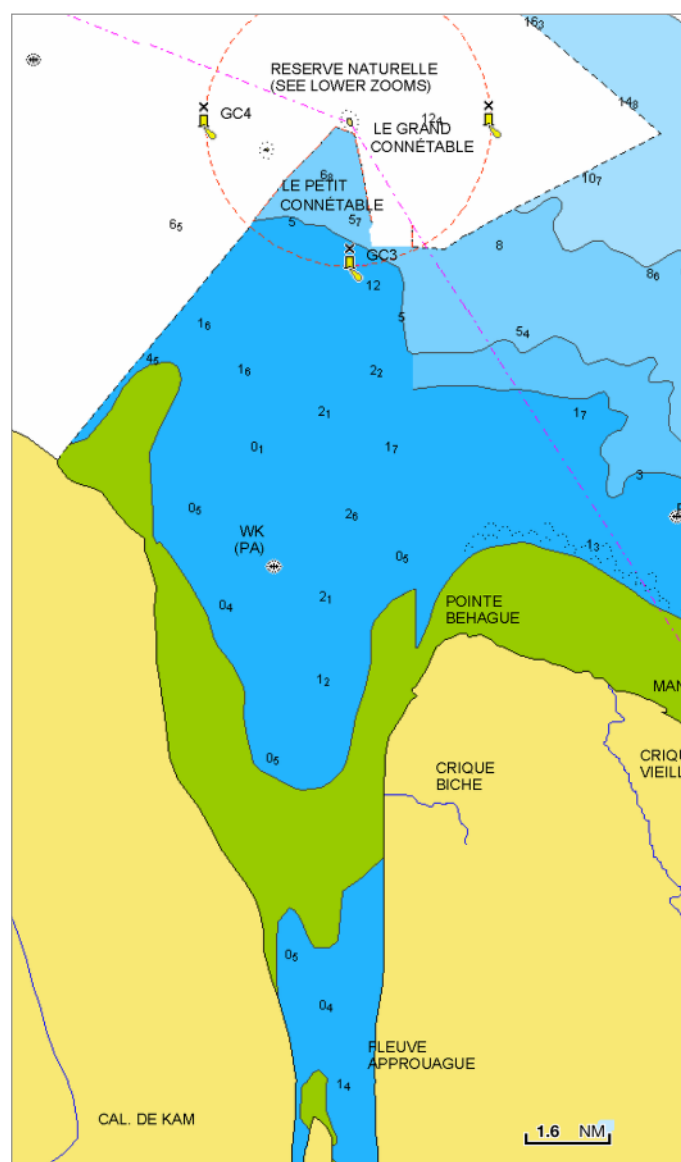
It is reported that the main river can be followed for a further 20M to the small town of Regina, with a local guide, through a narrow and winding channel. There is a small jetty for dinghy landing. The town has an airstrip for small planes.

ÎLES DU CONNÉTABLE AND LES BATTURES DU CONNÉTABLE

Le Grand Connétable (4°49'.00N 51°57'.77W) is a rock about 50m high.

Le Petit Connétable (4°49'.54N 51°56'.17W) is only a few metres high and flat. It is barely awash at high water.

The islands form a bird sanctuary and should not be approached. There is an exclusion zone of 2.5M radius around the islands, shown on charts as buoyed, although as of late 2014 the buoys were not in place.



PLAN 13: Îles du Connétable



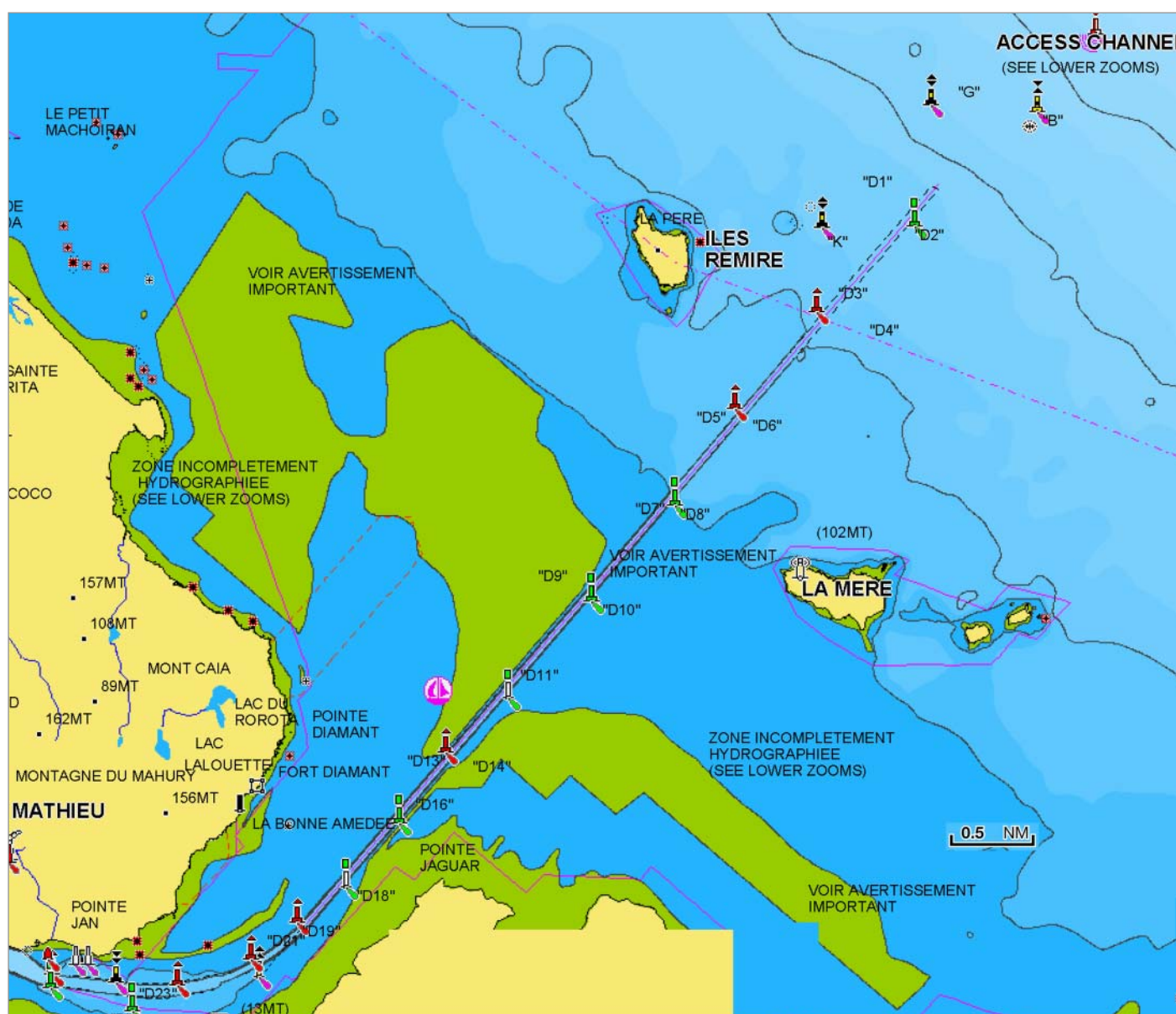
Les Battures du Connétable is a shoal with 1.4m depth at 4°55'.10N 51°57'.39W.

Le Grand Connétable



ÎLES REMIRE

A group of rocky wooded islands on the approach to Degrad des Cannes.



PLAN 14: Îles Remire

NAVIONICS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

Le Père



Le Père lies 1M NW of the marked channel into Degrad des Cannes, and La Mère and the two tiny islets of Les Mamelles lie 1M SE.

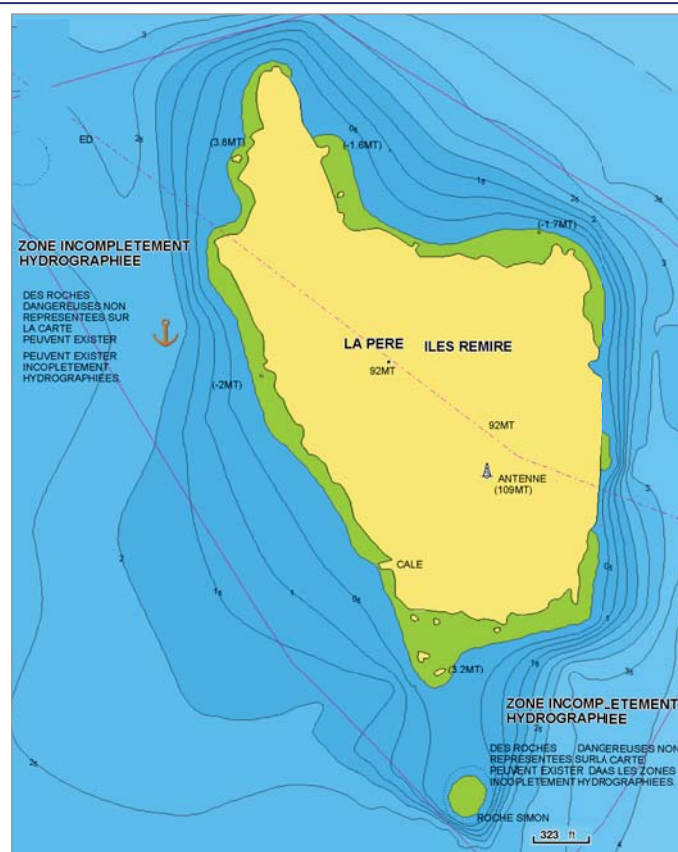
The west side of Le Père has a good anchorage in 3m, reasonably protected from the prevailing NE swell. There is a stone jetty for landing, rather slippery, and an overgrown path ashore. There are no services.

The waters surrounding La Mère are shallow, showing 2-2.5m when we visited at half tide, implying not much more than 1m at low tide. These actual depths (2014) are significantly lower than charted depths in many places. La Mère was previously inhabited and had a prison and a farm, some ruins of which remain. It is served occasionally by a small tourist boat from Degrad des Cannes.



PLAN 15: Le Père

PLANS 16-17: Fleuve Mahoury and Degrad des Cannes (inset)



FLEUVE MAHOURY/DEGRAD DES CANNES (4°51'N 52°16'W)

A commercial port and an unattractive marina that is usually full, with few facilities ashore



Approach and entrance

Offshore approach waypoint 4°57'.86N 52°09'.36W. From here travel 2.0M on a heading of 213°, passing the safe water buoy on either side, and then continuing between the E and W cardinal buoys.

Channel entrance waypoint 4°56'.18N 52°10'.45W. Follow the buoyed channel into the port. Depth is officially maintained to at least 3.4m, although it is less towards the red buoys.

Anchorage and marina

There is a small marina at 4°51'.14N 52°16'.96W with water and 220V electricity on the pontoons. It is usually full. It may be possible to tie up alongside one of the boats on the outer jetty to take on water.

Cruising boats usually anchor a little upstream of the marina in 4.5m with good holding in mud. Be aware of the tidal stream in the river which can reach 4kt. Swell also sometimes makes its way up the river.

Formalities

The Douane (customs) building is immediately outside the dock gates in the main port. The offices are open 0700-1300 Mon, Wed, Fri and 0700-1300 / 1500-1800 Tue, Thu. The Police aux Frontières office, if needed, is at Cayenne airport.

Ashore

Ashore at the marina there are toilets/showers but no other shoreside services. There is a small bar/restaurant 200m from the port gates in Degrad des Cannes, a 15 minute walk.

It is 6km to Remire-Montjoly where there is a well-stocked Carrefour supermarket, and a further 8km to Cayenne where there are all usual services.

There is no public transport to the marina. A taxi between Cayenne and the marina is €45-€50.

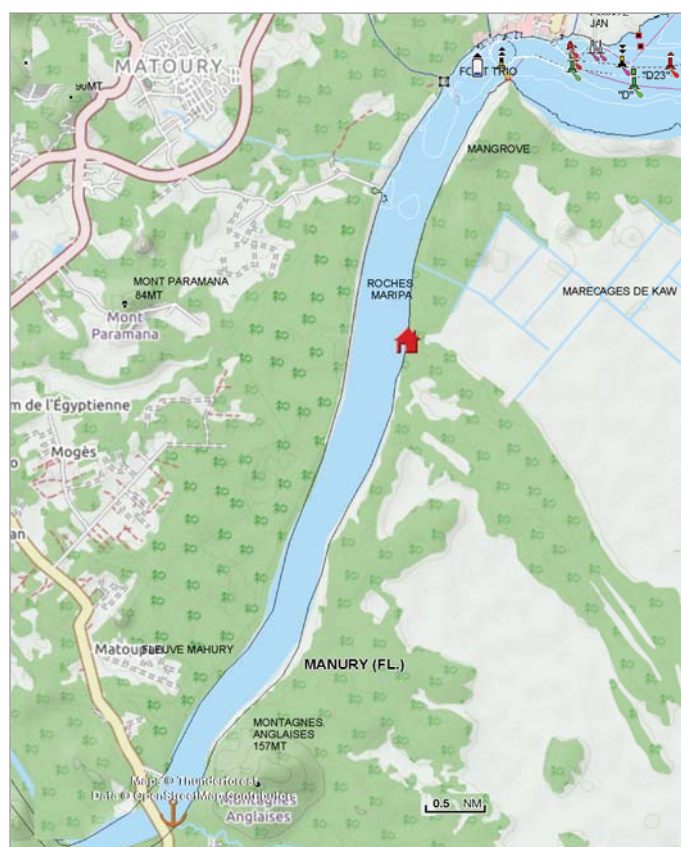
Minibuses operate during the day between Cayenne and Degrad des Cannes main port (a 15 min walk from the marina) via Remire-Montjoly and charge €2.00. In theory minibuses run every 30 mins, but only go to the main port on request, which means travel into Cayenne from the marina can be a hit and miss affair. Hitchhiking is possible with patience, and a ride into Remire-Montjoly provides access to many more buses.

FLEUVE MAHOURY UPRIVER FROM DEGRAD DES CANNES

River anchorage by a bar/restaurant



PLANS 18-19: Fleuve Mahoury (and overlay)



Travelling upriver from Degrad des Cannes you immediately enter jungle. The river is buoyed with depths of at least 2m + tide. Anchorage is possible almost anywhere in the river according to depth.

2.7M from the marina at Degrad des Cannes, passing the Roches Maripa shoal, a sizeable building with a jetty, Auberge du Mahoury, is situated on the east bank (4°48'.67N 52°17'.60W). Anchor off in 3+m and dinghy to the jetty. The Auberge is a relaxed bar/restaurant with free Wi-Fi, open all day but serving meals in the evening only.

The road bridge 6.9M upriver from the marina at Degrad des Cannes spells the end of navigation for masted vessels. Anchoring a short distance before the bridge in 8m is pleasant. On the E bank next to the road there is a small slipway but nothing ashore. On the west bank is a military site with a jetty, landing prohibited.

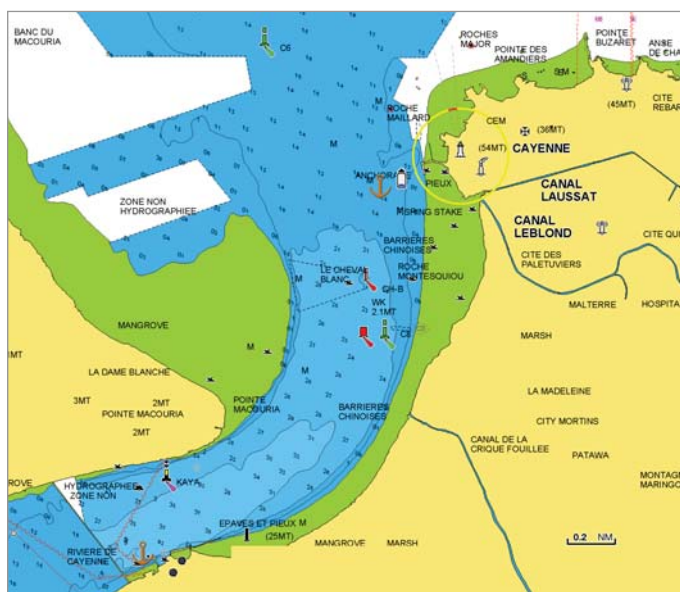
Taking the dinghy 3km upriver from the road bridge leads to the attractive village of Roura, with a supermarket (which also sells gas cylinders), a medical centre, and a restaurant.

Auberge du Mahoury



RIVIÈRE DE CAYENNE/CAYENNE (4°56'N 52°20'W) / LARIVOT

An acceptable anchorage with access to French Guiana's lovely capital city, excellent provisioning



PLAN 20: Cayenne and Larivot



Cayenne is no longer an operational port, and fishing boats use Larivot instead.

Cayenne's old harbour cannot be entered – it is extensively silted and there are several wrecks. It is practical to anchor off the old harbour and use the dinghy to get ashore.

Tidal range at Cayenne is 2.9m springs and 1.2m neaps.

Entry is straightforward at mid tide and above, with depths of 2m + tide in the marked channel and the anchorage area.

Entrance and anchorage

From the safe water buoy at 5°02'.81N 52°18'.40W sail 6.1M, leaving two green channel markers to port. As of October 2014 the C6 green channel marker had been moved 0.3M to the W compared to the charted position, and is now at 4°56'.81N 52°21'.26W. From that buoy, aim directly for the obvious breakwater at 4°56'.13N 52°20'.54W and anchor in 2-3m. The anchorage is well protected in a SE swell and acceptable in a NE swell. Tidal streams are up to 3kt.

Ashore

Going ashore, tie the dinghy next to the breakwater Cayenne harbour from the anchorage



steps, securing with a chain for security reasons through holes in the concrete at the top of the steps. The dinghy should be tied fore and aft to prevent it from being trapped under the breakwater in a rising tide. It is a 5 minute walk to the city, passing the fish market (open Tue-Sat) and ice factory along the way.

Cayenne is a pleasant city with French cafes, restaurants, boutiques, and a colonial feel. It is an easy place to linger, but not if you are on a budget. The terrace of Les Palmistes (Av du Gen de Gaulle) has free Wi-Fi for customers.

There is a Carrefour in Remire, a suburb of Cayenne, which can be reached by minibus or taxi from Cayenne. Remire is about 6km from Degrad des Cannes. On the outskirts of Cayenne there are several other large supermarkets including a Super U, and many smaller supermarkets in the town itself.

Cayenne's main market is open Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. A few streets away from the market, near the gare routière (bus station area), there are stalls selling imported Surinamese ingredients. The fish market, close to the old harbour in Cayenne, is open Tue-Sat mornings. Ice is available from the ice factory next to the fish market.

See the Degrad des Cannes entry for information on formalities.

Larivot

Larivot, the fishing harbour of Cayenne, is a further 2M upriver. From the breakwater anchorage aim for the red and green channel markers situated between the shore and the lit white concrete tower with a red top marking a shoal, avoiding the clearly visible obstructions in the water. Larivot is the fishing harbour just before the low road bridge. The harbour has a travel lift and two substantial jetties occupied by fishing craft, too high for use by cruising vessels. Anchor off in 3+m and go ashore by dinghy.

Cayenne inner harbour at low tide – not a place for keeled yachts



Larivot harbour with the road bridge beyond



ÎLES DU SALUT

Secure, comfortable anchorages off pretty and historically interesting islands

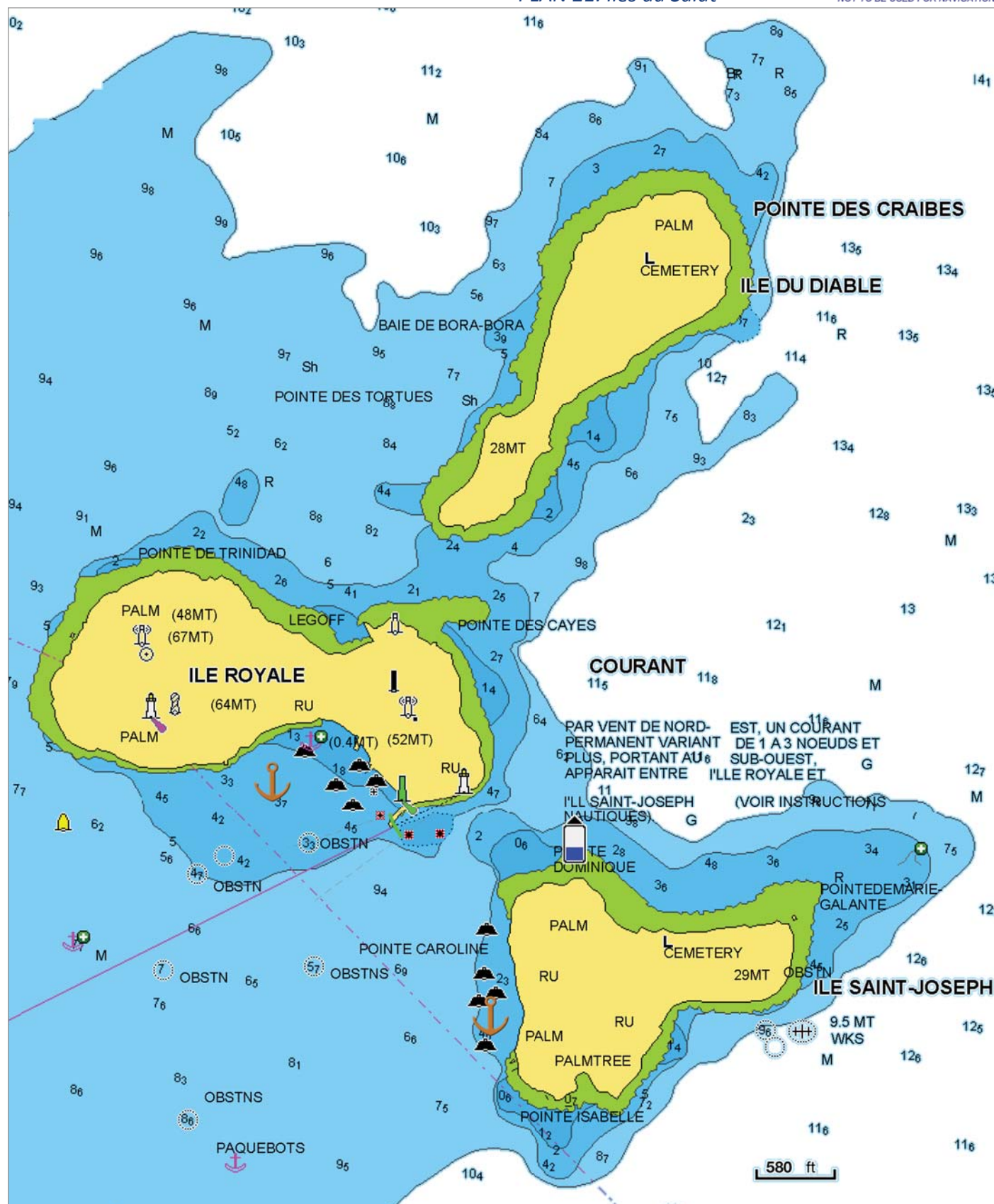
The Îles du Salut (Isles of Salvation) consist of three volcanic islands close together 7M off the coast, slightly E of N from Kourou. The islands are low lying with a maximum elevation of just 66m. Île Royale

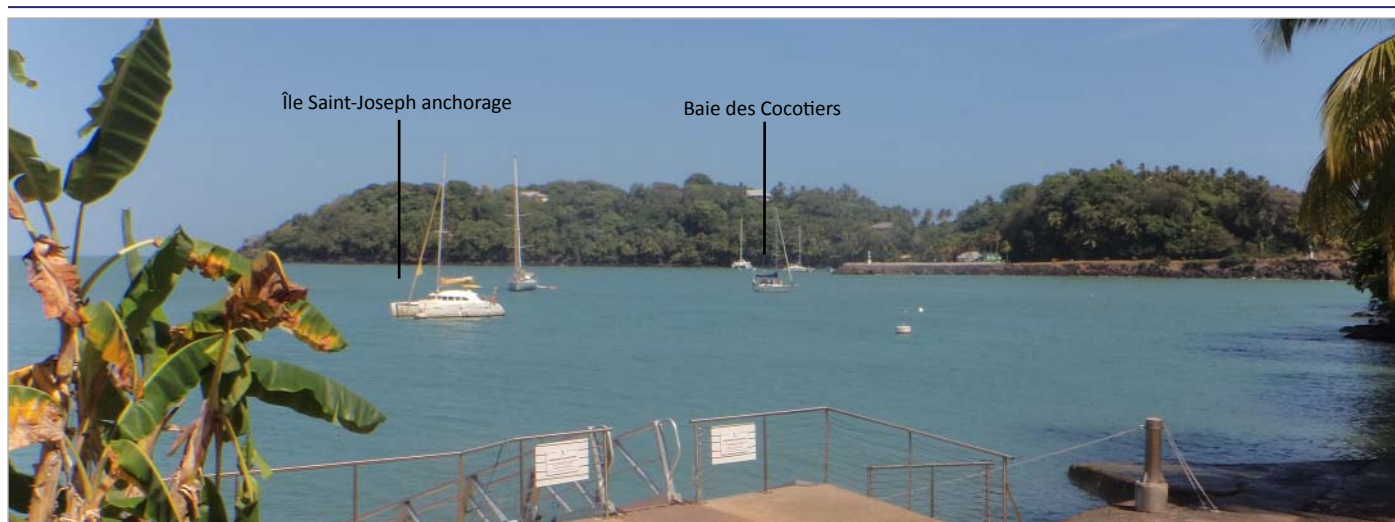
has a light (Fl (2) 10s).

Tidal range is 2.8m springs and 1.2m neaps. Tide times are Cayenne -0020.

PLAN 21: Îles du Salut

NAVIONICS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION





Looking to Île Royale from Île Saint-Joseph

Anchoring

Due to the relatively shallow depths (<12m) around the islands anchorage is possible almost anywhere, although due to the prevailing SE-E-NE trade winds the NW-W-SW sides of the islands are preferred. All of the anchorages are roly, and for monohulls a set of flopper-stoppers (roll attenuators, see <http://www.cruisingworld.com/how/reduce-boat-roll-flopper-stoppers> for more information) will pay dividends in these islands and beyond.

The water at Îles du Salut is 2°C cooler than in the mainland rivers, a very pleasant change, and the climate is a little cooler as a result of this. There are normally no mosquitoes at anchor.

Anchoring is prohibited in all the Îles du Salut during rocket launches from the Space Centre at Kourou for safety reasons. Launches are infrequent occurrences, about one a month, and a space centre boat will patrol the area and inform any boats anchored to move. The next launch date can be found at <http://www.arianespace.com/news/mission-status.asp>

Overall Îles du Salut are a delightful stop, reminiscent of Caribbean or South Pacific islands, secure and comfortable, a very pleasant part of cruising this coast.

Île Royale

Île Royale is the largest of the islands. The preferred anchorage is in the Baie des Cocotiers on the S side of the island, in 1.5-4m over soft mud depending on distance from shore, with moderate holding. It offers some protection from NE swell, and Île Saint-Joseph blocks the worst of the SE swell, and although still a roly anchorage it is a lovely place with palm trees ashore, and the sun rising over the Passe de la Desirade between Île Royale and Île Saint-Joseph. The four large mooring buoys may be available for an overnight stop but will have to be vacated during

the day when they are used by tourist boats. There is a floating dock ashore where a dinghy can be tied up.

The original constructions on the island, such as the roads and the buildings, were produced using prison labour, and are well advanced in the process of restoration. There is a walkway around the island (2.6km, 1 hour), several paths up the central hill, and a pleasant bar/restaurant on the hilltop with lovely views of Île du Diable and beyond to the sea. There is a small tourist shop selling t-shirts etc, but no provisions are available.

Fauna on the island includes monkeys, agoutis, iguanas, macaws and wild chickens.

Île Saint-Joseph

Île Saint-Joseph was perhaps the most terrible of the three islands on which to be incarcerated. Prisoners here were kept in solitary confinement with enforced silence, and fed meagrely through a hatch in the cell door without any communication from prison warders. The ruins of the prison can be visited.

The W side of the island across from Baie des Cocotiers offers an anchorage with moderate protection from E swell, but the swell does curve around the island making it still somewhat roly. Reasonable holding in 3-8m over mud and gravel. There are several mooring buoys that could be used when available and which must be vacated if the owner arrives.

There is a floating pontoon ashore, to which a dinghy can be tied up, and a pathway ashore to explore the island, including the prison ruins. The inhabited buildings on the island are a military post with restricted access. Fauna include wild chickens.

Île du Diable

Île du Diable (Devil's Island) is the site of the

infamous political prison in the novel *Papillon* (Henri Charrière), and was the site of the imprisonment of Alfred Dreyfus, victim of the shameful Affaire Dreyfus. The prison operated from 1852 to 1953.

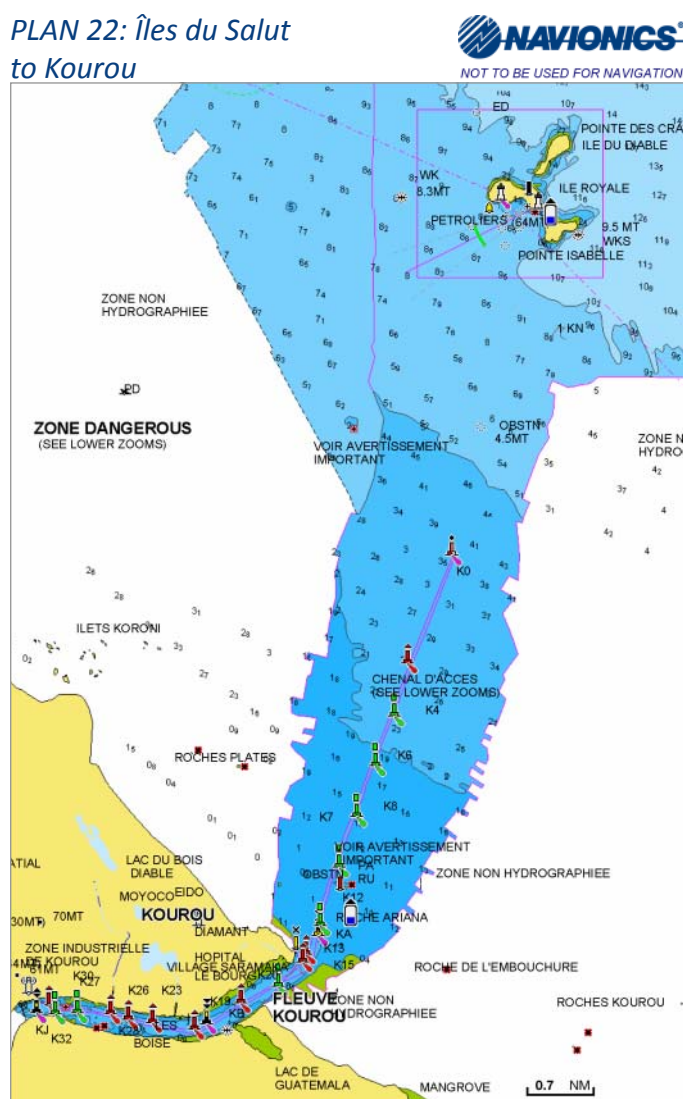
Technically it is forbidden to anchor or land on the island, although at a practical level it would seem unlikely anyone would be around to object.

There is no good anchorage around the island, although the W side offers some protection if the winds are light, and is better in swell from the SE rather than NE.

Another option, for those with a suitable outboard engine, would be to make the 0.9M trip by dinghy from Baie des Cocotiers or the W side of Île Saint-Joseph through the Passe de la Desirade and the Passe des Grenadines. Currents can be strong in these passes.

It is not easy to land on the island due to the rocky shoreline, perhaps part of the reason it was selected as a prison island. Access during the prison times was by cable car from Île Royale. The Baie de Bora-Bora on the west side offers the best option for landing, but is hardly easy.

PLAN 22: Îles du Salut
to Kourou



KOUROU (5°08'N 52°38'W)

Home of the Guiana Space Centre, the European Space Agency's primary launch site

The population of the town is 25,000, and given the high number of expatriates the town's infrastructure and provisioning is more advanced than its size would suggest. The architecture of the town is uninspiring, and the layout is not especially pedestrian friendly.

Approach and entrance

There is a clearly marked and well maintained channel in the river with officially maintained depths of at least 1.7m + tide, although we found the bar in the river (close to the obvious large hotel at the entrance to the river by the Pointe des Roches) to be about 1m + tide, i.e. about 3.2m at the time we crossed. Tide times are Cayenne -0020, and tidal streams in the river can run as much as 4kt. Note that depths outside the approach channel are shoal and there are several unmarked drying rocks which may have waves breaking over them.

Approach waypoint at the start of the channel 5°12'.52N 52°36'.38W. Follow the marked channel into the river.

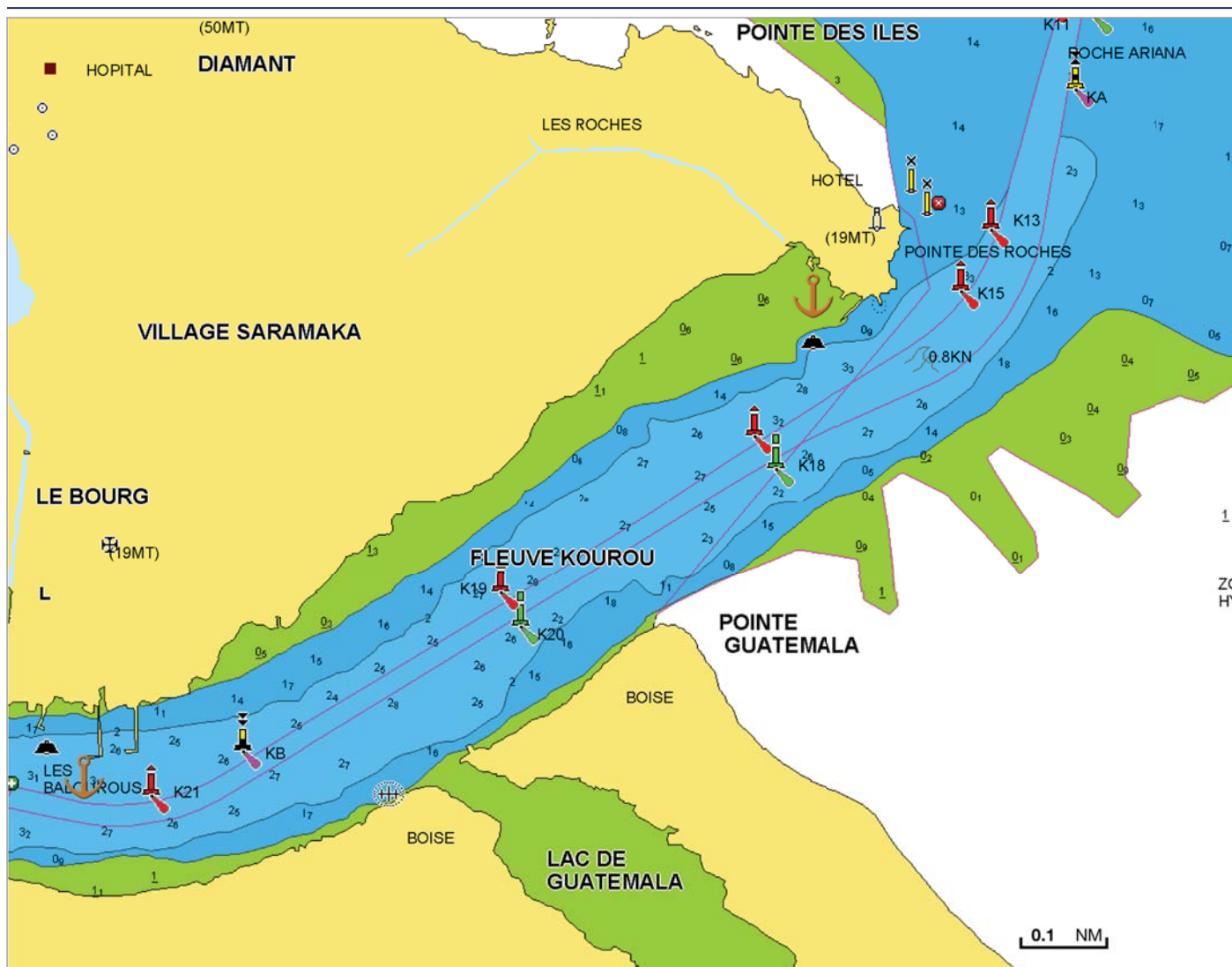
Anchorage

For boats that can take the ground there is an option to anchor off the now defunct Club Maritime Kourou at 5°09'.49N 52°37'.68W. The dinghy can be tied up to a metal ring by the steps on the river entrance breakwater. The large Hotel des Roches is ashore with a bar, restaurant, and usual hotel services.

Otherwise, continue along the marked channel to the marina jetty (5°08'.82N 52°38'.57W) and anchor outside the channel in 3-5m with reasonable holding in heavy, sticky mud. Note the S cardinal mark before the marina, and leave this to starboard on entry. Leave sufficient swinging room as boats may be wind rode or tide rode at different times. Tidal range is 2.5m springs and 1.1m neaps.

The marina is essentially always full. Water is available at the marina jetty either by jerry can or by coming alongside when a space is temporarily available, e.g. when one of the tourist catamarans are away.

It is possible to tie up the dinghy to either the marina dock or the fishermen's jetty, although the latter has some reported incidences of dinghy and outboard theft.



PLAN 23: Kourou anchorages

NAVIONICS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

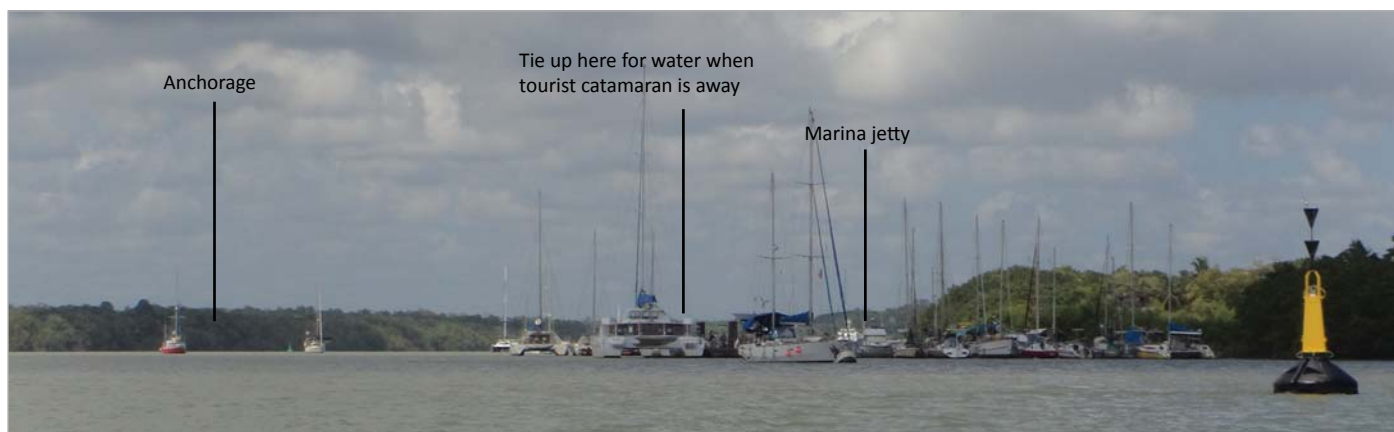
Ashore

From the fishermen's jetty there is an obvious road that leads into town. A fish market will be found to the left at the start of the road. Further along there is a modest fruit and vegetable market including a few stalls offering Surinamese spices, a small supermarket, and several restaurants. At the crossroads before the Mairie, turn left to find a fuel station with diesel and petrol available by jerry can (this is 900m from the marina gate, a hot walk with little shade).

The main town is another 1km from the crossroads, and banks, supermarkets, laundry services, restaurants and bars etc, can be found in the centre. Bar "le 13" has free but slow Wi-Fi, while Bar des Sports (opposite La Poste) has faster Wi-Fi for a charge.

The date of the next launch from the Guiana Space Centre at Kourou can be found at <http://www.arianespace.com/news/mission-status.asp>. Tours of the Space Centre in French only are offered by

Kourou



appointment Monday to Friday, typically requiring several days advance booking. Tours are not offered on the days either side of a rocket launch.

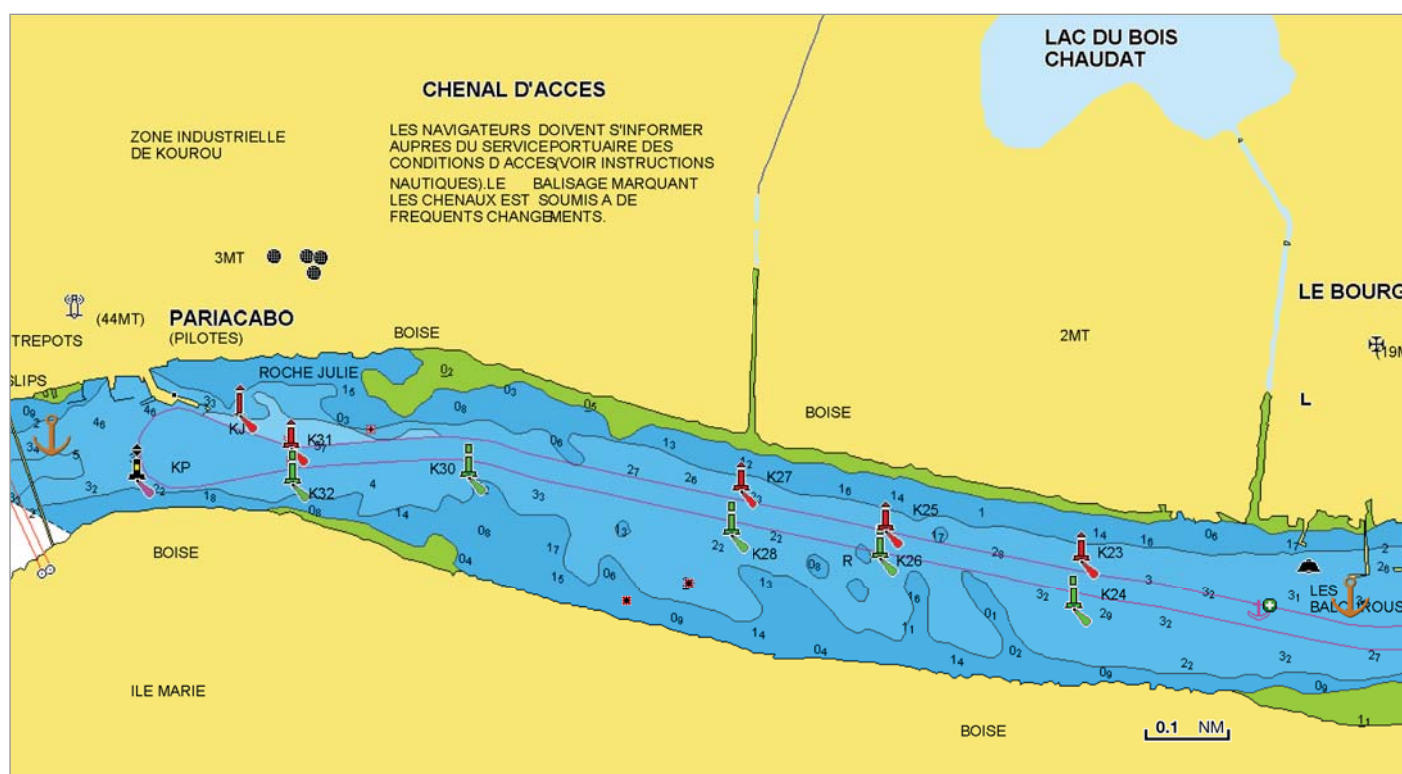
Pariacabo

Pariacabo is the dedicated port for the space centre 1.5M further along the river from the marina jetty, and clearly visible from it. A bridge just after Pariacabo precludes sailing further upriver.

Follow the marked channel, and anchor in the river between the 3rd jetty and the bridge in 4-6m. Note that the first and largest jetty is for the Space Centre and should not be approached or photographed for

security reasons. The second jetty is military. The third jetty is the Douane (customs) jetty, and can be used for landing by dinghy (ask permission from the military guards just ashore from the jetty).

It is possible to clear in or out at the Douane building close to the bridge. Ashore on the main road there is a fuel station, a basic chandlery (Nautic Auto) catering primarily for sport fishing boats, and behind it a Leader Price supermarket.



PLAN 24: PARIACABO

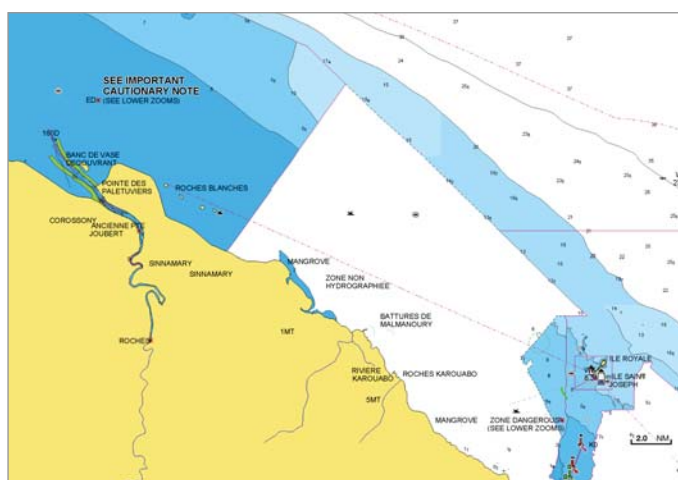
NAVIONICS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

Pariacabo anchorage



SINNAMARY (5°22'N 52°57'W)

River with a shallow bar leading to a small town



PLAN 25: Îles du Salut
to Sinnamary river

NAVIONICS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

Sinnamary is a small town of 3,000 inhabitants on the Sinnamary River about 50M from Kourou. The river has adequate depths once past the approach and bar, however, getting into the river is for shoal draught vessels only and must be done close to high tide.

Tide times are Cayenne +15m.

Approach and entrance

Note that the inshore area between Îles du Salut and the approach waypoint has not been surveyed in detail, is shoal, and there are known hazards including the Roches Blanches. Charts contain a warning that depths may vary due to movement of the seabed. It is recommended to remain outside the 5m line until the final approach.

The river is approached from the NW, as there are extensive shoal sandbanks SE and E of the

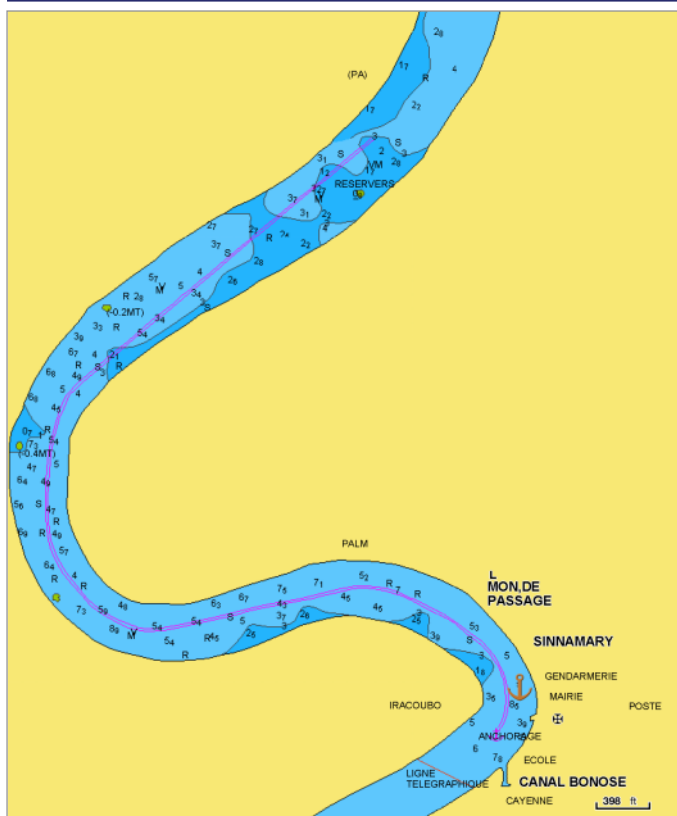


PLAN 26: Sinnamary river

river entrance, on which swell breaks in normal conditions. It is not possible to cut the corner to the approach waypoint if coming from the SE.

The approach waypoint is 5°34'.13N 53°08'.77W. This showed a depth of 2.0m at half tide. From here head 131° for 8.1M to the channel entrance at 5°28'.52N 53°02'.32W. Note that we were unable to reach the channel entrance due to depths of 1.5m at half tide, but entrance should be feasible for shoal draught vessels close to high tide. We talked with





PLAN 27: Sinnamary river,
detail to Sinnamary



(note: significant offset between satellite and plan positions
along course of river)

fishermen who regularly travel in and out of the Sinnamary River and they advised there would be no difficulty entering with a 2m draught at high tide.

We also discussed the river with the Service Fleuvial in Degrad des Cannes who advised that entry would be possible.

From the channel entrance continue 1.4M on a heading of 140° to 5°27'.46N 53°01'.43W, and a further 1.3M heading 130° to 5°26'.44N 53°00'.21W. After the bar the river is reported deep enough for there to be no obstructions for cruising vessels, and the river is then followed for a further 6M to Sinnamary.

Anchor in 5-8m in the river opposite the town. There is a newly constructed floating pontoon for local fishermen that may be possible to tie up to (ask at the Mairie), and which can be used for dinghy landings.

A road bridge stops further navigation for cruising boats, although exploration by dinghy could easily be done.

According to the *Service Fleuvial* the river has a dam about 50km upstream. A siren sounds at the Mairie (town hall) in Sinnamary when it is being opened.

Fleuve Mana (5°40'N 53°46'W)

The river is not navigable for cruising vessels due to heavy silting. The estuary is a breeding and hatching ground for leatherback turtles.

MARONI RIVER

A superb jungle river with options for remote anchorages, river exploration, and a good provisioning stop

The Maroni River forms the border between French Guiana and Suriname. The main town on the river is the border town of Saint Laurent du Maroni. Across the river lies the corresponding border town of Albina, Suriname.

Approach and entrance

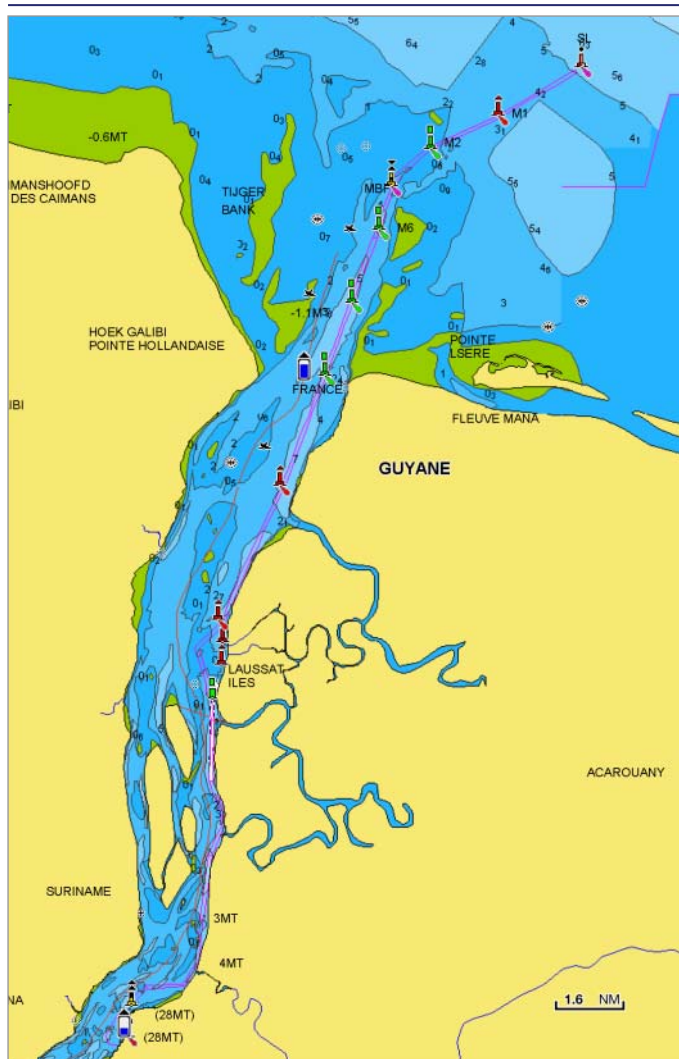
From the safe water buoy at 5°51'.80N 53°51'.75W it is 10M to the river entrance at Pointe des Hattes, and a further 14M to Saint Laurent du Maroni along a marked channel with a minimum maintained depth of 2.2m + tide. We found depths slightly greater than charted in the channel. The buoys are lit until about 5M inside the river, and thereafter are unlit. Buoy positions change due to the shifting nature of the sandbanks in the approach.

As the current in the river can run at up to 3kt a

favourable tide is preferred. A pleasant anchorage will be found outside the buoyed channel just past channel marker M10 / Pointe des Hattes (5°43'.73N 53°57'.56W) with 6m and good holding in mud. Wind against current produces small short chop, but this disappears with a change in tide or less wind. It is a peaceful place to spend a night. Tidal range is 2.6m springs and 2.0m neaps.

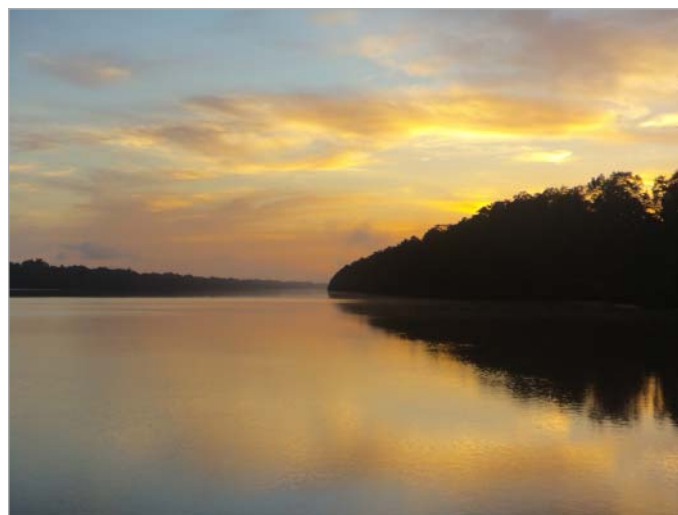
Night entry to the Maroni is practical as far as the Pointe des Hattes anchorage. From Point des Hattes onwards daylight navigation is recommended.

Note that the charts of the river that we used (FR7376) are no longer correct regarding depths and the positions of sandbanks. This is not generally a problem as the well-marked channel can be followed, and navigation outside the channel can be carried out with careful attention to the depth



sounder. See also the note about an uncharted rock in Saint Laurent.

After Pointe des Hattes there are many opportunities to anchor in calm waters in the river outside the channel or in the criques off the main river.

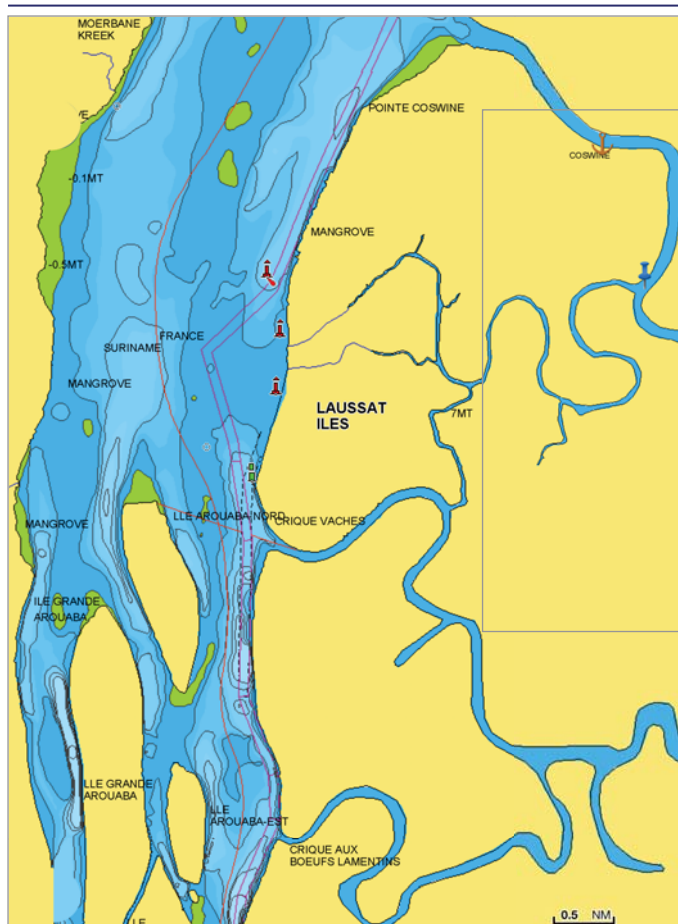


PLAN 28: Maroni River entrance



The channel buoy positions as of October 2014

Buoy name	Position	Light
Safe Water	5°51'.80N 53°51'.75W	Iso.4s
M1	5°50'.71N 53°53'.62W	Fl.R.4s
M2	5°49'.91N 53°54'.78W	Fl(2)G.6s
M3	5°49'.98N 53°54'.82W	Fl(2)R.6s
M4	5°49'.32N 53°55'.75W	Fl(3)G.12s
M5	5°49'.39N 53°55'.80W	Fl(3)R.12s
West cardinal	5°49'.21N 53°55'.93W	VQ(9)10s
M6	5°48.11N 53°56'.33W	Q.G
M8	5°46.45N 53°56'.93W	Fl.G.4s
M10 (Pointe des Hattes)	5°44.79N 53°57'.53W	Fl(2)G.6s
M7	5°42.30'N 53°58'.55W	Fl(3)R.12s
M9	5°39.21'N 53°59'.93W	Fl(5)R.20s
M14	5°38.56'N 54°00'.42W	Unlit G
M14A	5°38.20'N 54°00'.31W	Unlit G
M11	5°37.80'N 54°00'.27W	Unlit R
M16	5°36.98'N 54°00'.08W	Unlit G
M13	5°31.44'N 54°00'.50W	Unlit R
M18	5°30.90'N 54°00'.75W	Unlit G
M15	5°30.74'N 54°01'.72W	Unlit R
Edith Cavell	5°30.49'N 54°01'.93W	Unlit wreck marker
M17	5°30.33'N 54°02'.23W	Unlit R
M20	5°30.24'N 54°02'.16W	Unlit G



PLANS 29-30: Coswine, Vaches and Boeuf



(note: satellite and plan positions are significantly different)

The floating pontoon at Ayawande/Coswine



CRIQUE COSWINE (5°41'.47N 53°58'.41W)

A jungle creek 3.5M upstream from the river entrance at Pointe des Hattes

The crique is particularly attractive as there is the option to return to the Maroni River via Crique Vaches rather than retracing the inbound route.

The entrance bar has at least 2.5m water and deepens to 5+m within 0.5M of the crique entrance. Cross the bar in the centre of the crique entrance.

The small village of Ayawande/Coswine is at 5°40'.46N 53°57'.05W, 1.9M from the crique entrance. Anchor in 8m and dinghy ashore to the floating pontoon. The village has a dozen or so houses, most traditionally built, and is located on a dune of fine white sand. Rainwater is collected in barrels, wood is used for cooking, and somewhat incongruously public lighting and satellite dishes are powered by solar panels. There are no services.

1.8M after Ayawande/Coswine a junction is arrived at (5°39'.19N 53°56'.71W). Take the south branch to continue along the main crique, and the west branch to reach Crique Vaches (see separate entry). The south branch takes a meandering course through deep jungle with depths typically 10-20m. At 5°38'.86N 53°55.90W the crique widens and

shoals to 4m – a tranquil jungle anchorage – before deepening again. A similar wider area with 3m will be found at 5°38'.47N 53°55'.45W, 2.2M after the junction. The crique could be explored further for perhaps another 2M until it becomes narrow and shallow towards its multiple sources.

PLAN 31: Coswine



CRIQUE VACHES (5°36'.96N 53°59'.95W)

Another jungle creek 5M upriver from Crique Coswine

5+m at the entrance bar and 10-15m in the main crique. The junction with the crique leading to Crique Coswine is 1.8M upriver.

Anchorage is possible anywhere in the creek, and as it is a wide creek there is likely to be some breeze.

Further exploration of the main crique beyond the junction leading to Crique Coswine is possible.

Through Route between Crique Coswine and Crique Vaches

A recommended excursion through remote jungle rivers with no navigational difficulties

The through route is a delightful and straightforward half day excursion into jungle rivers. It is highly recommended. The total distance from leaving the Maroni River via one crique to returning to the river via the other crique is 11.5M. The island traced by this route is Île Laussat.

The route is practical in either direction. The shallowest water encountered is the entrance bar at Crique Coswine with at least 2.5m. Depths are much greater once in the criques, usually at least 8m, often considerably more.

Anchorage is possible anywhere on the route for those wishing to spend a night in jungle surroundings. Be aware that there will be little or no wind, and mosquito nets / hatch covers are essential.

Waypoints from Coswine to Vaches

Waypoint	Coswine to Vaches	Vaches to Coswine
5°36'.96N 53°59'.95W	Junction Maroni River and Crique Coswine entrance. 2.5m minimum depth in centre of entrance.	Exit to Maroni River
5°40'.46N 53°57'.05W	Coswine village	Coswine village
5°39'.23N 53°56'.63W	Waypoint immediately before junction. Turn to starboard / W.	Waypoint immediately after junction.
5°39'.22N 53°56'.83W	Waypoint immediately after junction.	Waypoint immediately before junction. Turn to port / NE.
5°38'.23N 53°57'.31W	Waypoint immediately before junction. Continue straight on (NW)	Waypoint immediately after junction.
5°38'.27N 53°57'.38W	Waypoint immediately after junction.	Waypoint immediately before junction. Continue straight on (SE)
5°38'.33N 53°58'.14W	Waypoint immediately before junction. Turn to port / S.	Waypoint immediately after junction.
5°38'.25N 53°58'.18W	Waypoint immediately after junction.	Waypoint immediately before junction. Turn to starboard / NE.
5°37'.27N 53°58'.30W	Waypoint immediately before junction with Crique Vaches. Turn to starboard / NW.	Waypoint immediately after junction.
5°37'.29N 53°58'.43W	Waypoint immediately after junction.	Waypoint in Crique Vaches. Turn into crique on port side / NE.
5°36'.96N 53°59'.95W	Exit from Crique Vaches to Maroni River	Junction Maroni River and Crique Vaches entrance. Depth of at least 5m.



PLANS 32-33: Boeuf/Lamentins
to Paradis

NAVIONICS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

**CRIQUE LAMENTIN (5°34'.40N
53°59'.84W)**

This small creek carries at least 4m of water at low tide and can be navigated for 4.4M into deep jungle. At the junction 5°33'.56N 53°58'.91W, 3.1M from the crique entrance, take the west branch. This branch can be followed for a further 1.3M, the crique gradually narrowing, to another junction where overhanging trees stop further navigation in both directions (5°32'.46N 53°58'.97W).

**PARADIS VILLAGE (5°30'.82N
54°00'.97W)**

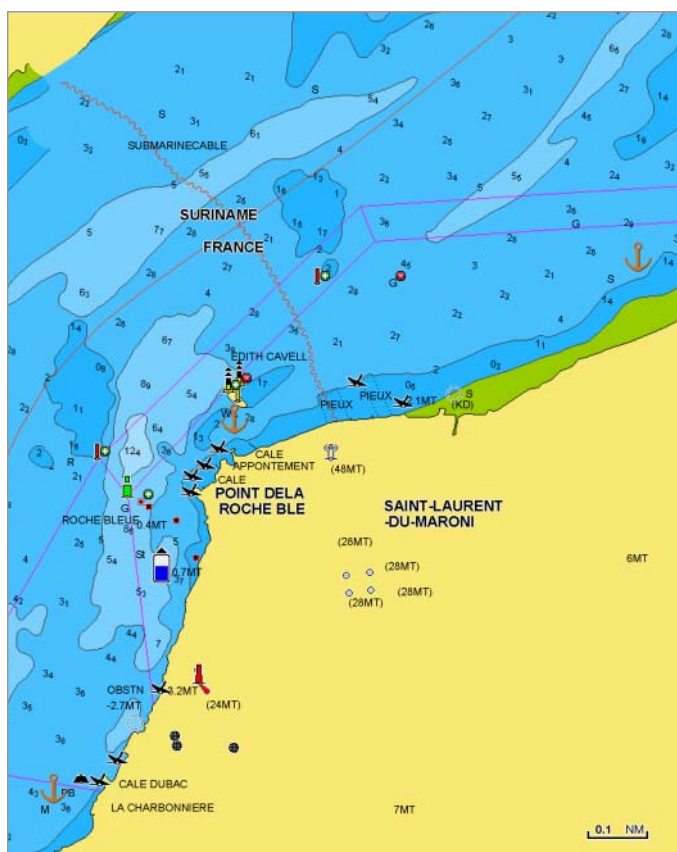
Paradis Village is an Amerindian village 1.0M downstream of Saint Laurent du Maroni. Anchor off the village in 3m and land on the beach next to the fishing pirogues. There are no services in the village, although there is a standing tap for water. It is a half hour walk into Saint Laurent via Paddock Village.

Paradis Village



SAINT LAURENT DU MARONI (5°30'.47N 54°01'.99W)

A pleasant town with a secure anchorage and good facilities ashore.



PLAN 34: St Laurent du Maroni anchorages



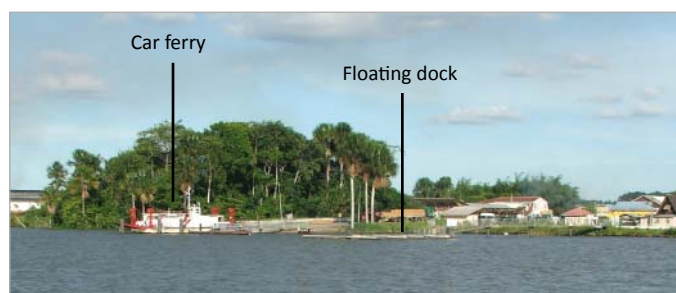
(note: main village - Paddock; nearby hamlet - Paradis)

The anchorage is just off the town behind a grounded freighter with a small forest of trees growing on it, the Edith Cavell. From a distance it looks like an island but as one approaches, the ship outline becomes clear.

Anchorage and upriver

Anchor in 5-10m over sand and mud. Holding is good. Leave sufficient swinging room for the tidal change. There is a small floating pontoon ashore to which the dinghy can be tied up.

When leaving the Edith Cavell anchorage to



Saint Laurent ferry wharf

proceed upriver, head directly out to the marked channel leaving the M20 green buoy to port. Between the M20 buoy and Roche Bleu (the obvious rock with two small shrubs growing on it, almost submerged at high water) there is a submerged rock (5°30'.23N 54°02'.13W) which, as we found out first hand, is not shown on all charts.

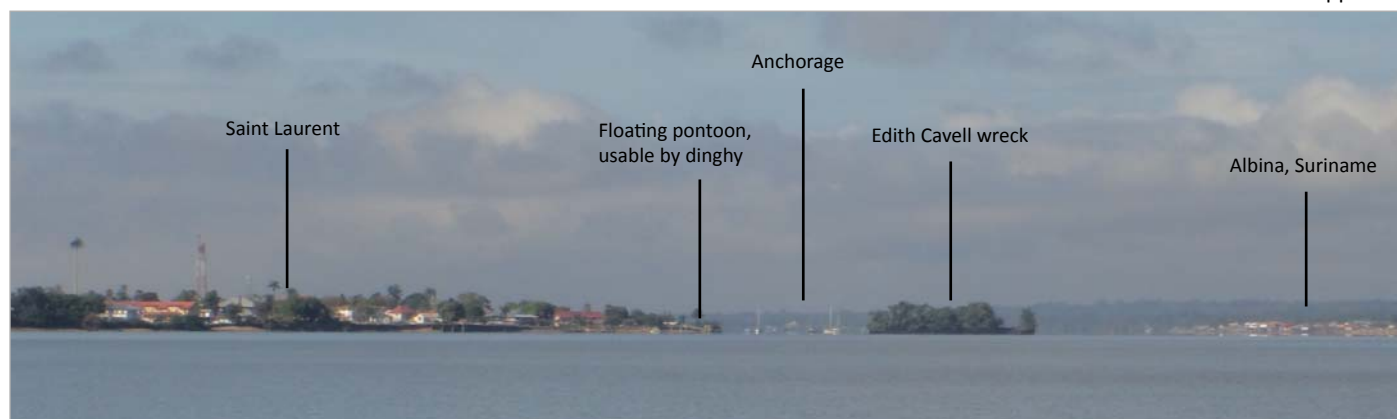
It is possible to anchor off the ferry wharf at 5°29'.56N 54°02'.33W. There is a floating pontoon with finger piers for dinghy landing. That pontoon, the ferry pontoon, and the small floating pontoon next to it are all within the Customs area. The area is fully secure during their opening hours but there is no access when closed in which case it will be necessary to land on the (unsecured) beach. Local food stalls, mostly Surinamese, surround the area where the cross-river pirogues arrive and depart. The Super U supermarket is a short walk inland.

Plans exist to build a marina in Saint Laurent near to the Edith Cavell anchorage. The developer of the marina is David Matelicani, organiser of the annual Nereid's Rally from Tobago to Saint Laurent. As of October 2014 there was no evidence that work on the marina had started.

Formalities

The Douane (customs) office necessary for clearance in or out is in the town (the Douane office at the ferry terminal is not able to clear yachts). From the

Saint Laurent approach



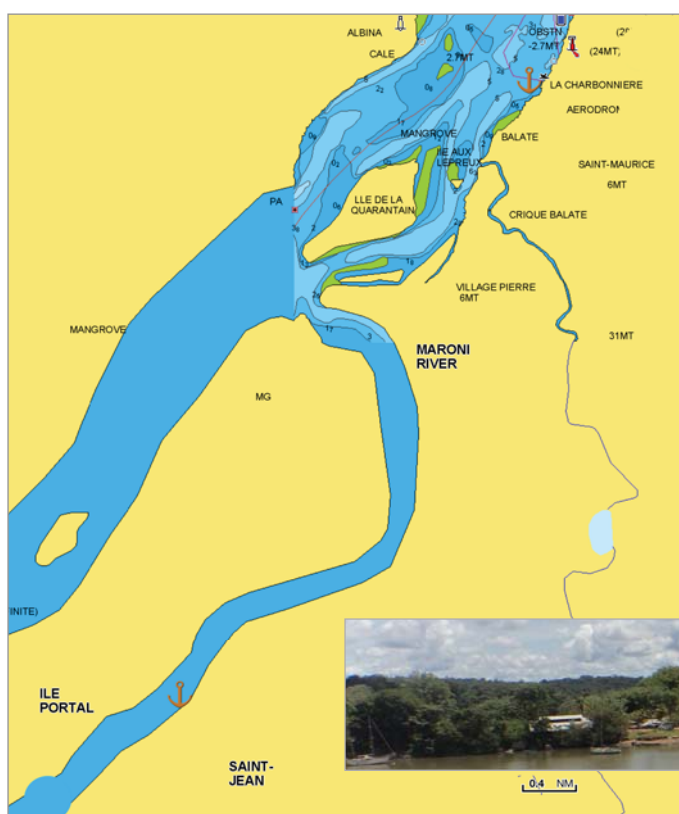
floating jetty by the Edith Cavell anchorage turn left and follow the waterside path past the swimming pool until a large house with a walled garden blocks further waterside progress. Follow the wall around the house. The Douane office is opposite the front of the house. If immigration is required, the Police Aux Frontières (border police) next to the Douane at the ferry terminal should be visited.

Ashore

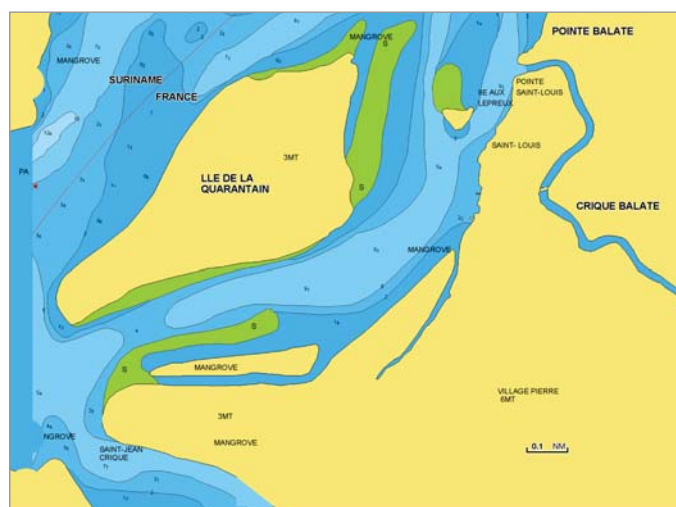
There are the usual supplies in town (pop 40,000) including a good Super U supermarket, many smaller supermarkets, a lively fruit and vegetable market on Wednesday and Saturday mornings, a fuel station (although note that across the river in Albina fuel is less expensive), and several bars, cafes and restaurants. The café/bar Tipic Kreol has free Wi-Fi.

SAINT JEAN DU MARONI (5°24'.72N 54°05.00W)

An old prison town, now a friendly military encampment



PLAN 35: Crique Saint Jean



PLAN 36: Île De La Quarantine and Crique Saint Jean entrance

Saint Jean du Maroni



the town. Dinghy ashore and land on the beach. The floating jetty belongs to the military and landing is not permitted.

Ashore

Ashore there is a basic grocery store (ring the bicycle bell for service) and a waterfront tourist restaurant with free Wi-Fi for customers. The town was the site of a prison labour camp during French colonial times which is now a military camp with friendly French legionnaires. The tiny creek a short distance upstream of the military pontoon can be explored by dinghy.

Denis is a French liveaboard cruiser who arrived in Saint Jean from Trinidad with his turquoise Najad around the turn of the millennium. He is anchored close to the town (inshore of the sandbank), speaks English, and has a fast pirogue for river trips.

Approach and anchorage

Saint Jean is 9M from Saint Laurent along the Crique Saint Jean. Pass between the E bank of the river and Île aux Lépreux, and continue past Île De La Quarantine (where a minimum depth of 3m will be found) to the entrance to Crique Saint Jean. Take the centre of the entrance, then head toward the N bank and follow the crique some 100m from the bank until close to 5°26'.22N 54°03'.21W where it is necessary to head towards the centre of the creek for the remainder of the journey.

Anchor off the town in the middle of the crique in 4m water with good holding. Note that there is a sand bank between the middle of the crique and

SURINAME



PLAN 37 : Suriname



Suriname has a low lying coast consisting of tropical rainforest, with two small mountain ranges in the interior rising to a maximum elevation of 1,286m. The population is concentrated along the coast, and the interior (about 80% of the land area) is not easily accessible and has few residents. Almost all infrastructure is along the coastal strip.

The population is 460,000 and is very ethnically and religiously diverse. The major ethnic groups are East Indian (27%), Maroon (22%), Creole (16%), Javanese (14%), Mixed (13%) and Others (8%). About half live in the capital, Paramaribo, which is the only sizeable metropolitan area in the country.

The official language is Dutch, and English is spoken quite widely, especially in towns and cities. Many other languages are spoken, in line with the wide ethnic diversity.

The time zone is GMT-3, one hour ahead of Guyana.

The official currency is the Surinamese Dollar (SRD). Exchange rates (July 2014) are approximately 1 USD = 3.25 SRD and 1 EUR = 4.4 SRD.

GDP per capital is about \$9,900.

Major elements in the economy include bauxite mining (15%), gold mining, and oil. About a quarter of the population work in agriculture. In the north of the country rice farming is significant, and Surinamese rice is known for its high quality.

Brief history

The Dutch first colonised Suriname in 1613. The English invaded and ran Suriname for two periods, 1650-1667 and 1799-1816. The country became an independent republic in 1975. A military coup in 1980 installed a socialist dictatorship, which remained in power until 1991. Since 1991 the country has operated as a democracy. The current president, Desi Bouterse, elected in 2010, was also leader of the country during the socialist dictatorship.

Formalities

When approaching Suriname check in by VHF with the Maritime Authority Suriname (MAS) on VHF 16 or VHF 12.

Clearance procedures are fairly relaxed - check in the next working day after arrival. Offices are open Monday to Friday mornings only. It is necessary to dress in long trousers, collared shirt and deck shoes when visiting officials.

Passports must be valid for 6 months.

Nationals of Belgium, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela can get a tourist card (a kind of visa waiver) costing €20. All other nationalities need a visa, issued on arrival, which requires passport sized photos. The visa fee depends on nationality.

Note that the above regulations apply to people arriving by private yacht. There are different

regulations for arrival overland (for example by ferry from French Guiana) or by air, and if crew are joining the boat in Suriname it is necessary to check the visa/tourist card requirements for entry.

Visas and Tourist Cards are valid for 90 days. However, it is necessary to visit the Vreemdeligen Politie every 30 days to get another stamp in the passport.

Check In Procedure in Paramaribo:

1. Skipper and all crew need to visit the Vreemdeligen Politie (Immigration) at Jaggernath Lachmonstraat with 4 copies of a crew list (name, nationality, passport number). The crew lists are stamped. (M-F 0800-1300)
2. Skipper to take outward clearance and 2 x crew list to the Doane (Customs) office in the low green building on Abatoirweg (near the main port). (M-F 0700-1300). Your outward clearance form and 1 crew list will be retained, while the other will be returned to you with a stamped hand written note on it that you are cleared in. There is no separate clearance document. Customs will also submit a copy of your crew list to MAS (Maritime Authority Suriname).
3. Skipper and all crew to visit Consulaire Zaken (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (M-F 0900-1300) at the corner of Lim A Po straat and Watermolenstraat to get tourist cards and/or visas. You will need passports, crew list and boat documents, fees in euros, and if visas (not tourist cards) are necessary passport photos will be required.
4. Skipper and all crew need to visit the Vreemdeligen Politie (Immigration) again with passports, tourist cards/visas and a crew list. Passports will be stamped.

Check Out Procedure:

1. Skipper and all crew need to visit the Vreemdeligen Politie (Immigration) to get exit stamps.
2. Skipper to visit the Doane to get outward clearance.

Firearms must be declared, and may either be kept on board in a secured location or surrendered on arrival and returned on departure.

Technically, meat & fish, meat & fish products, fruits, vegetables, and most other foodstuffs are prohibited without an import permit. As a matter of practicality normal boat provisions are unlikely to be questioned.

Animals must have a valid health certificate and rabies vaccination.

Crime

Suriname is generally a low crime country.

In Albina and Paramaribo there is some petty street crime – normal precautions should be taken. There have been occasional reports of more violent crime after dark around the Central Market and Palm Garden in Paramaribo.

There are no reports of yacht related crime, although it would do no harm to take the usual Caribbean precautions (chaining the dinghy when left unattended, lifting it at night, closing hatches and locking the boat while away, etc).

Incidents of piracy between Surinamese and Guyanese fishermen on the Courantyne River continue to occur. The main motivation is fish glue which is a valuable local product (used for furniture and antique restorations and for art e.g. illuminated manuscripts). According to local police, yachts and non-fishing craft have not been involved in any incidents.

Communications

Local SIM cards are available and inexpensive. Coverage is good in Paramaribo and other towns and limited elsewhere in the country.

Wi-Fi is available in cafes and restaurants and is generally fast. There are several internet cafes in Paramaribo, and good Wi-Fi in Nieuw Nickerie.

Repairs and Chandleries

In Paramaribo there are limited services as follows:

- Several locations sell and maintain outboard motors, including Howard Marine, Dr Nassylane 47 (Tohatsu, Mercury): Jong Tjien Fa, Wagenwegstraat 55 (Yamaha, Parsun, Evinrude); Iraya Motors, Zwartenhovenbrugstraat 192. Each have a limited selection of chandlery aimed primarily at small powerboats.
- Hermelijn Automotive, Keizerstraat 123. A good selection of belts and filters.
- Moboco on Industrieweg have a selection of stainless steel screws and hardware.
- Cozmozan on Burenstraat have solar panels and batteries.

Propeller Marine is on Industrieweg, the road that leads from Paramaribo to Domburg, just after the bridge over the Saramacca Canal. They have a modest selection of chandlery items mostly aimed at sport boats, and including some equipment for commercial boats and sailing yachts. In addition, they are willing to source most parts to order.

Lift out using a portable crane is available at the

fishing services company Cevihas a short distance upstream of the bridge in Paramaribo. A custom wooden cradle is built for each yacht. Contact Leysner on +597 486 755 ext. 105 or 106. While on the hard, living aboard is acceptable and work can be carried out by owners or by locally hired workers.

Importing Spares

Duty of 30% must be paid on all spares imported into Suriname. The process is variable: sometimes it is straightforward, while other times it is more drawn out and requires a trip to the airport to assist with clearance.

For spares of any significant value it may be cheaper and easier to fly to Trinidad and return with the spares rather than go through the formal importation process.

Fuel

Diesel is available by jerry can from the fuel stations in Domburg and Albina, or via taxi at the Waterland marina. It may be possible to get diesel at the fishing pier in Nieuw Amsterdam, rafting up next to a fishing boat.

Water

Water is available at berths at the Waterland Marina, and alongside at the fishing pier in Domburg for a small gift of wine or beer.

Jerry cans can be filled at the dinghy dock in Domburg and at the harbour office in Nieuw Nickerie.

Cooking Gas

Most cylinders can be refilled in 1-2 days via the Harbour Resort bar at Domburg. Alternatively call Ben on 037 0180.

Provisioning

Provisioning is good in Paramaribo, and the fresh produce market near the waterfront is particularly notable. Several large supermarkets can be found in and around the town.

Domburg has mid-sized supermarkets but limited fresh produce.

Nieuw Nickerie has a good produce and fish market and several mid-sized supermarkets in the town, and Albina has many supermarkets and alcohol outlets.

Throughout Suriname prices are noticeably lower than French Guiana.

Health

The main hospital is the Academisch Ziekenhuis in

Paramaribo. This is a modern, high quality hospital.

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required if travelling from a yellow fever risk country.

Malaria is not a risk in Paramaribo, but is a risk in all other parts of the country, especially the jungle interior. Dengue fever is also a risk. See the introduction for advice on mosquito protection.

River Charts

Paper charts for all the rivers in Suriname are available from MAS (Maritime Authority Suriname) at Cornelis Jongbauwstraat 2 in Paramaribo. The staff are very helpful and are happy to discuss possible inland routes and give advice on places to stop. Charts are SRD 200 each. <http://www.mas.sr/en/HOME>

Public Holidays

- 1 January: New Year's Day
- March: Holi-Phagwa
- March/April: Good Friday, Easter Monday
- 1 May: Labour Day
- 5 June: Indian Arrival Day
- 1 July: Keti Koti, Emancipation Day (end of slavery)
- 8 August: Javanese Arrival Day
- 9 August: Indigenous People's Day
- 10 October: Maroon's Day
- 25 November: Independence Day
- 25 December: Christmas
- Varies: Eid al-Fitr (end of Ramadan)
- Varies: Diwali

New Year is a major celebration in Suriname, with street parties starting on the morning of 31st December and continuing through to the morning of 1st January.

Transport

The international airport is the Paramaribo-Zanderij

Reviewing comprehensive hydrographic river charts with the helpful staff at MAS



International Airport (PBM) located in Zanderij, 45km south of Paramaribo.

KLM operates flights to and from Amsterdam. Surinam Airways, the national carrier, operates to Aruba, Curaçao, Georgetown (Guyana), Cayenne (French Guiana), Miami, and Port of Spain (Trinidad).

Car rental is available and is inexpensive. Driving is on the left, as in Guyana. (All other countries in South America drive on the right, including French Guiana).

There is a road link with French Guiana via a car ferry from Albina to Saint Laurent-de-Maroni, and

to Guyana via a car ferry from Nieuw-Nickerie to Corriverton.

Tides

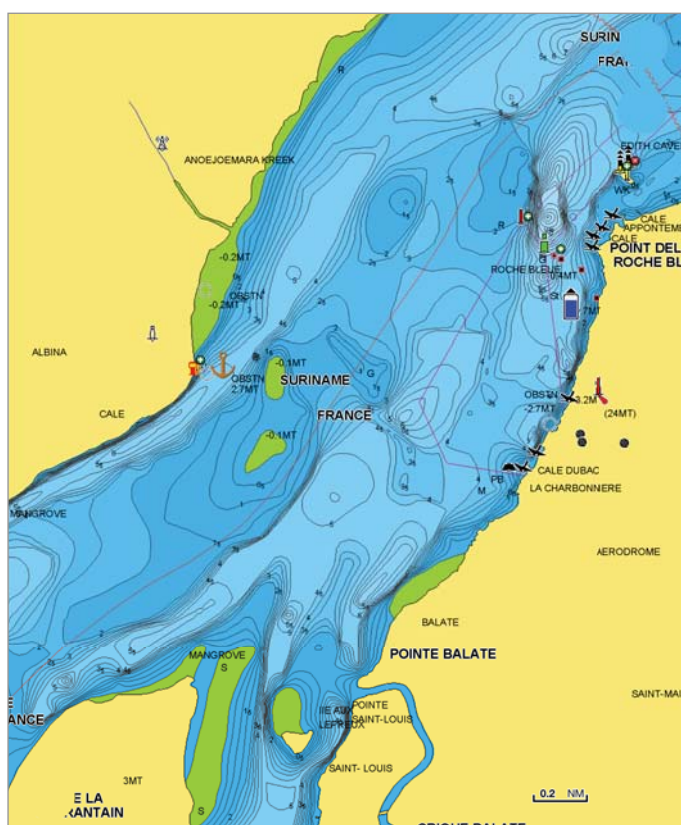
Tidal range at Paramaribo is 2.5m at springs and 1.1m at neaps.

Tidal predictions are available online at www.tide-forecast.com and www.tides.info for the following locations

- Paramaribo (port of reference)
- Nickerie River
- Suriname River

MAROWIJNE RIVER/ALBINA (5°29'N 54°03'W)

Uncomfortable anchorage off a border town selling lower cost goods



PLAN 38: Albina anchorage



The Marowijne (Maroni) River forms the border with French Guiana. See the pilotage directions for the Maroni River in the French Guiana section for more details.

Albina is the town on the Surinamese side of the river opposite Saint Laurent, accessible by a car ferry and frequent pirogues.

Approach and anchorage

Follow the marked channel to 5°29'.69N 54°02'.66W
and then head directly across the river to 5°29'.85N

54°03'.12W. Depths are at least 2m + tide, and the line taken is the one used by the pirogues. Older charts (FR7376) for the river showing drying sandbanks on this line are incorrect, and the charted deeper water downriver of this line in the middle of the river does not exist.

Anchor in 4m over sand with good holding. There is a broken pontoon which is useful to tie up to and walk ashore, or land on the beach. At the top of the jetty is a fuel station.

Albina has 5000 inhabitants and is a rough and ready place making a living from lower priced foods, alcohol and durable goods sold in the numerous supermarkets to cross river visitors. The town has a reputation for petty theft and pickpocketing.

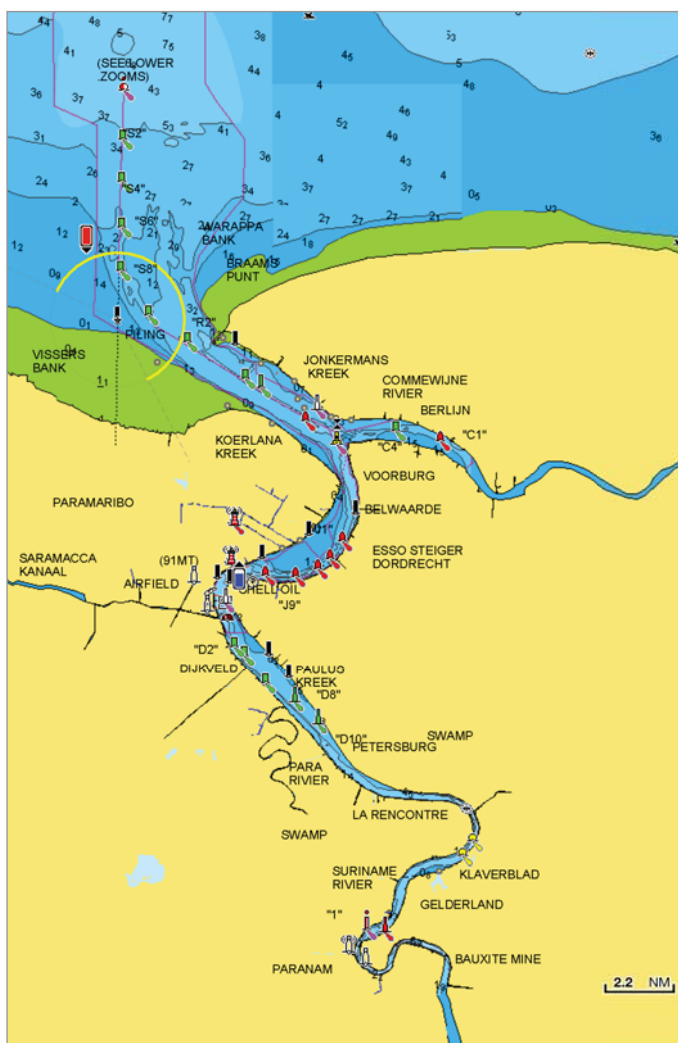
Formalities

It is possible to clear your boat in to Suriname at the Doane office next to the car ferry terminal, although staff are not used to dealing with yachts. Immigration is in the same building, but it is only possible to go through the immigration process if you have arranged a visa/tourist card prior to arriving in Albina, for example from the Suriname consulate in Albina. Alternatively, postpone check in until Paramaribo - for a short visit no one will question you or your boat's presence in Albina.

Albina beach



SURINAME RIVER ENTRANCE



PLAN 39: Suriname and Commewijne rivers

The Suriname River is the major river in the country. It is navigable to a few miles beyond Paranam by sailing yachts. The marked channel is maintained to 4.3m until Paramaribo, and 3.4m until Paranam.

Currents are strong and can run up to 5kt exceptionally, but are typically 2-3kt.

The Commewijne River flows into the Suriname River a short distance upstream of the river entrance.

From the Safe Water Buoy (Y.Mo(A)8s) at 6°04'.81N 55°12'.83W follow the marked channel south (181°) for 5.75M, keeping the green channel buoys close to the port side. Then turn to port, heading 145° for

1.75M to the next green buoy, and then 123° for 3.0M into the river entrance.

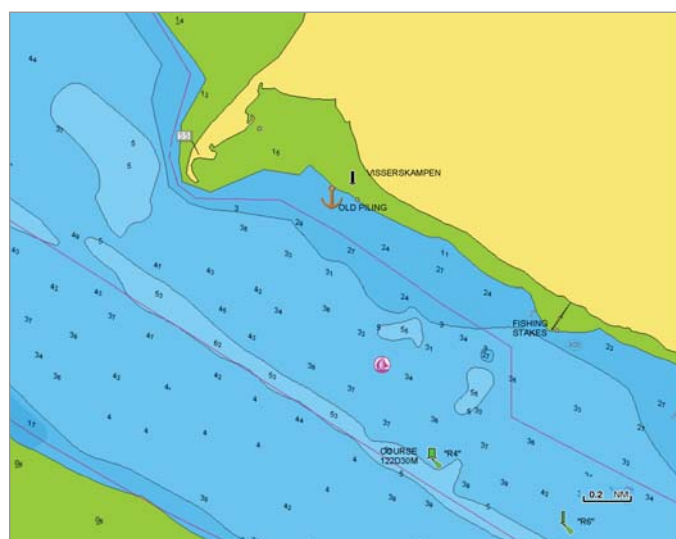
At this point you have the small fishing village of Visserskampen to port, a good place to anchor outside the channel in daylight to wait for a favourable tide.

It is practical to enter the river at night as it is well buoyed, but it is essential to remain in the marked channel, as there are many fishing stakes outside the channel, especially in the first few miles of the river.

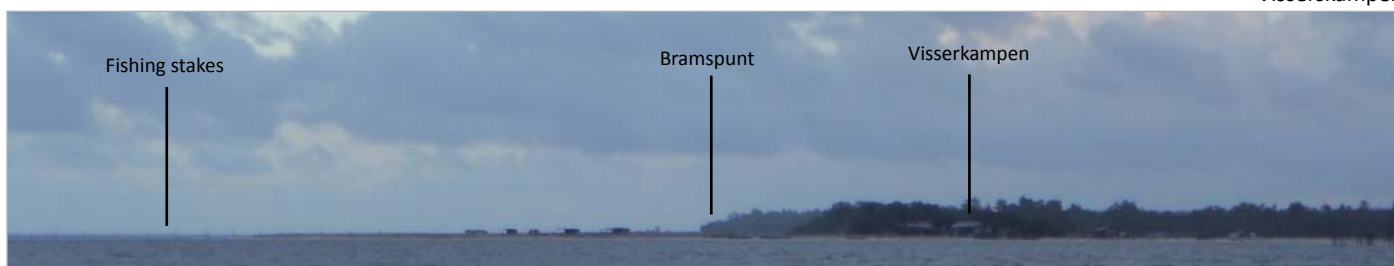
It is a further 4M along the marked channel to the major junction between the Suriname River, leading to Paramaribo, Domburg and Paranam, and the Commewijne River leading to Nieuw Amsterdam, Alkmaar, and eventually via the Cottica River to Moengo.

The Suriname and Commewijne rivers have a reasonable amount of commercial traffic including large barges pushed or towed by tugs which have very limited manoeuvrability and considerable momentum. If anchoring it is imperative to be close to shore and to have the boat well lit on deck to ensure visibility to barges that are unlikely to be expecting to encounter a yacht at anchor.

PLAN 40: Visserskampen



Visserskampen



Progress along the Suriname River

PARAMARIBO (5°52'N 55°10'W)

Suriname's interesting capital has good provisioning but no anchorage

From the junction of the Suriname and Commewijne rivers it is 8M to the city of Paramaribo following the marked channel.

The city has some fine Caribbean/colonial architecture and is a Unesco World Heritage Site. There is an excellent fresh food market near the waterfront.

While passing Paramaribo it is possible you will be approached by the Harbour Police in their launch who will board your vessel and take your details. They are primarily interested in pets and firearms, and are friendly and helpful.

Pleasure craft are no longer permitted to anchor in the vicinity of Paramaribo - all pleasure craft must proceed to Domburg or beyond. This is not much of a loss as the waterfront is neither attractive nor secure for anchoring or landing.

The river is spanned by the Jules Wijdenbosch Bridge between Paramaribo and Meezorg with a vertical clearance of 41m.

Jules Wijdenbosch Bridge, Paramaribo



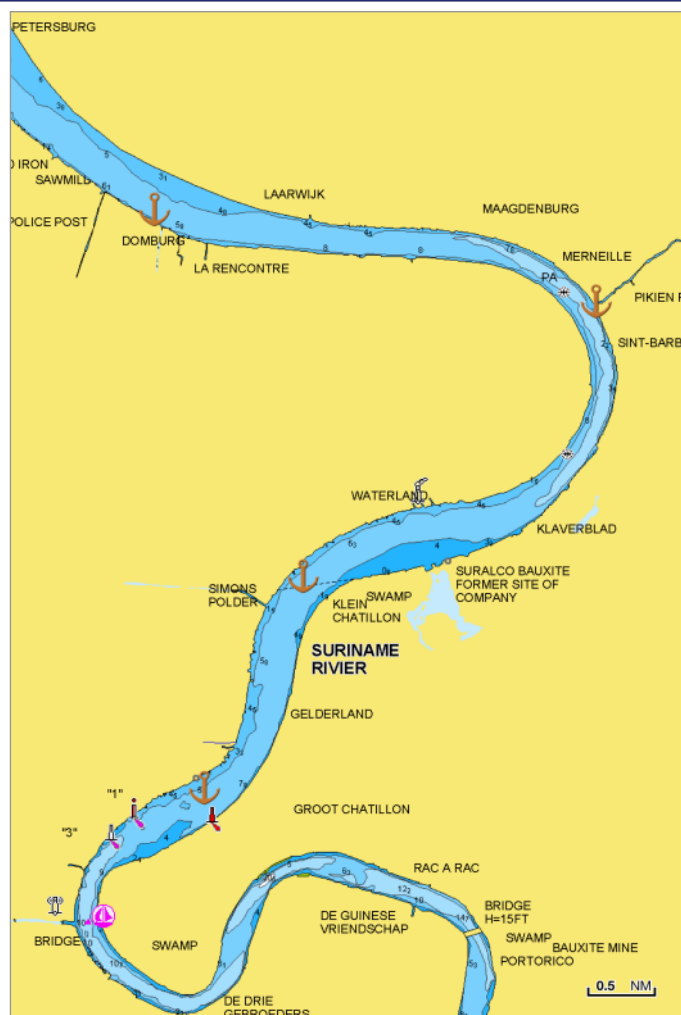
DOMBURG (5°42'N 55°05'W)

Good anchorage and mooring field, with a yachting-oriented bar ashore.

Passing Paramaribo, follow the marked channel for a further 8M to the small town of Domburg. Tide times at Domburg are Paramaribo +40m.

Moorings and ashore

Harbour Resort Domburg has 14 laid moorings at €8.50 per day (late 2014), with the price reducing somewhat for longer stays. The facility has a dinghy dock with potable water (by jerry can), showers, and a friendly bar with food, Wi-Fi and a book swap. A washing machine can be used for SRD 20 (bring your own washing powder). A swimming pool is planned. Contact on +597 7110257 or +597 8726198, info@overwinteren-tropen.com, www.marinassuriname.com.



PLAN 41: Marinas and anchorages on the Suriname river

NAVIONICS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

(note: Waterland Marina shown as anchorage)

Immediately outside the complex there is a fuel station with ATM (an easy 150m walk from the dinghy dock), several supermarkets adequate for day to day provisioning but with limited fresh produce, and a few small restaurants.

Buses to Paramaribo stop at the supermarket a short distance past the fuel station towards Paramaribo and cost SDR 2.45 each way. A taxi is SRD 60-80 each way. The Harbour Resort can also assist with car rental on site (€12.50/day in late 2014) and with refilling cooking gas cylinders (2 days turnaround).

Water is available alongside from the Holsu fishing pier in Domburg, a short distance downriver from the Harbour Resort. While there is no charge for water, a gift of wine or beer is welcomed.

Harbour Resort Domburg

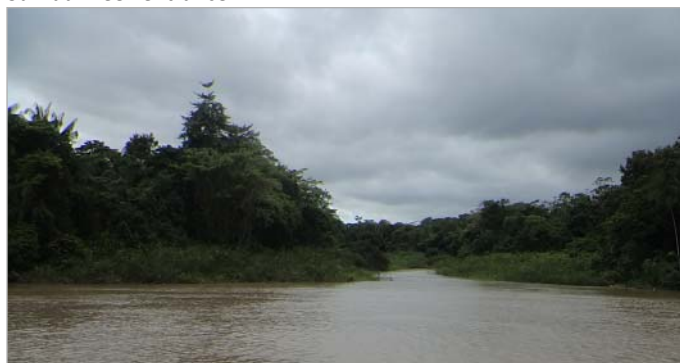


**SURNAU KREEK (5°41'.51N
55°01'.64W)**

A narrow kreek for the adventurous

A tight kreek that carries 2.5m+tide at the entrance bar and for at least 250m inland. The kreek is no more than 20m wide, and in places closer to 10m. Turning around takes patience and care. Anchor in the kreek fore and aft (there is no room to swing). Alternatively, anchor outside in the river in 20m and explore by dinghy.

Surnau Kreek entrance



Inside the kreek



**WATERLAND MARINA (5°39'.40N
55°03'.76W)**

Small good quality marina in a boutique jungle resort

6M upriver from Domburg is the Waterland Marina with space for 12 yachts on a single well-constructed jetty with finger pontoons and 3m-7m water. All berths have electricity and water, Wi-Fi is offered in the bar ashore, and an overnight laundry service (€12) is available. The marina is part of a boutique jungle resort of some charm which has a small restaurant (Sunday brunch is a highlight), a beach, and canoes and bicycles for hire.

A 12m berth is €18 per day, reducing to €15 a day for stays of one month or longer (2014 prices). Contact

on VHF 12, +597 8786938, www.waterlandsuriname.com, info@waterlandsuriname.com

Car rental can be arranged for €10 a day, and a taxi roundtrip to Paramaribo for formalities costs SRD150 including waiting for you at the various offices. Noal, the friendly and helpful Dutch owner, speaks good English and is an excellent source of knowledge and advice about Suriname.

Fuel by jerry can is possible from a fuel station a few km away using a taxi (SRD50 for 2 trips in 2014).

Waterland Marina jetty, unusually empty



ACCARIBO (5°37'.92N 55°04'.49W)

A settlement 1.7M upriver from Waterland

Accaribo has another jungle resort, White Beach, with a bar, popular at weekends. Anchor in the river close to the resort. Dinghy landing is possible on the beach or on the lower of the two wooden jetties.

Accaribo



Jetty usable for landing

PARANAM (5°36'N 55°5'W)

Unattractive commercial port with little reason to stop.

Paranam is an industrial port 10M upstream from Domburg on the Suriname River. It is not a particularly attractive location. Anchor out of the marked channel close to the town. A small beach can be used for landing, although there is little reason to do so.

Paranam



Suriname River upstream from Paranam

Continuing on upstream from the port you pass under power lines (60m clearance) and are in the jungle immediately. Anchor anywhere in 10m+ of water, ensuring your boat is towards the side of the river and well lit, as sizeable commercial barges travel this section of the river.

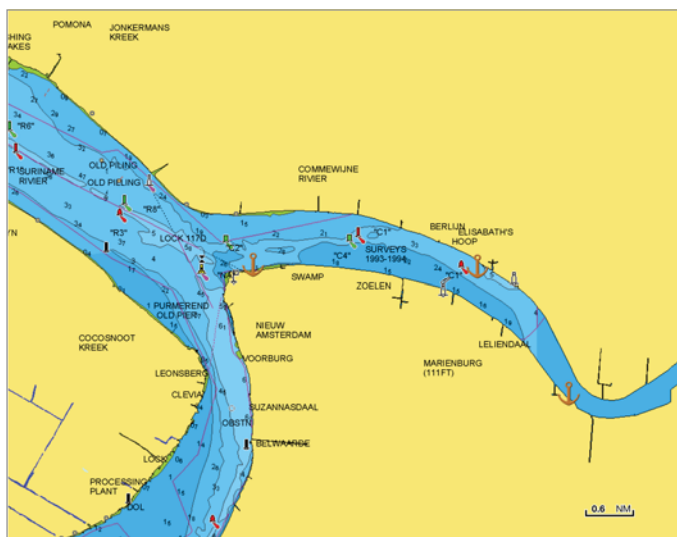
3.5M upstream from Paranam is a road bridge with 7.5m clearance that ends navigation for cruising yachts. Further exploration could be undertaken by dinghy.

Road bridge upstream from Paranam.



**NIEUW AMSTERDAM (5°53'.51N
55°05'.30W)**

Nieuw Amsterdam is a small town (pop 5000) at the junction of the Suriname River and the Commewijne River



PLAN 42: Nieuw Amsterdam and anchorages on the Commewijne river



Nieuw Amsterdam



Anchor north of the town in the Commewijne River in 4m over soft mud, and use the water taxi jetty for landing by dinghy.

The town has an attractive open air museum on the point with an old fort and other buildings in the process of renovation. Several modest supermarkets will be found in town, along with two simple snack bars (one by the entrance to the open air museum) and one restaurant.

The fishing pier, on the Suriname River side of town, has a fuel station right by it. It may be possible to raft next to a fishing boat and get fuel alongside.

**JOHAN-EN-MARGARETHA
(5°53'.49N 55°02'.45W)**

Attractive anchorage with a small, lively village ashore, and a restored plantation a short walk away

Some 3M upstream from Nieuw Amsterdam along the Commewijne River is an attractive anchorage off the small village of Johan-en-Margaretha. The jungle is teeming with birdlife in this area.

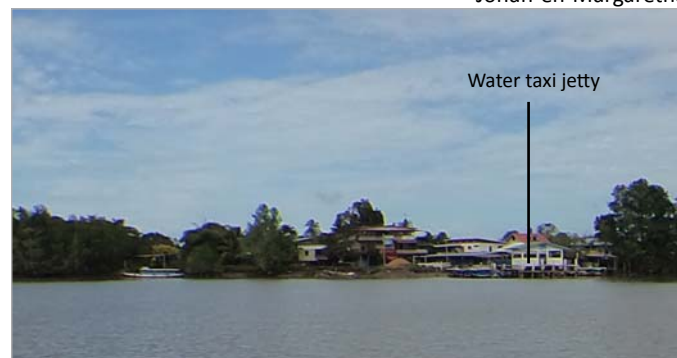
Approach and anchorage

It is important to follow the buoyed channel in the early part of the Commewijne as there are several sets of fishing stakes that stretch almost across the river between Nieuw Amsterdam and Johan-en-Margaretha.

After leaving the red buoy to starboard continue on a short distance and anchor before the obvious jetty used by water taxis in 7m over soft mud. Note that the current runs quite strongly here, up to 4kt. The water, while not clear, is much less muddy than in the Suriname River.

Land on the jetty by dinghy taking care not to obstruct the water taxis, and be aware of current and tidal range (at low tide reaching the jetty from the dinghy takes some effort). The village has several

Johan-en-Margaretha





Fishing stakes across the Commewijne River

simple provision shops that also sell roti and other take away foods, and whose forecourts become local bars in the evening. There is also one small restaurant. Sunday afternoon and evening is lively.

A few hundred metres further upstream you will find a jetty for the beautifully restored plantation at Frederiksdorp. The jetty can be used for dinghy landing if you use the plantation restaurant. Alternatively it is a pleasant 10 minute walk along a clear path from Johan-en-Margaretha.

Across the river on the south side there is a jetty that provides access to the small village of Marienberg and old plantation buildings. This can be reached by dinghy or water taxi.



Frederiksdorp

ALKMAAR (5°51'.88N 55°01'.29W)

2M beyond Frederiksdorp lies the small town of Alkmaar. Anchor off in 14m over mud and clay. Land by dinghy at the water taxi jetty. There is one simple bar/restaurant in the town and several traditional wooden houses.



Alkmaar anchorage looking downstream from the town



MOENGO (5°38'N 54°25'W)

Mining town accessible to commercial barges via a long river journey



PLAN 43: To Moengo via the Cottica River



This information is provided for reference as we did not visit Moengo.

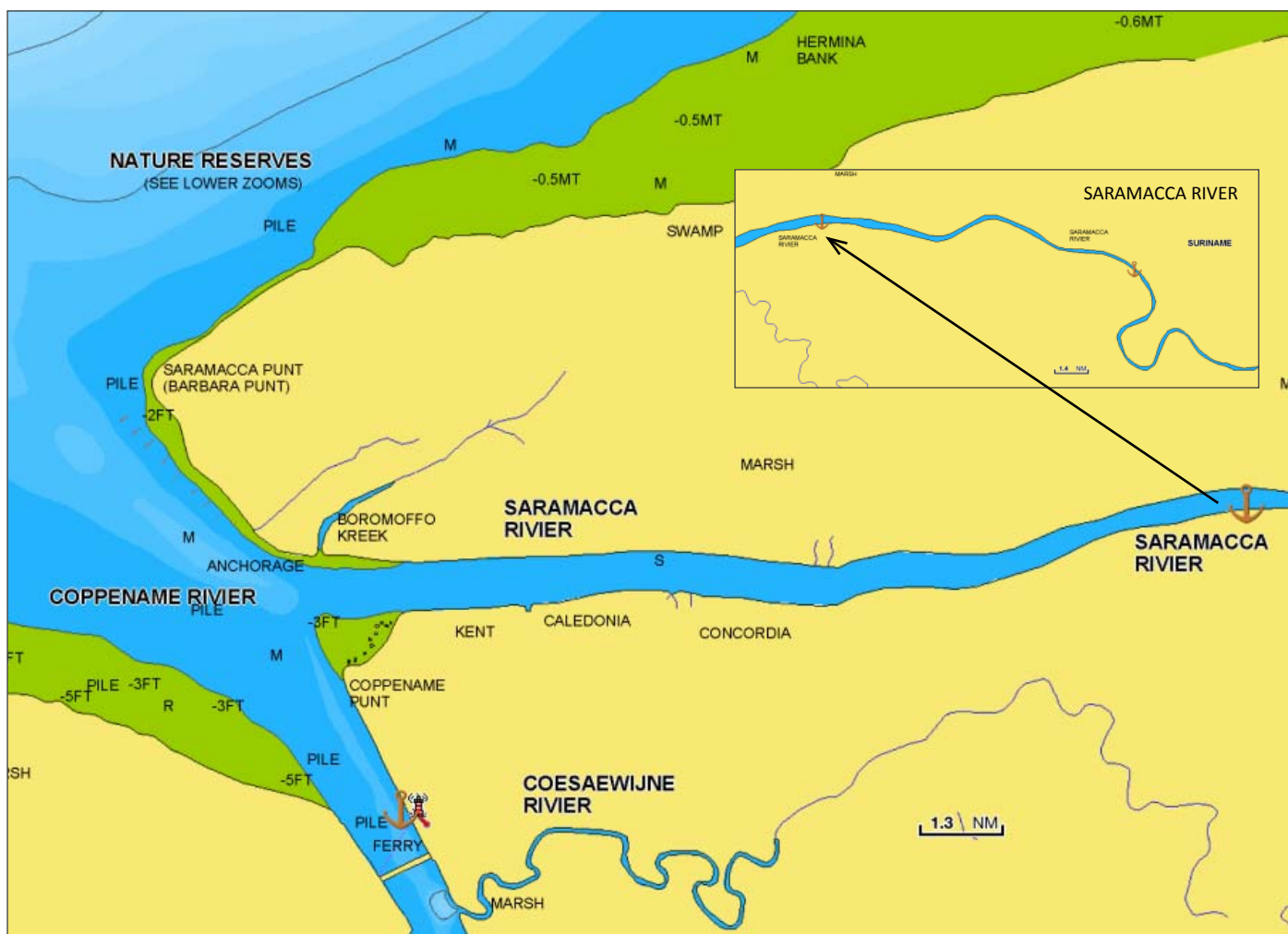
Commercial vessels navigate to the mining town of Moengo (population 10,000, largest bauxite mine in the world) following the Commewijne River for a further 11M beyond Alkmaar, then the Cottica River for 53M, and finally the Boven Cottica River for 11M, a total of 80M from the river mouth at Nieuw Amsterdam.

The tiny jungle settlements of Wanhatti, Paradijs, Lange Hoekoe and Rikanau Hoffo are the only inhabited places between Alkmaar and Moengo. There are no services ashore until Moengo.

The whole river system is tidal, although by the time Moengo is reached the tidal range is just 0.1m. Beyond Alkmaar the controlling depth is 6.8m, although generally the rivers are much deeper than this.



COPPENAME RIVER



PLANS 44-45: Coppename and Saramacca rivers, with continuation

NAVIONICS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

The Coppename River, and its tributary the Saramacca River, are about half way between the Suriname River and the Courantyne River on the Guyana border. The Coppename River is unbuoyed.

Tide times are Paramaribo -45m.

Entrance and anchorage

We found depths in the Coppename entrance to be at least 1.5m+tide in November 2014. The latest Surinamese chart shows the entrance to be 0.4m+tide, considerably lower than on previous charts, and inconsistent with our actual experience. Nonetheless entrance on a rising mid tide will be necessary for most cruising vessels.

From the E sail to 6°03'.22N 55°54.44W, then head 230° for 8.9M to the approach waypoint of 5°57'.58N 56°01'.29W. There is an unmarked drying sandbank inshore of the line between these two waypoints. If approaching from the W there are no offlying hazards, and the approach waypoint can be sailed

directly.

From the approach waypoint, sail 2.9M heading 173° to 5°54'.72N 56°00'.96W, then 7.2M heading 131° to the confluence of the two rivers at 5°49'.99N 55°55'.55W, leaving the withy at 5°50'.85N 55°56'.40W to port.

Consider the SW side of the line formed between the above waypoints as a recommended limit and keep to it. The river shoals quite quickly to the NE of the line. The line cannot be followed directly as there are numerous groups of unlit fishing stakes which will require small deviations to avoid, and which will change with time. When faced with a deviation, favour SW towards the centre of the river for greater depth. Entry at night or in reduced visibility would be unwise.

Anchorage is possible anywhere in the river subject to depth, but is best towards Boskamp or in the Saramacca River.

BOSKAMP (5°47'.02N 55°53'.83W)

Pleasant unspoiled village rarely visited by cruising yachts

The Coppename can be followed upstream after the Saramacca confluence for a further 4.5M to a fixed road bridge across the river, with depths a comfortable 3.5m or more.

Anchor by the village of Boskamp in 3.5m over soft mud. Land by dinghy at the jetty directly behind

the piles of a ruined pier.

The friendly and pleasant village has three small supermarkets/bars, one of which serves simple cooked food, and a lady making dried saltfish and smoked fish.

Boskamp



SARAMACCA RIVER

Remote river anchorages with interesting temples ashore

Older charts of the Saramacca River show it as being extremely shallow for the first 10M. This does not match our experience in 2014. We found navigation simple and straightforward with 1.8m + tide in the centre of the river at the entrance and no bar. Entry should be timed for half flood for peace of mind.

Staying in the centre of the river we found depths to be consistent, shoaling slightly to a least depth of 1.4m+tide 3M into the river and increasing very slowly as you proceed upriver. 10M into the river the depth is 2.8m + tide, and increases thereafter as the river narrows. Navigation is possible to 28M from the river mouth to a fixed road bridge.

Occasional fishing nets are placed across the centre of the river and may or may not have a flag at one end – if not, all that will be seen are small floats. As the river has a typical U-shaped bottom it is practical to stay close to one of the banks to avoid the nets.

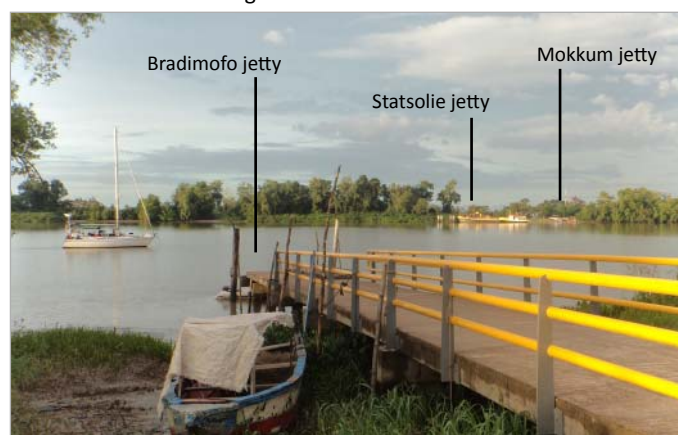
The surroundings are lush jungle with occasional clearings. It is practical to anchor anywhere according to depth, except for the clearly signposted areas near the two Staatsolie underwater pipelines at 5°51'.99N 55°34'.00W and 5°50'.86N 55°31'.41W.

Landing is possible using the small jetties at the hamlets of Mokkum (5°52'.00N 55°40'.46W) and across the river at Bradimofo. Neither hamlet has any services, but there are interesting temples in each. Statsolie has a facility behind Mokkum and

occasionally company barges tie up at their large private jetty.

At the fixed road bridge at 28M (5°49'.80N 55°28'.00W) anchor in 12m over gritty mud. It is feasible to land by dinghy under the bridge and go ashore through mud, or perhaps over one of the pirogues that are kept there. Ashore there is a fuel station, 3 modest supermarkets, an ATM and 2 small restaurants.

Looking across the Saramacca River from Bradimofo



Saramacca River Bridge





Nieuw Nickerie commercial dock

to prevent swinging into the channel, and keep the boat as visible as possible, e.g. with deck lighting as well as a standard anchor light at night.

Formalities

It is necessary to visit the Customs office and the port office both before the port gate, some 100m from the dockside. Clearance formalities are possible here. If cleared in already just show clearance and passports. The Police office in Nieuw Nickerie, although handling immigration for commercial seamen, is unable to process normal passport type check in or check out. It is necessary to visit the Immigration office at the ferry point, South Drain, a 45m taxi ride away (SRD150 round trip in 2014). The Immigration office can stamp passports in or out but cannot issue tourist cards, therefore if entering Suriname here it is necessary to have a visa.

When we visited Nieuw Nickerie there was no charge for tying up, but as commercial vessels are normally charged it is possible a charge could be levied in future. Water is available by jerry can from the helpful and friendly port office.

PLANS 47-8: Nickerie River (and overlay)



Ashore

The town is a pleasant place built on being a regional farming centre with rice the main crop. It has a good market open mornings Mon-Sat selling fresh produce and fish, stalls selling cooked food, several supermarkets, banks/ATMs, restaurants, bars, etc. Fast Wi-Fi is available free of charge to bar customers at the Residence Inn on the main square.

Upstream

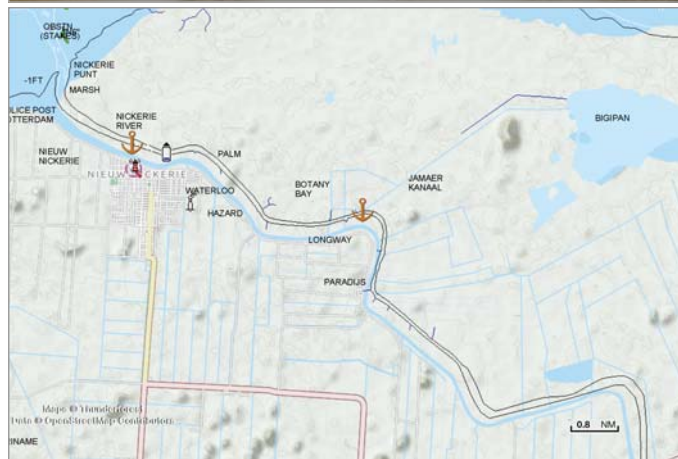
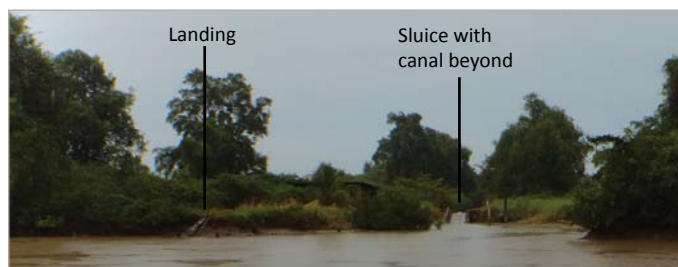
The Nickerie River can be followed for 12.6M upstream of Nieuw Nickerie to an interesting road bridge between two towers which used to lift to allow ships to pass to Wageningen, but which is no longer functional. Depths are adequate in the river, 6-10m, sometimes a little more. Currents run up to 4kt so tide timing is important.

At 5°55'.77N 56°55'.66W you will find the Jamaerkanaal, which after 4M arrives at Bigi Pan, a shallow inland lake with abundant wildlife including caimans and red ibises. The canal and lake can be explored by dinghy which must be carried for a short distance from the river up a ramp and over the sluice gates. The main boat can be anchored fore and aft in the river a short distance away from the sluice.

Lifting bridge across the Nickerie River, no longer operating



Jamaerkanaal from the Nickerie River



CORANTIJN / COURANTYNE RIVER

This river forms the border with Guyana, and is navigable 75M inland with at least 2m water, typically much more



PLAN 49: Corantijn River entrance



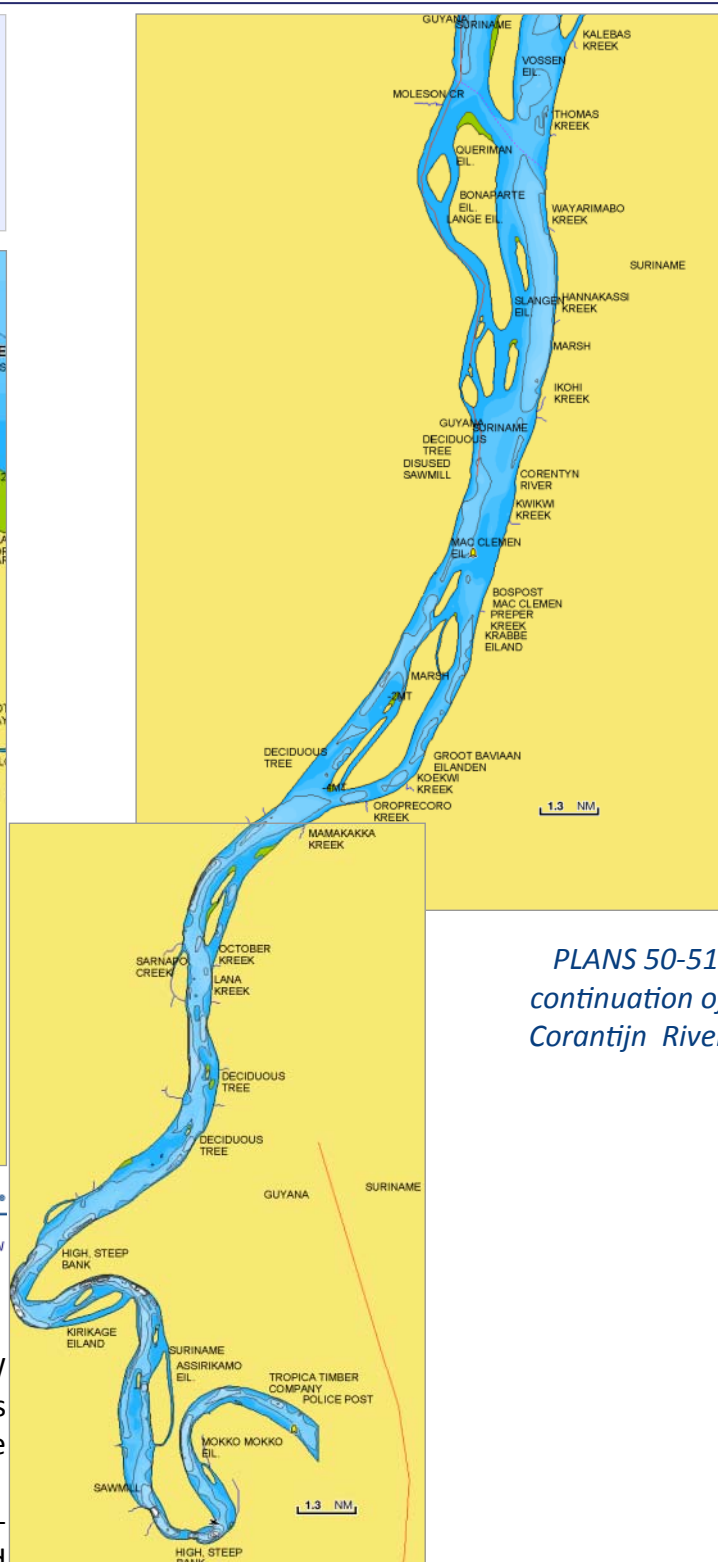
Tidal range is 3.2m springs and 2.2m neaps.

From the safe water buoy at 6°02'.42N 57°00'.60W (Mo(A)8s) sail for 10M heading 218° towards Springlands following the red buoys marking the channel. There is at least 2.5m + tide.

For navigation beyond Springlands, the up-to-date Surinamese chart for the Courantyne should be carried. This is available from MAS in Paramaribo (see River Charts in the Suriname introduction) but not from the MAS office in Nieuw Nickerie.

There are occasional reports of piracy on the river. These are confirmed by both the Surinamese Politie (police) and Guyanese customs officials to be theft of fish glue products between fishermen from Guyana and Suriname, and have not involved other vessels on the river.

Below Vossen Eiland the ferry port of South Drain, Suriname, is found at 5°44'.98N 57°08'.21W. It is possible to clear in and out of Suriname here with



PLANS 50-51:
continuation of
Corantijn River

Customs and with Immigration, although if checking in, a visa will have to have been arranged in advance (e.g. from Georgetown) as the Immigration office here cannot issue Tourist Cards.

Aside from a small snack cart outside the ferry terminal there are no services ashore. It is a 45 min taxi ride to Nieuw Nickerie.

The Amerindian village of Orealla, Guyana is on your starboard side 51M from the Safe Water Buoy, and after a further 24M Apoera is found, a small jungle settlement on the Suriname side of the river.

GUYANA



PLAN 52: Guyana



Guyana has a fairly flat coastal plain backed by rainforest and savannah, and a highlands area that rises to 2,810m inland at the tri-border point with Brazil and Venezuela. Much of the rainforest is unspoilt and is difficult to access.

The coastal strip is where most of the 735,000 inhabitants live. About a third live in the capital, Georgetown. The country is ethnically diverse, with about 44% East Indian, 30% Black, 17% Mixed and 9% Amerindian.

Major industries include sugar (Demerara) and rice production, timber, and aluminium and gold mining. Good quality rum is also produced and exported. GDP per capita is \$3,600.

The currency is the Guyanese dollar, with an approximate rate of 200GYD to 1USD, 275GYD to 1EUR, and 350GYD to 1GBP. As of Nov 2014 only Scotia Bank ATMs function with foreign cards, and these have a limit of GYD 30,000 per ATM transaction.

Time zone is GMT-4, 1 hour different to Suriname, and the same as eastern Caribbean islands to the N.

English is the official language of Guyana and is spoken everywhere, often with a heavy local accent. Guyanese Creole, an English based language, is the primary everyday language.

Culturally, Guyana is closer to the Caribbean than to Latin America. It hosts the headquarters of Caricom (Caribbean Community), an economic, political and diplomatic organisation somewhat similar to the EU for Caribbean islands, promoting trade and free movement of citizens between member states.

Brief history

Guyana was originally colonised by the Dutch in 1616, and passed into British colonial control in 1814. Independence from Britain was achieved in 1966.

The original indigenous population was decimated

by European diseases, and both the Dutch and the English used African slaves. After the formal abolition of slavery in 1838 labour was provided for the plantations by indentured East Indians. The vast majority of Guyanese today come from these two populations.

In 1978 the American cult leader Jim Jones' Jonestown community brought Guyana into the news with the mass murder/suicide of 918 residents following the murder of a visiting US congressman.

Formalities

Official ports of entry for customs clearance are: Corriverton (Springlands), New Amsterdam, Georgetown, Bartica. Immigration offices are more widespread, and immigration check in or check out can occur independently of vessel clearance.

Formalities consist of two steps:

1. Immigration, carried out by the Police department.
 - Passports must be valid for 6 months.
 - Visas are issued on arrival for those that need them. No visa is required for nationals of many countries including UK, US, Canada, New Zealand, France, Germany, Australia, Sweden and the Netherlands. In some cases evidence of funds is required.
 - Stamps are given for 3 months. Extending beyond this time is straightforward.
2. Clearance, carried out by the Customs department.
 - Permission is granted for 6 months, and it is straightforward to renew for a further six months if required. Beyond this the yacht must either leave Guyana or be formally imported.
 - Firearms and (significant) foreign currency must be declared.
 - Bringing animals into Guyana entails some work. As well as the usual health/vaccination certificate an Import Permit is required from the local Ministry of Agriculture. Animals from the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and several Caribbean countries may then enter. Animals from all other countries are quarantined for 90 days.
 - A fee of G\$2500 (USD 12.50) is charged by Customs for clearing in and again for clearing out.

Long trousers and a collared long sleeve shirt are needed for clearance. Men and women in shorts or very casually dressed will be turned away from the

offices. The dress code is displayed on the doors of the offices.

Depending on the individual officer, different documentation may be requested. For example, Immigration in Springlands required:

- A copy of the boat registration document
- A copy of clearance from our last port
- 2 crew lists signed and stamped with the ship's stamp (the first time in more than 30 countries we have ever been asked for a ship's stamp)
- A "Immigration Regulations" form, signed and stamped with the ship's stamp
- A normal immigration form for each crew member

Customs in Springlands required:

- An agent to find the right form for leisure boats, as Customs do not supply the forms. We used Nivie Broker in Springlands, +592 629 8741. Costs are nominal.
- A copy of the boat registration document
- A copy of the captain's/owner's passport
- Registration of the owner for a Guyanese TIN (Tax ID number) necessary to pay the clearance fee
- A clearance fee of G\$2500 (about USD 12.50)

In such cases the best option is to go with the flow, gently and repeatedly point out you are not a cargo ship, and view it all as part of the Guyanese experience, especially when asked if you intend to discharge oil products to a tanker.

The procedure at Bartica is somewhat simpler as the authorities are more used to dealing with cruising vessels rather than just cargo boats.

Crime

Georgetown has a reputation for petty crime on the streets. Normal precautions should be taken. Georgetown is also considered an unsafe anchorage, and it is universally recommended not to anchor near Georgetown for safety reasons. Occasional theft occurs against commercial ships. If Georgetown must be visited for emergency reasons tie up at the Coastguard dock.

All other areas of the country are considered safe for visiting yachts. In particular it is worth noting that there are no reported incidents of attacks on cruising yachts, even in Georgetown, and the authorities are vigilant in ensuring yachts are safe.

While Bartica may feel somewhat edgy, it is considered safe.

Incidents of piracy between Surinamese and Guyanese fishermen on the Courantyne River

continue to occur. The main motivation is fish glue which is a valuable local product. According to local police, yachts and non-fishing craft have not been involved in any incidents.

Communications

Local SIM cards for mobiles are available. Internet access via mobile is quite slow as Guyana has only 2G (GPRS) data services as of November 2014.

Internet cafes are widespread, although often it is necessary to use their computers rather than your own. Wi-Fi is less widespread but can be found in Bartica and Georgetown. It is not particularly fast.

The country code is +592.

Repairs and Chandleries

Yacht services are extremely limited in Guyana. If at all possible it is best to get to Chaguaramas, Trinidad, where almost every conceivable yacht service is available.

NGEC Boatyard in Georgetown has a slipway and the ability to take a boat out of the water in an emergency, as well as carry out basic repairs.

M. F. Yassin hardware and mining supply store in Bartica carries a small range of spares for Perkins diesels and Yamaha outboards, and can help with inboard or outboard engine repairs. They also have a range of general hardware, e.g. tools, hoses, connectors, etc, and sell gasoline generators.

The Double Platinum Service Station in Bartica has a limited range of engine supplies including filters.

Kit Nascimento, an ex-government minister and key promoter of the Essequibo as a yachting location, is the general go to guy in the area for yachties. He may be able to assist with recommendations for repair services. Tel :(+592) 226-0240 Mobile: (+592) 640-4497 Email: kitnasc@gmail.com

Importing Spares

Importing spares to Guyana is possible but somewhat bureaucratic and time consuming. No duty is payable on spares imported for a yacht in transit.

A customs agent is essential to the process, and agents can be found in Springlands and Georgetown. Costs are modest. Note that there are no customs agents in Bartica.

It is also feasible to fly to Trinidad and return with small parts as luggage, a process that will almost certainly be quicker than having parts shipped and imported into Guyana.

Fuel

Fuel is available from filling stations ashore by jerry can in Springlands, Rosignol and Bartica.

In Bartica larger yachts could consider using one of the two waterside filling stations set up for freighters and fishing boats.

Water

Water is not considered potable anywhere in Guyana. Use bottled water for drinking.

In an emergency it is possible to make river water potable with a watermaker, but the suspended silt will require a very fine pre-filter and regular pre-filter cleaning and replacement. Wear on watermaker components will be much greater than with clean seawater.

Provisioning

There are open air markets in most towns offering a reasonable selection of produce. Stabroek Market in Georgetown is excellent and the market at Bartica is good.

Supermarkets are generally modest affairs offering a limited selection of canned and dry goods, including some imported American goods.

Health

Medical care for minor medical conditions is available in Guyana. Emergency care and care for major conditions is limited in Georgetown, and extremely limited outside of the capital. There are small hospitals in New Amsterdam and Bartica. For more significant medical care Trinidad has excellent facilities and is a short plane ride away.

Although a yellow fever vaccination is not compulsory it is highly recommended.

Malaria is rare but not unheard of in Georgetown, New Amsterdam and the Essequibo as far as Bartica. Inland Malaria is endemic, and dengue fever is a risk. See the notes in the introduction regarding mosquito protection and malaria prophylaxis.

River Charts

Available charts for the rivers in Guyana primarily rely on data collected by the British Admiralty prior to 1966. A comprehensive hydrographic survey has not been carried out since then. The charts of the Essequibo River in particular are no longer reliable due to significant shifts in the position of sandbanks.

The Courantyne River has good charts available from MAS in Paramaribo, Suriname.

Public Holidays

- 1 January: New Year's Day.
- 23 February: Republic Day
- February/March: Holi
- March/April: Good Friday, Easter Monday
- 1 May: Labor Day
- 5 May: Arrival Day
- 26 May: Independence Day
- 1st Monday in July: CARICOM Day
- 1 August: Emancipation Day
- October/November: Deepavali
- 25/26 December; Christmas Day, Boxing Day

Transport

Guyana has one international airport, the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (GEO), about 40km south of Georgetown.

Flights operate regularly to Port of Spain (Trinidad), Kingston (Jamaica) and New York, and less frequently to Miami, Toronto, Santiago (Chile) and Paramaribo (Suriname). Caribbean Airlines is the flag carrier for Guyana as well as for Trinidad & Tobago.

Tides

Tidal range at Georgetown is 2.6m at springs and 0.9m at neaps.

Tidal predications are available online at www.tide-forecast.com and www.tides.info

for the following locations.

- Georgetown (port of reference)
- Skeldon (Springlands)
- Rosignol (Berbice Bridge)
- New Amsterdam
- Anna Regina
- Parika (Essequibo)

SPRINGLANDS (5°53'.44N 57°08'.03W)

Port of Entry and sizeable border town with a roly anchorage.



Springlands Immigration Office

Springlands is the northern area of Corriverton, an agglomerated border town and trading port, population 11,000, across the Courantyne River from Nieuw Nickerie. Skeldon, a major sugar processing centre, forms the southern area of Corriverton.

Approach and anchorage

From the approach waypoint at 6°02'.57N 57°00'.69W sail 11.5M heading 218° to Springlands following the red buoys clearly marking the channel. There is at least 2.2m + tide.

Anchor in 5m, good holding in mud/clay, between the decayed customs jetty and the prominent Mosque. Do not anchor closer to shore than a line parallel to the end of the customs jetty as there are semi-submerged piles and broken jetties. The anchorage has some roll, being wide open to the NE and in strong E/NE conditions would be untenable, particularly on the ebb.

There are two water taxi jetties that can be used to land by dinghy, the one with a small blue shelter ashore being the better maintained of the two.

You will be approached by the local equivalent of Caribbean boat boys offering to look after your dinghy, help with formalities, shopping, etc. It is worthwhile to reach an agreement for the dinghy,

Springlands



and for help in town if formalities are to be completed as the offices are not really within walking distance.

From the dinghy landing dock the Immigration offices are about 1km to the right, an improbable looking white wooden building down a side street and across a plank bridge over a creek. The Customs office is about 1km to the left from the end of the dinghy landing, past the mosque. We cleared in here in 2014 - expect to spend at least half a day doing so.

The town has several banks, and money may be obtained from a teller using your credit card, a passport and one additional form of picture ID, e.g. driving licence, ICC licence. The nearest branch of Scotia Bank which has an ATM that works with foreign cards is a 20M taxi ride away. Informal money changers, offering better rates than banks for cash, will approach you at the foot of the dinghy dock.

There are supermarkets, restaurants, bars, etc. Springlands is a pleasant, lively town.

BERBICE RIVER / ROSIGNOL (6°16'.3N 57°32'.2W)

A river for daylight entry only, abundant anchorage possibilities, and a small town with a distinct Caribbean flavour.

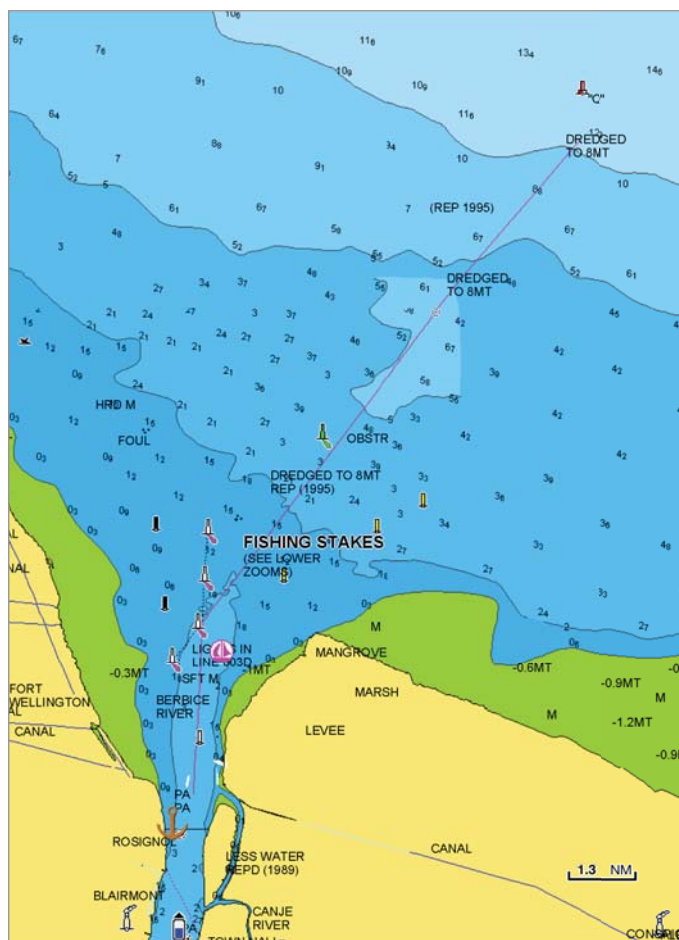
The tidal rise is 2.5m at springs and 1.3m at neaps. The flood sets SW at 3kt and the ebb N at up to 5kt.

Approach

The approach to the Berbice River follows a marked channel which is regularly dredged to 6m. The marks are not shown on charts, but were in place in late 2014 and mostly lit.

Unfortunately it would appear attention is not given to maintenance of channel markers and lights.

There are numerous hazards outside the channel
PLAN 53: Berbice River approach



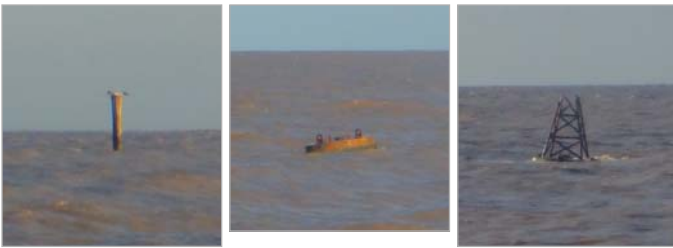
including the usual fishing stakes, but of particular note is an unlit substantial piling at approx. 6°24'.90N 57°28'.25W 300m SE of the channel. A night time approach is strongly discouraged.

From the Approach waypoint at 6°26'.07N 57°27'.68W sail 6.3M heading 216° to 6°20'.94N 57°31'.37W. As already mentioned this is a marked channel, but beware of the broken green channel marker with only its base remaining, unlit, at 6°21'.80N 57°30'.71W and a broken red channel marker at 6°21'.35N 57°31'.14W. In addition there are several marks that are missing, but the channel is straightforward to follow even without the marks.

Then sail 3.8M heading 183° to 6°17'.19N 57°31'.58W before the opening bridge spans, being sure to pass exactly through 6°20'.69N 57°31'.39W which is a few hundred metres after making the turn and which guides you between two sets of fishing stakes right up against each side of the channel (situation as of Nov 2014).

The Berbice Bridge crosses the river immediately before Rosignol and New Amsterdam. It is a pontoon bridge with 10.9m clearance under the fixed portion close to New Amsterdam, and two spans that open completely for 1.5hr per day around daylight high tide. The current schedule can be found at <http://www.berbicebridge.com/>, 592-327-5466, email info@berbicebridge.com.

The Berbice Bridge Company (VHF Ch. 16) is particularly inflexible and requires all vessels, leisure boats as well as cargo ships, to submit their details 24 hours in advance for approval and pay a fee of GYD 55,000 (over USD 250) each way for transit through the opening spans. Boats with less than 10.9m air height require no approval and pay no fee, as they transit under the high fixed span.



Unlit hazards on the approach to the Berbice River

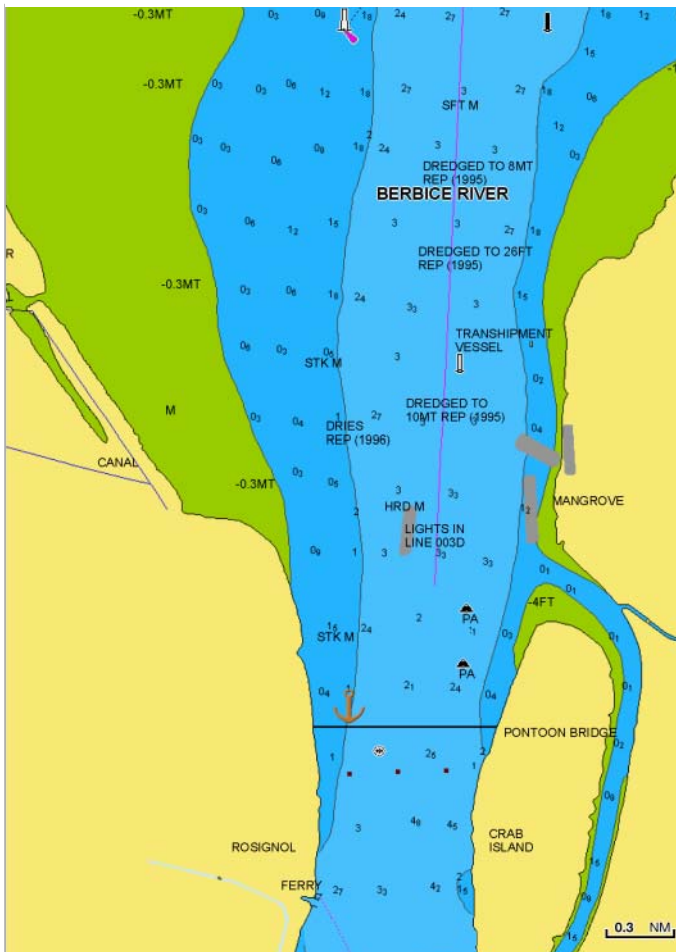
Anchorage

Anchoring is feasible in most of the river depending on depth. Anchoring before the bridge on the west side ($6^{\circ}17'.02\text{N}$ $57^{\circ}31'.87\text{W}$) in 2.5m avoids any traffic other than a few fishing boats at Cotton Tree, the village on the west side of the bridge. It is also possible to anchor on the east side to explore New Amsterdam by dinghy.

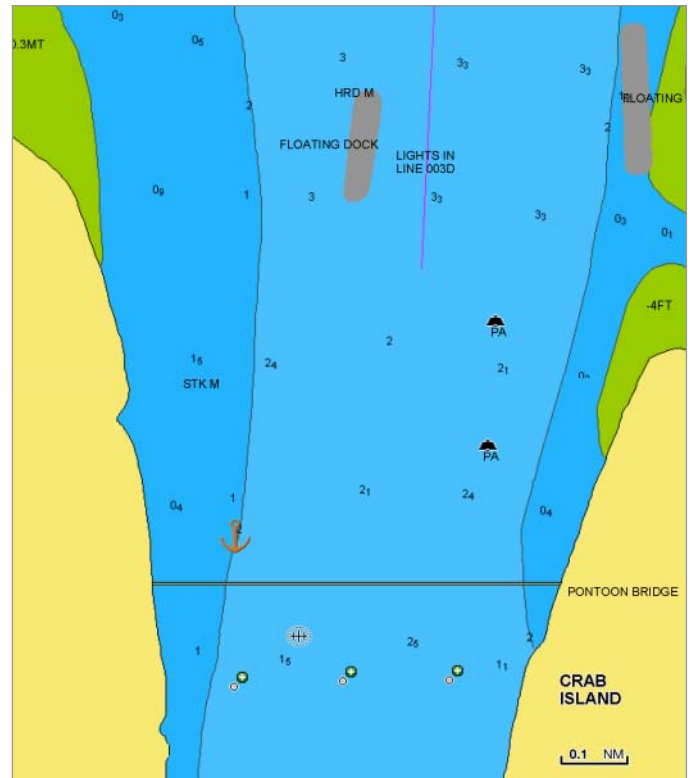
Ashore in Rosignol and beyond

Rosignol is a small town with a distinctly Caribbean

PLAN 54: Berbice River



Berbice Bridge



PLAN 55: Berbice River, bridge and anchorage at Rosignol

atmosphere, including coconut water street stalls and reggae music playing. Land by dinghy, tying up to one of the friendly fishing boats at Cotton Tree on the west side of the bridge. Cross the bridge road and you are immediately on the main street of Rosignol. In the town you will find a bank, several small supermarkets, bars, street food, a Digicell cell phone shop etc. Money can be changed at the travel agent about half way along the main street. Fresh produce is limited in the town itself, but can be found at the produce market on Stelling Rd, about 2km from the town centre.

On the east side of the river 2M past the bridge is New Amsterdam with a population of 33,000. New Amsterdam can be reached by shared minibus from Rosignol and has banks, supermarkets, restaurants, etc.

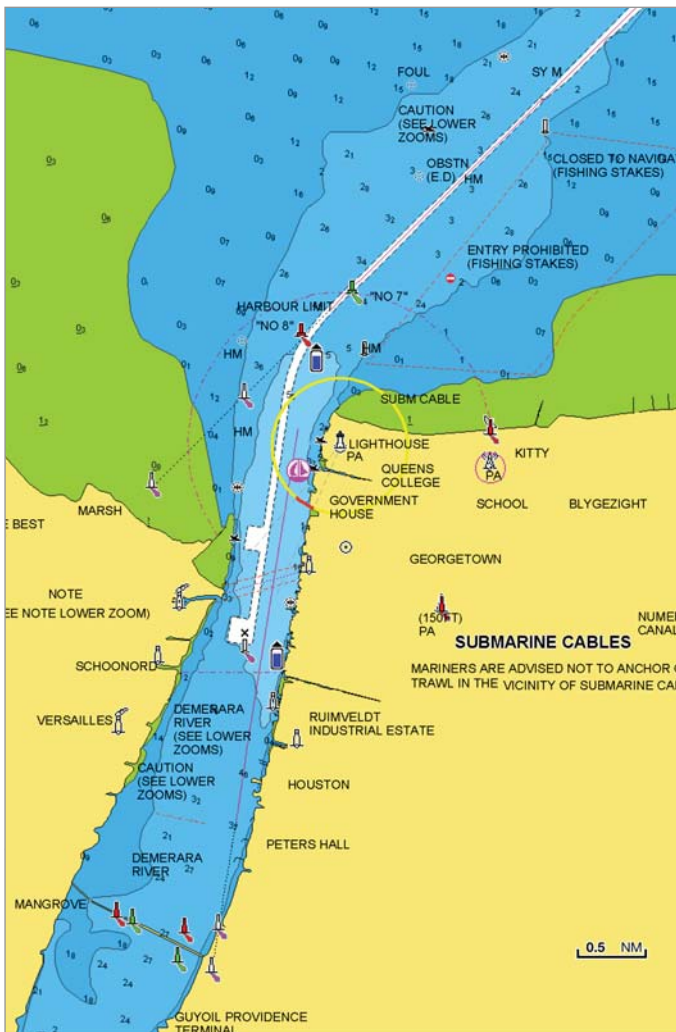
Bernhard Kleinhenz (see Baganara Island entry) followed the Berbice River for 220M past New Amsterdam in his sailboat with adequate depths. The only challenges encountered were large ore barges which require most of the river to negotiate bends.

Cotton Tree



DEMERARA RIVER AND GEORGETOWN (6°50'N 58°10'W)

A commercial port with known security issues



PLAN 56: Demerara River and Georgetown



Communication should be made with the Port of Georgetown on VHF 16 or 13 to request permission to enter.

Although commercial vessels dock at Georgetown, it is universally recommended by local people that yachts do not anchor there for safety reasons. There are reports of opportunistic theft/piracy against commercial vessels in Georgetown. If Georgetown must be visited for emergency reasons, tie up at the Coastguard dock.

The Demerara Harbour Bridge 4M after Georgetown has 7.9m clearance. There are two retractor spans allowing passage without height restrictions that open once per day, schedule at <http://www.harbourbridge.gov.gy/> or call +592 233 7007/8/10.

After the Demerara Harbour Bridge the river can be followed for a further 52M to Linden, a town of 30,000 inhabitants. Commercial traffic travels the Demerara River regularly to and from the town with Bauxite ore. Controlling depth in the river is 4.5m. There are numerous settlements on the river between Georgetown and Linden.

There is a fixed road bridge in Linden that stops further navigation.

ESSEQUIBO RIVER

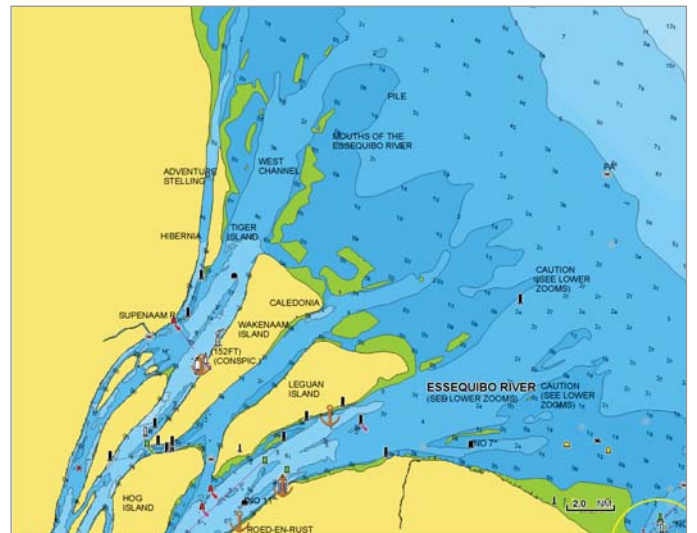
The Essequibo River is the largest in Guyana and is the area the Guyanese Tourist Authority promotes for yachting

Currents at the river mouth run up to 3kt, and tidal range at springs is 2.7m.

The river is no longer buoyed. Charts for the river are materially outdated, still showing buoyage and with depths and sandbank positions that do not always correspond to reality.

There are two channels recommended for cruising boats. From the south take the South Channel. It takes the old Ship Channel for the initial approach and then generally stays close to the shoreline of the southern bank of the river. From the north take the West Channel. The channels converge at Lau Lau Island. Both channels are not difficult but the West Channel is the easier and deeper of the two, and offers immediate protection from the prevailing

PLAN 57: Essequibo River entrance



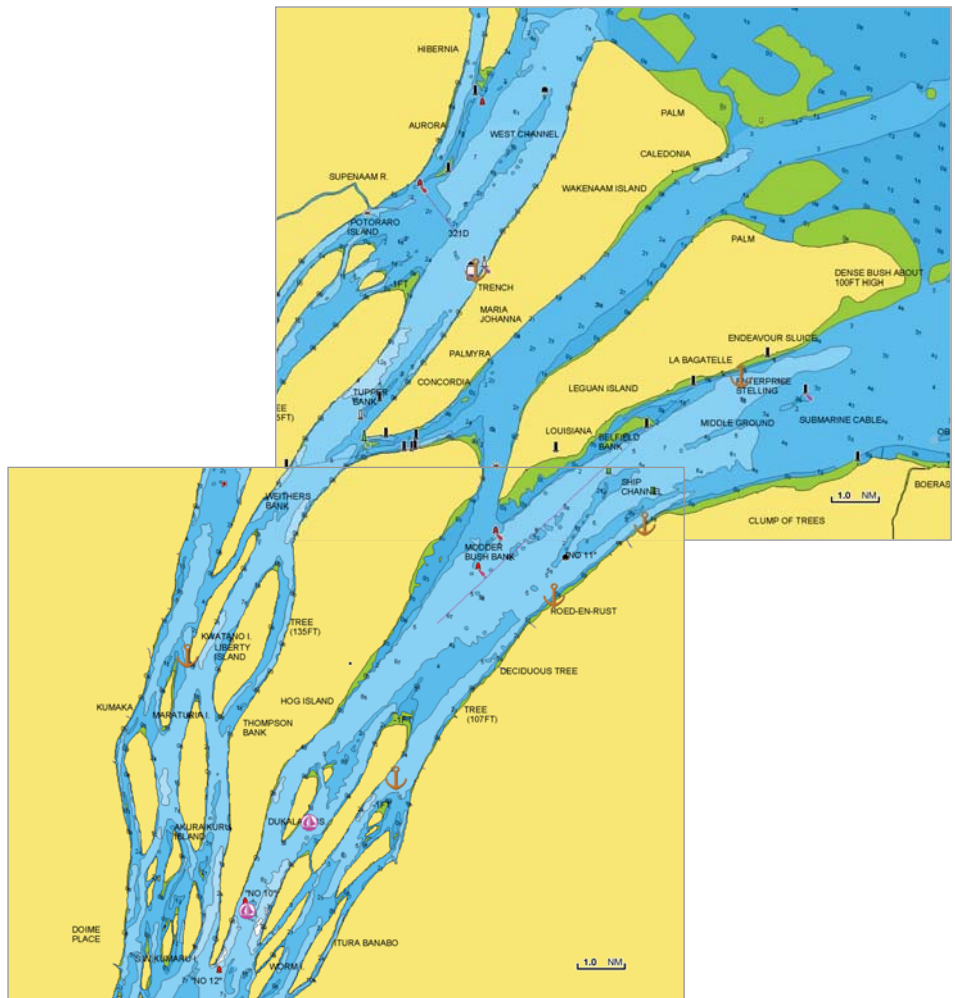
swell once the river is entered in the lee of Wakenaam Island.

The South Channel has a least depth of 2.1m + tide which is encountered over the bar between the approach waypoint and the first islands in the river. The West Channel has a least depth of 2.6m + tide over the bar. Depths in the channels once over the bar are greater, although note that there are shoal patches outside the channels. Controlling depth on the passage from Lau Lau Island to Bartica is 2.3m + tide.

Both channels pass through areas of fishing stakes and nets. A daylight approach is recommended.



*PLANS 58-59: Essequibo
ship channel, west channel and
continuation*



The South Channel to Lau Lau Island

	Waypoint	Course	Distance	Cumulative distance	Notes
1.	7°00'.99N 58°11'.36W			0M	Approach waypoint
2.	6°57'.00N 58°16'.00W	229°	6.1M	6.1M	
3.	6°54'.50N 58°20'.00W	238°	4.7M	10.8M	Beware of shoal area to NW of this segment. Sandbank with 0.5m water at 6°52'.84N 58°23'98W
4.	6°51'.90N 58°25'.50W	245°	6.1M	16.9M	Parika
5.	6°50'.00N 58°27'.70W	229°	2.9M	19.8M	Roeden Rust
6.	6°45'.85N 58°31'.26W	220°	5.5M	25.2M	Fort Island
7.	6°43'.00N 58°32'.40W	202°	3.1M	28.3M	
8.	6°40'.75N 58°33'.69W	210°	2.6M	30.9M	
9.	6°38'.70N 58°34'.30W	197°	2.1M	33.0M	Lau Lau Island

The West Channel to Lau Lau Island

	Waypoint	Course	Distance	Cumulative distance	Notes
1.	7°23'.00N 58°21'.30W			0M	Approach waypoint. The shallowest depth on this passage is about ¾ of the way through this segment with 2.6m + tide.
2.	7°10'.40N 58°22'.40W	185°	12.6M	12.6M	3.0-4.5m. Shoals to both sides.
3.	7°08'.80N 58°24'.20W	228°	2.4M	15.0M	3.5-8m Shoals to both sides of the channel, especially to the E, but plenty of space in the channel.
4.	7°01'.50N 58°26'.90W	200°	7.8M	22.8M	5-8m
5.	6°57'.00N 58°28'.90W	204°	4.9M	27.7M	5-9m. Wakenaam Stelling to the E.
6.	6°53'.33N 58°32'.16W	221°	4.9M	32.6M	3-11m. The shallowest part is over Weithers Bank extending NE from Little Truli Island. Deeper water, if needed, could almost certainly be found further to the E.
7.	6°49'.35N 58°34'.14W	206°	4.4M	37.1M	6-9m. Liberty Island anchorage.
8.	6°48'.45N 58°34'.30W	190°	0.9M	38.0M	6-10m.
9.	6°45'.69N 58°34'.09W	176°	2.8M	40.7M	7-12m.
10.	6°42'.85N 58°34'.34W	185°	2.9M	43.6M	Go very close to the tip of Hog Island, 15-20m water. Old buoy 12 is visible looking NE from below Hog Island, one of the few remaining buoys in the river but not relevant to this route. The shallowest point in this segment is 2.6m+tide over a sandbar.
11.	6°38'.70N 58°34'.30W	179°	4.2M	47.8M	Lau Lau Island.

LAU LAU ISLAND TO BARTICA

The route has at least 2.3m+tide, generally much more. Fishing nets are deployed in the river, especially between Lau Lau Island and Stampa Island, although not typically on the route below as it used by the large ferry and commercial barges.

Although a pilot is not necessary if the waypoints are followed, Malcolm (+592 670 9575) has been recommended by one cruiser (s/y Dreamtime Wanderer). Another pilot, Dominic, can be contacted via Kit Nascimento (+592 6404497 or kitnasc@gmail.com).

The South Channel, the route from Lau Lau Island to Bartica and the routes to Hurakabra and Baganara make use of some of the waypoints developed by Chris Doyle and other contributors to his Guyana /Essequibo cruising guide. The West Channel waypoints were pioneered by Bernhard Kleinhenz.



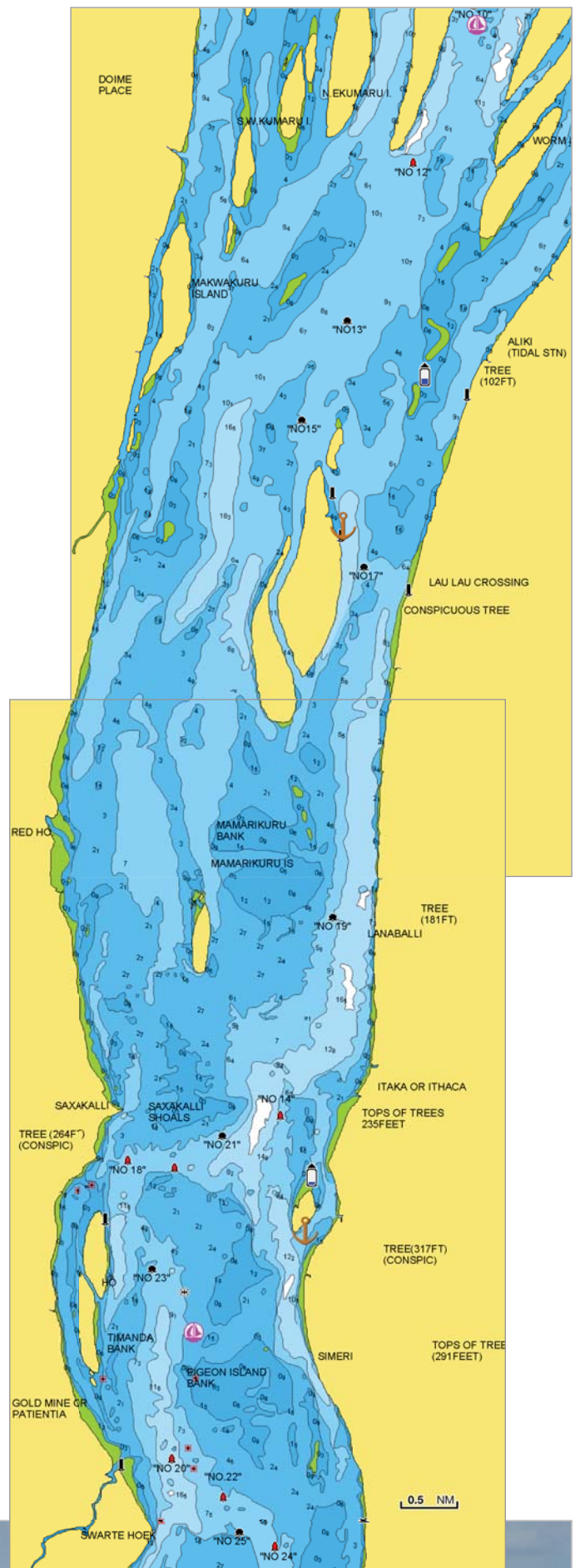
PLANS 60-61: Lau Lau
to Swarte Hoek

ENTERPRISE (6°54'.87N
58°23'.54W)

**A serviceable if somewhat roilly anchorage
on the south side of Leguan Island**

Useful for waiting for the desired tidal conditions.
Anchor in 6m over mud and clay.

Enterprise



WAKENAAM STELLING (6°57'.00N 58°28'.90W)

An anchorage suitable for an overnight stop or waiting for favourable tide conditions

The anchorage is protected from chop and swell in normal trade wind conditions.

Commercial vessels use the harbour and there is a car ferry to Parika on the east coast of the Essequibo.

Anchor in 7m, and land by dinghy where the fishing pirogues are using any of the steps along the wall.

The main stelling (commercial dock) at the SW end of town is reserved for the car ferry.

Wakenaam Stelling



PARIKA (6°51'.90N 58°25'.50W)

Parika is a small river port and market town of 4,000 inhabitants with several ships docked.

There are fast ferries to Bartica, to Enterprise on Leguan Island, and across to the opposite bank of the Essequibo at Supenaam.

The anchorage is not attractive, and in normal trade wind conditions there is enough chop here to be uncomfortable from midday onwards, although it will calm down overnight. Anchor near the town, ensuring you do not obstruct the ferries or other commercial traffic.

Land by dinghy next to the water taxis in the inner

harbour. Note that this dries almost completely at low tide.

It is possible to check in / check out in Parika. The Immigration office is close to the main ferry pier and they will direct you to the Customs office.

Parika has small restaurants, several supermarkets, and a Scotia Bank branch with an ATM. There is a large produce, fish and meat market on Wednesdays and Sundays.

Parika



Roeden Rust



ROEDEN RUST (6°50'.94N 58°27'.63W)**Roeden Rust is identifiable by the shipyard with a pier**

Continue upriver for a further 3M from Parika staying close to the bank.

Anchor off the pier 4-6m water, allowing for tidal range and swinging. The anchorage is more

comfortable than Parika but still somewhat choppy in normal trade wind conditions.

Land by dinghy at the shipyard pier. From the top of the road buses and taxis run to Parika.

LIBERTY ISLAND (6°49'.20N 58°34'.74W)

A tranquil island anchorage in the West Channel good for an overnight stop. Anchor in 5m.

Liberty Island

**FORT ISLAND (6°46'.73N 58°30'.53W)**

Continue on for 4.5M from Roeden Rust, staying close to land, arriving at the Fort Island anchorage. Anchor in 6-8m. Land on the beach or at one of the jetties, asking for permission.

There are several buildings on the island including the ruins of a fort, a school house and a church, connected by a paved walkway.

Fort Island

**LAU LAU ISLAND (6°39'.66N 58°34'.72W)****Remote jungle anchorage with lots of wildlife**

An uninhabited jungle island offering a pleasant, remote anchorage with plenty of wildlife. The water is deep around the NE corner of the island, shallower near the SE corner. Anchor in 12-15m in the NE around 6°39'.66N 58°34'.72W (reached from 6°40'.29N 58°33'.83W or 6°38'.70N 58°34'.30W)

or 3m+ in the SE around 6°38'.01N 58°35'.03W (reached from 6°37'.45N 58°34'.44W). The position of the sandbanks shown on the chart is no longer correct. In the places we went we found more water than shown on the chart, but presumably there are areas with less water too.



Lau Lau Island

STAMPA ISLAND (6°33'.31N 58°35'.02W)

Delightful tranquil remote jungle anchorage

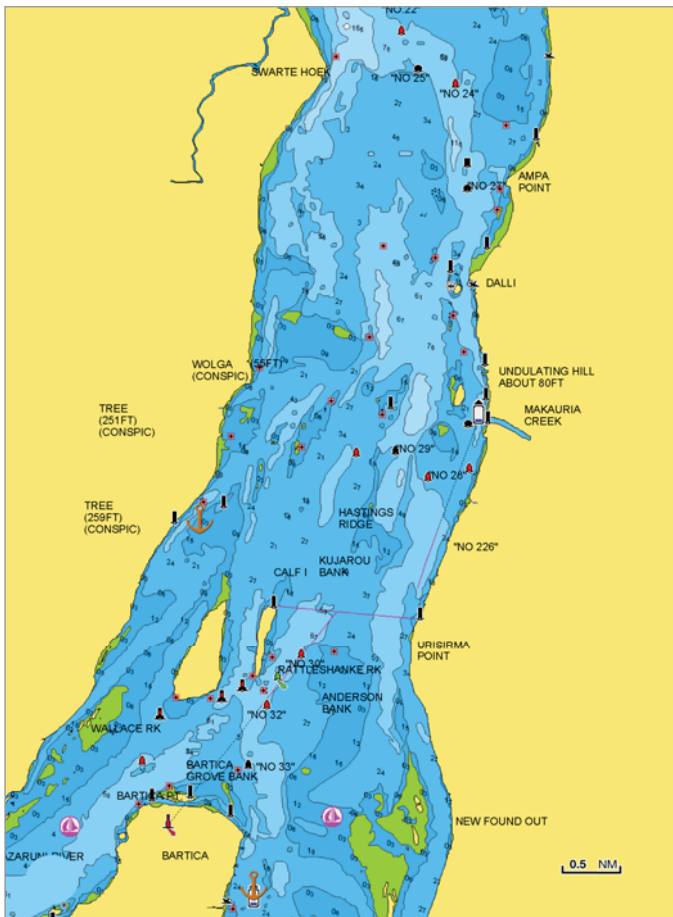
An attractive, tranquil anchorage on the south side of Stampa Island in 4-8m with plenty of wildlife in the surrounding jungle. Note that some traffic, including barges, passes this anchorage day and night, so ensure the yacht is well lit, with more than just a masthead anchor light. The occasional traffic does not detract from the peace of this anchorage.

There are ruins of buildings ashore on Stampa Island, a few pillars of which are visible from the anchorage. There is a very dilapidated pier on the west side of the island that is not usable. Landing is difficult and progress inland on the island would require a machete.

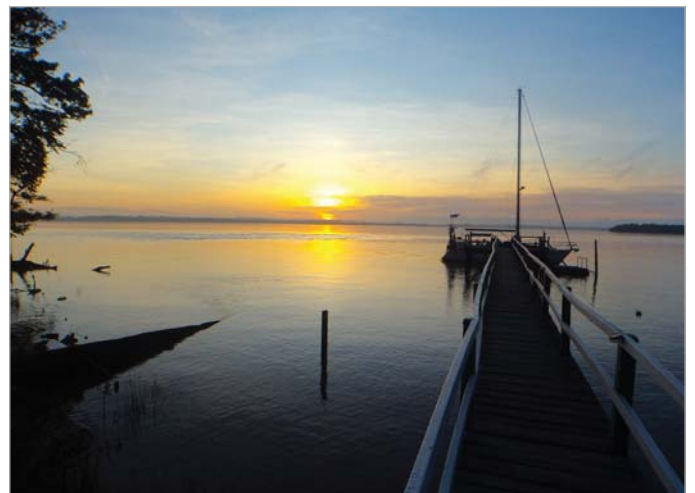
Stampa Island anchorage



PLAN 62: Swarte Hoek to Bartica



Hurakabra Resort



Lau lau Island to Bartica

	Waypoint	Course	Distance	Cumulative distance	Notes
1.	6°38'.70N 58°34'.30W			0M	Lau Lau Island, convergence of South and West channels
2.	6°36'.31N 58°34'.59W	187°	2.4M	2.4M	
3.	6°34'.21N 58°35'.40W	201°	2.3M	4.7M	
4.	6°32'.59N 58°35'.10W	170°	1.7M	6.3M	Stampa Island to the E
5.	6°31'.67N 58°34'.75W	160°	1.0M	7.3M	Rock Pigeon Island rocks and sandbar to W
6.	6°31'.06N 58°34'.58W	164°	0.6M	7.9M	
7.	6°30'.42N 58°34'.59W	181°	0.6M	8.6M	
8.	6°30'.13N 58°34'.74W	207°	0.3M	8.9M	
9.	6°29'.83N 58°35'.06W	227°	0.4M	9.3M	Rocks to the E and W
10.	6°29'.07N 58°35'.19W	189°	0.8M	10.1M	Narrow passage between Dalli Island and the shore. After Dalli island Two Brothers Island and Makauria Island to the W. Rocks and shoals to the W.
11.	6°27'.95N 58°35'.08W	174°	1.1M	11.2M	Makauria Creek to the east
12.	6°26'.66N 58°35'.50W	198°	1.4M	12.6M	
13.	6°26'.44N 58°36'.47W	257°	1.0M	13.6M	Rattlesnake rocks to the W
14.	6°24'.07N 58°37'.00W	193°	2.4M	16.0M	Bartica

Rock Pigeon Island rocks and sandbanks at low tide



HURAKABRA RESORT (6°27'.13N 58°37'.45W)

Pleasant eco-resort owned by a local sailor

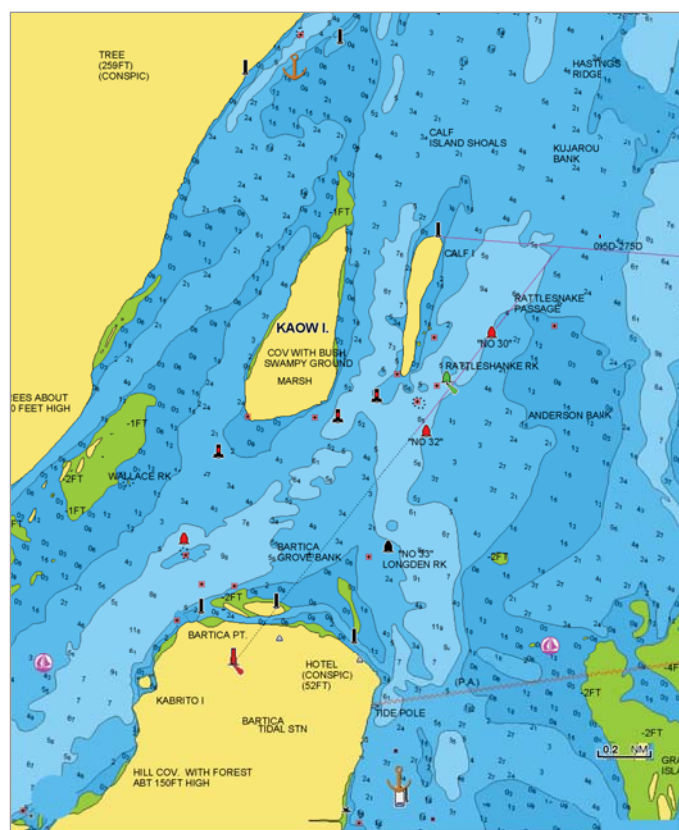
A comfortable eco resort on the river owned by Kit and Gem Nascimento. Kit is a key person in the opening of the Bartica area to yachties, and is a helpful contact for repairs and services.

Hurakabra is accessible from the route between Lau Lau Island and Bartica. The passage has depths of at least 2.4m+tide.

A more direct route exists from Hurakabra to Bartica. The controlling depth on this route is 1.7m+tide. Close to high tide there will be at least 3m water.

Anchor off the resort in 5m, good holding. It is also possible for one shoal draught boat to tie up to the pilings at the end of the jetty with 1.2m water at low tide, although a dinghy is still needed for the 5m gap between the pilings and the jetty. Land at the floating dinghy dock.

There is a small daily charge (\$6 in 2014) for use of the resort facilities including showers, toilets and hammocks. The resort has a bar, and meals can be prepared for cruisers with advance notice. The early morning jungle walk, lasting several hours, is interesting.



PLAN 63: Hurakabra Resort to Bartica

NAVIONICS
NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

Waypoints between Lau Lau Island and Hurakabra

	Waypoint	Course	Distance	Cumulative distance	Notes
1.	6°29'.27N 58°35'.17W			0M	N of Dalli Island
2.	6°29'.15N 58°35'.39W	240°	0.3M	0.3M	
3.	6°28'.47N 58°35'.92W	218°	0.9M	1.1M	Shoal area to the N of this segment
4.	6°28'.23N 58°36'.73W	253°	0.8M	2.0M	
5.	6°27'.42N 58°37'.16W	208°	0.9M	2.9M	Stay W of the white can marking a submerged rock
6.	6°27'.13N 58°37'.45W	225°	0.4M	3.3M	Hurakabra Resort

Waypoints from Hurakabra to Bartica

	Waypoint	Course	Distance	Cumulative distance	Notes
1.	6°27'.13N 58°37'.45W			0M	Hurakabra Resort
2.	6°26'.62N 58°37'.77W	212°	0.6M	0.6M	
3.	6°26'.28N 58°37'.52W	144°	0.4M	1.0M	
4.	6°25'.70N 58°37'.76W	202°	0.6M	1.7M	
5.	6°25'.46N 58°37'.84W	198°	0.3M	1.9M	
6.	6°25'.14N 58°36'.97W	110°	0.9M	2.8M	
7.	6°24'.91N 58°36'.81W	145°	0.3M	3.1M	
8.	6°24'.07N 58°37'.00W	193°	0.9M	4.0M	Bartica

BARTICA (6°24'.07N 58°37'W)

Relatively wealthy, edgy, but safe and secure town with a good anchorage and decent provisioning

Bartica is a lively, somewhat edgy mining services town with a population of 15,000. It is wealthy by Guyanese standards as a result of gold mining, and prices, while inexpensive by international standards, are higher than elsewhere in Guyana.

Tidal range at springs is 2.4m. Anchor off the town in 3-8m with good holding in mud. Avoid anchoring near the ferry terminal or obstructing ferry paths. Ensure that the boat is well lit as barges and commercial traffic pass here day and night, as well as many high speed water taxis.

Land by dinghy. There are several possibilities, including tying up to landing places directly on the shoreside wall.

Between the Stelling and the market hall there is a green roofed shack on a large, somewhat dilapidated jetty with newly constructed wooden landing steps. This used to be the Kool Breezes bar but it is now closed. Tie up to the steps, avoiding blocking the water taxis.

Alternatively, 200m upriver, after the two fuel pontoons, there is a small red building with a blue roof. This is Sunil's Boat House run by Winston which has 24/7 staff, video security recording, friendly and trustworthy local helpers and a tame green parrot. They will look after your dinghy for a small tip or a beer. They also have propane, petrol, diesel and soft drinks available 24/7, albeit at prices higher than elsewhere in town.

Bartica



Check in / check out is possible in Bartica and is easier than elsewhere in Guyana as cruising yachts have been processed previously. Immigration is at the Police station on First Avenue next to the Stelling and Customs are across the street above Church's Chicken.

There are two waterside filling stations almost next to each other a short distance from the market building. The Double Platinum Service Station and Bartica Service Station have diesel and gasoline available by hose on the water at the end of their piers (6m water). Note that the pilings and piers are high and widely spaced, being designed for cargo

ships rather than yachts, and that the fuel nozzles are much larger than the usual filling station nozzles.

Scotiabank on Second Ave has an ATM that works with foreign cards.

There are plenty of bars and restaurants including several Brazilian ones. Nightlife is quite intense, especially at weekends when the gold miners come in from the jungle goldfields to let off steam.

The town has a good market with fruit, vegetables, fish and meat, several small supermarkets, a small hospital and several hardware stores. It is possible to get propane cylinders filled via the hardware stores with a turnaround time of a few days.

BAGANARA ISLAND (6°19'.99N 58°35'.52W)

Beautiful, tranquil anchorage off a small eco resort.

Baganara Island is 4.5M south of Bartica on the Essequibo River. The island has a beautifully kept eco resort, Baganara Resort, with its own small airstrip.

The passage to Baganara passes close to unmarked rocks in the river, and the route formed by the waypoints should be followed very closely. The controlling depth for this passage is 2.7m + tide, and sailing near to high tide will give at least 4m water throughout.

Anchor around the resort in 5-7m over sand, good holding. Avoid anchoring near the airstrip for

obvious reasons. Dinghies can be landed on the beach. There is no charge for anchoring or landing. Wi-Fi is available free of charge at the resort, and there is a bar and good restaurant (advance notice is required for meals). A laundry service is available with turnaround of 2-3 days.

The operations manager of the resort, Lincoln, is an ex river boat captain and a good source of information on river pilotage.

Flights are available three days a week to Georgetown from the airstrip on Baganara, out and

Waypoints from Bartica to Baganara

	Waypoint	Course	Distance	Cumulative distance	Notes
1.	6°23'.92N 58°37'.13W			0M	Bartica
2.	6°23'.25N 58°36'.75W	150°	0.8M	0.8M	The segment to next waypoint passes between two sets of rocks above the water
3.	6°22'.73N 58°36'.77W	182°	0.5M	1.3M	
4.	6°22'.31N 58°36'.53W	150°	0.5M	1.8M	West of this waypoint is Do It Rock (6°22'.28N 58°36'.64W) underwater except at low water springs
5.	6°22'.13N 58°36'.59W	200°	0.2M	2.0M	
6.	6°20'.20N 58°35'.92W	161°	2.0M	4.0M	
7.	6°19'.99N 58°35'.52W	118°	0.5M	4.5M	Baganara Resort

back the same day, approx. USD 80 roundtrip in 2014.

Bernhard Kleinhenz, a German cruiser, lives 0.5M upriver from Baganara with his Guyanese wife Sharmilla. They have circumnavigated in their custom built yacht which is moored next to his house.

He has extensively explored the rivers of Guyana by boat, and enjoys meeting cruisers, especially those interested in cruising off the beaten track. Anchor north of the jetty at 6°19'.43N 58°35'.17W. Beware of underwater rocks south of the jetty.

Baganara Island



MAZARUNI AND CUYUNI RIVERS

The Mazaruni River joins the Essequibo at Bartica. The river is navigable for 7M from Bartica before arriving at an area of active gold dredging, where tailings from the dredging operations have created hazards in the river.

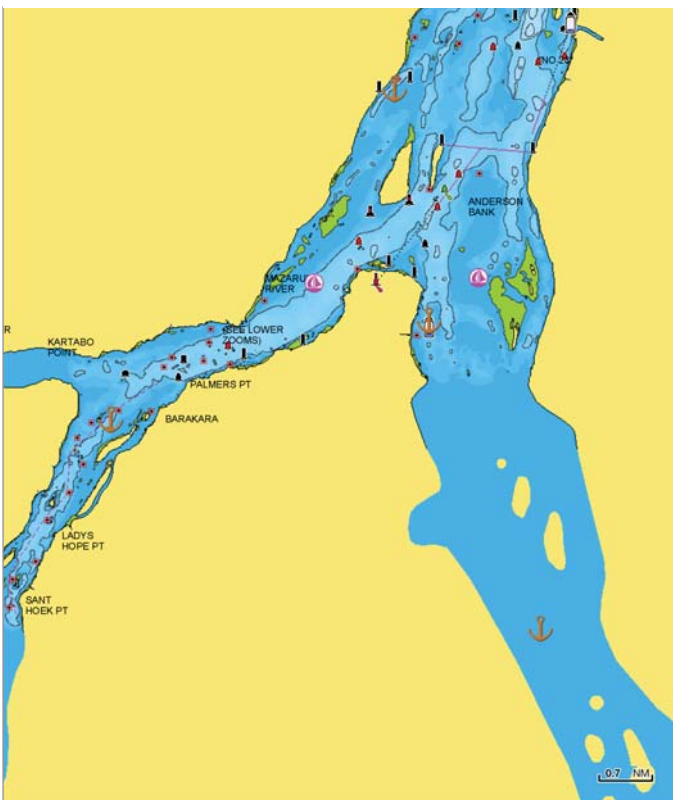
Entry into the river requires heading downriver from Bartica to avoid the shoal that extends north from Bartica. Crossing the shoal area represents the

controlling depth for the Mazaruni River. We found 1.6m + tide, giving a comfortable 3m+ for an hour either side of high tide.

The Cuyuni River joins the Mazaruni River 4M from Bartica. This river is being extensively dredged by gold miners and is not safely navigable for cruising yachts due to dredging debris.

The Mazaruni Correctional Facility is 3.5M from Bartica at 6°23'.93N 58°39'.42W. Needless to say landing is not appropriate in the vicinity without prior arrangement with the prison authorities. Prisoners farm agricultural products at the prison, many of which are sold in the Bartica produce market.

PLAN 64: Mazaruni and Cuyuni Rivers



Route from Bartica to Kykoveral Island

	Waypoint	Course	Distance	Cumulative distance	Notes
1.	6°24'.07N 58°37'.00W			0M	Bartica
2.	6°24'.91N 58°36'.81W	13°	0.9M	0.9M	
3.	6°25'.44N 58°37'.23W	322°	0.7M	1.5M	
4.	6°23'.97N 58°38'.76W	226°	2.1M	3.7M	Mazaruni Correctional Facility to the west
5.	6°23'.48N 58°40'.26W	252°	1.6M	5.2M	
6.	6°22'.75N 58°41'.21W	233°	1.2M	6.4M	Cuyuni River confluence to the west. Kykoveral Island ahead.

Mazaruni Correctional Facility



KYKOVERAL ISLAND (6°22'.76 N 58°41'.21W)

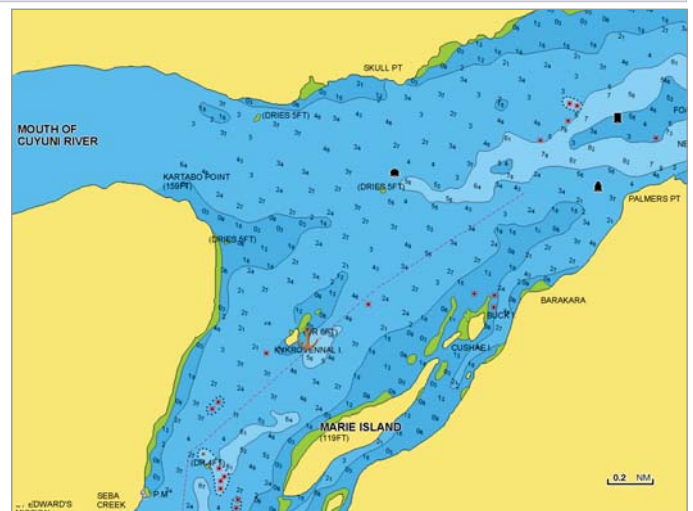
River anchorage by a historically interesting island

Kykoveral Island dates from the early Dutch colonisation of Guyana. The ruins of a fort are on the island. It is a pleasant anchorage.

Land by dinghy on the beach or possibly on the jetty at high tide.

There is a resort hotel on Buck Island, a 0.4M dinghy ride away.

PLAN 65: Kykoveral Island



Kykoveral Island





Buck Island

**POMEROON RIVER (7°37'N
58°45'W) AND CHARITY (7°23'.84N
58°36'.04W)**

This information is provided for reference as we did not enter the Pomeroon River.

The Pomeroon River is primarily used for local agricultural transport, although fishing boats and small commercial vessels also use the river.

The entrance is unbuoyed and extremely shallow, with 0.5m + tide reported over the bar. The available chart from 1986 is 1:300,000 and naturally is not very

*PLAN 66: Pomeroon River
(pin shown at Charity)*



detailed. Sandbanks have moved, and the approach is now reported to be further to the W than shown on the chart.

Once past the bar and inside the river, depth is not an issue and the river has a typical U-shaped bottom. The small town of Charity is 21M from the river entrance. Anchor in the river and land at the small wharf by dinghy. There is a large market at Charity each Monday.

It is reported to be possible to continue along the river past Charity.

**WAINI AND MORAWHANNA
RIVERS AND PORT KAITUMA
(7°43'.56N 59°53'.04W)**



*PLAN 67: Waini and
Morawhanna Rivers*



This information is provided for reference as we did not enter the Waini and Morawhanna Rivers.

The Waini River is close to the border with Venezuela, and is one of the least developed parts of Guyana.

Approach Punta Waini from offshore, aiming for 8°32'.70N 59°52'.77W remaining S of a shoal patch 3M N of there. The channel into the river is no longer marked, although the stumps of the piles are reported to be visible at low tide. Depths are reported as at least 1.8m + tide from one local source, and 3m + tide from another local source.

Once inside the wide river mouth tend towards the SE side, lining up for the Morawhanna Passage to the SE. There is reportedly a piling marking a mud flat extending W from the area between the Morawhanna Passage to the SE and the Waini River

to the NE. The piling should be left to port.

The Morawhanna Passage joins with the Barima River (from Venezuela). After the confluence, follow the Morawhanna River, arriving at the small village of Morawhanna. There is reportedly up to 25m water in the river and currents run at up to 5kt, so tidal timing is critical.

The village of Morawhanna (pop 200) has a strong African heritage. It used to be an important fishing port and official port of entry, but is now a subsistence fishing village. Tie up to the wooden stelling and report to the Police. (The concrete dock is for fishing boats). Immigration check in and check out is possible here but there are no customs facilities. Customs clearance must be carried out elsewhere, e.g. Bartica or another port of entry.

Kumaka, a regional market town and port, is a few miles upriver of Morawhanna. The town has a large stelling, supply stores, etc.

The river can be followed through deep jungle to Port Kaituma, some 50M from Morawhanna. Port Kaituma is a rough and ready town of 6,000 inhabitants that primarily serves independent small-scale gold miners. The river ends at Port Kaituma and there is a turning circle. Improbably, there is also a Coastguard office.

The remains of Jonestown, the agricultural community created by the People's Temple cult, and scene of the murder/suicide of 918 people in 1978, is 11km by road from Port Kaituma.

