



CRUISING CLUB OF AMERICA publication **Essential Passage Guide to The Viking Route**

A Review by Mike Jaques RCC

My initial reaction was something of surprise that a guide such as this was required. A reasonable expectation would be that, if you were embarking on such a voyage, you would be more than able to plan from the current comprehensive range of pilots. The RCPPF “Arctic Waters” edited by Andrew Wilkes, in particular provides a substantial amount of detailed background information for such voyages. On reflection, it is really the equivalent in walking of a long distance path guidebook against more detailed guides of specific mountains.

Putting that aside it is a remarkable collation of data with contributions from some very experienced high latitude sailors , including our own Bob Shepton. In fact, Bob’s introduction reviews the Pilot rather well.

As it is produced for the American cruiser some of the terms and depth may well raise a smile with the British reader. The detail though, can’t be treated lightly There is a mass of very useful information on weather, ice, communications, gear and safety. The chapter on safety and the development of a safety culture is particularly welcome. Although, you would have to be a very brave person to face a polar bear with a pepper spray.

The pilotage information has more non navigational information than we are used to, all of which would be very helpful and save a lot of legwork. The destinations that I am familiar with are all very well represented.

Some humour was found when it was recommended that you will need a dehumidifier for overwintering in Scotland! Scottish sailors will of course already be proud owners.

The Pilot is recommended to any Northern voyager’s library even if they are not intending to complete the Viking Way. I’m confident it would be well used. This is a seriously good contribution for sailing in the Arctic.

Mike Jaques, RCC

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Further details :

<https://rccpf.org.uk/pilots/224/CCA-Essentials-Passage-Guide-to-The-Viking-Route>

