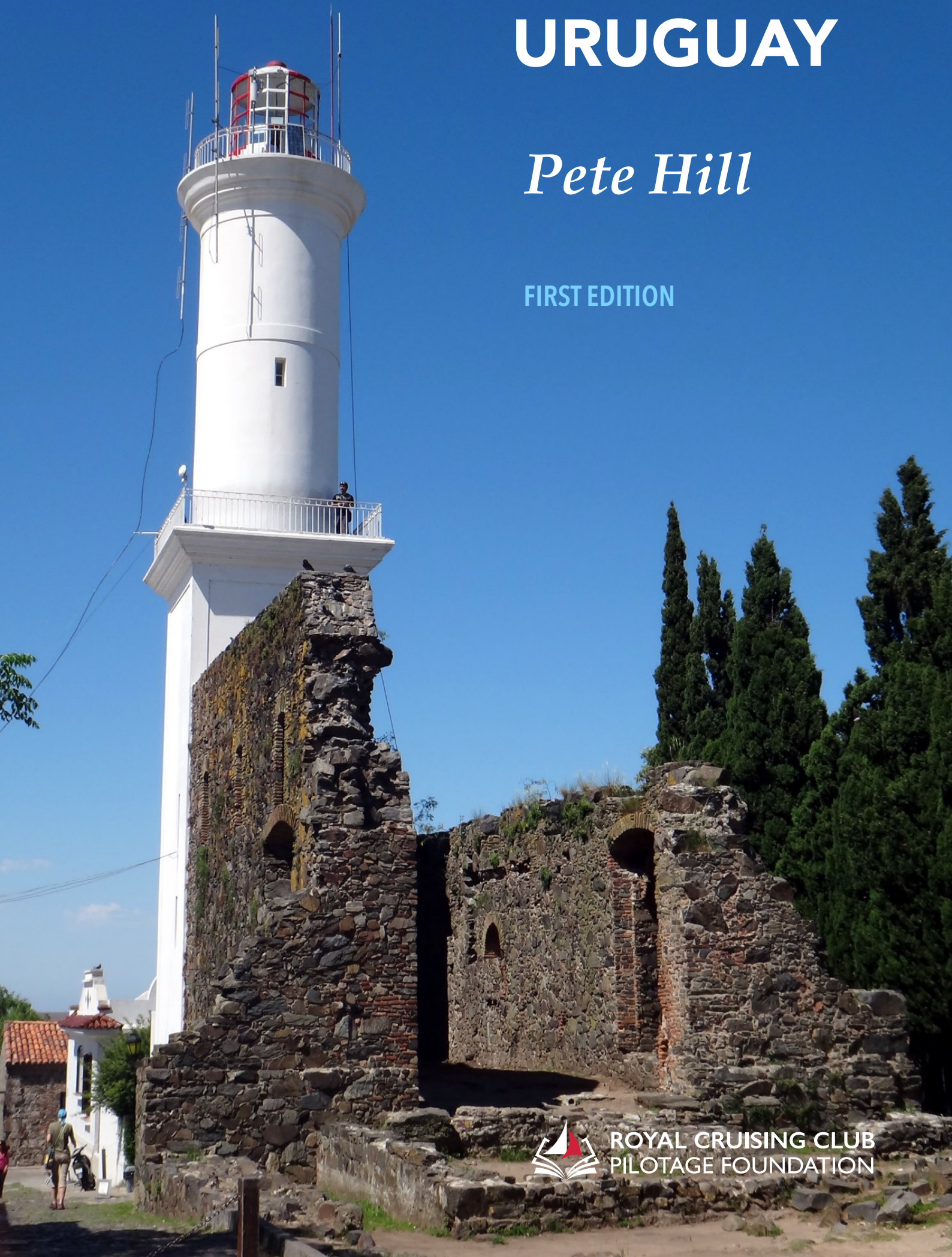


URUGUAY

Pete Hill

FIRST EDITION



ROYAL CRUISING CLUB
PILOTAGE FOUNDATION

Published by

The Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation

1st Edition 2025

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ISBN 978-1-0683988-0-3 eBook

Cover photo - *Pete Hill*

Colonia Lighthouse

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photographic and chart information relating to small boat pilotage and navigation for anywhere in the world, including remote areas where other sources of information are scarce or non-existent.

Navigating the PDF - hyperlinks

All items on the Contents page are hyperlinked to their relevant page in the text. On each page in the text, clicking on **URUGUAY** at the bottom of the page, will take you back to the Contents page.



Piriapolis Harbour

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Following the priority established by the Royal Cruising Club (RCC) to publish pilotage information, the Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation was established as an independent charity in 1976 with the objective "to advance the education of the public in the science and practice of navigation". The Foundation's principal activity is to collate and publish pilotage information for the benefit of cruising sailors worldwide.

Benefitting from the copyrights donated by RCC members and others and working with its team of dedicated authors and editors, the Pilotage Foundation has developed a portfolio of cruising

guides available both in printed format and through its website covering a wide range of cruising areas including some of the more remote areas of the world.

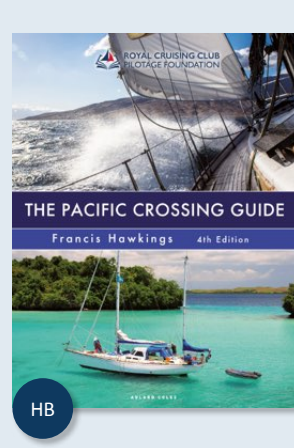
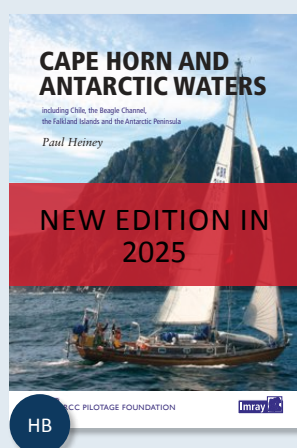
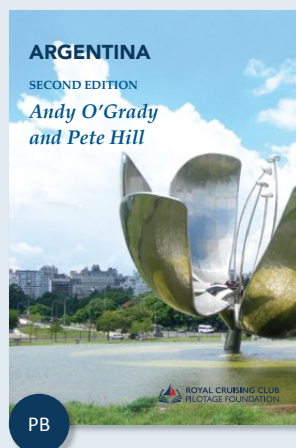
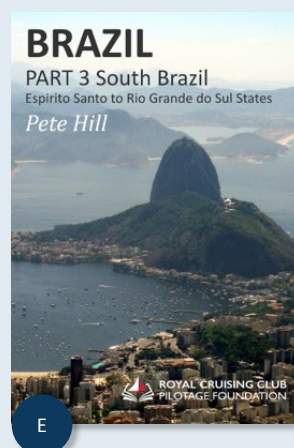
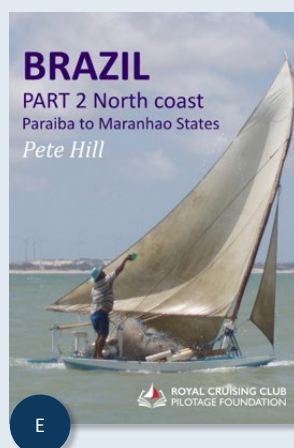
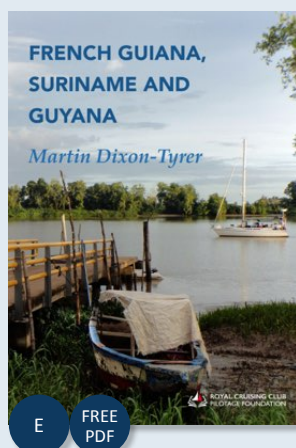
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HB **HARD BACK**

Foreword

The Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation is very grateful to Pete Hill for writing this pilotage guide to Uruguay. It is the only recent publication providing information to cruisers about the coastline of this fascinating country. We hope it serves to remind sailors what a worthwhile place to explore Uruguay – which is so often overlooked or bypassed in favour of its more substantial neighbours – is.

Pete Hill's indefatigable enthusiasm for cruising coupled with his methodical approach to pilotage have proved to be perfect qualities for writing previous guides, so we were particularly delighted when the manuscript for this edition arrived in our inbox. Pete Hill is to be commended for his altruistic commitment to researching, recording and freely sharing all the pilotage details of his voyages.

An introduction to the country, its customs and regulations, is followed by detailed, first-hand pilotage information to assist with safe access to all significant anchorages and harbours.

Updates to this – and all our books – may be found on our website:

<https://rccpf.org.uk/Updates-and-Supplements>

We also encourage visitors to the area and anyone with recent experience of cruising Uruguay to contribute to our work for the benefit of all. Corrections, photographs and updates can be submitted via our website:

<https://rccpf.org.uk/Provide-Feedback>

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my good friend Luis Nin Estevez for his helpfulness over the years on my many visits.

Pete Hill
2025



Grocery shop San Felix

I. Uruguay - an introduction



Introduction

Uruguay is often overlooked as a cruising destination, with yachts rushing to Argentina or Brazil. It has its own charms and the people are friendly, if not so demonstrative as its neighbours to the north and south.

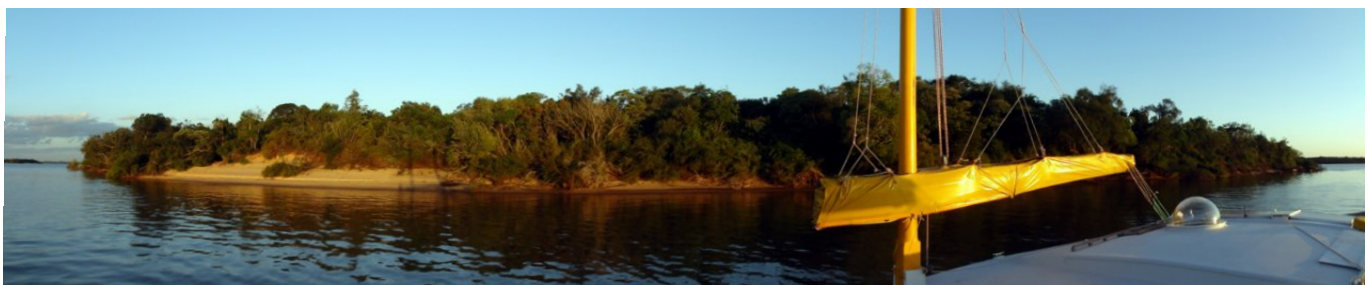
The Atlantic coast provides several artificial harbours and a few anchorages. The Rio De La Plata has a several small rivers to explore, and more interesting cruising can be found by sailing

up the Rio Uruguay and the Rio Negro, where it is possible to see something of the hinterland.

It is hoped that this guide will encourage more yachts to enjoy the cruising pleasures of Uruguay.

General

Uruguay, officially 'Republica Oriental del Uruguay' (literally the Republic East of the (Rio) Uruguay), was founded in 1825 and now has a population of 3.5 million Spanish speaking people, descendants of predominately Spanish and Italian immigrants.



Isla Chica anchorage km 235



Barge on the Rio Uruguay

It is regarded as the most democratic South American country and also one of the most socially progressive in Latin America. As well as accepting the LGBT community, it allows same sex marriage and abortion. It was also the first country in the world to legalise cannabis. (NB cannabis is only legal for citizens and residents.)

Uruguay flag

The Uruguay flag has a ratio of 3:2



Time Zone

Uruguay is on time zone GMT (UTC) –3
There is no daylight saving time

Weather

Uruguay has a sub tropical/temperate climate. Spring weather tends to be windy, cool and damp, the summers are warm, or hot away from the coast, autumn is cooler and the winter is mild, with only occasional frosts. Rainfall is evenly spread throughout the year. *Pamperos* do cause some, at times, violent winds and are foretold with classic cigar shaped clouds.

Average temperatures and rainfall:

	Montevideo	Paysandu
Summer max	28°C (82°F)	30°C (86°F)
Summer min	17°C (63°F)	18°C (64°F)
Winter max	14°C (57°F)	16°C (61°F)
Winter min	6°C (43°F)	5°C (41°F)
Rainfall max	Oct. 105mm	Feb. 150mm
Rainfall min	Jun. 80mm	Jun. 60mm



Pampero approaching Paysandu

Tides and river water levels

Tides on the Atlantic coast are not large with a range of 0.3m to 0.6m. However on the Atlantic coast and to a much larger extent on the Rio de La Plata strong winds from the east will quickly cause a significant rise in the water level and strong west winds will decrease the water level.

In summer the current on the Rio Uruguay is about 1 to 1.5 knots, but can be much more in floods, which occasionally occur on the Rio Uruguay and it's tributaries, when water levels rise significantly.



Strong current Paso Hervidero km305

Weather forecasts

The Prefectura has up to date weather information and usually displays it on their notice board.

There are many online weather forecasts, two of the best seem to be:

www.windy.com

www.predictwind.com

Their free service is very good and adequate for all coastal cruising needs. It is available for laptops and mobile phones/tablets. Paying a subscription gives you extra forecast details.

Another popular free online forecast is:

www.windguru.cz

This is available for laptops and mobile phones/tablets.

Cruise Planning

With Uruguay's temperate climate it is possible to cruise all year round, although winter cruising would benefit from a heater onboard. In the summer season, December to March, Uruguay is a very popular destination for yachts from Argentina. The prices of the marinas and mooring usually double and in the most popular destinations there is often no room in the yacht harbours.

Uruguay is the easiest country to leave a yacht, either to go travelling in South America or to return home.



Ceibo tree - national tree of Uruguay

Navigation Aids

The buoyage system in Uruguay is IALA-B. Uruguay has a good system of buoys and lighthouses which are reliably maintained.

Charts

- The Uruguay Armada (Navy) produces charts for its coast line and the Rio Uruguay. Paper charts cover the whole area. There are some electronic charts, but the coverage is not as great as for the paper charts. The following link lists an index of the Uruguayan charts available (both paper and electronic) for the coast and rivers. It is no longer possible to download PDF copies of the charts, as in the past. It appears that the link needs to be copied and pasted to work.

<https://sohma.armada.mil.uy/index.php/servicios/publicaciones-nauticas>

- British Admiralty charts have poor coverage of the coast, except for the major ports.
- Navionics electronic charts (for chart plotters and tablet/mobile phones) give good coverage of the coast and for navigating the upper Rio Uruguay.



Evening on the Rio Negro

Prefectura (coast guard)

The Prefectura controls all vessel traffic along Uruguay's coast and rivers. It is required to clear into and out of each port with the Prefectura. It must be understood that the Prefectura regards the safety of vessels as its responsibility and as such they like to control the movement of vessels.

Visitors from Europe and North America will find this attitude unfamiliar. Ports will be closed to yachts when the forecast is for force 6 winds or above (this does not stop entry into a port).

As you travel between ports call the Prefectura 'control marítimo' before arrival on Ch VHF 16 (or try 9 or 11). English is not commonly spoken so brush up your basic Spanish to answer their simple questions.

Formalities – Entry

It is not essential to enter Uruguay at a recognised port of entry, but at the first port the Prefectura (coast guard) should be visited and then Immigration and Customs can be visited as soon as a port of entry is visited.

Ports of entry - exit:

- Punta del Este
- Montevideo
- Colonia
- Carmelo
- Nueva Palmira
- Salto

Be aware that if entering Uruguay you are required to inform the Prefectura of your arrival at least 1 hour before arrival (usually done by VHF).

Documentation

You will need:

- A valid passport for each crew member (valid for at least 90 days on arrival)
- Ships registration
- Clearance from your last port



Scrap yard old car

Immigration

The majority of nationalities do not require a visa to enter Uruguay. On entry a visa for 90 days will be issued, which can be extended for a further 90 days at an immigration office at a present cost of US\$30 (2024). After 180 days you must leave the country (no exceptions) but can return after leaving the country for 24 hours.

Customs

You can import your vessel tax free for a period of nine months. After that period there is a yearly tax of US\$300 for vessels up to 10T and US\$600 for vessels of 10-20T. This is paid to the Prefectura and liable to a 20% penalty for late payment. A reduction in the tax is available if the vessel is in the same location for six months.

Be aware that if the Prefectura deems you a resident then you may be subject to safety inspections.

All fire arms must be declared on arrival.

Formalities – Exit

As well as clearing out with the Prefectura it is also necessary to clear with Customs and Immigration departments.

Leaving a boat while out of the country

This may be to travel around South America or to return home.

Uruguay is the easiest country to leave your yacht, rather than Brazil or Argentina. The yacht can stay in the country, duty free for 9 months. The two most popular ports to do this are Piriapolis and Puerto Sauce. Outside the summer season (mid-December to mid-March) the mooring fees are often half the summer rate.

Money

The currency in Uruguay is the Peso.

In 2024, the exchange rate is approximately:

1 £ GBP = 50 \$ U

1 € Eur = 42 \$ U

1 \$ US = 39 \$ U

Communications

The area code to call Uruguay is: +598

Mobile telephone is available with Antel, Claro and Movistar being the three main suppliers. Antel is the national company and generally regarded as giving the best service with the widest coverage.

Marinas

With a few exceptions all the marinas are state run by the Hidrografía.

The summer season, from mid-December to mid-March, is very busy with yachts from Argentina. The main yachting ports of Punta del Este, Colonia and Carmelo are often full, particularly at weekends and public holidays.

Compared to European and North American marinas the prices are very reasonable, even in the high season, and out of season the prices drop in half.

The Hidrografia website list the various charges for all their marinas:

www.mtop.gub.uy/hidrografia/tarifas

Travel

Travel within Uruguay is mainly carried out by bus between the main cities. Outside of Montevideo the railways no longer operate a passenger service.

International travel to Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay is either by long distance bus or from Montevideo and Punta del Este international airports.

A ferry service runs from Montevideo and Colonia to Buenos Aires and there are small passenger ferry services from Carmelo, Nueva Palmira and Salto to Argentina.

International flights to Europe, North America and other destinations are from Montevideo, but more choice and destinations are available from Buenos Aires.

Repairs and Maintenance

Piriapolis has a lift out facility with a 100T travel lift and hard standing. This is the usual place for yachts to do maintenance and repairs.

Note that officially you are not allowed to live on board whilst on the hard. Out of the summer season there are many options to rent accommodation ashore.

Punta del Este also has a boatyard with a travel lift.

Note also that all work should be called 'maintenance' rather than repairs, as otherwise the Prefectura may require you to have the repairs inspected by a surveyor or engineer – at your expense.

Importation of spares

Spare parts can be imported free of customs duty but you must employ a customs agent before the spares are ordered. Failure to do this is likely to incur an import duty of up to 60%.

The most useful customs agent is in Piriapolis:

South Atlantic Marine Service (SAMS)

Rambla de los Ingleses

Piriapolis

☎(+598) 44 32 1564 or (+598) 99 80 3907

alejandromartinboats@hotmail.com

The owner speaks English and stocks chandlery. Piriapolis is the major haul out facilities for foreign yachts

Health

There are no major health problems but there is some Dengue and Zika virus.

Uruguay has a free public health for its citizens and about half of the hospitals are in the this ASSE system. Visitors can use the system, but will be required to pay.

Private health care is a reasonable price and there are private hospitals. The Hospital Britanico is regarded as the highest quality, with English speaking staff.

Hospital Britanico,
Ave. Italia 2420,
Montevideo

Crime

Uruguay was once a country with hardly any crime, but unfortunately this is no longer the case. Compared to most other countries, especially in South America, crime is not a major problem, but in Montevideo and other cities there are pick pockets and mugging are possible in the dodgy parts of town. Be street wise.

Public Holidays

1 January	Ano Nuevo
1 May	Dia de los Trabajadores
18 July	Jura de la Constitucion
25 August	Declaration de la Independencia
25 December	Dia de la Familia

There are other public holidays, but these are only observed by public offices, schools and banks.

6 January: Carnival, 19 April, 18 May, 19 June, 18 July, 12 October, 2 November.



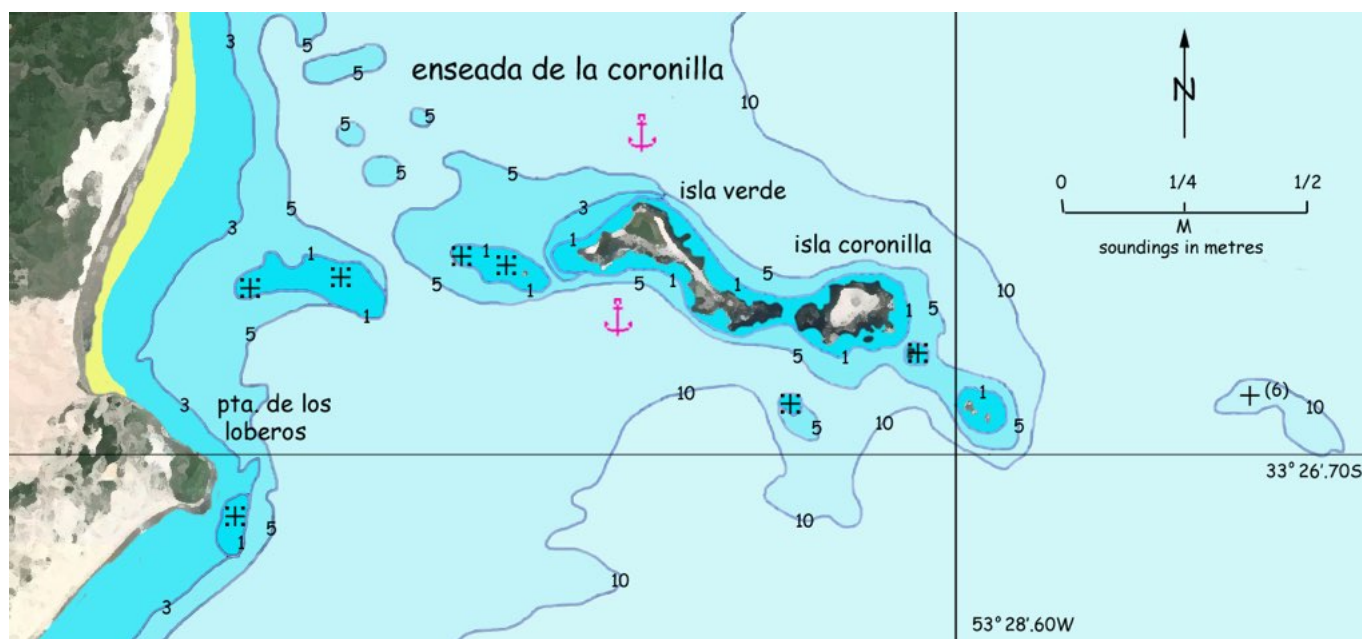
Plaza Constitucion, Fray Bentos

2. Islas Coronilla

33° 56'.02S 53° 29'.29W

Anchorage of two small islands, 12 NM south of the border of Brazil and Uruguay.

Charts	Uruguay	3 (inset of Islas Coronilla)
	BA	3064 (large scale)
Tides	Complex	Range 0.6m
Lights	No nearby lights	



General

Islas Coronilla are two small islands, Isla Verde and Isla Coronilla. They lie about 1 NM off the coast between Pta. De La Coronilla and Pta. De Los Loberos, and 12 NM south of the Brazil/Uruguay border.

Approach

Approach from the north or south keeping outside the 10m line. Be aware of the 6m rock 0.6 NM east of Isla Coronilla.



Islas Coronilla panorama - looking south

Anchorage

There are two possible anchorages. With winds in the southerly quadrant then anchor north of Isla Verde in 6–7m. With winds in the northern quadrant then anchor south of Isla Verde in about 8m. Note that there is no shelter from the east and any large swell could well make these anchorages untenable. Note also that west of Isla Verde the channel between the island and the mainland is encumbered with above and below water rocks.

Formalities

None

Facilities

No facilities.

When visited in September there were many Fur Seals in the area. In settled weather this is a delightful remote anchorage and with seals frolicking around the boat this only enhances the experience.



Isla Verde



Playful fur seals

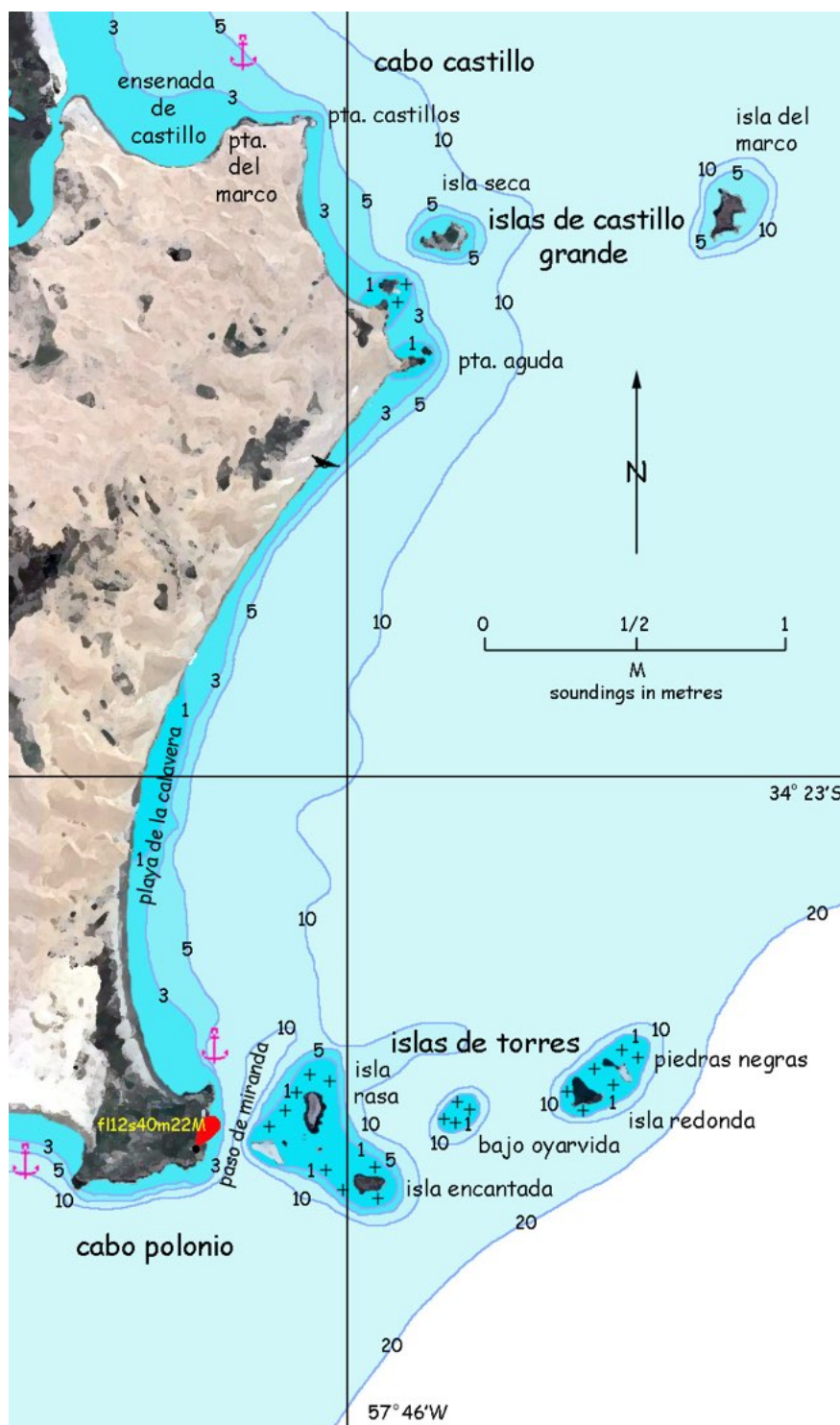
3. Cabo Castillos, and Cabo Pollonio

34° 20'.36 S 53° 46'.55 W

34° 24'.42 S 53° 47'.30 W

Two bays on the Atlantic coast of Uruguay.

Charts	Uruguay	3 (inset of area)
	BA	3064 (large scale)
Tides	Complex	Range ~ 0.6m
Lights	Cabo Polonio light	Fl W 12s 40m 21.8NM



General

Two bays with Cabo Castillos to the north and Cabo Polonio 4 NM to the south. There are several small islands lying off each cape.

Approach

Cabo Castillos:

If approaching from the north then keep outside the 10m line.

If approaching from the south then keep outside the 20m line until north of Isla Redonda and Piedras Negras and then pass between Isla del Marco and Isla Seca before passing north of Pta. Castillos.

Cabo Polonio:

If approaching from the south keep outside the 20m line until south of Cabo Polonio and east of the Bajo del Polonio (a shoal with a 3.2m rock, approximately 1.5 NM southwest of Cabo Polonio). If approaching from the north then pass east of the Piedras Negras and south of Isla Encantada.

Anchorage

Cabo Castillos:

Anchor north of Pta. del Marco in about 4.5m with good shelter from the west through south to south-southwest. This anchorage is exposed to any swell from the northwest quadrant. It is possible to land on the shore, swell permitting.

Cabo Polonio:

There are two possible anchorages depending on wind and swell.

There is a small bay close west of Cabo Polonio, anchor off the bay in 8m. Good shelter from the west through north to northeast.

The other anchorage is close north of Cabo Polonio also in about 8m with shelter from the southwest to northwest. Close east of Cabo Polonio is a clear passage (Paso Miranda) between the mainland and Isla Rasa, but be aware that there are many rocks extending west of Isla Rasa.

Both these anchorages are off beaches and landing is possible, swell permitting.

Formalities

None

Facilities

Cabo Castillos:

None

Cabo Polonio:

Ashore there are many small houses and cabins forming an unstructured weekend/holiday community. As well as several pousadas and restaurants there is also a small supermarket in the centre of the village.



Cabo Castillo



Anchorage off Cabo Castillo



Cabo Polonio looking northeast



Cabo Polonio looking southwest



Cabo Polonio light and Isla Rasa



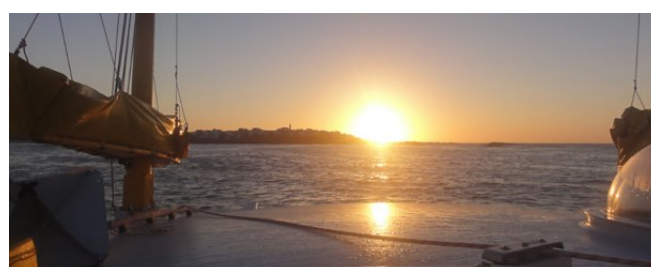
South end of Playa de la Calavera, Cabo Polonio



Colourful summer cottage, Cabo Polonio



Summer cottages, Cabo Polonio



Sunrise Cabo Polonio

4. La Paloma

34° 38'.76 S 54° 8'.73 W

An artificial harbour next to a small seaside town, and the first port of arrival if travelling from Brazil.

Charts	Uruguay	3, 19
	BA	3064
Tides	Complex	Range ~ 0.6m
Lights	Cabo Santa Maria	Fl W 60s 42m 20NM
	Maria Victoria	Fl WR 4s 7.5m 8NM
	Hbr. Maria Magdalena	Fl G 5s 14m 5.5NM



General

La Paloma is an artificial harbour and small fishing port close to the small seaside town of the same name.

Approach

If approaching from the north keep outside the 10m line and pass west of the Bajo Falkland and then head for the harbour entrance.

If approaching from the east, pass south of the Bajo 18 De Julio (marked with a lit south cardinal mark), keeping well north of the shoals off the harbour breakwater.

The approach from the east, south of Bajo 18 De Julio, is marked by the white sector of the Maria Victoria light and leads you to the end of the breakwater. The red sector shows over the two shoals.

From the south keep outside the 10m line until the northwest end of the harbour breakwater (marked with a Fl G light) is bearing west, then head west, keeping south of the Bajo 18 De Julio (marked with a lit south cardinal mark). See above.

Entry

On entering the harbour, favour the north side as the south side is very shallow. The dredged channel to the marina is quite narrow, with shoals and rocks off the southwest side of the breakwater. Proceed along the channel, which is marked with small unlit buoys, directly towards the marina jetty. Small ships use the port so there is plenty of water, but be aware that shoaling can occur.



Cabo Santa Maria Light



La Paloma Harbour entrance looking southeast



La Paloma Harbour panorama

Harbour facilities

You are not allowed to anchor in the harbour.

There are a few moorings available, but only suitable for boats up to 9m (30ft).

The marina consists of a substantial non-floating concrete jetty with yachts tying bow on to the jetty with a stern line to a buoy. Depth is about 6m.

Note that if landing from a dinghy at the jetty it can float under and, with a quick rising water level (wind driven), can trap it underneath, and cause some damage.

Formalities

First visit the Prefectura, situated up from the jetty, to the left of the marina office. The Prefectura is open 24hrs.

If this is your first stop in Uruguay then you can enter here, but you are required to announce your arrival at least 1hr before by VHF radio. There is a customs office on the ground floor, under the marina office, which should be visited if this is your first port in Uruguay. There is no immigration office here but immigration can be completed at a port of entry (the nearest one is Punta del Este).

Call in at the Marina office.

On leaving obtain clearance from the Prefectura, you must present your receipt from the marina.



Marina jetty and Prefectura building to the right



Fishing fleet with Customs on the left and Marina office above



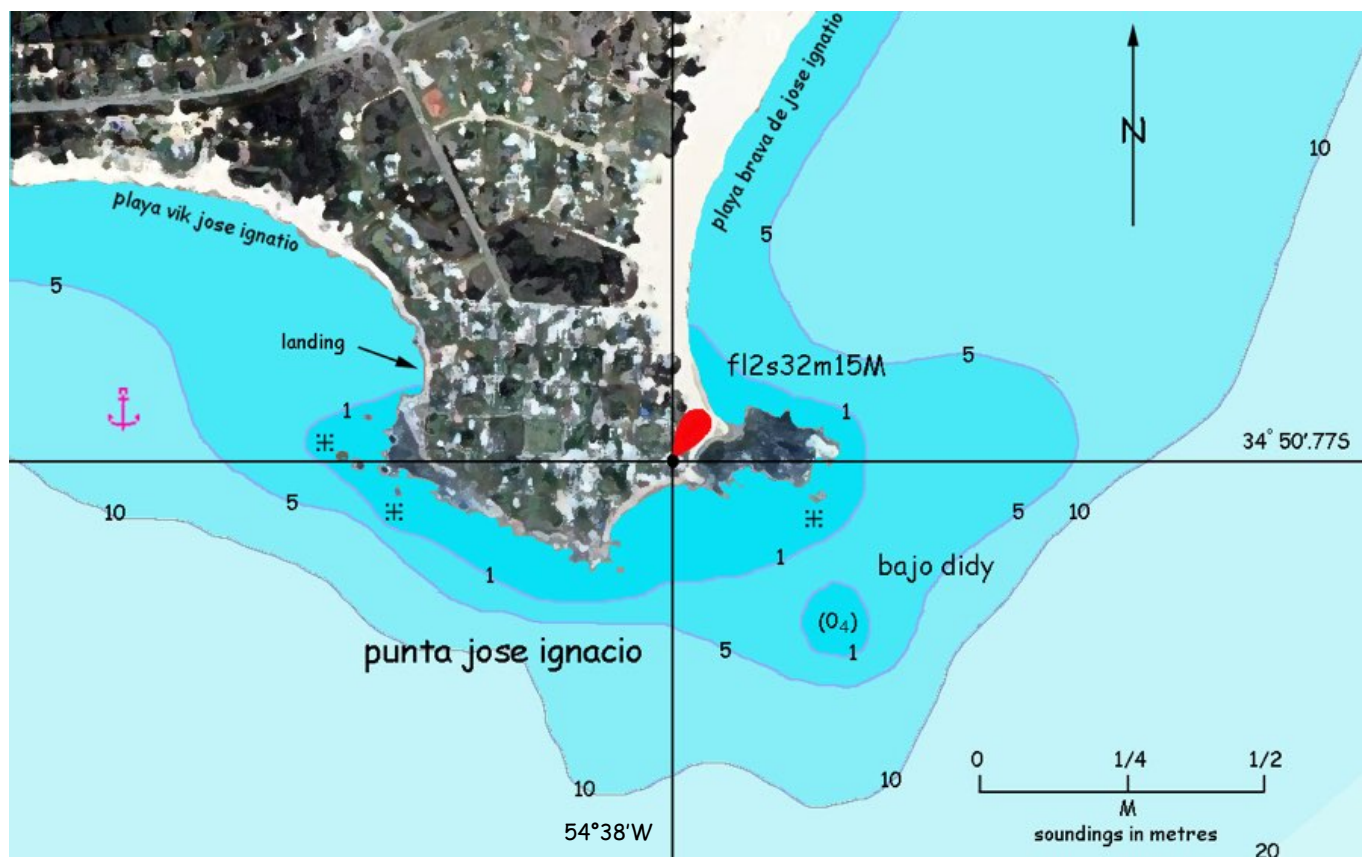
Whale on the main street

5. Punta Jose Ignacio

34° 50'.64 S 54° 38'.96 W

A small cove to the west of Punta Jose Ignacio.

Charts	Uruguay	3, 21	
	BA	3064, 2004	
Tides	Springs	0600 & 1800	Range 0.6m
	Neaps	0000 & 1200	Range 0.3m
Lights	Pta. Jose Ignacio		Fl W 2s 32m 15NM
	Jose Ignacio fuel terminal		Fl (2)W short + long 15s



General

A small cove to the west of Pta. Jose Ignacio lying 17 NM northeast of Punta del Este. Ashore is a small village with basic supplies.

Entry

If approaching from the east, keep outside the 10m line to avoid the 0.3m shoal, Bajo Didy.

If approaching from the west you are required to keep 2 NM south of the Jose Ignacio fuel terminal buoy, 4 NM southwest of Pta. Jose Ignacio. The end of the pipeline is marked with a lit yellow buoy (see above).

When approaching the anchorage keep well

clear of the reef off the western tip of the headland, which extends approximately 200m.

Anchorage

Anchor in 5m to 6m in the centre of the bay. The best landing is at the end of the beach by the headland. Shelter from the north and east, but only suitable in settled weather with little swell.

Formalities

None

Facilities

A few basic facilities with a small grocery store and several restaurants.



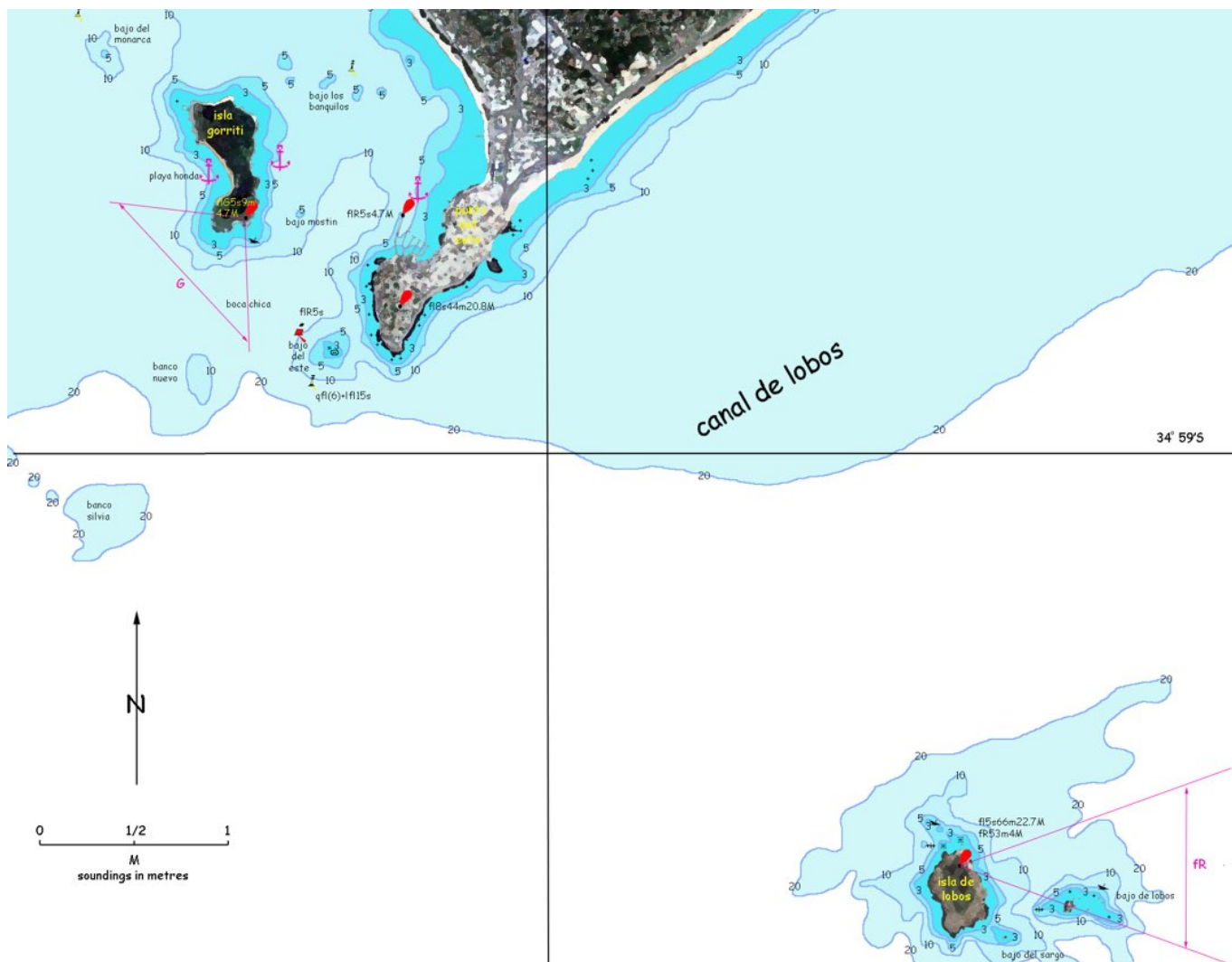
Panorama Punta Jose Ignacio looking east

6. Punta del Este

34° 58' S 54° 57' W

An fashionable summer resort with a large yacht harbour.

Charts	Uruguay	3, 31	
	BA	3064, 3703	
Tides	Springs	0600 & 1800	Range 0.6m
	Neaps	0000 & 1200	Range 0.3m
Lights	Pta. del Este	Fl W 8s 40m 21NM	
	Isla de Lobos	Fl W 5s 66m 23NM	
		Fl R 9m 5NM	
	Isla Gorriti	Fl G 9m 5NM	



General

Punta del Este is a trendy upmarket resort for the wealthy of Argentina and Uruguay. It has a large yacht harbour with marina, mooring buoys and a yacht club. The island of Gorriti close west of the harbour is a park and open to the public.

Approach

If approaching from the east then pass to the north of Isla de Lobos, along the Canal de Lobos.

Then pass south of Bajo del Este, which is marked with a lit south cardinal buoy, and a red buoy on the west side. Then proceed up the channel between the Isla Gorriti and the mainland.

If approaching from the west you can pass either north or south of Isla Gorriti, but keep at least 400m from the shore.

If approaching in heavy weather, take care as the sea can break in the relatively shallow water.

Anchorage

Punta del Este

There are several concrete jetties with bow on moorings with a buoy to hold you off. All sizes of yachts can be accommodated up to maxi size. North of the jetties are many mooring buoys. Note that the yacht harbour is very busy in the summer months (mid-December to mid-March) and advanced booking for the marina or moorings is probably essential.

It is possible to anchor outside the moorings to the north in about 5m to 3m. The anchorage gives good shelter from the south through east to the north, but is particularly exposed to strong winds from the southwest and northwest.

Isla Gorriti

It is possible to anchor either side of the island.

The eastern anchorage off the jetty in about 6m gives good shelter from the west quadrant and is a useful place to shelter from strong westerly winds. Land at the jetty but be aware that a ferry service uses it in the summer months.

The anchorage on the west side is off Playa Honda in about 5m. It provides good shelter from all east winds. In the summer it is a very popular daytime anchorage, but all leave by early evening. Land on the beach. Good protection can be found anchoring quite close in to the northeast corner of the island in 4m.

Isla Gorriti is well worth a visit, with many pine trees and footpaths leading over the island. There is a cafe at Playa Honda, open in the summer season.



Punta del Este Marina



Playa Brava, Punta del Este

Formalities

Punta del Este is a port of entry and if arriving from abroad then call the Prefectura on VHF one hour before arrival.

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and if entering Uruguay you will need to visit the immigration and customs offices, situated on the waterfront, in front of the Prefectura.

You will only need to visit the Hidrografia if using the marina or a mooring buoy,

On departure you will need a receipt from the Hidrografia, even if anchored (no charge), before calling at the Prefectura.

Facilities

There is a dinghy dock to the east of the main jetty. The Yacht Club Punta del Este runs a launch service to the moorings, contact them on VHF Ch 17.



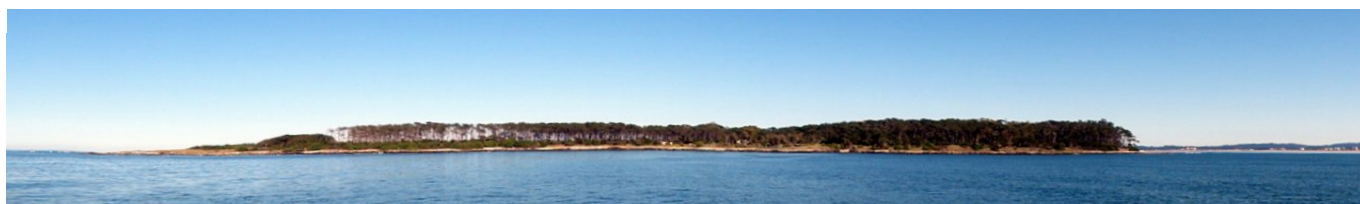
Bateria Santa Ana – historic fort on Isla Gorriti

Diesel and petrol can be obtained at the ANCAP fuel dock, on the west side of the main jetty.

A small boatyard with travel lift and chandlery is located next to the marina.

There are two supermarkets at the southwest end of town, not far from the marina. The southwest corner of the harbour is where the local fishing boats are based and there is a fresh fish market here. Otherwise there are all the facilities you would expect of good size fashionable resort town.

There is an hourly bus service to Montevideo airport which takes 1hr 45mins, and another 30mins into the city. The bus station is at the northeast end of town. The local airport has flights to Argentina.



Isla Gorriti panorama



Isla Gorriti jetty



Playa Honda panorama



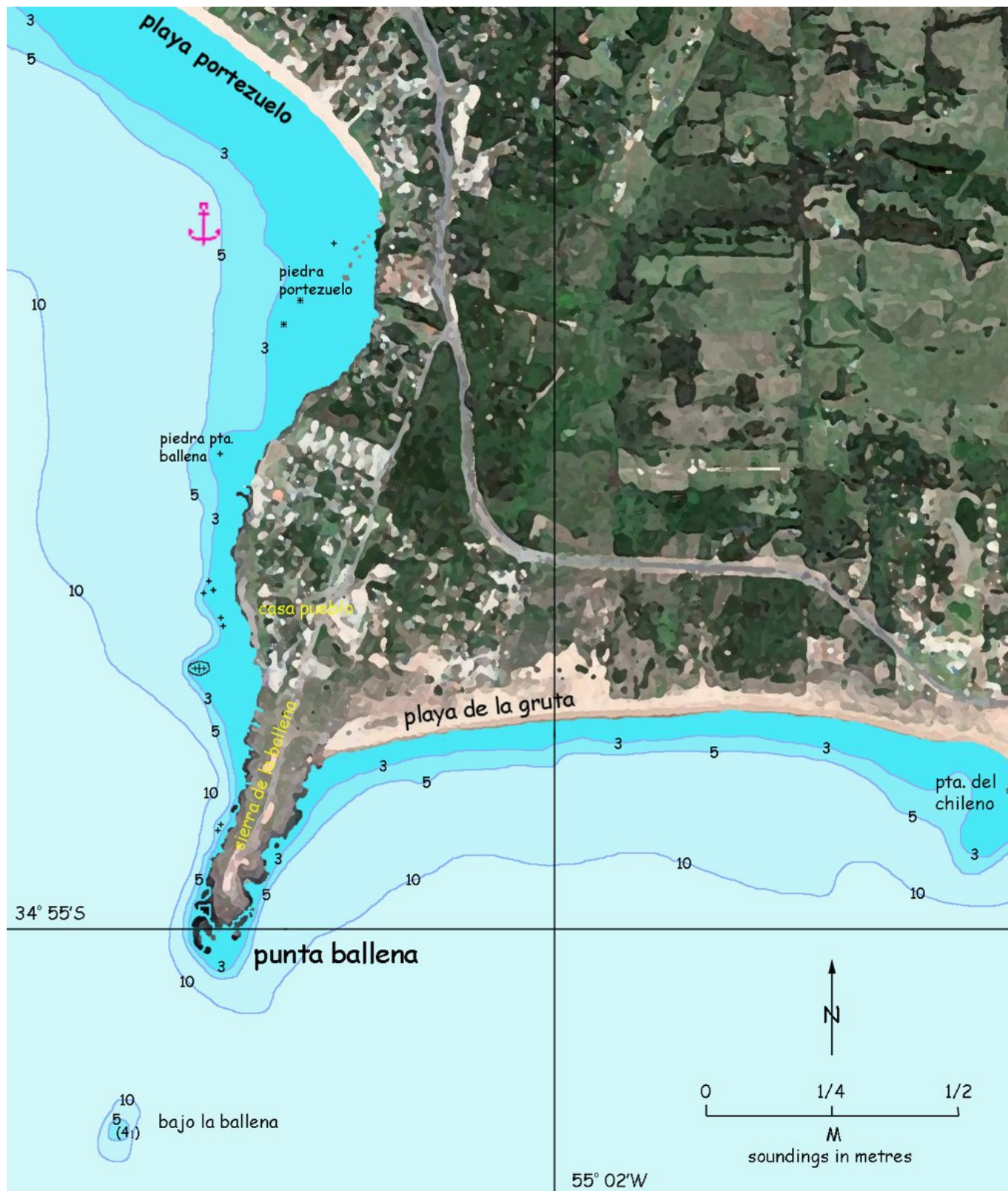
Playa Honda, Isla Gorriti

7. Punta Ballena

34° 53'.63 S 55° 2'.79 W

Anchorage on the west side of Punta Ballena.

Charts	Uruguay	3, 31	
	BA	3064	
Tides	Springs	0600 & 1800	Range 0.6m
	Neaps	0000 & 1200	Range 0.3m



General

A pleasant anchorage in a bay off Playa Portezuelo, 1.5 NM north of Punta Ballena. Ashore is a small resort village.

Approach

If approaching from the east, then keep outside the 10m line and pass between Punta Ballena and Bajo La Ballena, a 4.1m shoal. Once past Punta Ballena then keep at least 400m off the shore and head for the anchorage. Along the west side of Punta Ballena are numerous rocks and a wreck.

The approach from the west is clear.

Anchorage

Anchor in the corner of the bay, at the south end of Playa Portezuelo, in about 6m, sand. Good shelter from the north to southeast.

Land at the beach, swell permitting.

Formalities

None

Facilities

Ashore there are several restaurants and cafes as well as a small grocery store.



Ensenada del Portrero – Punta Ballena anchorage looking east



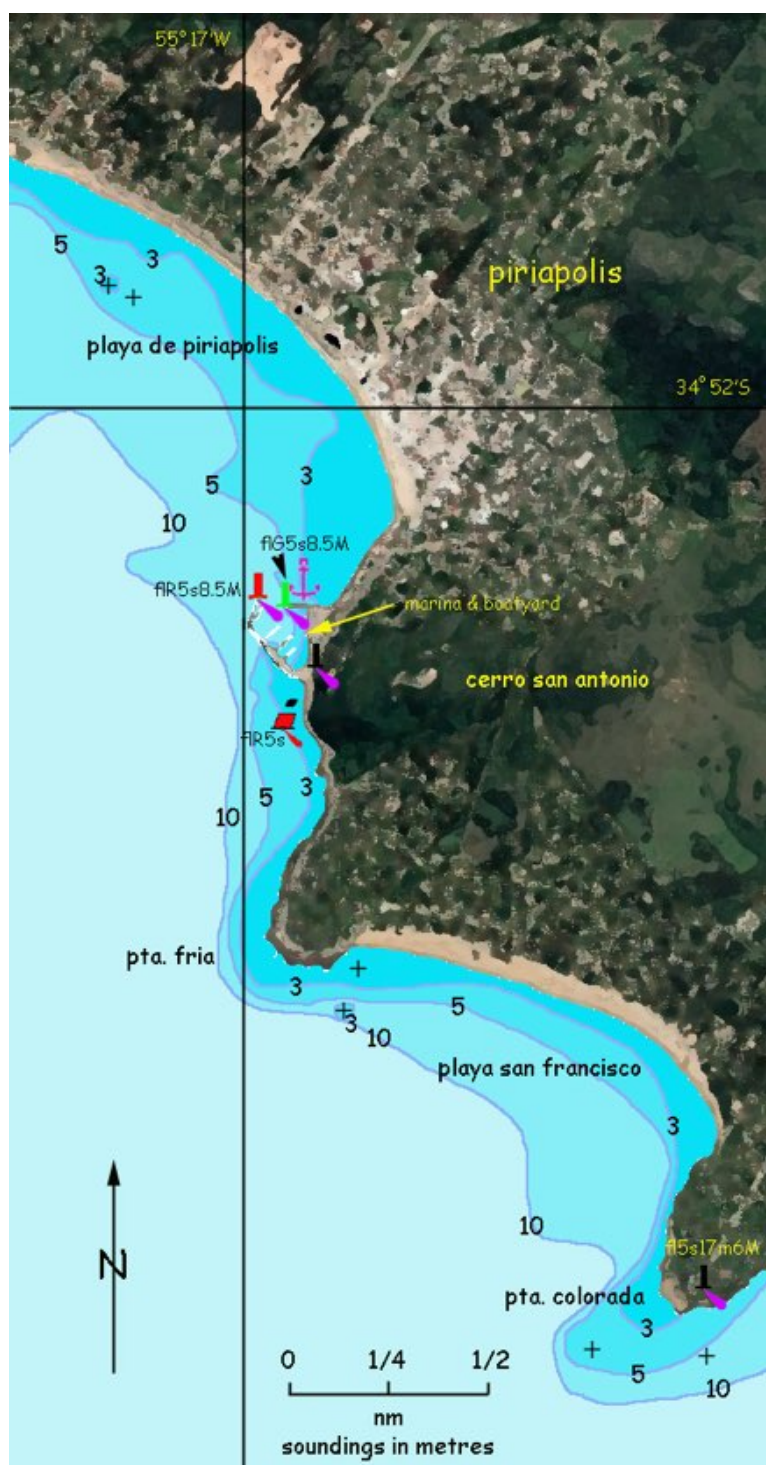
Punta Ballena looking northwest

8. Piriapolis

34° 52'.5 S 55° 17' W

Seaside resort town with yacht harbour and boatyard.

Charts	Uruguay	30, 32	
	BA	3064	
Tides	Springs	0600 & 1800	Range 0.6m
	Neaps	0000 & 1200	Range 0.3m
Lights	Piriapolis Hbr.	Fl R 5s 8.5NM	
		Fl G 5s 8.5NM	
	Pta. Colorada	Fl W 5s 17m 6NM	



General

Piriapolis is a resort town. The yacht harbour has a marina and a large boatyard. The boatyard was developed for the early Whitbread round the world races and has a large 100T travel lift. This is the best boatyard facility in Uruguay.

Approach

The approach from the east is clear of dangers, but keep at least 600m south of Pta. Colorada, and 400m off Pta. Fria.

Approaching from the west is clear of dangers.

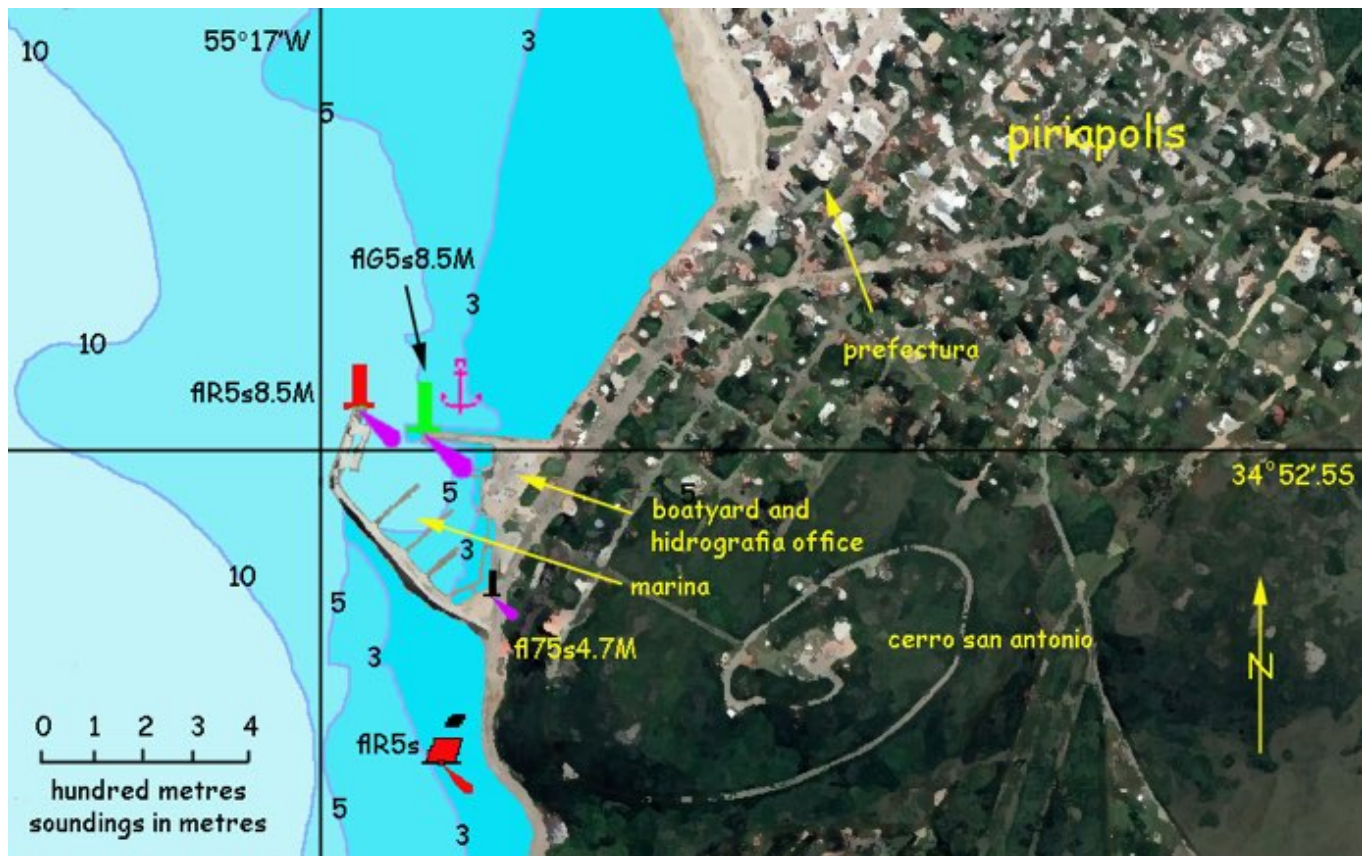
Anchorage

The entrance to the yacht harbour is on the north side, with red and green lights marking the entrance. Call 'control maritimo' ahead of arrival.

It is possible to anchor close north of the harbour in 3m, but clear of the entrance, there is no charge. While the anchorage gives shelter from the northeast through east to south, any strong west wind will make this anchorage untenable necessitating entering the harbour or clearing out to sea. Keep a close eye on the weather.



Hotel Colon, Piriapolis



Piriapolis Marina looking northwest



Piriapolis Harbour panorama

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and on leaving. You will require a receipt from the Hidrogafia on leaving (even if you have anchored out).

Facilities

Piriapolis is by far the best boatyard in Uruguay with a large 100T travel lift. Local tradesmen are available to carry out work if needed, but DIY is allowed. You are not officially allowed to live on board your yacht whilst in the boatyard.

Accommodation ashore is readily available outside the summer season. Be aware that if you state that you are doing repairs then the Prefectura may well insist that your repairs are assessed by an engineer or surveyor, at your expense. Best to always just do maintenance!

The marina has all the usual facilities and is a 15 min walk to town. Piriapolis has all the facilities of a small resort town.

A bus service runs to Montevideo airport and the city, approximately every 2hrs during the day.



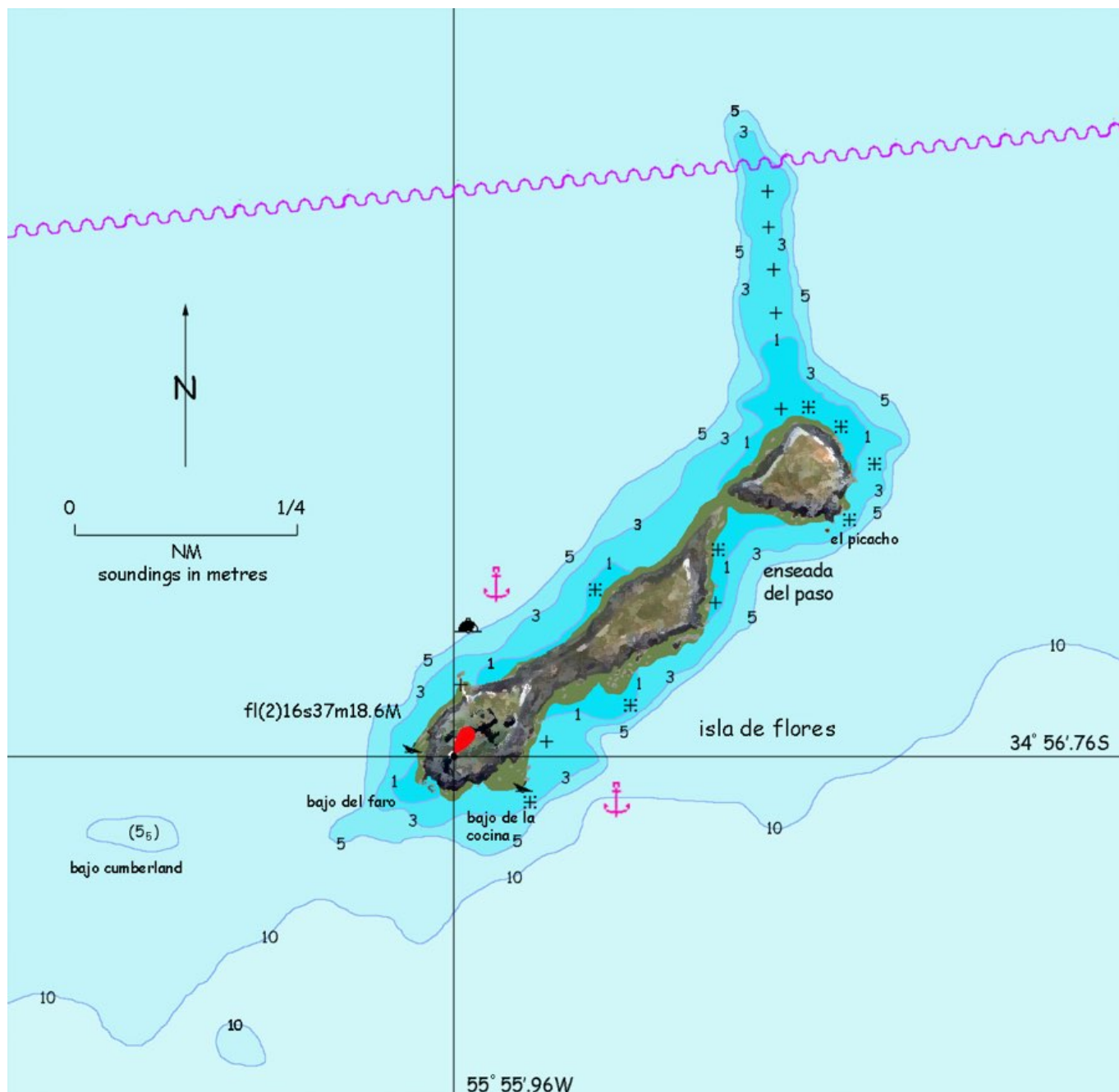
Piriapolis Beach in summer

9. Isla Flores

34° 56'.72 S 55° 56'.92 W

A small uninhabited island 10 NM east of Puerto Buceo, Montevideo.

Charts	Uruguay	40 (with inset)
	BA	1740, 2001
Lights	Isla De Flores	Fl W(2) 16s 37m 18.6NM



General

This small island, 10 NM east of Puerto Buceo, has anchorages north and south of the island.

Approach

If approaching from the east and heading for the northern anchorage then keep 0.7 NM north of

the northeast end of the island as a shallow reef extends 0.5 NM from it.

The approach to the southern anchorage is clear.

The approach from the west is clear to both anchorages.

Anchorage

The north anchorage is in about 6m and provides shelter from the south and west. Avoid anchoring any further northeast of the shown position on the chart as the holding there is poor.

The southern anchorage is west of the lighthouse in about 10m and would only be suitable in settled weather.

Formalities

None

Facilities

The island is uninhabited but on the northwest side of the island, near the lighthouse is a jetty where it should be possible to land. No other facilities.



Isla de Flores, looking north



Detail – Isla de Flores,

10. Puerto del Buceo, Montevideo

34° 55' S 56° 08' W

Yacht harbour in a Montevideo suburb, the only feasible option to visit the city.

Charts Uruguay 40, 41
BA 3064, 1749, 2001
Argentine H-150

Tides Tides are complex with a range of up to 1m. Note that water levels are more dependant on the wind, strong westerly winds increase the depth and strong easterly winds decrease the depth, sometimes alarmingly.

Lights Y. C. Uruguayo Fl W 5s 8NM



Buceo panorama

General

Buceo is the headquarters of the Yacht Club Uruguayo and is the only feasible place for yachts to stay while visiting Montevideo. The centre of the city is about 6.5km to the west.

Approach

If approaching from the east pass either side of Isla De Flores (10 NM east of Buceo) and then head directly for Buceo. Note the shoal Buen Viaje, 1.3 NM south of Buceo.

If coming from the west you must stay 1.2 NM south of Pta. Brava, to avoid a sewer outfall (marked by cardinal buoys). Once past then head directly to Buceo, keeping west of the shoal Buen Viaje.

Anchorage

If arriving after dark an anchorage can be found southwest of Pta. Buceo, in about 2.5m. Good shelter from the north and west.

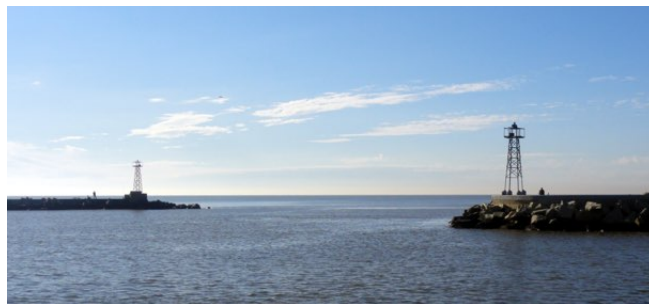
The Yacht Club Uruguayo makes visitors welcome. The moorings close to the entrance (painted blue) are usually reserved for visitors and these are in the deepest water with about 2.5m. There are several jetties for bow to mooring with a stern buoy. These are also available for visitors, the depth on the outer end is about 2m, but can be less with strong easterly winds. The bottom in the harbour is soft mud.

It is possible for a small shallow draught boat to anchor outside the moorings, but the holding is poor in the soft mud.

During strong south winds the visitor mooring are uncomfortable, but the mooring seem substantial.

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura office at the base of the club house on entry and again when leaving, it is manned 24hrs a day.



Entrance to Puerto del Buceo



Yacht Club Uruguayo



Dinghy dock at the Yacht Club Uruguayo, Buceo



Montevideo City Centre



Mercado del Puerto, Ciudad Vieja



Buxareo street market, General Rivera

Facilities

The club provides a launch service to the moorings and there are showers, swimming pool, a bar and a restaurant in the club house. The club has a small boatyard with boats lifted out by crane up to about 35ft, this may be available to visitors. There is also a small chandlery.

Across from the club are stalls selling fresh fish, fruit and vegetables.

Montevideo Shopping is a small mall with a supermarket, less than a mile (1.5km) north of the harbour. A little further past the mall is the cross road Ave. General Rivera which has a good selection of shops.

An excellent market takes place on Thursday mornings on Rua Felix Buxareo, five blocks to the left along Ave. General Rivera.

A short way west of the club is a bus station with regular buses to the city centre.



Maritime Museum of Montevideo,
on the eastern waterfront in Buceo



Professional Dog Walker!

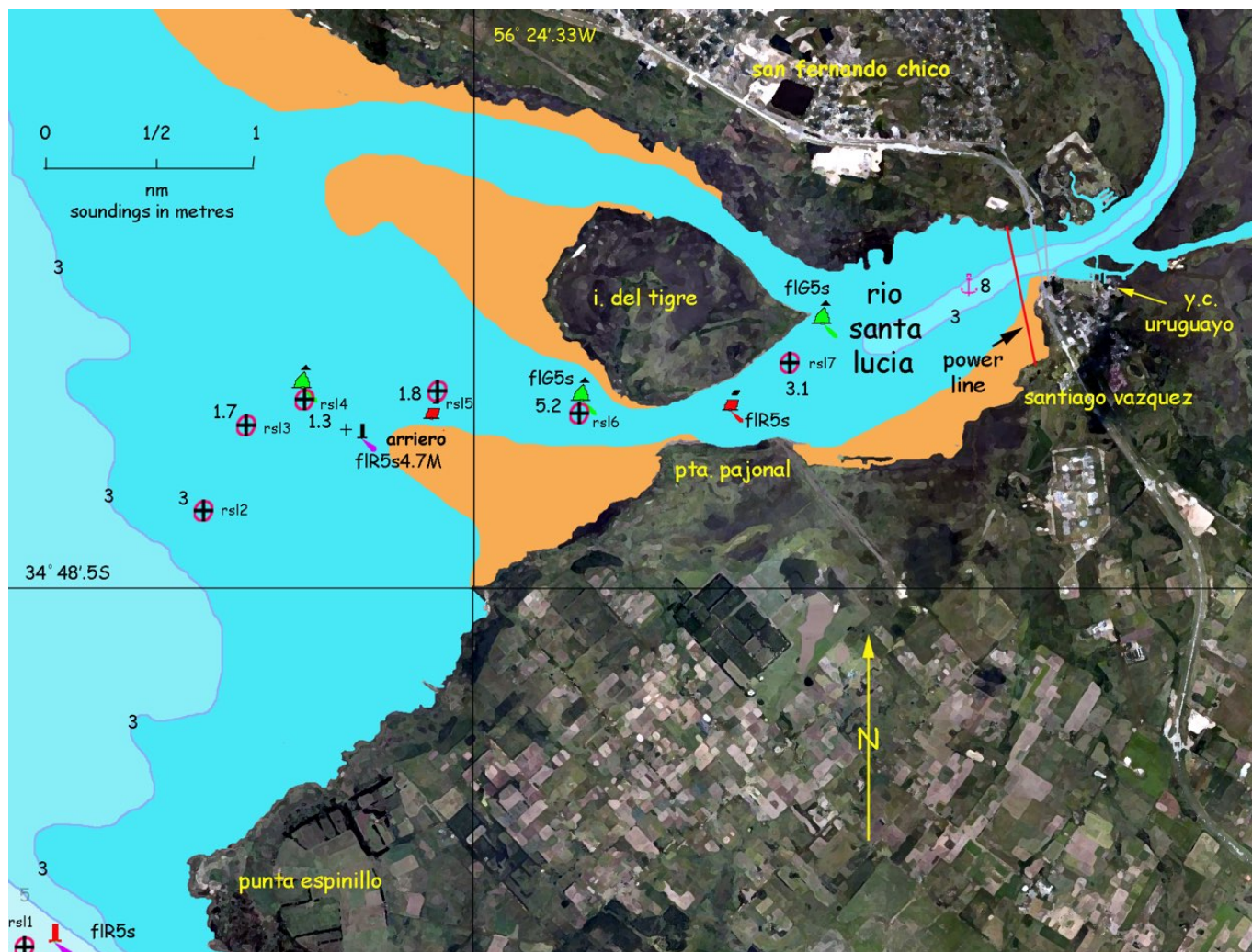
II. Rio Santa Lucia

34° 47'.25 S 56° 21'.73 W

An sheltered anchorage in the mouth of a river.

Charts Uruguay 40, 50
BA 1749, 2001

Tides Tides are complex with a range of up to 1m. Note that water levels are more dependant on the wind, strong westerly winds increase the depth and strong easterly winds decrease the depth, sometimes alarmingly.



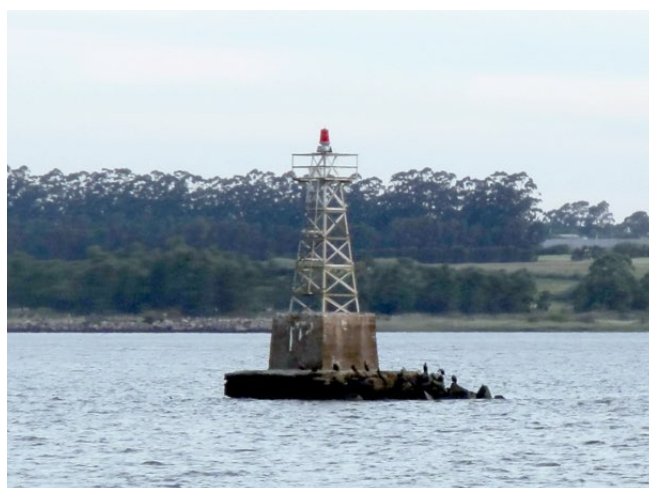
General

The Rio Santa Lucia, 13 NM northwest of Montevideo, provides a sheltered anchorage off a small town, but the entrance is relatively shallow.

Approach and entry

The approach is straightforward but if approaching from the west pass south of the Banco Santa Lucia, which extends 3.6 NM south of Punta del Tigre. The south end of the bank is marked with a south cardinal buoy. The south end of the bank lies 6.5 NM west of Punta Espinillo.

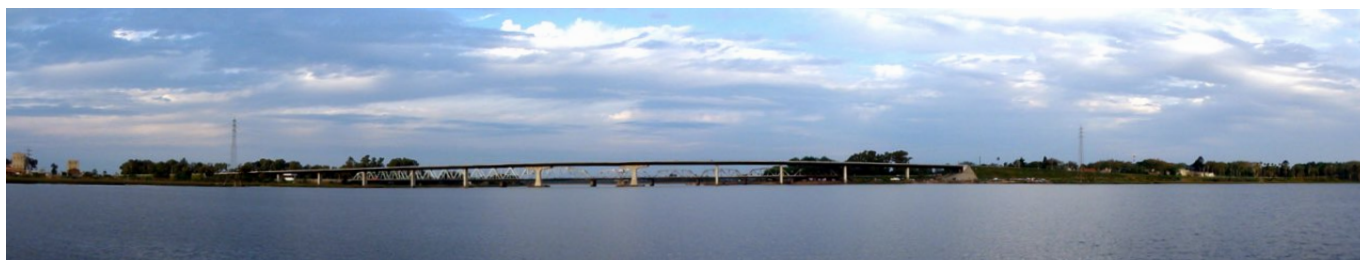
Entry is from the red pillar buoy, off Punta Espinillo and follows a well spaced set of buoys (see waypoints), taking you south of Isla del Tigre to the anchorage.



El Arriero Beacon



Isla Tigre from the east



Bridges across the Rio Santa Lucia, looking east

WARNING: note that the overhead power lines, close west of the bridges, sweep down very low in the middle, and one visiting yacht touched and was burnt to the waterline, fortunately the crew managed to swim ashore, but lost everything.

Waypoints

RSL1 34° 50'.10 S 56° 26'.77 W

RSL2 34° 48'.15 S 56° 25'.77 W

RSL3 34° 47'.78 S 56° 25'.53 W

RSL4 34° 47'.67 S 56° 25'.24 W

RSL5 34° 47'.63 S 56° 24'.53 W

RSL6 34° 47'.74 S 56° 23'.79 W

RSL7 34° 47'.52 S 56° 22'.66 W

Anchorage

34° 47'.17 S 56° 21'.72 W

Anchor about 0.3NM west-southwest of the bridge in 8m of water. Land either at the first stone jetty, past the bridges, or at the Yacht Club Uruguayo jetty, a little further east. The air clearance under the bridges is not known, the Prefectura should be able to supply the information. The lower east bridge has an lifting span, but is believed to no longer operate.

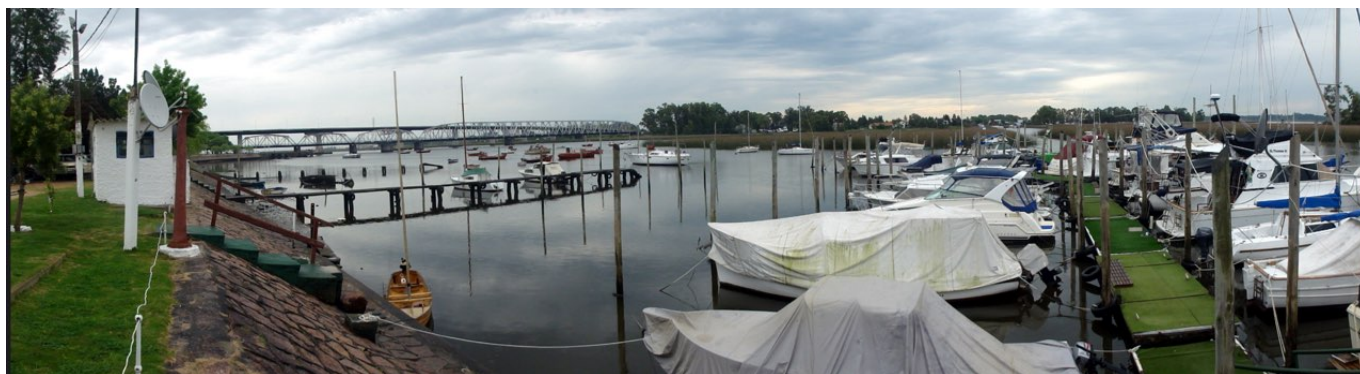
Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and on departure.

Facilities

Santiago Vazquez is a small town with basic supplies. The small Yacht Club Uruguayo, a branch of the main club in Buceo, makes visitors welcome.

A bus service (#127) goes to Montevideo and takes about 1hr 20mins.



Yacht Club Uruguayo, Rio Santa Lucia



Jetty by the Prefectura



Prefectura



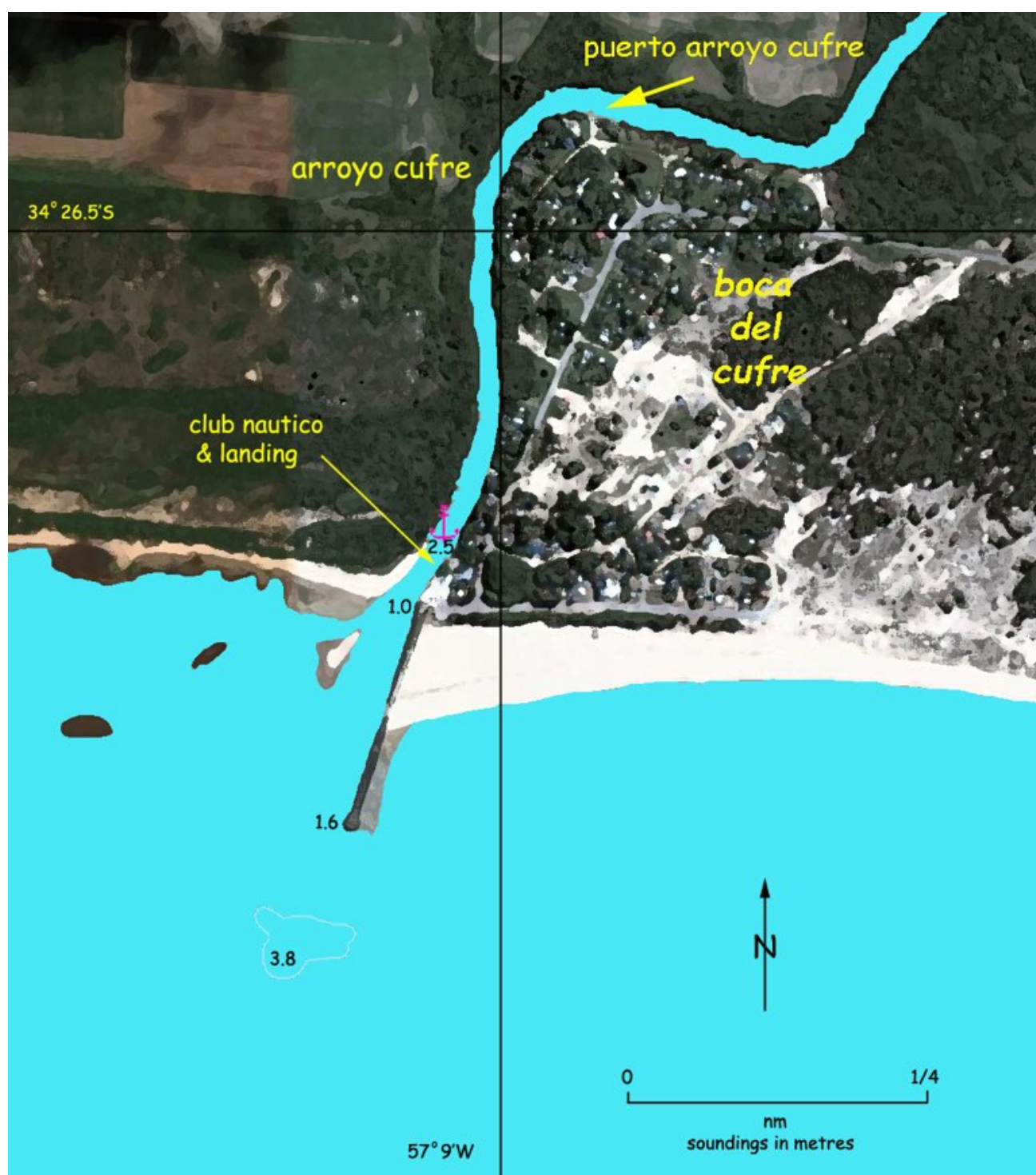
Remains of the yacht that hit the overhead power lines

12. Arroyo Cufre

34° 27'.07 S 57° 9'.28 W

A small river with a shoal bar entrance of the village of Boca del Cufre. Suitable for shallow draught yachts.

Charts	Uruguay	50	
	BA	1749	
Tides	HW springs at	~ 0800 & 2045	Range ~ 0.6m
	HW neaps at	~ 0230 & 1545	Range ~ 0.2m
	Note that strong winds can effect the tidal range by up to 2m		
Lights	Fl R (2) 5s	1.3NM SSW of S end of breakwater	





Entrance to Arroyo Cufre looking north-northeast



Arroyo Cufre looking towards the entrance



Dinghy dock at Club Nautico

Approach

The approach is straightforward. A lit red lateral buoy is situated 1.3NM south-southwest of the south end of the breakwater. Entry to the river is towards the breakwater and then pass close alongside the west side of the breakwater. The shallowest part was at the very entrance to the river where the depth was found to be 1.0m when visited. The water level varies dependant on the wind, strong westerlies decrease the depth, and a strong east wind vice versa. The sketch chart shows the depths when visited and could be used to gauge the actual depths in the entrance.

Anchorage

When visited there were several small yachts moored by the west bank of the river, near the entrance. Anchor past these yachts, to keep clear of the channel in about 2.5m. Land at the Club Nautico.

Formalities

None

Facilities

Boca del Cufre is a small village with many weekend houses. There is a small grocery store and a couple of restaurants, but not much else. A very pleasant, quiet community with a nice sandy beach.



Puerto Arroyo Cufre



Quiet Street, Boca del Cufre

13. Rio Rosario

34° 26'.47 S 57° 21'.76 W

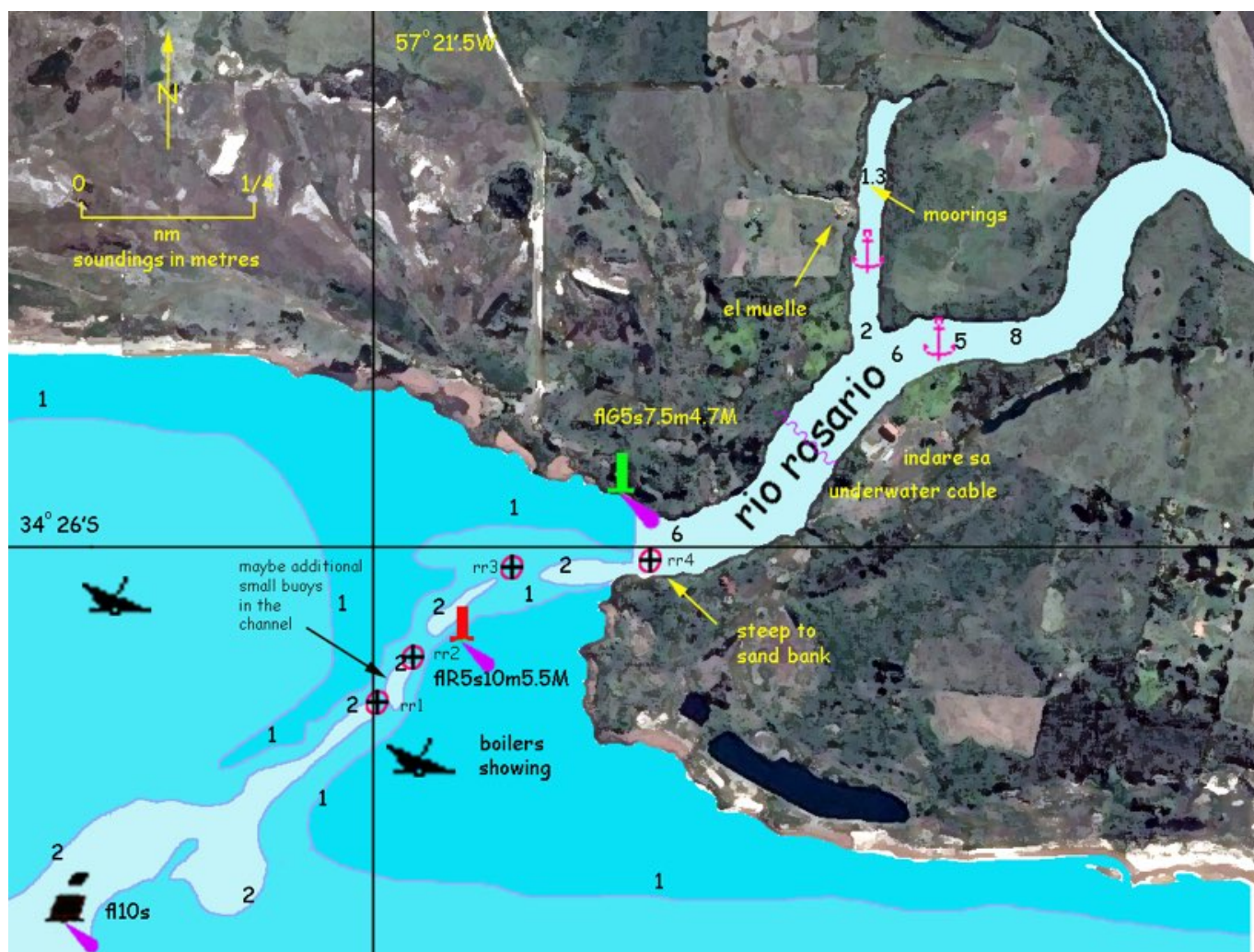
The Rio Rosario is a small river with anchorages.

Charts Uruguay 50,51
BA 1749

Tides HW springs at ~ 0800 & 2045 Range 0.8m
HW neaps at ~ 0230 & 1545 Range 0.2m

Note that strong winds can affect the tidal range by up to 2m

Lights Safe Water Buoy FI W 10s
Entrance Buoy FI R 5s 5.5NM
Entrance Buoy FI G 5s 4.7NM



General

The Rio Rosario provides sheltered anchorage inside the entrance and can be navigated by a shallow draught yacht 8 NM near to the small town of La Paz. Close inside the entrance is an abandoned factory and old sand works, otherwise all is rural and peaceful.

Approach

The approach to the safe water buoy is straightforward. The land around the entrance is

very featureless and the best landmarks are the factory and chimneys at the town of Juan Lacaze, 4 NM east of the entrance.



'Boilers' at very low water level





Rio Rosario panorama looking southwest towards entrance

Entry

From the safe water buoy follow the waypoints below. If the channel has moved then there may well be additional small buoys.

A yacht with a draught of up to 1.8m should be able to enter the river, unless the water level is low (due to wind). This entrance should be avoided in strong onshore winds, a safer alternative would be Puerto Sauce (Juan Lacaze).

Waypoints

Safe water buoy 34° 26'.62 S 57° 22'.04 W

RR1 34° 26'.24 S 57° 21'.47 W

RR2 34° 26'.08 S 57° 21'.36 W

RR3 34° 26'.00 S 57° 21'.19 W

RR4 34° 26'.00 S 57° 20'.92 W



Indare SA engineering works

Anchorage

In the lower part of the river there are two anchorages. Either just past the entrance to El Muelle in about 5m, or in the El Muelle channel.

Formalities

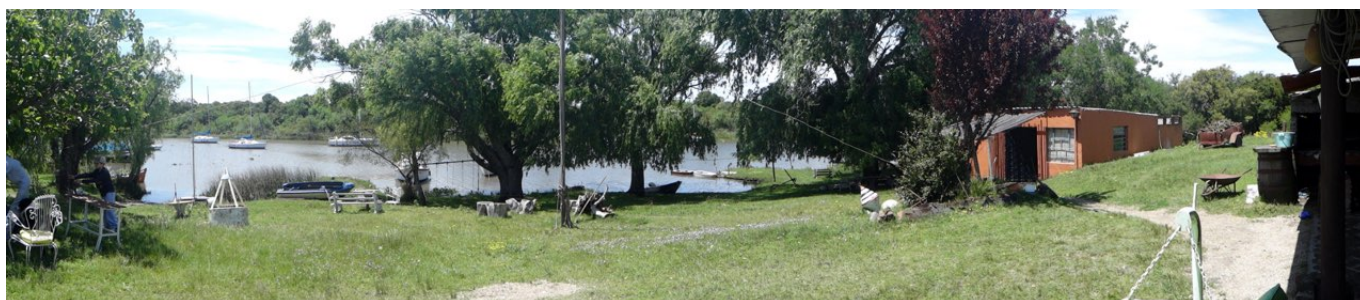
None

Facilities

It is believed that the 'El Muelle' restaurant is now closed.



El Muelle Cove



Moorings off El Muelle restaurant



Upper Rio Rosario

Upper Rio Rosario:

It is possible to travel another 8 NM up the river with a shallow draught boat. Most of the river is quite deep but there are some shallow patches. When visited the least depth found was 1m in one place (see chart).

The first difficulty is the Paso De Pedras. There are numerous rocks either side of the river here, but a clear channel through. It is marked with leading marks but these are poorly maintained and quite well hidden in the trees. There may be small port and starboard buoys marking the channel. Once through the pass and around the corner then keep close to the southwest shore to avoid rocks on the northeast side. After the next bend the rest of the river is straightforward, but favour the outside off the bends to find the deepest water.

NB the overhead power cable – not far past Paso De Pedras – with an approximate air clearance of 18m.

Close past Puerto Ingles the river becomes very shallow (0.5m).

Anchorage

It is possible to anchor almost anywhere along the river once past the Paso De Pedras area. It is rural and quiet.

To visit the town of La Paz then anchor just past Puerto Rosario, an abandoned dock, in about 1.4m. It is then another 1 NM by dinghy to the landing at the Club Nautico Concoria, and another 0.5 NM to La Paz.

Facilities

La Paz is a very small town with basic provisions.



Paso de Pedras Leading Marks



La Paz



Club Nautico Concordia slipway



Club Nautico Concordia



Sunk steam tug

I 4. Puerto Sauce – Juan Lacaze 34° 26'.3 S 57° 27'.27 W

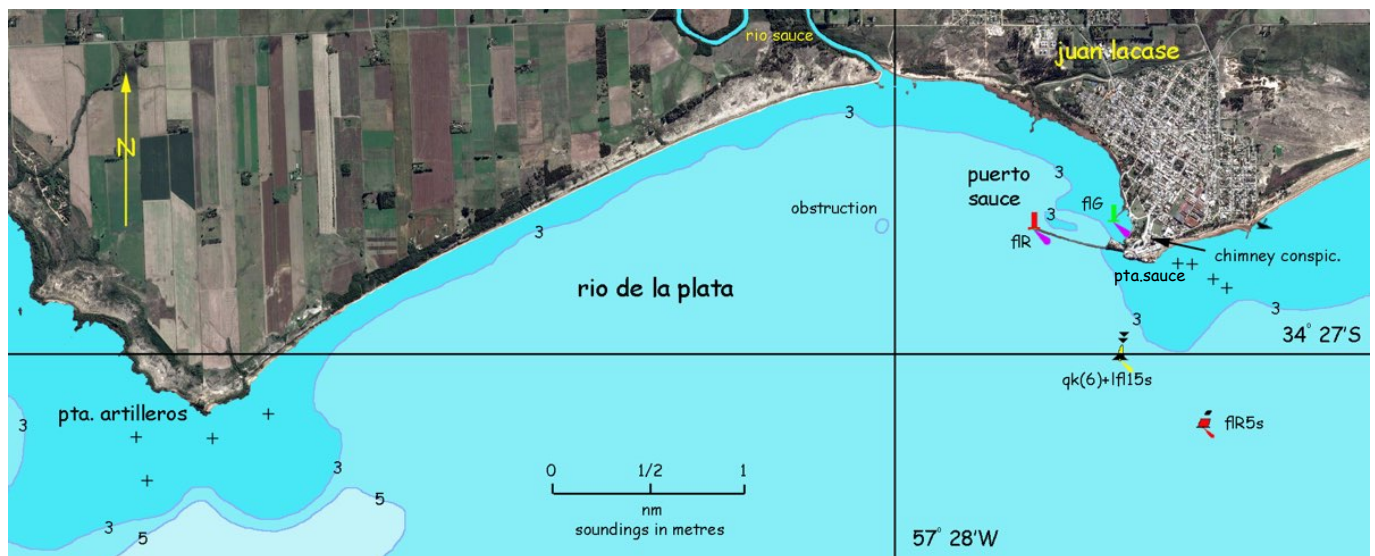
A small port and yacht harbour at the town of Juan Lacaze.

Charts Uruguay 50,51
BA 1749

Tides HW springs at ~ 0800 & 2045 Range 0.8m
HW neaps at ~ 0230 & 1545 Range 0.2m

Note that strong winds can affect the tidal range by up to 2m

Lights Safe Water Buoy Fl R 5s
West end of breakwater Fl R 5s 6m 8NM



General

Puerto Sauce is an artificial harbour protected by a long breakwater. The inner harbour is a small yacht basin with moorings and stern/bow to moorings. The town of Juan Lacaze is dominated by the large pulp mill at Punta Sauce.

Approach

The approach is straightforward from the south.

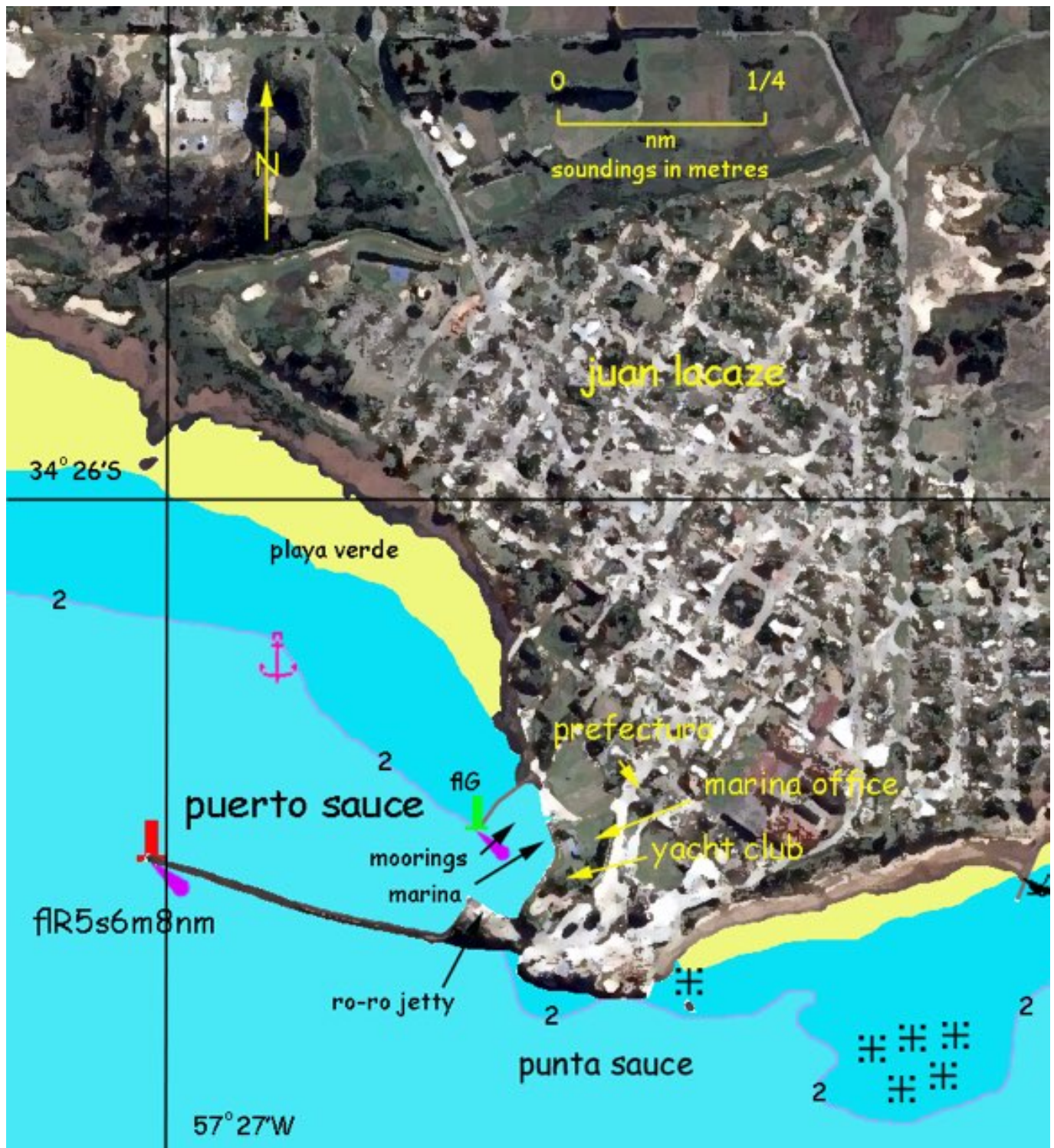
From the west keep 1 NM south of Punta Astilleros (4.9 NM west of Punta Sauce) to avoid the above and below rocks off the point before heading for the port.



Juan Lacaze Pulp Mill



Puerto Sauce inner harbour looking southwest



From the east keep outside the 3m line to avoid the rocks southeast of Punta Sauce. Pass south of the south cardinal buoy before heading to the port.

Entry

The end of the breakwater has a red lit beacon, continue along the north side to enter the inner basin. Be aware that a Ro-Ro ferry operates from the port and regularly enters and leaves the port.

Anchorage

The inner harbour has yacht moorings and stern/bow to moorings from a buoy. Usually the moorings are occupied with local boats and a



Juan Lacaze Ro-Ro Ferry



Inner harbour



Puerto Sauce stern-to moorings

visitor will either have to use the the jetty or anchor outside the inner basin in about 3m (leave plenty of room for the Ro-Ro ferry). There is a charge for anchoring.

It is possible to anchor outside the harbour area, north of the end of the breakwater in about 2m without charge. This anchorage is sheltered from all east winds, but exposed to the west. Land at Playa Verde.

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and departure.

Call at the Hidrografia office if moored or anchored in the harbour.

Facilities

Juan Lacaze is a reasonable sized town with good facilities.

There is a bus service to Colonia, which has a regular ferry service to Buenos Aires. The bus runs four times a day, and takes 50mins.

The marina is a good place to leave a yacht if wanting to travel by land.



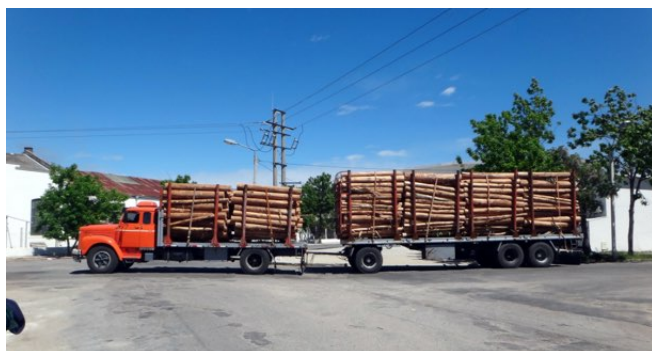
Yacht Club



Anchorage in the outer harbour



House in Juan Lacaze



Logs for the mill

15. Arroyo Riachuelo

34° 27'.5 S 57° 44'.0 W

A narrow navigable river with anchorage.

Charts Uruguay 51, 52
BA 1749

Tides HW springs at ~ 0800 & 2045 Range 0.8m
HW neaps at ~ 0230 & 1545 Range 0.2m

Note that strong winds can affect the tidal range by up to 2m

Lights Safe Water Buoy Fl W 10s red/white buoy
Breakwater Fl R 5s 3.8NM
Fl G 5s 3.8NM

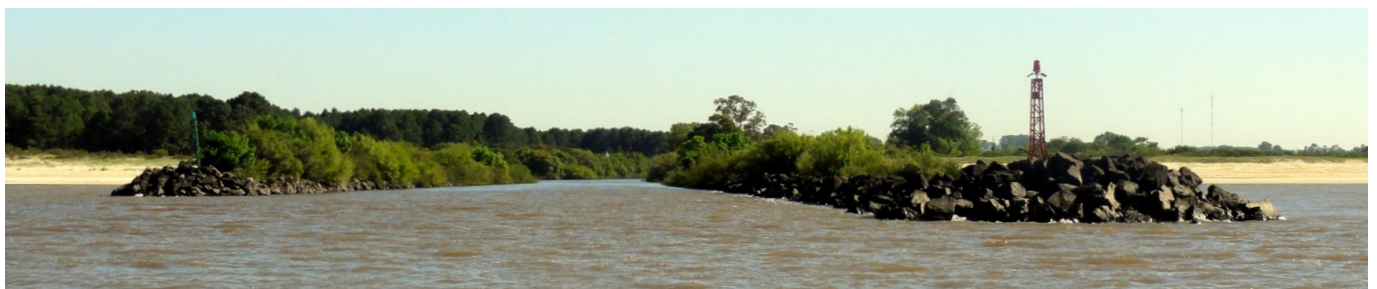
General

The Arroyo Riachuelo is a narrow river 5 NM east of Colonia. It is navigable for 1.5 NM, where there is a jetty and anchorage for yachts. In summer this is a very popular weekend destination for yachts.

Approach

From the west the approach is straightforward.

If approaching from the east then pass south of the south cardinal buoy, which marks the rocky shoal Restinga de Las Pipas. The buoy is 2.4 NM southwest of the entrance to Riachuelo. Then



Entrance to Arroyo Riachuelo



Anchorage off the jetty



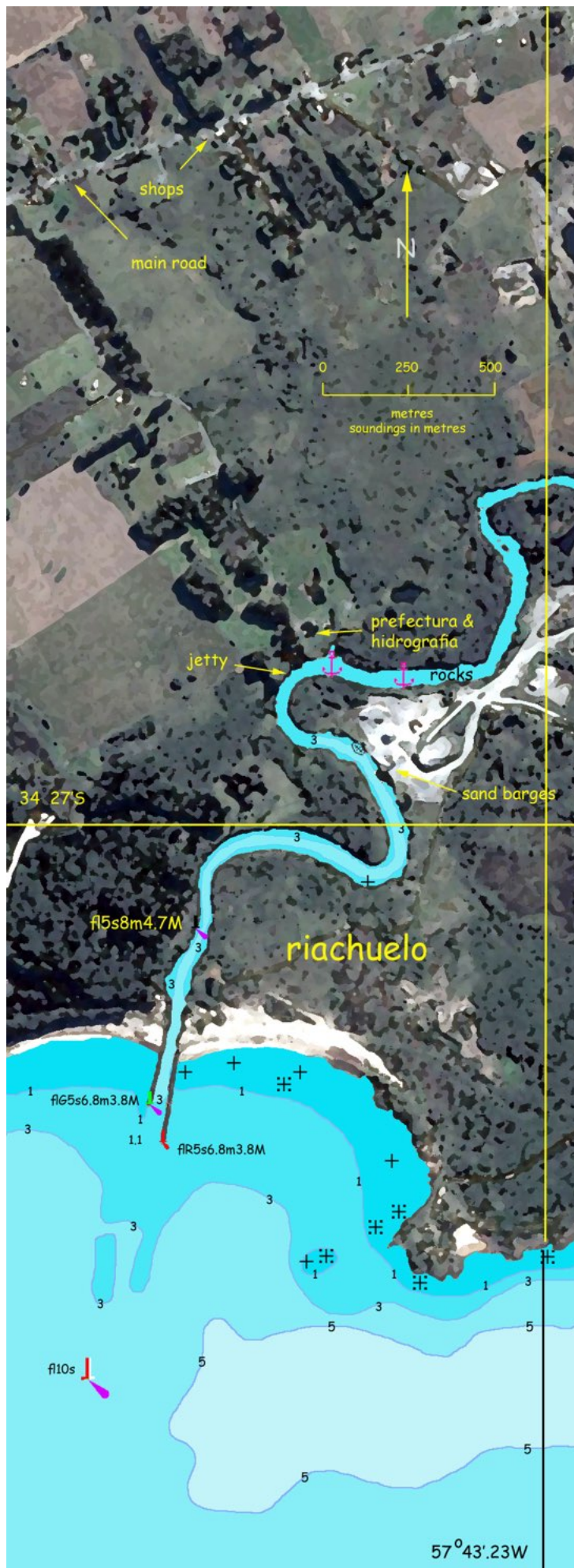
Jetty and landing steps



Sand barge



Prefectura and Hidrografia office



head towards the safe water buoy. This will take you east of Roca Barriles, a 2.4m shoal.

Approaching from the south then best to keep west of the Roca Barriles.

Entry

From the safe water buoy head on a course of 015°T to pass between the breakwaters. Favour the east side to avoid the 1.1m spot until the east breakwater is abeam. There should be a minimum depth of 2.5m. The channel is narrow, approximately 30m wide until in the river. Once between the breakwaters there should be 3m, and this depth or more will be carried up to the anchorage.

NB the breakwaters are quite high and you may well lose the wind if sailing in. Note also that a sand barge operates from here.

Anchorage

At the second hairpin bend in the river, 1.5 NM from the entrance, there is a jetty which can be used by yachts for a short stay.

The anchorage is past the jetty and the usual practice is to anchor and then take a line ashore, to a tree, to pull out of the channel.

Land at the jetty.

There is a charge for anchoring here.

Note the area of rocks and shoals to the east of the anchorage.

Formalities

There is a Prefectura and Hidrografia office close to the jetty. Call at both offices on arrival and departure. The Prefectura will require a receipt from the Hidrografia on departure.

NB while this is a very popular anchorage in the summer months it is rarely visited in the winter and the Prefectura and Hidrografia may well not be manned in winter.

Facilities

Water is available at the jetty. In season there is a cafe open near the jetty. About 1.5km up the road, on the highway are two small provision shops and a butcher.

Also on the highway are buses to Colonia. Colonia airport is about 4km west of Riachuelo.



Shops on the highway

16. Colonia

34° 28'.5 S 57° 51'.0 W

A port of entry and a major ferry port for Argentina.

Charts Uruguay 52, 60

BA 2004, 1749, 3561

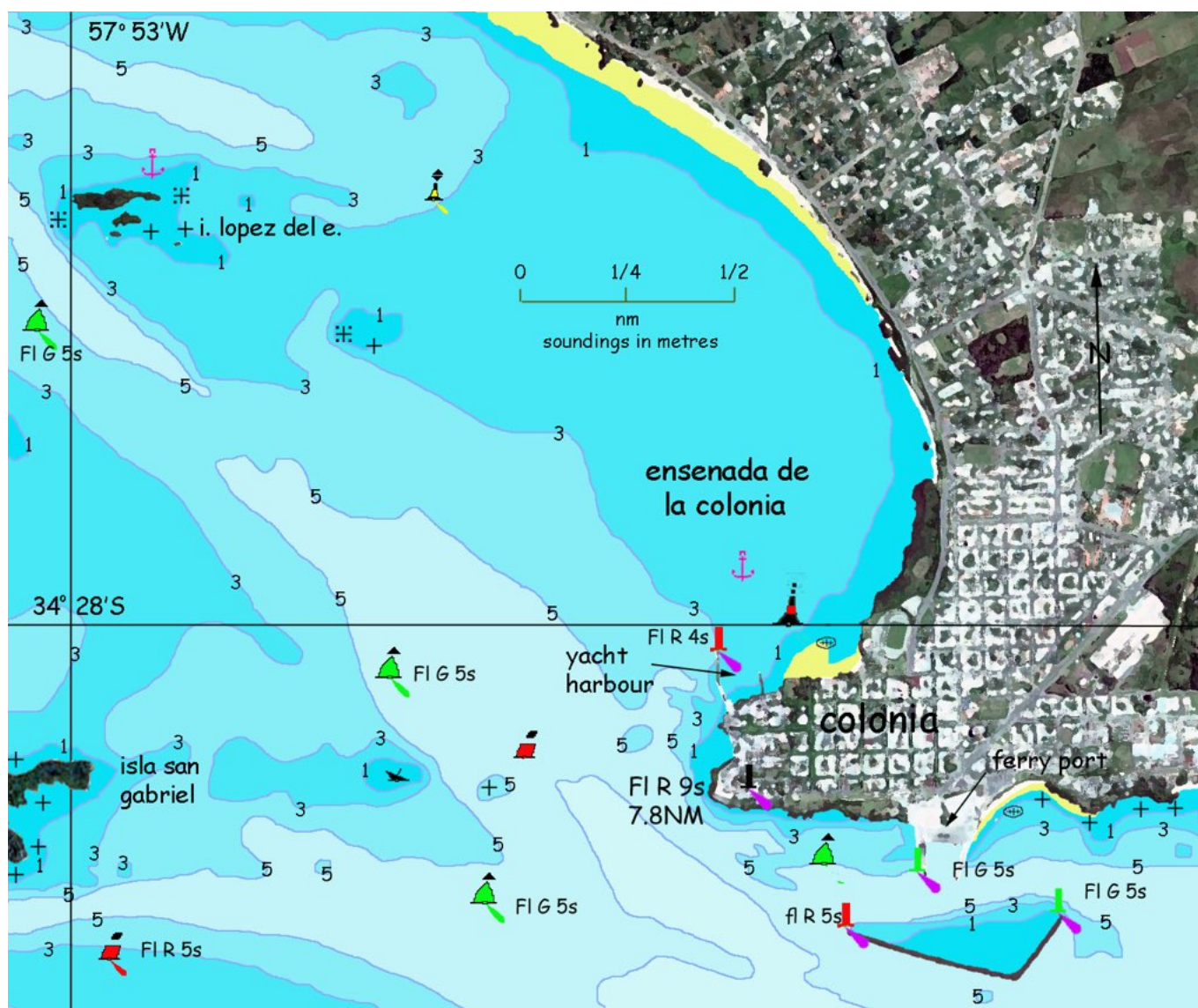
Tides HW springs at ~ 0800 & 2045 Range 0.8m

HW neaps at ~ 0230 & 1545 Range 0.2m

Note that strong winds can affect the tidal range by up to 2m

Lights Faro de Colonia FI R 9s 7.8NM

Yacht Hbr, breakwater FI R 5s 4.5NM



General

Colonia is a very old town with an interesting historic centre. It has a yacht harbour to the north as well as a ferry port to the south.

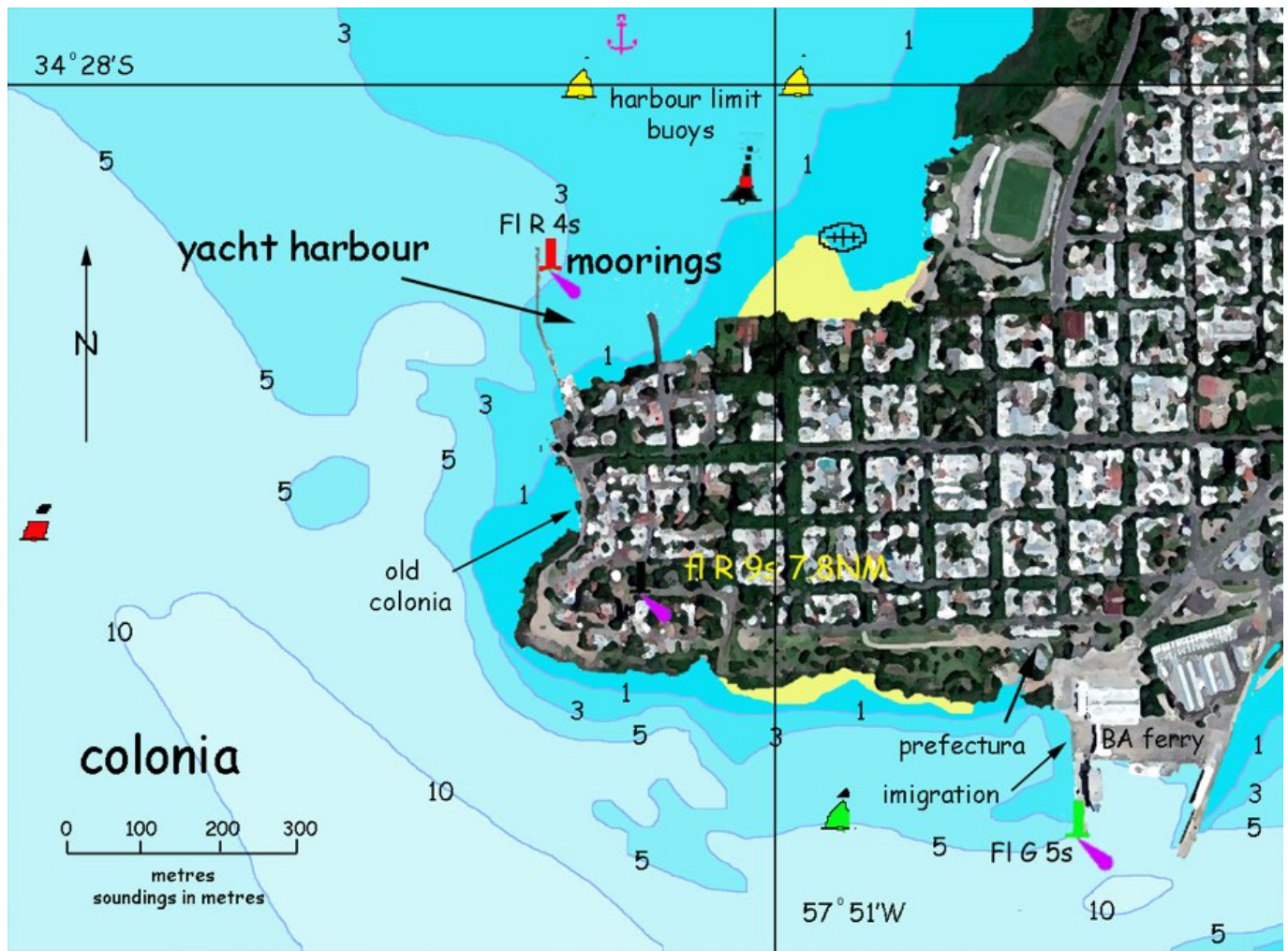
Approach

From Argentina and the east there are many wrecks to avoid, but they are all well buoyed. Pass south of Isla San Gabriel, in the buoyed channel, before heading for the yacht harbour at the north

end of the town. There are frequent ferries and high speed catamarans passing to and from Buenos Aires.

Approaching from the north keep west of Islas Horns del Oeste and to the west of the 5m line until Isla San Gabriel and pass south of the island, in the buoyed channel, before heading for the yacht harbour at the north end of town.

Approaching from the east is straightforward.



Colonia panorama



Colonia Yacht Harbour looking southwest

Anchorage

The yacht harbour has mooring buoys and, along the breakwater and wooden jetty there are bow to moorings, from a buoy. It is also possible to anchor outside the moorings in 2.5m, but note that anchoring is charged unless anchoring outside the harbour limits, marked by two yellow buoys (see chart).

While the harbour gives good protection from all but northerly winds, anchoring is exposed to north, northwest, west and southwest winds. In the event of strong winds from this direction shelter can be found by anchoring in the lee of Isla Lopez del Este, 1.5 NM northwest of the harbour.

In the summer season Colonia is a very popular place for yachts and is often full of yachts.



Jetty and Moorings

Formalities

If arriving from Argentina you are required to call the Prefectura 1hr before arrival.

In the summer months the Prefectura man a cabin at the yacht harbour otherwise call at the main Prefectura, just outside the ferry port.

If entering Uruguay then Immigration and Customs can be found in the ferry building, in the port.

On leaving you will need to call at the Prefectura cabin (or main office) and present your Hidrografia receipt. If you have been anchored outside the harbour limits you will still need a note from the Hidrografia to state that you owe nothing.

Facilities

Water is available from taps on the breakwater and toilets and showers next to the Hidrografia (showers are charged extra from mooring fees).

All the facilities of a tourist town. There are a few small supermarkets and many restaurants. Also a couple of chandlers.

A frequent ferry service (slow and fast) runs to Buenos Aires.

There is a frequent bus service to Montevideo, which takes 3hrs.



Colonia Light House



Prefectura and Aduana office



Restaurants by the harbour



Colonia town walls



Old Colonia



Old bull ring at Real de San Carlos



Church at Colonia



Colonia Yacht Harbour panorama



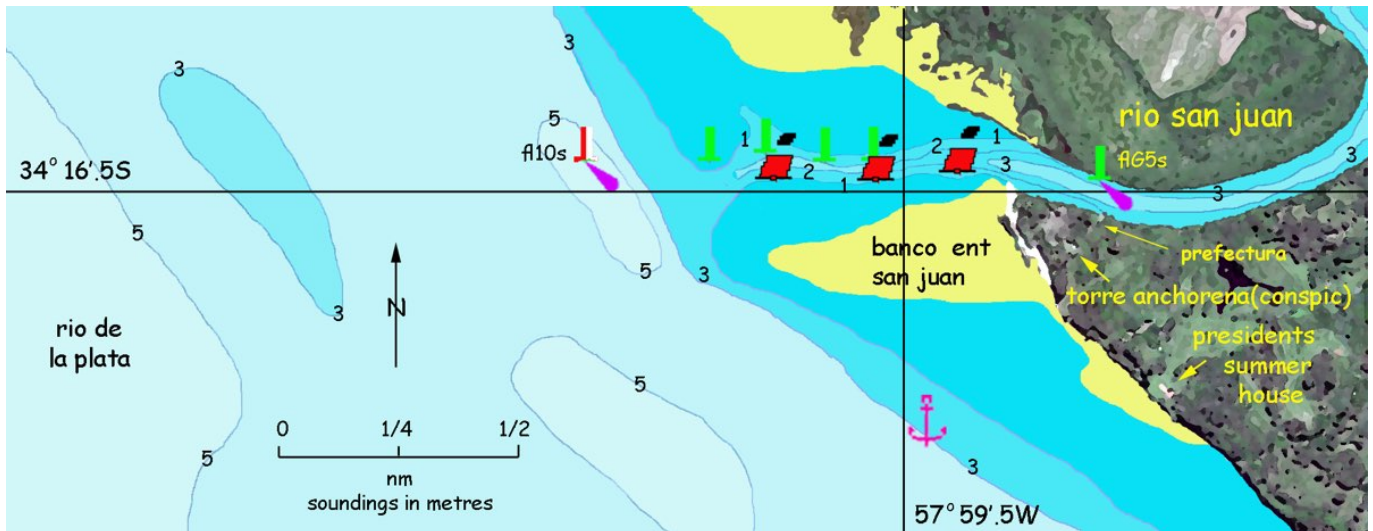
Colonia Yacht Harbour panorama

17. Rio San Juan

34° 16'.5 S 57° 59'.0 W

A small river 15 NM north of Colonia.

Charts	Uruguay	60, 60A 61, 62, 62A
	BA	3561
Tides	Range ~ 0.65m	
Lights	Safe Water Buoy	Fl W 10s
	Paso Entrada	Fl G 5s



General

The Rio San Juan is the site of the first European settlement on the Rio De La Plata. A fort was built here by Sebastian Cabot, the son of John Cabot, in 1527. A large stone tower marks the spot. The whole river on the south side is wood and park land, and forms the summer residence of the President of Uruguay. A pleasant anchorage.

Approach

The approach is straightforward if you keep to the buoyed channel in the Rio De La Plata.

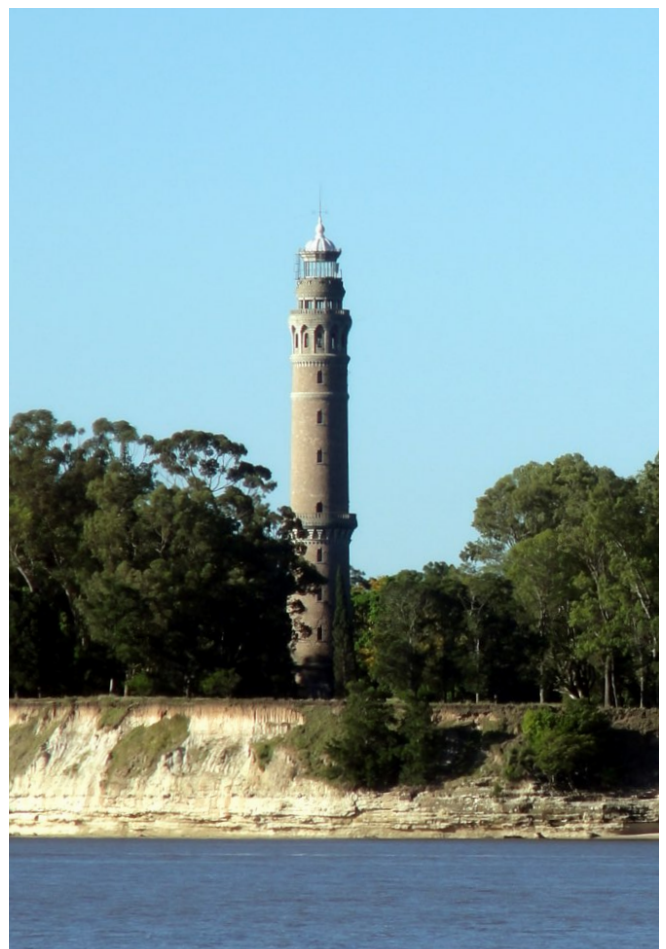
The Rio San Juan is easily identified from some distance by the conspicuous Anchorena tower, 69m high, which looks like a lighthouse.

Entry

Head for the the safe water buoy and then a channel, marked with small buoys, heading west, leads into the river. The least depth in the channel should be about 1.8m. Once into the river the depth increases to 3.5m.

Anchorage

Anchor anywhere in the river in about 3.5m, sand and clay. A beautiful quiet anchorage offering complete protection from the wind. Land at the Prefectura jetty, opposite the beacon on the north shore.



Tower at Rio San Juan



Anchorage off the Rio San Juan looking northeast

If you don't wish to enter the river a good anchorage can be found close S of the Banco Ent San Juan in 3m, off the large half timbered Presidential house. Sheltered from the north and east.

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and on leaving. There may be restrictions on visiting the Anchorena park, the Prefectura will advise on access.

Facilities

None



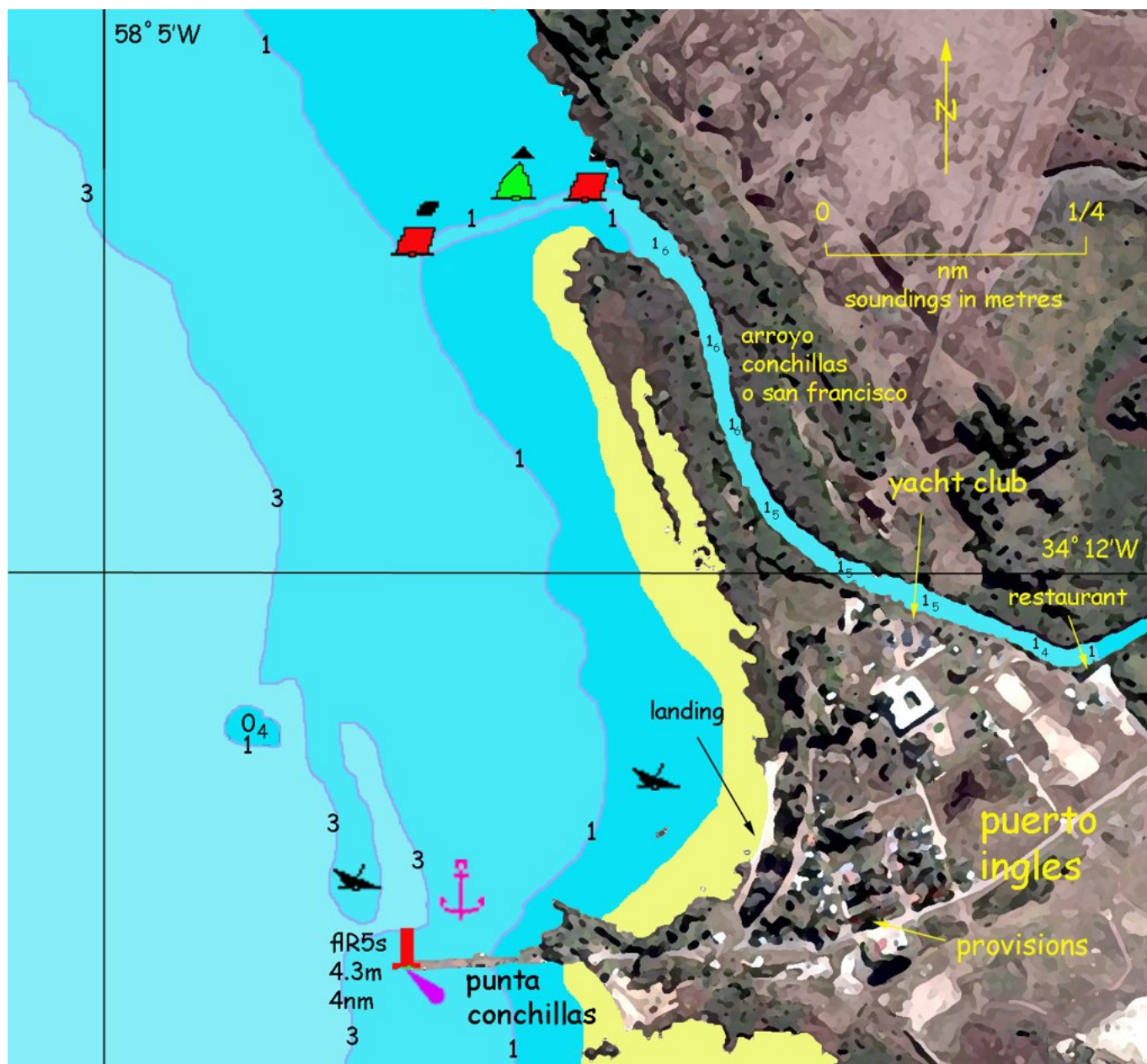
Uruguay President's Summer Residence

18. Punta Conchillas – Puerto Ingles

34° 12'.36 S 58° 4'.70 W

Anchorage off Punta Conchillas and a shallow river.

Charts	Uruguay BA	60, 61, 61B, 62, 62B 3561
Tides	Range	0.65m
Lights	Pta. Conchillas jetty	Fl R 4.3m 4NM



General

Punta Conchillas provides an anchorage next to the village of Puerto Ingles. Close north is the entrance to the Arroyo Conchillas, a shallow river.

Approach

From the south follow the Rio De La Plata buoyed channel and at km 97 head towards the jetty at



Cellulose Factory at Punta Pereyra



Punta Conchillas looking southeast

Punta Conchillas. The conspicuous cellulose plant at Punta Pereyra is 1.4 NM south-southwest of Punta Conchillas.

From the north follow the Rio De La Plata buoyed channel and at km 98 head towards the jetty at Punta Conchillas.

On approaching the jetty pass south of the wrecked barge, keeping approximately halfway between the wreck and the jetty.

Anchorage

Anchor north of the jetty in about 2.1m. Good shelter from the south and all east winds. Land at the small beach, east of the anchorage.

It is possible for shallow draught boats to enter the Arroyo Conchillas. The entrance is marked with buoys and has a depth of 1m, and then a little deeper water once in the river. The Arroyo Conchillas was not visited.

Formalities

None



Wharf at Punto Conchillas



Wreck



Landing beach, anchorage and wreck

Facilities

There are several restaurants in the village, and a small provision shop. More facilities are in the small town of Conchillas, 6km away.



Restaurant on Arroyo Conchillas



Club Pesca e Yachting Conchillas



Entrance to Arroyo Conchillas looking northeast



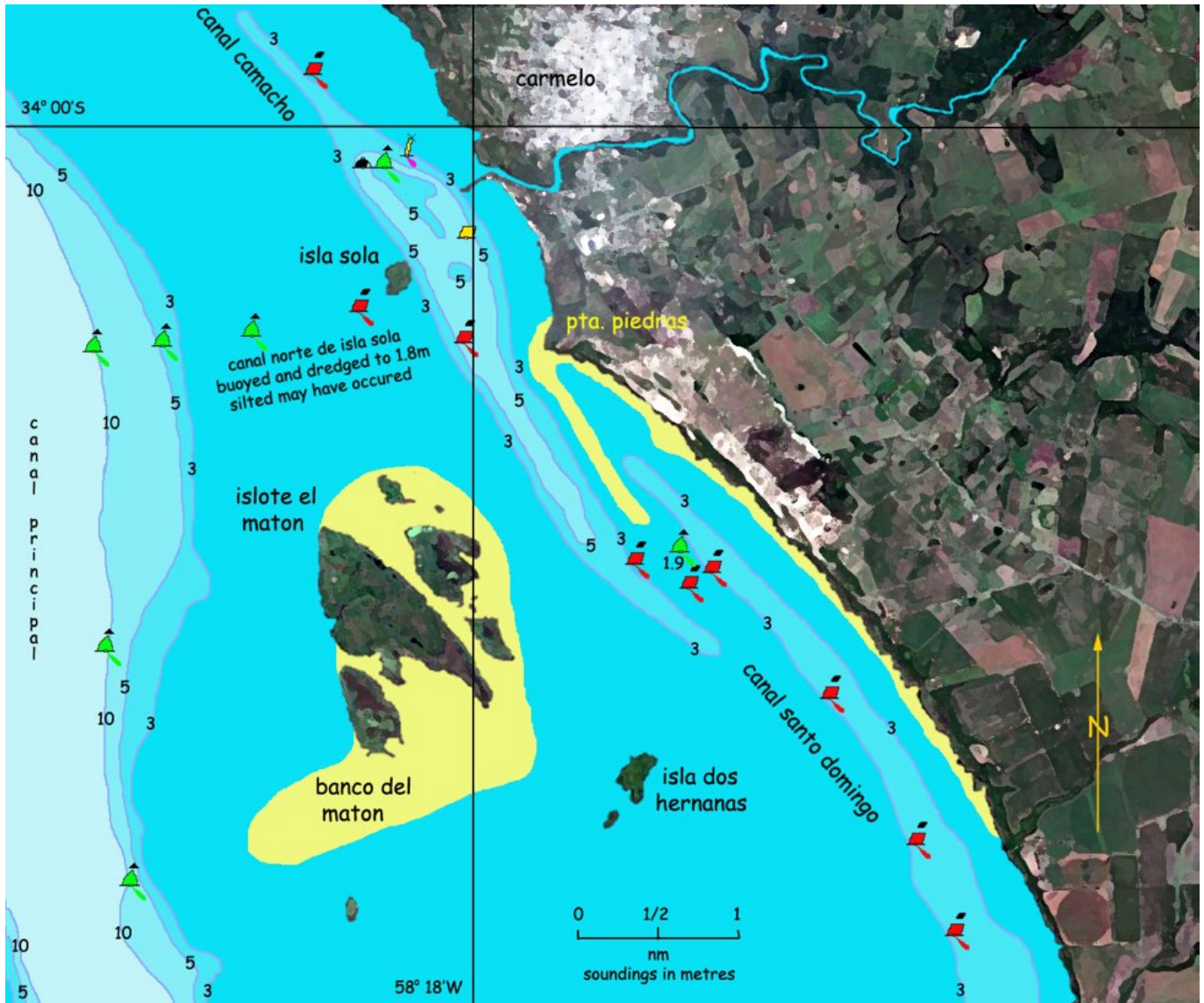
Arroyo Conchillas

19. Carmelo

34° 01' S 58° 18' W

Medium size town and popular yachting centre. A passenger ferry service runs to Argentina and consequently it is a port of entry.

Charts	Uruguay	60, 61, 61A
	BA	3561
Tides	Range	~ 0.65m



General

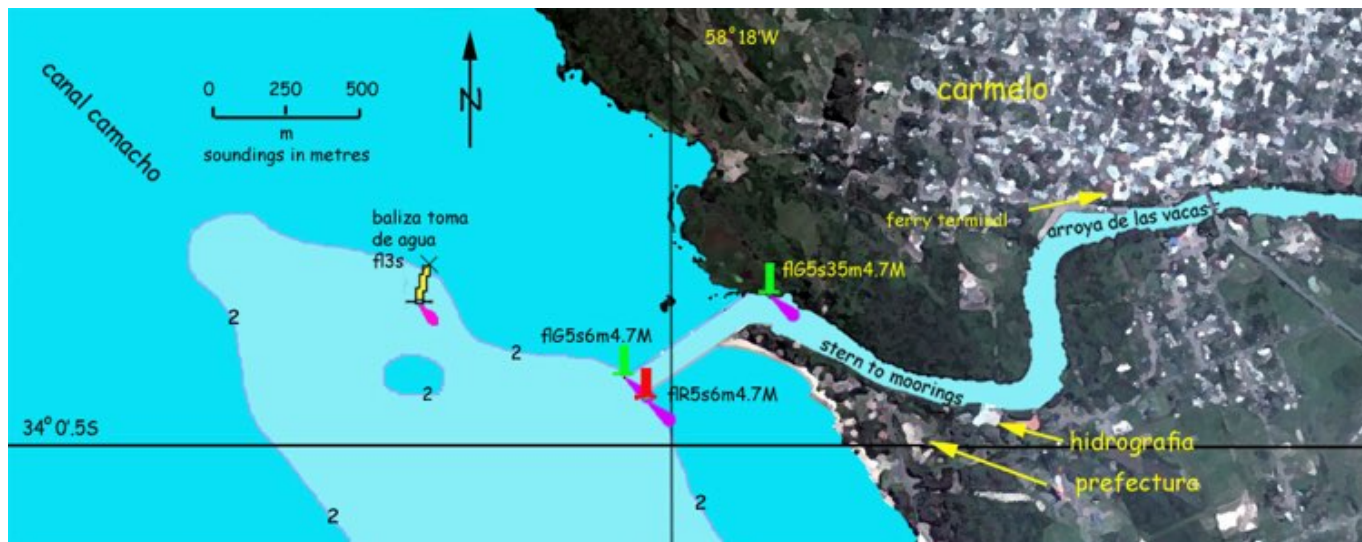
Carmelo is a medium size town and passenger ferry port for Argentina. It lies on the Arroyo de Las Vacas, a small river off the Rio De La Plata.

Approach

From the south there are two approaches. The deepest is the Canal Santo Domingo, which branches off the main Rio de La Plata channel at Punta Martin Chico, east of Isla Martin Garcia, at km 109. Much of the lit buoyed channel is 3m or more, but the shallowest section is 1.6 NM southeast of Punta Piedras, where there is only

1.8m. This section crosses the Punta Piedras Banco Sur. Be aware that deeper draught boats may well need higher water levels to cross here and may well be trapped by lowering levels.

The alternative is the dredged channel, Canal Norte De La Isla Sola, leading off the Rio De La Plata at km 130. It has a reported dredged depth of 1.8m, but may well be less if not dredged recently. This channel is 50m wide and marked with lit buoys at each end and unlit ones along its length. There may well be strong cross currents in this channel.



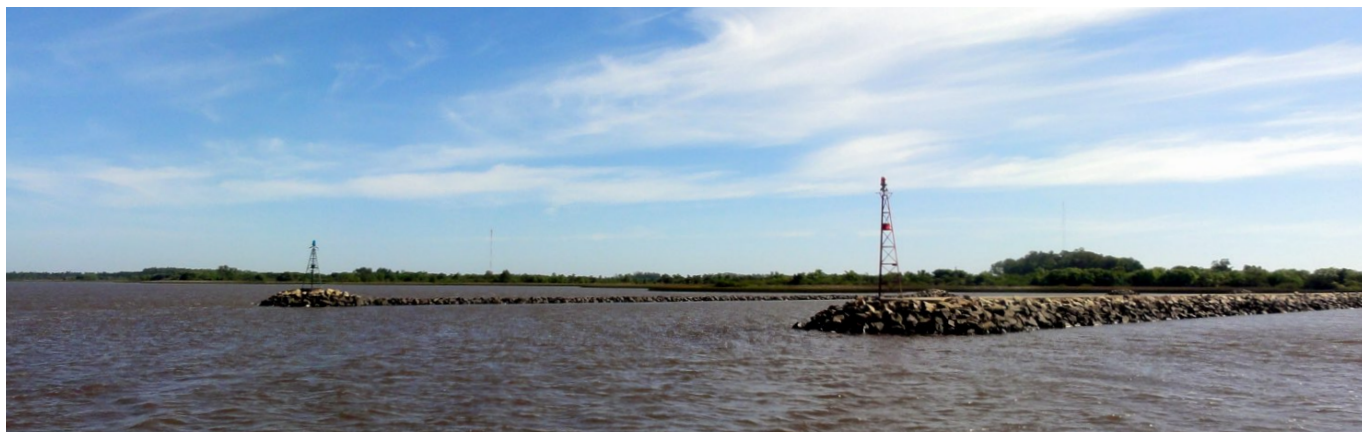
Entry

The entrance to the Arroyo de Las Vacas is protected by a breakwater on the south and concrete blocks along the north side. The entrance is marked with red and green lights. The entrance and river has a depth of 3m.

Anchorage

While it is possible to anchor outside the river this is discouraged by the Prefectura.

Inside the river entrance is a long quay for yachts to lie bow/stern to from buoys. In mid-summer this is a very popular place for *Portenos* to visit and is likely to be very crowded.



Entrance to Arroyo de Las Vacas



Stern-to berth in Arroyo de Las Vacas

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and departure. If arriving from Argentina then call the Prefectura 1hr before arrival.

Immigration and customs at the ferry terminal in town.

The Hidrografia office is mid-way along the quay.



Carmelo

Facilities

Water, showers and toilets are on the quay. Carmelo is a very pleasant town with all facilities.

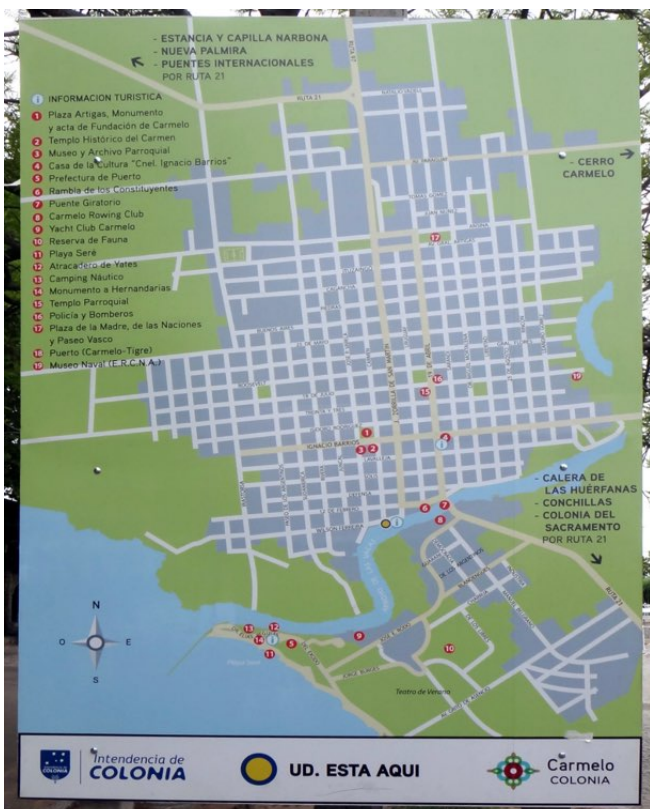
The passenger ferry runs to Tigre, a suburb of Buenos Aires and can be useful to renew your Uruguay visa.



Main Street, Carmelo



Swing bridge Puente Giratorio



Street map



Welcome

20. Punta Gorda - start of the Rio Uruguay

33° 55' S 58° 25'.35 W

Punta Gorda marks the border between the Rio de La Plata and the Rio Uruguay. The Rio Uruguay forms the Eastern border with Argentina and note that anchoring or going ashore on the western bank requires exit from Uruguay and entry into Argentina.

On the shore at Punta Gorda is a conspicuous obelisk making the start of the Rio Uruguay. From this point going north distances are measured in kilometres and the buoys are marked with their distance from Punta Gorda. The river is well

buoyed as far as Paysandu, which handles ocean going vessels. After Paysandu the buoyage is less frequent and often only marking the narrow passages.

In the summer months the current in the river is usually about 1 to 1.5 knots. Near Salto, at the head of navigation (Km335), the current can be very strong between 0800 and 1800 when the hydro electric power station is running at maximum (see Salto).



Obelisk at Punta Gorda, start of Rio Uruguay



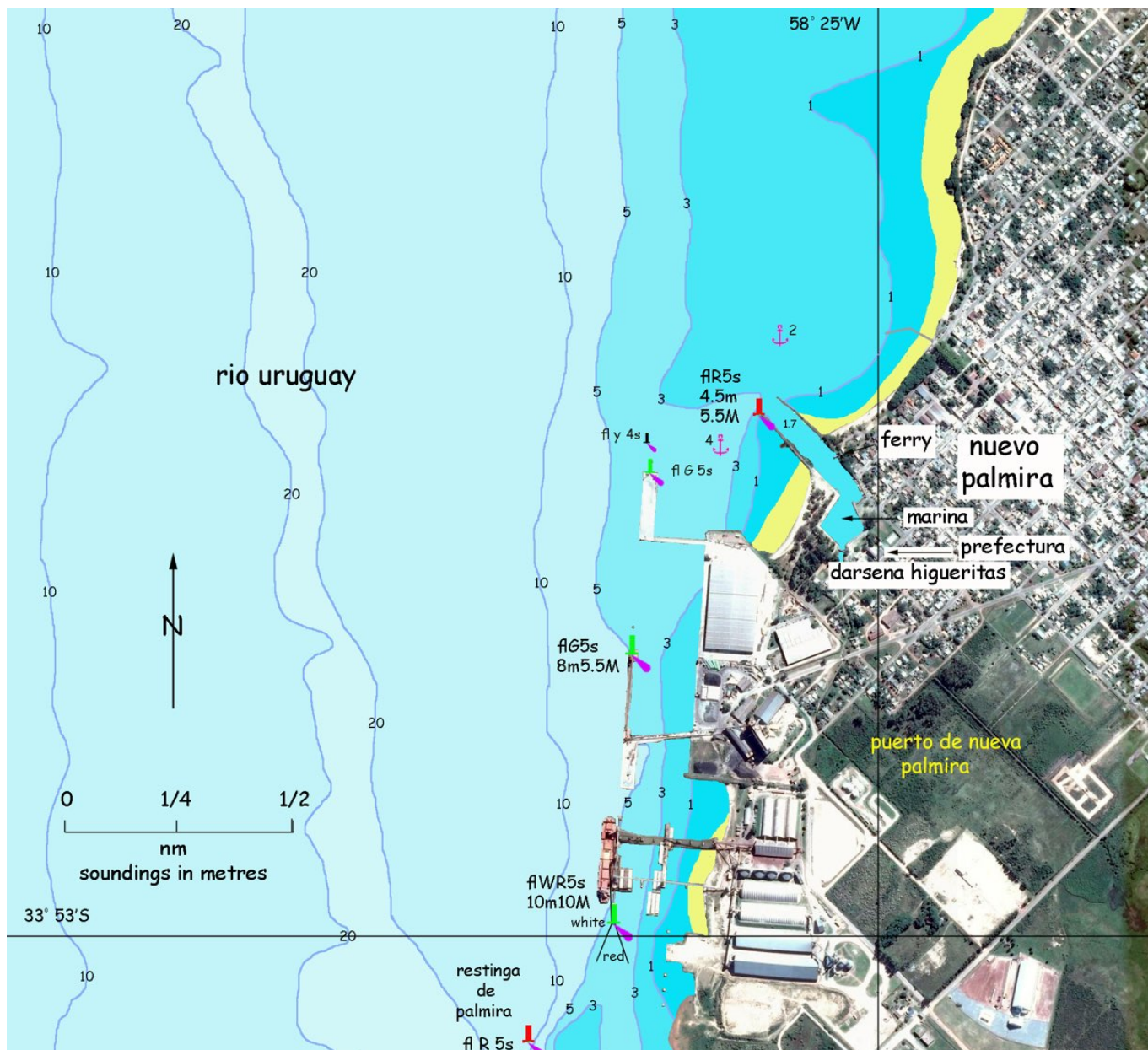
Barges loading timber, Rio Uruguay

21. Nueva Palmira

33° 52' S 58° 25'.3 W

A small town, port and yacht harbour. Port of entry.

Charts	Uruguay	61, 701, 701A
	BA	3561
Tides	HWSP	1.5m (0045) LWSP 0.2m (1845)
	HWNP	1.1m (0600) LWNP 0.6m (1200)
Lights	South end of port jetty	Fl W R 5s 10m 10NM
	Entrance to inner harbour	Fl R 5s 4.5m 5.5NM



General

Nueva Palmira lies at the junction of the Rios Uruguay, Parana Bravo and the Rio De La Plata.

Puerto De Nueva Palmira is a deep water port for quite large ships. The inner harbour, north of the port, has a small passenger ferry terminal (to Argentina) and a yacht harbour.

Approach

From the south the approach is straight forward keeping to the lit buoys channel in the Rio Uruguay. At Punta Gorda an obelisk on shore marks the boundary of the Rio De La Plata and the Rio Uruguay. On approaching the port take care to pass the shoal Restinga de Palmira (covered by the

red sector of the light on the south side of the Port jetty) to the west. Once north of the port head towards the breakwaters of the inner harbour.

From the north the approach is straightforward keeping to the channel in the Rio Uruguay. At km 6 head southeast towards the breakwaters of the inner harbour.

Anchorage

The inner harbour has a marina for yachts in the south corner. The depth in the harbour is quite shallow at 1.7m but there may well be more depth, depending on the level of the river.

There are two possible places to anchor. Either southwest of the breakwaters in about 4m, or north of the breakwaters in 2m. Land on the beach or in the harbour.

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and on leaving.

Nueva Palmira is a port of entry and if arriving from Argentina you must call the prefectura 1hr before arrival. Customs and immigration at the ferry terminal (only there when the ferry is arriving or leaving).



Commercial docks south of Nueva Palmira

Facilities

Nueva Palmira is a small town with fairly basic supplies.

A small passenger ferry runs to Tigre, a suburb of Buenos Aires. This can be a useful way to renew your Uruguay visa.



Entrance to inner harbour



Nueva Palmira inner harbour entrance at the right



Stern to berths in inner harbour



Ferry Nueva Palmira to Tigre, Buenos Aires



Restaurant on the beach



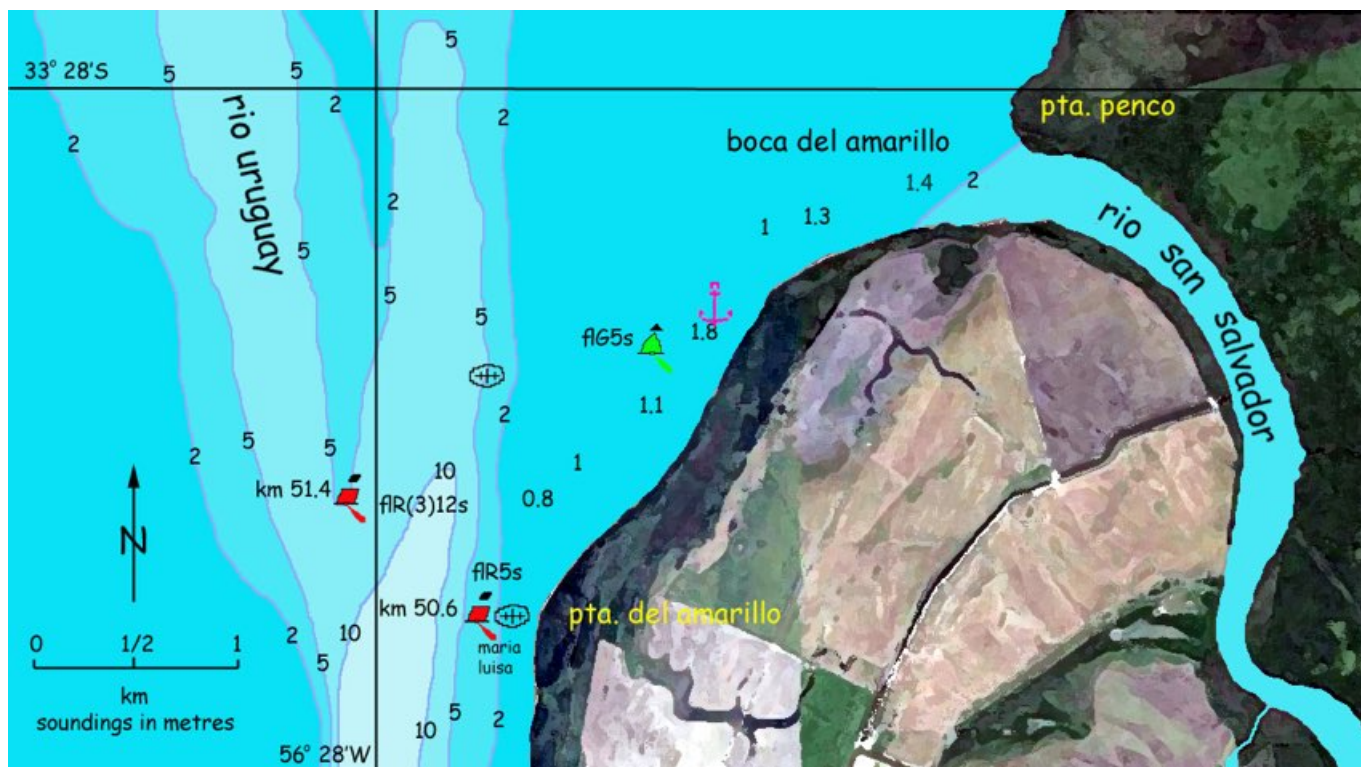
School in Nueva Palmira

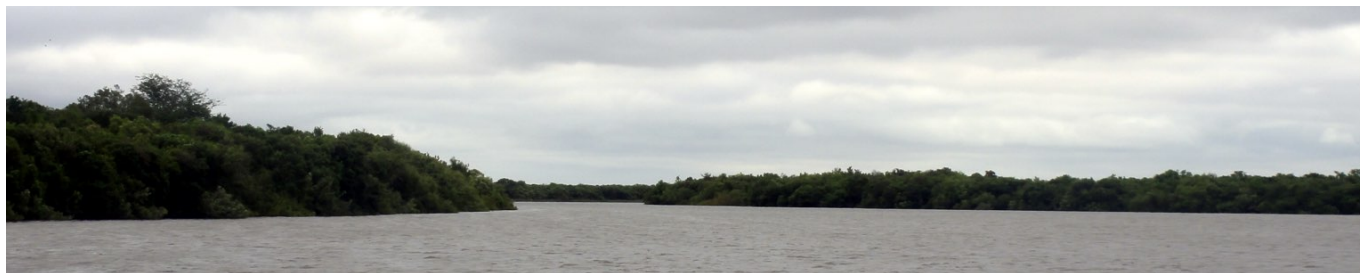
22. Rio San Salvador

33° 29.10 S 58° 25'.48 W

The Rio Salvador is a tributary of the Rio Uruguay and is navigable up to the small town of Dolores.

Charts	Uruguay	703
	BA	3549
Tides	HWSP	1.5m (0100) LWSP 0.2m (1900)
	HWNP	1.1m (0620) LWNP 0.6m (1220)
Lights	Maria Luisa	km 50.6 Fl R 5s





Entrance to Rio San Salvador

General

The Rio San Salvador is a tributary of the Rio Uruguay 45km north of Nueva Palmira. 28km from the river mouth lies the small town of Dolores, just past the town is a low bridge. From the mouth until Dolores the river flows gently through rural land, quiet and peaceful.

Approach

From the Rio Uruguay to the Boca del Amarillo there is a shallow channel with the least charted depth of 0.8m. However, unless the river level is very low the actual depth should be at least 1m more at high water, the best time to enter unless shallow draught.

From the south:

From the main channel on the Rio Uruguay pass the Maria Luisa buoy at km 50.6 and then head towards the green lit buoy.

From the north:

From the main channel, once past the red buoy at km 51.4, head east until you cross the 2m line and then head towards the green lit buoy.

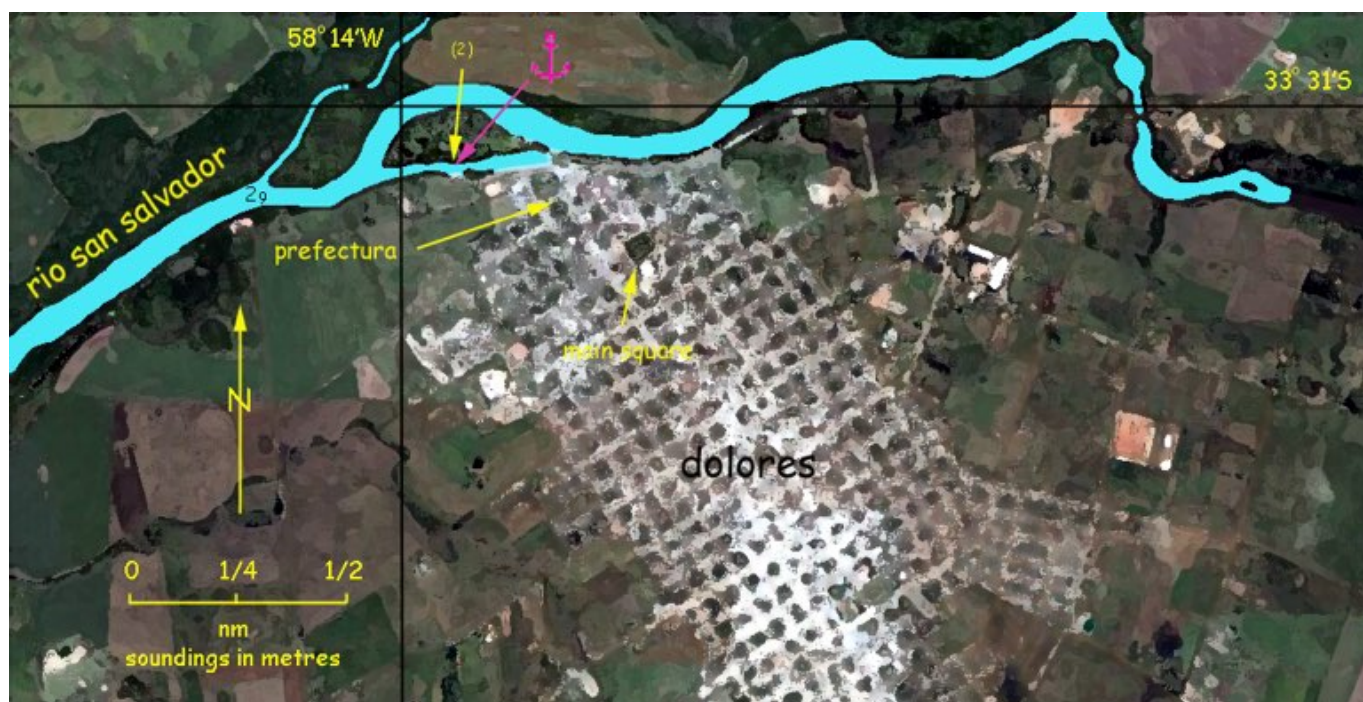
From the green lit buoy keep fairly close to the shore and turn into the Rio San Salvador by Punta Penco. Once in the river there is much more water.



Obelisk at km 12, Treinta y Tres Orientales



Along the Rio San Salvador



Anchorage

It is possible to anchor anywhere in the river.

If proceeding up to Dolores (28km from the mouth) then take the canal that branches off the river just before the town. Anchor in the canal in 2m.

The canal is a dead end. A long quay extends in front of the town and it may well be possible to tie up here, it appeared that there was plenty of depth.

Formalities

The Prefectura office is up from the quay, call on arrival and departure.

Facilities

All the usual facilities of a small town. An Ancap filling station lies at the east side of town.



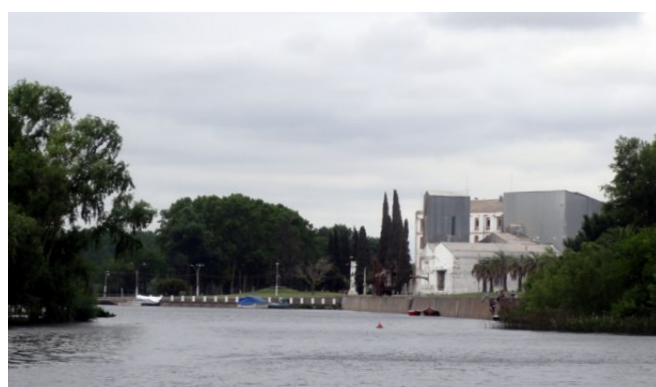
Canal at Dolores looking east



Entrance to the canal at Dolores



Canal and anchorage at Dolores



Dock at Dolores



Main square at Dolores



Steam crane on the dock at Dolores

23. Rio Negro

33° 21'.5 S 58° 25'.3 W

*A tributary of the Rio Uruguay navigable up to the towns of **Vila Soriano** and **Mercedes**. An attractive river, much of which is wooded.*

Charts Uruguay 704, 704A

BA 3549

Lights Entrance Boca Yaguari Chico km 65.4 Fl G 5s



Approach

From the Rio Uruguay at Km 65.4 enter the Boca Yaguari Chico, which is a channel between Isla Lobos, to the south, and Isla del Yaguari. Keep to the centre of the channel. There are two buoyed sections, one is about half way along the channel and marks a rocky section on the south side and the last buoy is just before the final bend. Much of the channel is more than 3m deep. Once out of the channel head east towards Vila Soriano.

Vila Soriano

A very small town on the south shore of the river. This is the oldest town in the area, the first European civil settlement in Uruguay, and giving its name to the province.

Approach

The approach is straight-forward along the river. The town is hidden until off the wooden jetty.

Anchorage

Anchor off the buoys, off the wooden jetty in about 4–5m clay. The water shoals rapidly as you approach the jetty.

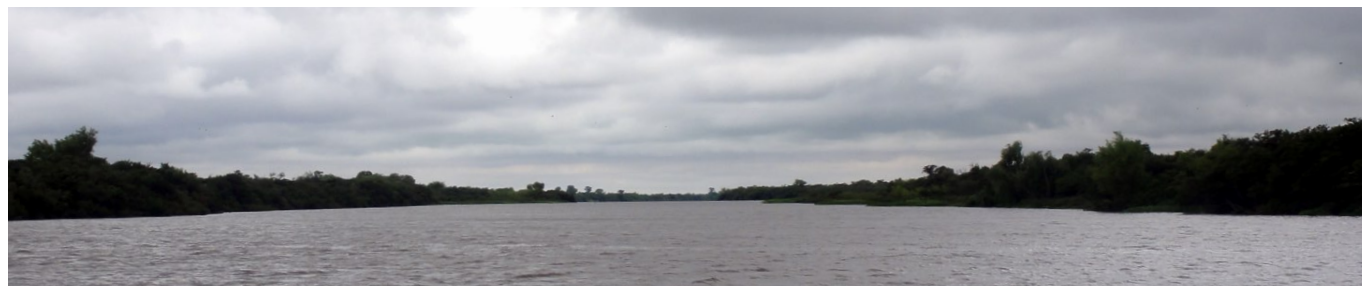
Land at the jetty or, alternately, at the park, east of the anchorage.

Formalities

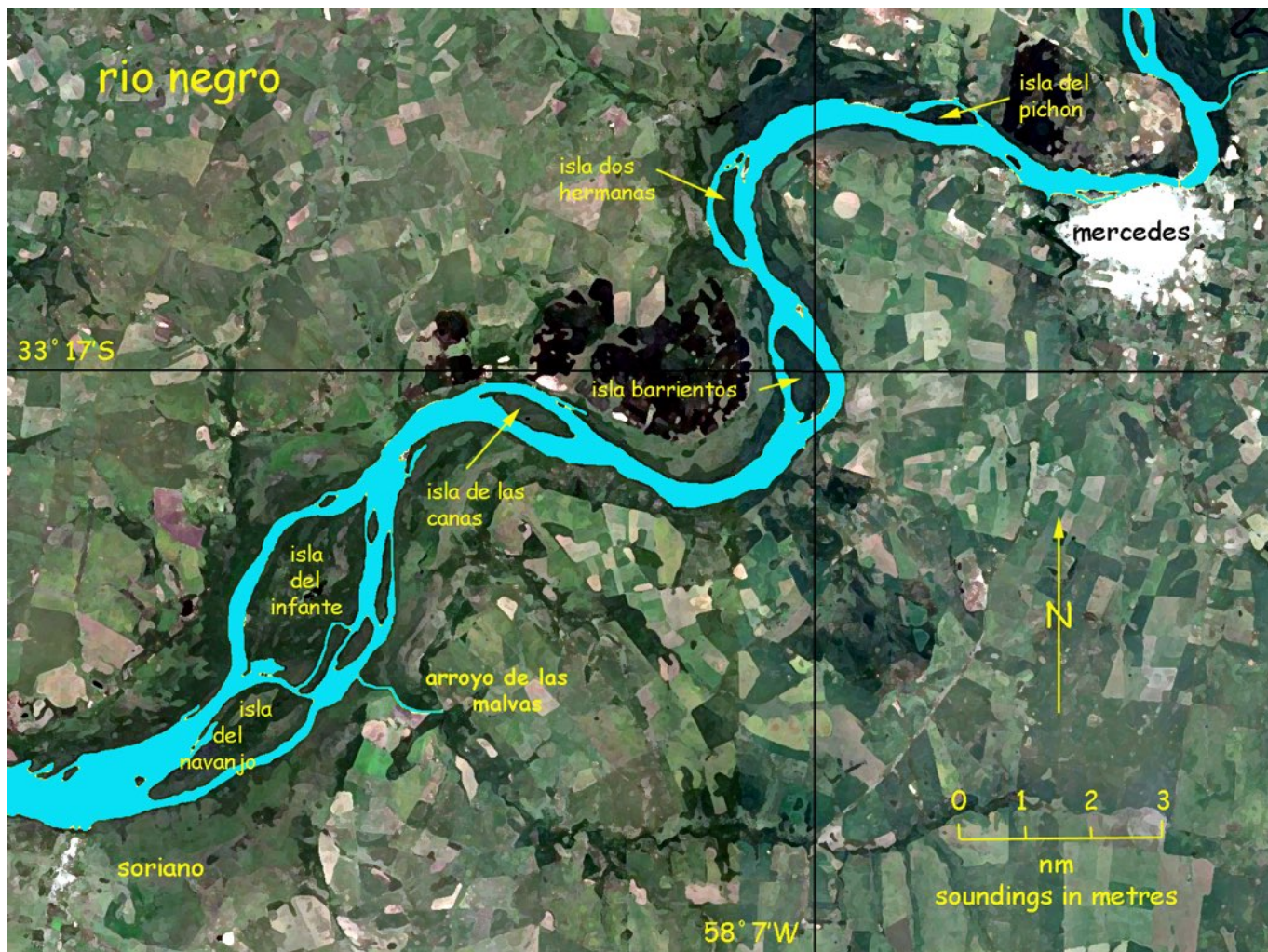
Call at the Prefectura (open office hours) on arrival and departure. The office is the white building near the jetty. If you intend to go further up the river to Mercedes the Prefectura will advise on the water level and the route to take, as the river is constantly changing.

Facilities

Fairly basic facilities, but there are several small grocers, a butcher and a bread shop. There is also an ANCAP filling station.



Boca del Yaguari (entrance to Rio Negro)



General

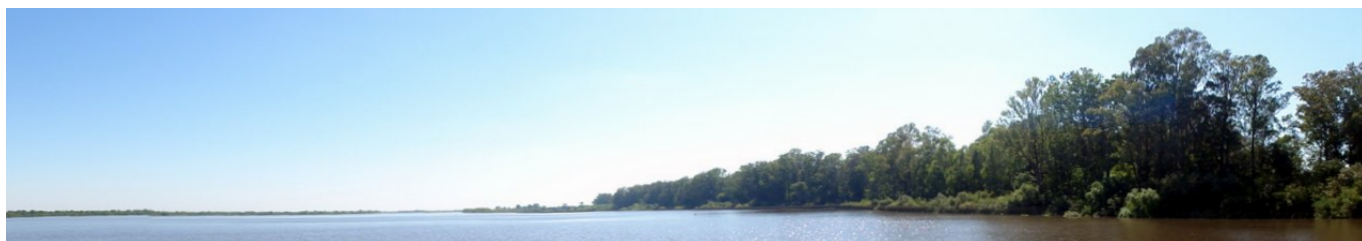
Once past Soriano the river splits into several channels, with the depths in each varying from time to time. The Prefectura at Soriano will advise on the current deepest channel and its depth. Generally there is a minimum of 1.4 metres and in the summer months yachts with up to 1.8 metre draught frequently travel up to Mercedes. Out of

the rainy season the current is usually 1 to 1.5 knots.

If you run aground the Prefectura are, apparently, happy to pull you into deeper water, if you can contact them.

Anchorage

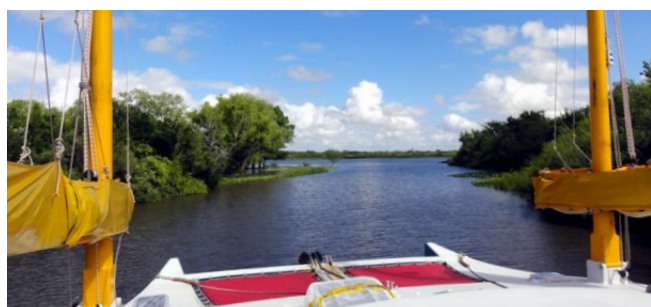
It is possible to anchor almost anywhere along the river in peaceful rural and wooded surroundings.



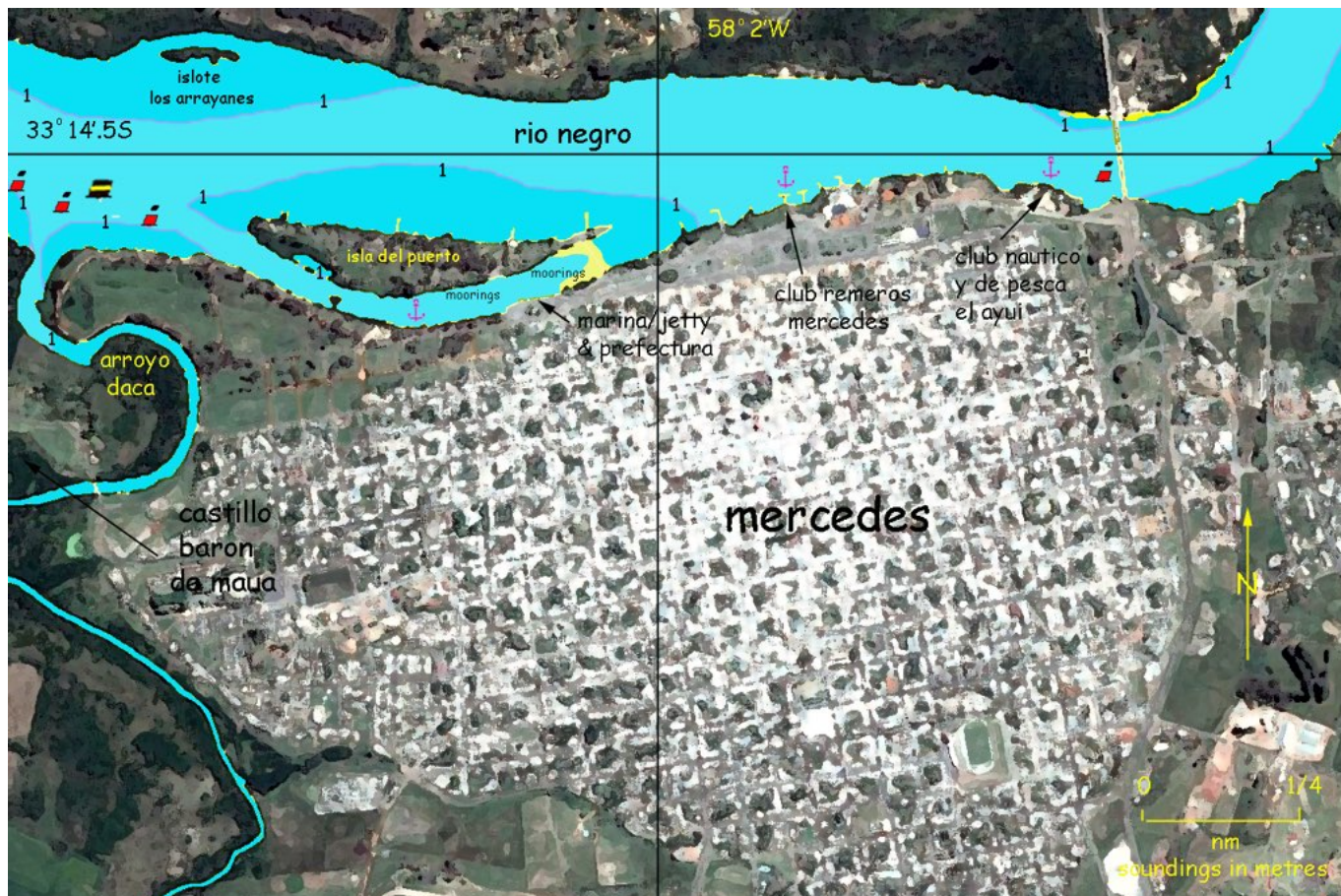
Isla del Naranjo looking east



Arroyo de Las Malvas entrance



Arroyo de Las Malvas



Mercedes

A small city of 42,000 people.
33° 14'.55S 58° 2'.92W

Anchorage

The most sheltered anchorage is in the canal on the south side of Isla del Puerto. It is a an attractive spot if a little narrow, but the river current should keep you away from the banks. Anchor to the west of the moored boats in about 4.5m. Note that the east end of the canal is blocked by a very low bridge. Note also that a sand barge has a jetty on the south side of the canal, at the west end, and travels in and out of the canal. Land at the park to the south or at the marina.

There is also a marina jetty towards the east end of the canal with stern/bow moorings from a buoy.

In the river it is possible to anchor off the Club De Remeras (rowing club) and they also have jetties for yachts to moor to.

Further east, just before the bridge, is the Club Nautico Y De Pesca El Ayui.

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and departure, the office is situated next to the marina in the canal.

Facilities

Water is available at the campsite on Isla del Puerto, or at the marina, which has showers. Facilities may also be available at the river front clubs.

All the usual facilities of a good sized town.
Buses to Montevideo, Fray Bentos and Argentina.



Cattle chute Rio Negro



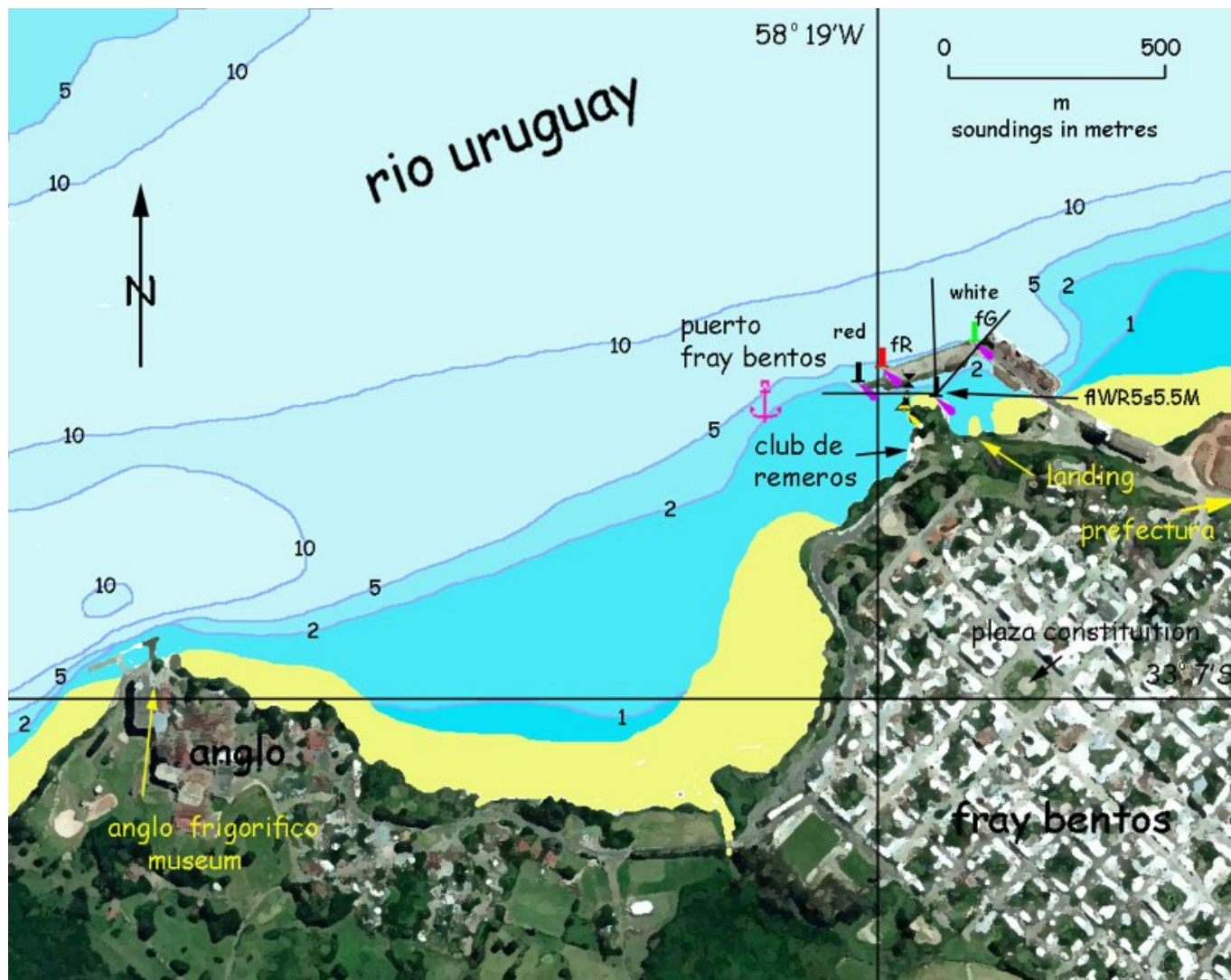
Floods on the Rio Negro

24. Fray Bentos

33° 6'.66 S 58° 19'.1 W

A small town on the Rio Uruguay at Km 98.5 and a port of entry.

Charts	Uruguay	706, 706A, 801, 801A
	BA	3549
Lights	Fray Bentos Inner Harbour	Fl WR 5s 5m
	West end Jetty	Fl AM 4s



Fray Bentos waterfront looking southeast

General

Fray Bentos has a population of 25,000. Close west of the town is the site of the Anglo Frigorifico which has been turned into a museum.

Approach

The approach from the Rio Uruguay is straight forward.

From the south pass the conspicuous Anglo Frigorifico and keep outside the 5m line as you head towards the harbour.

From the east pass under the Puente Internacional Liberador General San Martin at Km 105 (overhead clearance reported to be 42 metres with 37 metres available 75 metres either side of the centre of the bridge), 7 km east of Fray Bentos. Pass the jetty at the port before turning into the anchorage.



Prefectura Fray Bentos

Anchorage

The inner harbour is small, shallow and with many boats on moorings. It is unlikely that there will be room to anchor here.

Anchor to the west of the harbour in about 3.5m, keeping the entrance to the harbour clear. This provides good shelter from the east and south. Land at the small beach, at the south end of the inner harbour, or at the Club de Remeros.

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and on departure.

Facilities

All the facilities of a reasonable sized town.

The old Anglo Frigorifico (closed 1979), was the home of the 'Fray Bentos' brand of tinned meat. It has now been turned into an excellent museum and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Buses to Mercedes, Montevideo and Argentina.



Rowing Club



Fray Bentos anchorage and entrance to inner harbour



Fray Bentos inner harbour and landing beach



Anglo Museum Waterfront



Anglo meat processing factory museum



Fray Bentos town centre



Anglo Museum Mural



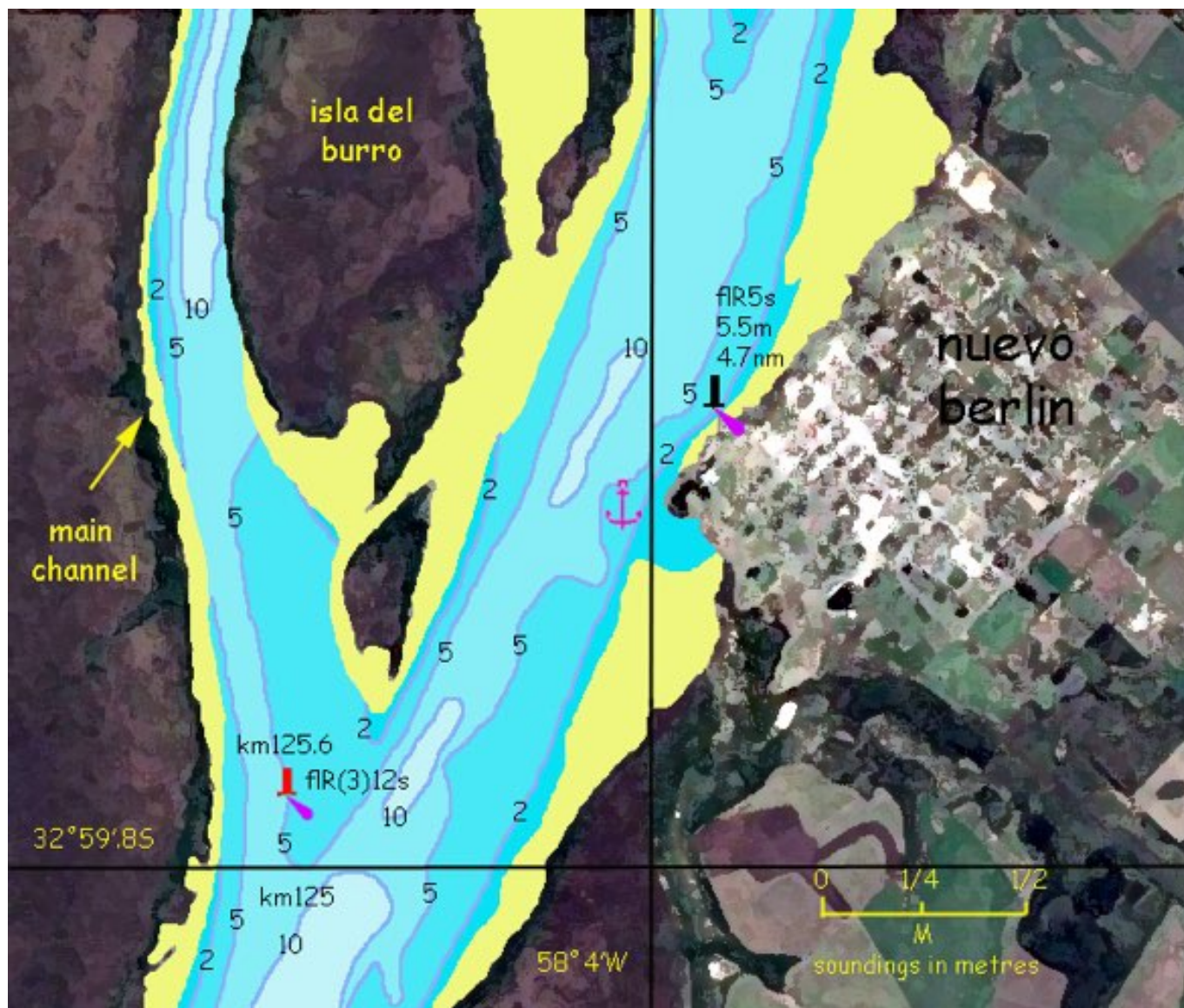
Libertador General San Martín Bridge looking east
This is a cantilever road bridge that crosses the Rio Uruguay and joins Argentina and Uruguay

25. Nueva Berlin

32° 58'.85 S 58° 4'.01 W

A small town on the banks of the Rio Uruguay just above km 125.

Charts	Uruguay	802
	BA	3549
Lights	Nueva Berlin jetty	Fl R 5s 5.5m 4.7NM



Approach

The approach is straight forward along the Rio Uruguay main channel.

From the south at km 125 take the east branch of the river and proceed 1.5 NM to the anchorage off the town.

From the north, after passing the red buoy at km 125.6 turn to the east and proceed up the eastern branch of the river, up to the anchorage off the town.

Anchorage

Anchor southeast of the jetty in about 6m. Good shelter from the east-northeast through southeast to south.

Land at the steps on the jetty.

Formalities

None

Facilities

All the usual facilities of a small town, including an ANCAP filling station.



Anchorage off Nueva Berlin



Jetty at Nueva Berlin



Jetty at Nueva Berlin



Nueva Berlin



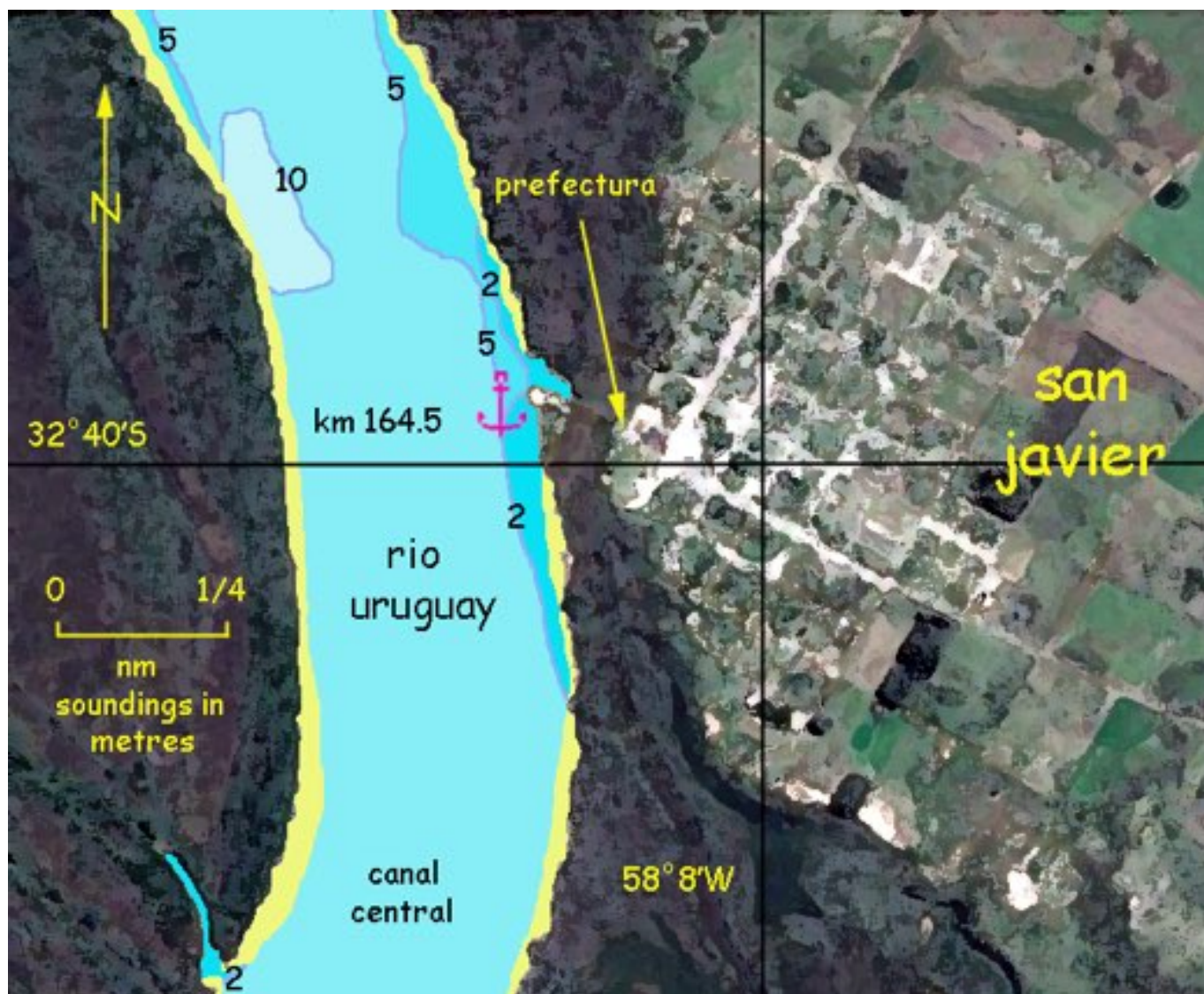
Nueva Berlin

26. San Javier

39° 40' S 59° 8'.48 W

Small town on the banks of the Rio Uruguay at Km 164.5.

Charts Uruguay 804



General

San Javier was founded in 1913 by a group of 300 Russian settlers escaping religious persecution by the Czar. The population of 1,800 is still almost entirely of descendants of the settlers. On the 17 July a festival is held of traditional food, music and dancing.

Approach

Straight forward from the main channel of the Rio Uruguay.

Anchorage

Anchor off the jetty in 2.5m, good shelter from all east winds.

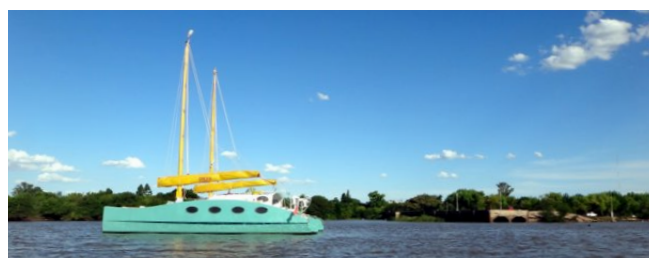
Land at the jetty or on the beach south of it.

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and departure. It is situated at the end of the road from the jetty, on the edge of town.

Facilities

Several small grocery shops and restaurants as well as an ANCAP filling station.



Anchorage and jetty at San Javier



Anchorage at San Javier



Waterfront San Javier



San Javier



Russian connection



Plaza Libertad, San Javier



General store, San Javier



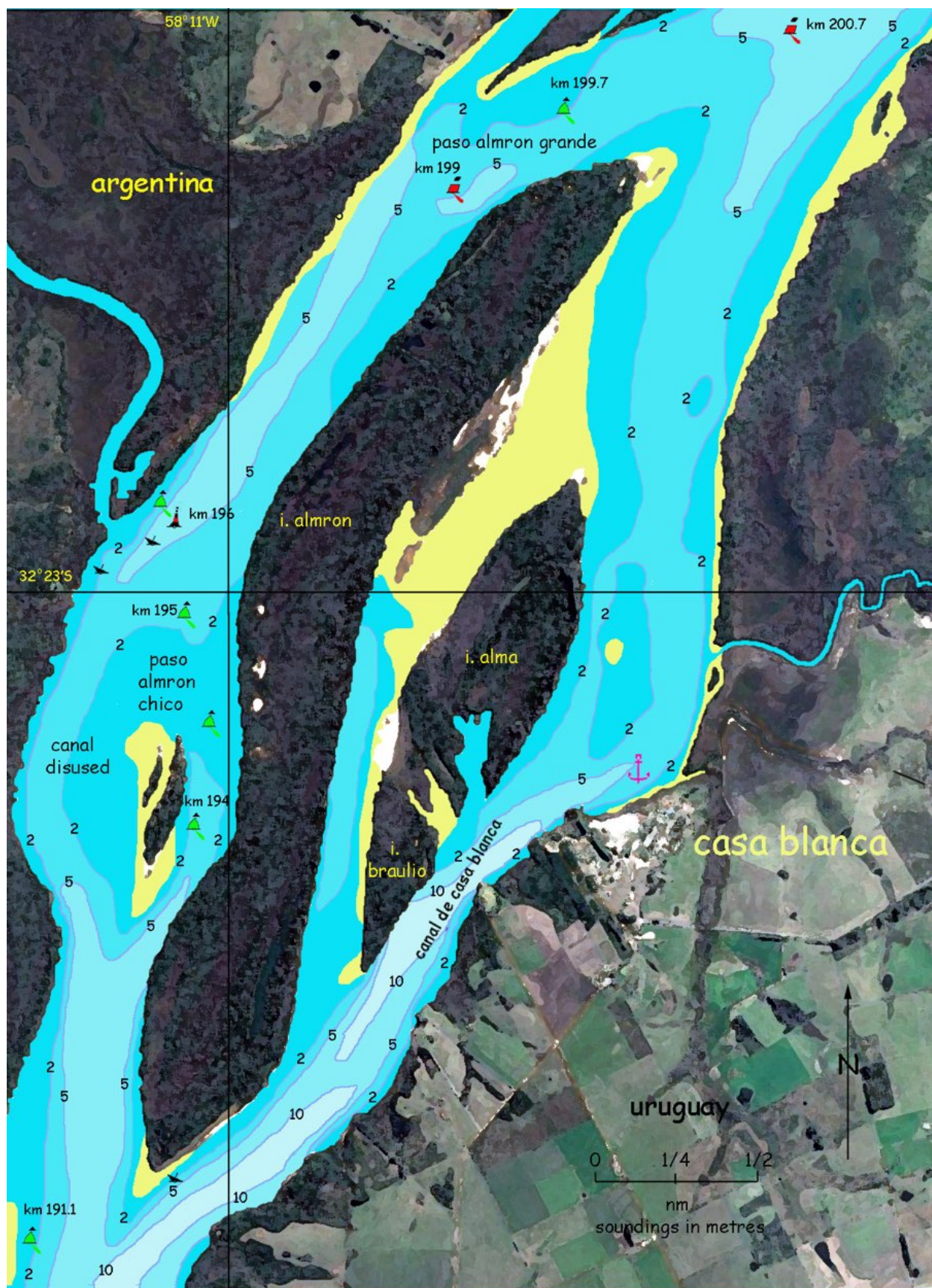
San Javier

27. Casa Blanca

32° 23'.64 S 58° 9'.52 W

A village on the Canal de Casa Blanca at Km 195, 13km south of Paysandu.

Charts Uruguay 805



General

A small village.

Approach

From the south, just past the buoy at km 187.5, take the east channel, Canal de Casa Blanca.

From the north, at the buoy at km 200.7, take the east channel, Canal de Casa Blanca.

The Canal de Casa Blanca is not the main Rio Uruguay channel, but it has more than 2m depth through it's length.

Anchorage

Anchor off the village in about 4m. Land on the small beach.

Formalities

None

Facilities

The village has a bakery and a small shop as well as a restaurant, La Pulperia.



Approaching Casa Blanca



Anchorage Casa Blanca



House and jetty Casa Blanca



Main Street Casa Blanca



Hotel Casa Blanca



House mural Casa Blanca



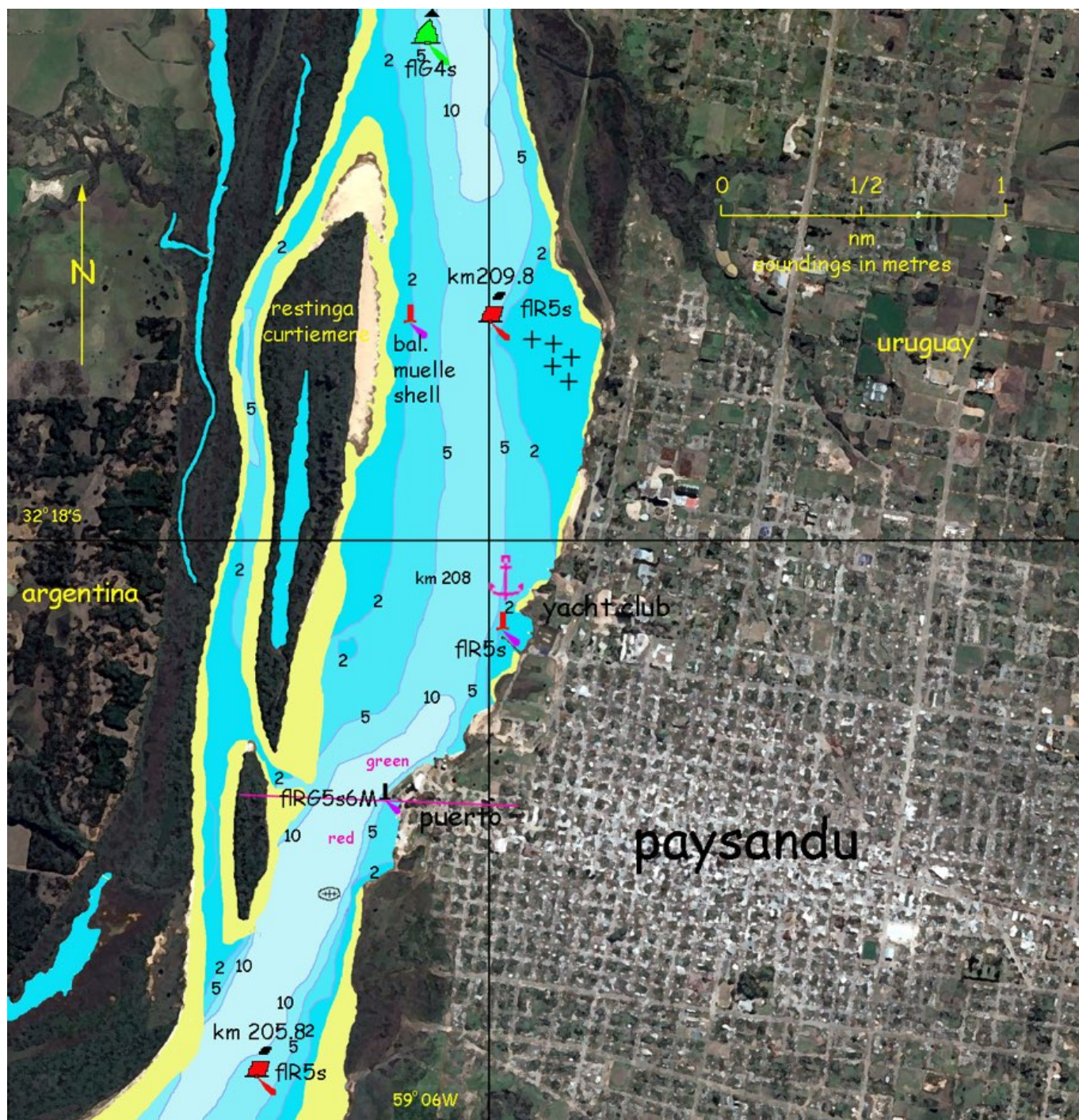
Factory at Casa Blanca

28. Paysandu

32° 18' S 58° 5'.81 W

A city on the Rio Uruguay at km 207.

Charts	Uruguay	806, 901
Lights	Paysandu Puerto	Fl RG 5s 11m 6NM
	Muelle Shell	Fl R 5s

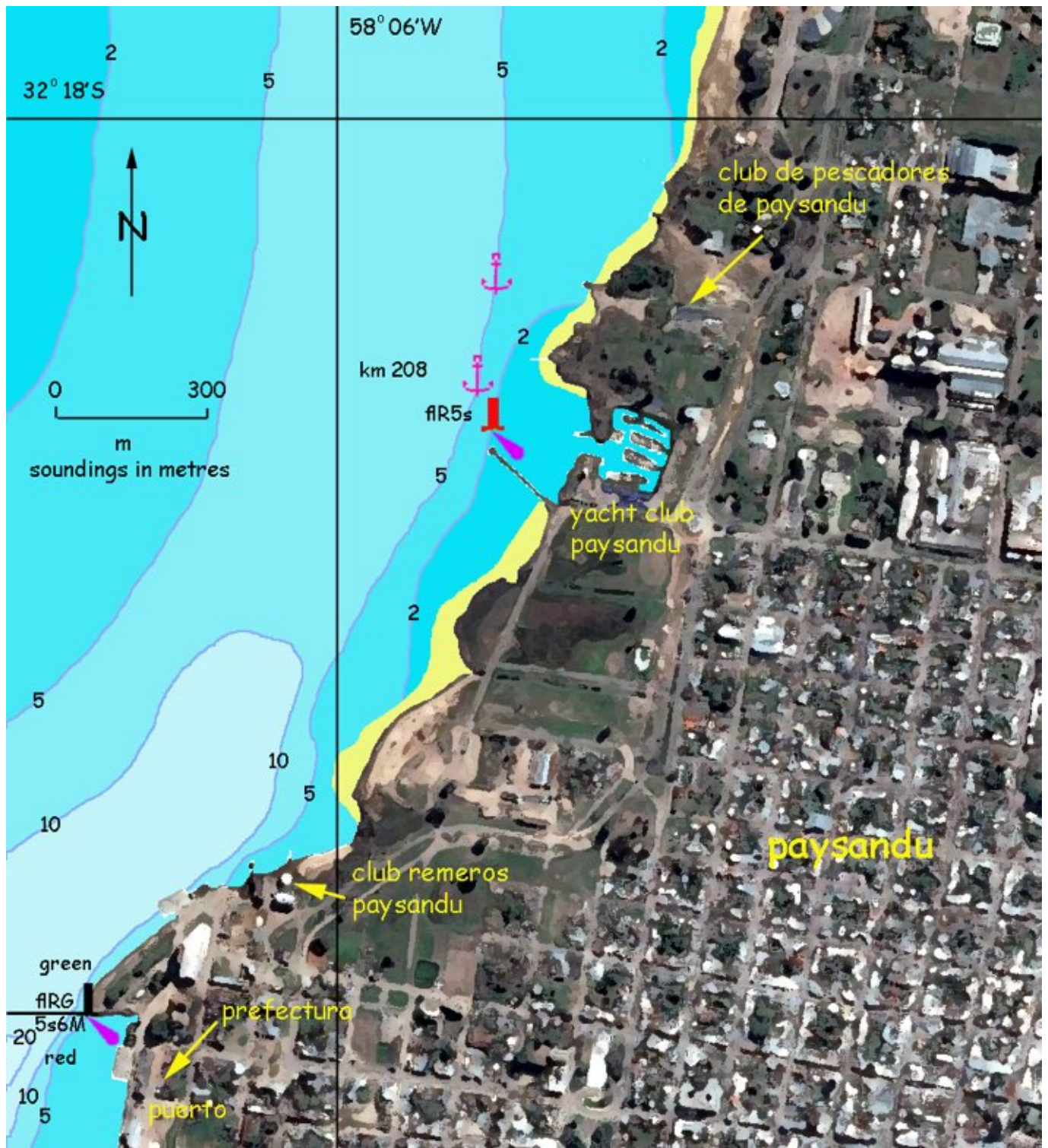


General

Paysandu is Uruguay's fourth largest city with a population of 76,000.

Approach

The approach is straight forward. Just over 2 NM north of Paysandu is the Puente Internacional General Artigas, with a vertical clearance of 31m.



Yacht Club Paysandu



Anchorage off Paysandu



Anchorage off Club de Pescadores de Paysandu

Anchorage

There are two options for anchoring at Paysandu:

The first is at the off the Yacht Club Paysandu, outside the moorings. Anchor in about 5m or 6m. You should be able to land at the club. The club has a small marina and it may be possible to berth here, if space is available.

The second option is a little further north, at the Club De Pescadores De Paysandu, also in about 5m or 6m. Land at the small jetty or on the beach. When visited the club gave permission to land and access through the club premises, past the gate keeper.

Both these anchorages give good shelter from all east winds.

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and departure, their office is located in the commercial port.

Facilities

All the facilities of a city. From the Yacht Club it is a 2.5km walk into the centre of town.



Landing dock and ramp, Club de Pescadores



Commercial docks at Paysandu looking southeast



Puente Internacional General Artigas, connecting Paysandu with Colon (Argentina)



Cooling off on Sunday afternoon in the river



Pampero approaching Paysandu



Main Street Paysandu



Old building in Paysandu



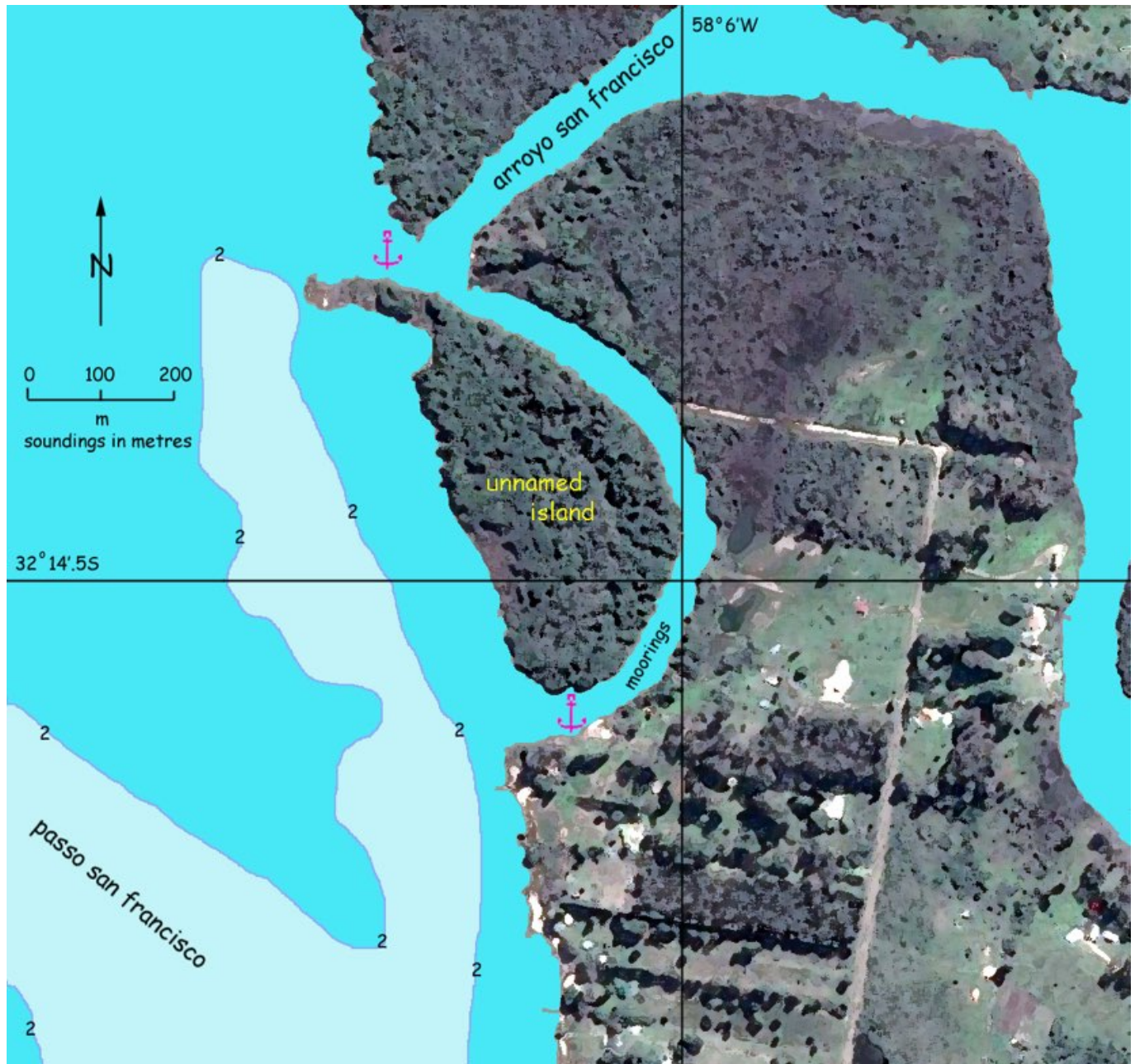
Flood levels in metres

29. Arroyo San Francisco

34° 14' S 58° 6' W

Two sheltered anchorages off the Rio Uruguay, 4 NM north of Paysandu.

Charts Uruguay 806, 901



General

Two peaceful, well sheltered anchorages, either side of the unnamed island at the Arroyo San Francisco.

Approach

From the south, pass under the Puente International General Artigas (air clearance 31m) and 1.2 NM north of the bridge take the east branch of the Rio Uruguay, keeping to the east shore.

From the north, pass the red buoy at km 216 and

continue for at least another 0.5km before turning east towards the shore and then follow the east branch of the Rio Uruguay, keeping to the east shore.

A small island will open out to the east, the first anchorage is in the mouth of the channel south of the island, the second anchorage is entered north of the island.

Anchorage

The south anchorage is in the mouth of the channel south of the island. Anchor in about 2.5m or more (depending on the river level), to the west

of the moorings. Good shelter here except from the west.

The north anchorage is to the north of the island and at the entrance to the Arroyo. Anchor in about 2.5m or more (depending on the river level). This anchorage is away from all habitations and gives good shelter from all except northwest winds.

Formalities

None

Facilities

None



North entrance to Arroyo San Francisco



Yacht moorings at Arroyo San Francisco



Arroyo San Francisco



Ruined house, Arroyo San Francisco



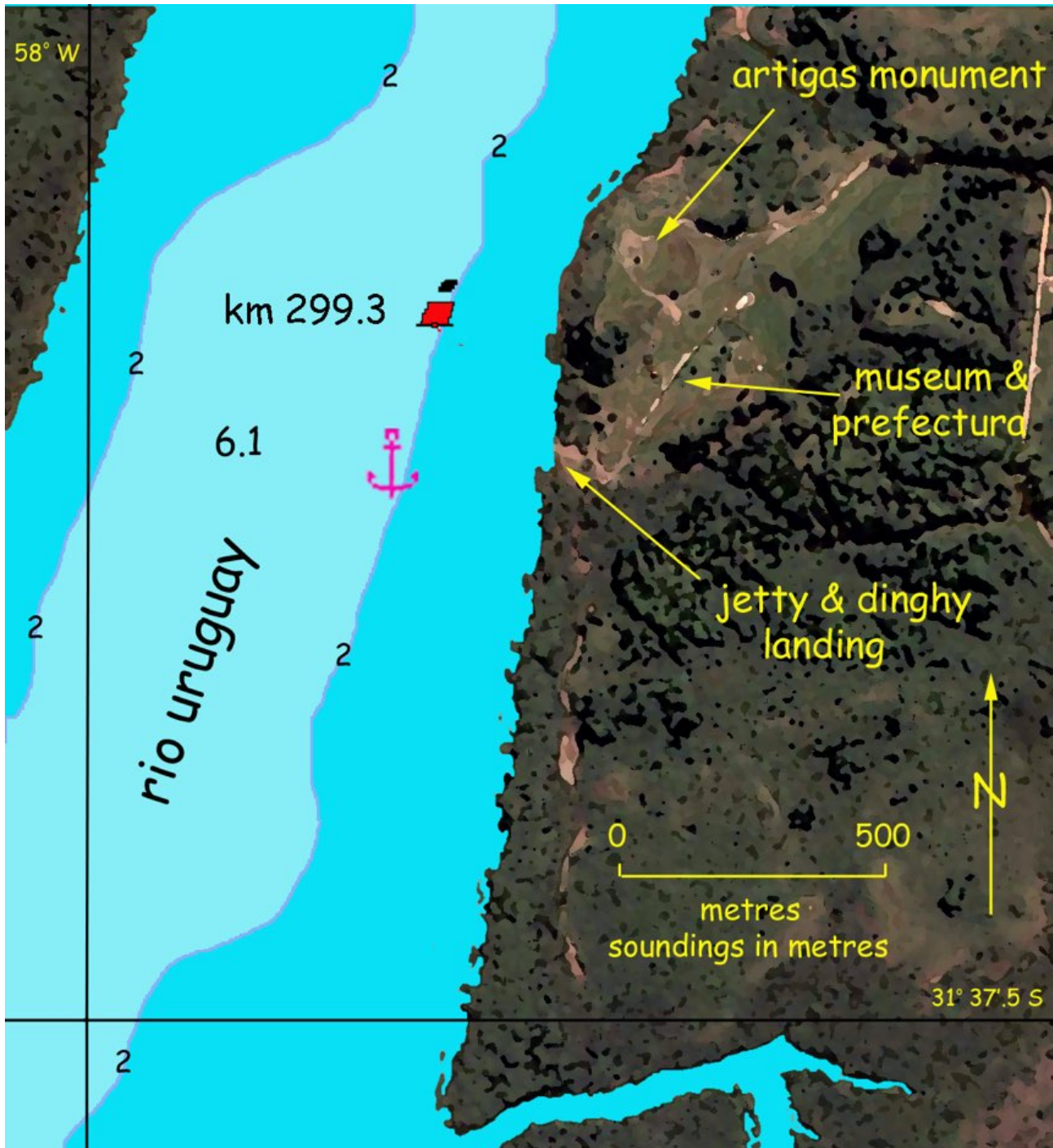
Arroyo San Francisco

30. Monumento Artigas

31° 36'.82 S 57° 59'.24 W

Small park with the General Artigas monument and a museum at km 299 on the Rio Uruguay.

Charts Uruguay 905



Approach

Straight forward from the main channel in the Rio Uruguay.

Anchorage

Anchor in about 3.5m off the jetty. Exposed to north and south winds. Land at the jetty or the small beach next to it.

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and departure, it is situated next to the museum.

Facilities

No facilities except for the restaurant at the museum.



Approaching the Artigas Monument from down river



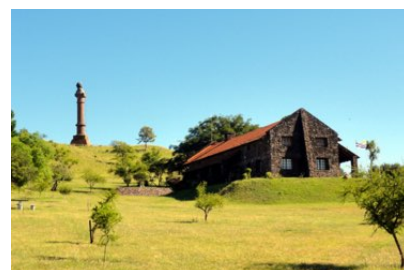
Anchorage and jetty at the Artigas Monument



The Prefectura pay a visit



Rio Uruguay looking downstream



The Artigas Monument and museum



Rio Uruguay looking up river



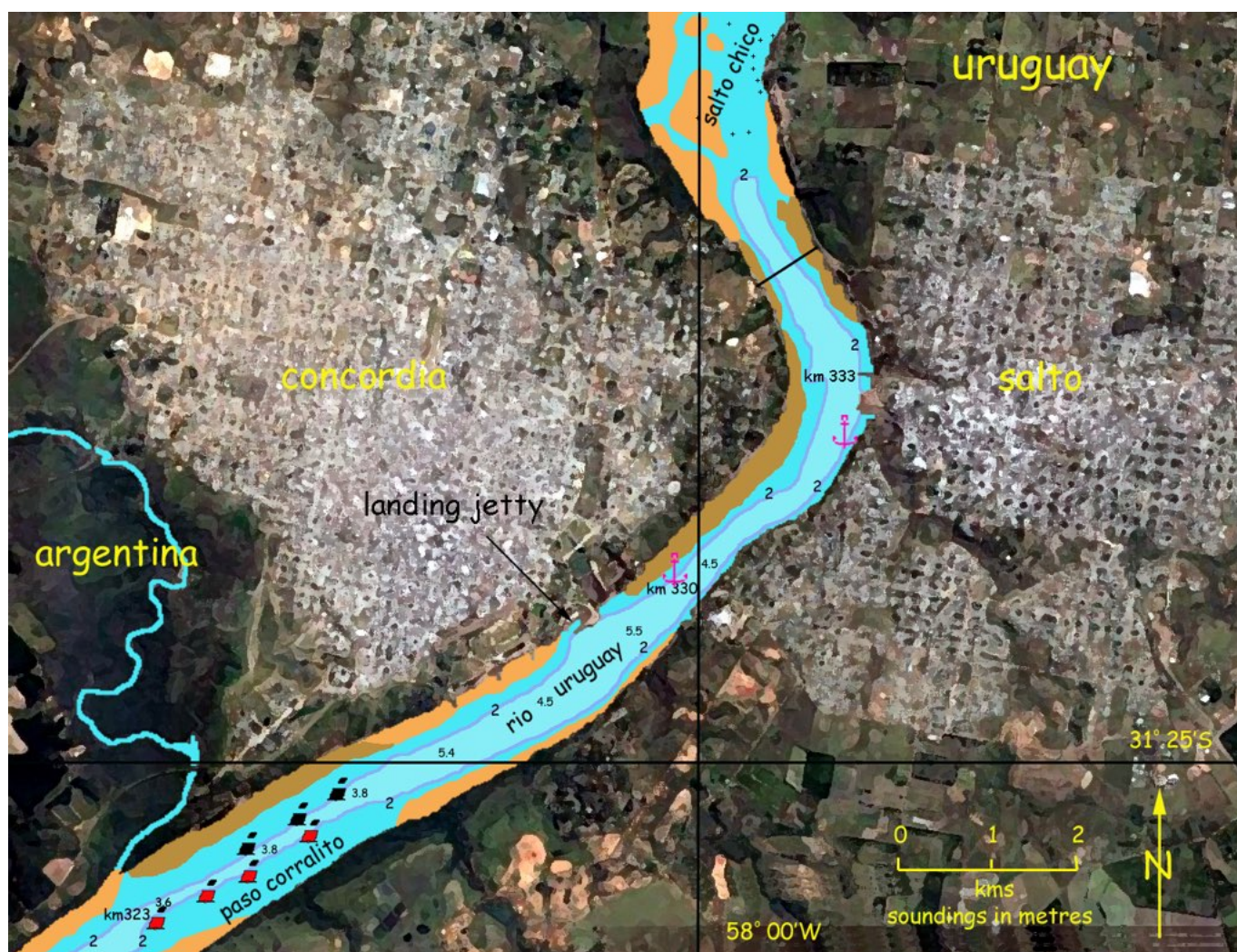
The Artigas Monument

31. Salto

31° 23'.13 S 57° 58'.76 W

Salto is a city at the head of navigation of the Rio Uruguay, and a port of entry.

Charts	Uruguay	906 (906B), 930
Water Level	The Salto Grande dam, 6NM north of Salto is a large hydro electrical generator which mainly operates during the working day. From about 0800 a large volume of water rushes down the river increasing the depth at Salto by 2m or so, and creating strong currents.	
Lights	Salto Jetty S	Fl R 5s 11m 5.5NM
	Salto Jetty N	Fl G 5s 11.5m 5.5NM



General

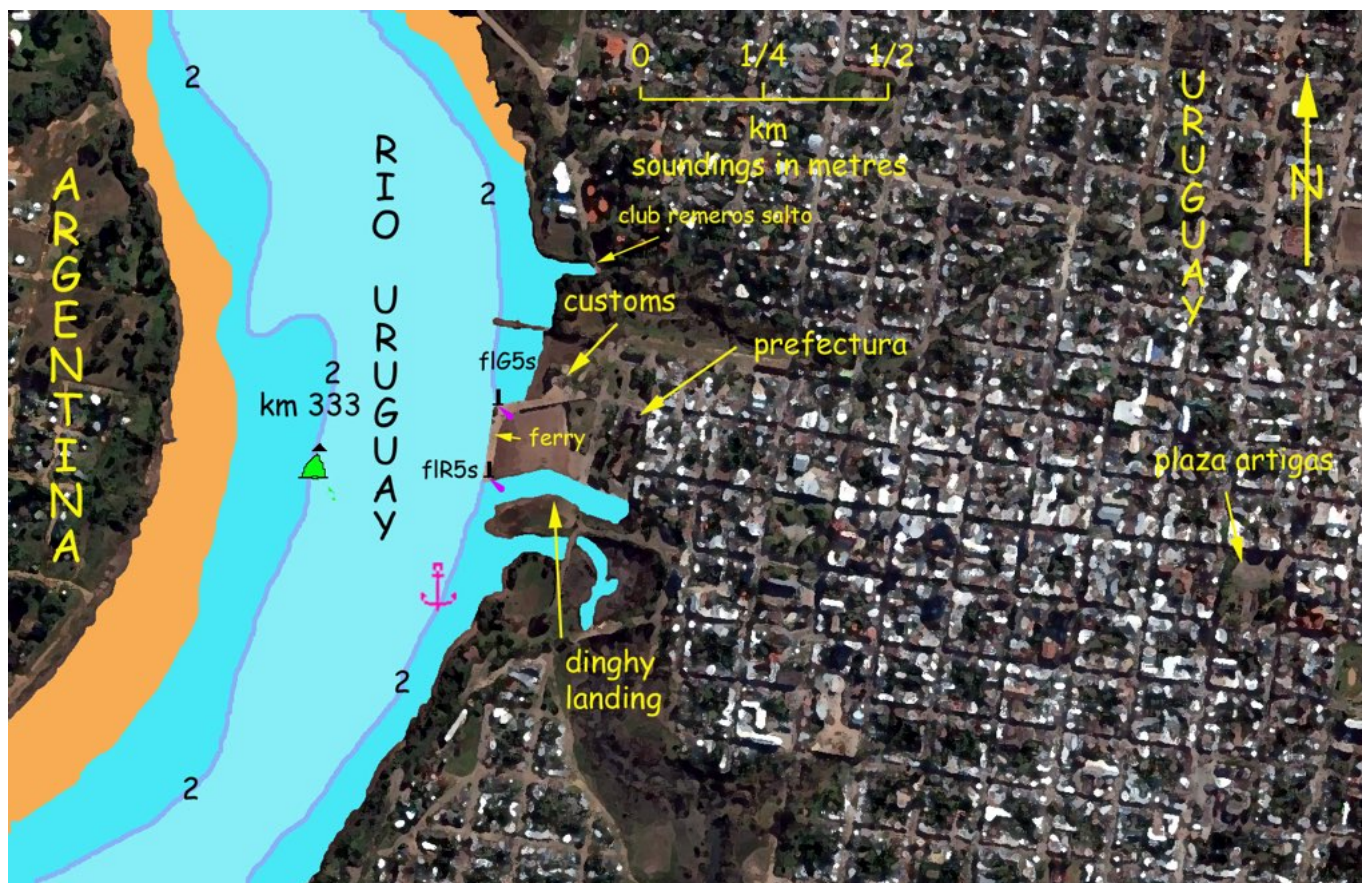
Salto is Uruguay's third largest city with a population of 104,000. It is at the head of navigation on the Rio Uruguay.

Approach

The approach to Salto is straightforward along the marked channel of the Rio Uruguay. The daily discharge of water from the hydro electric dam



Salto waterfront looking north



above Salto greatly affects the current. This is less of a problem at the Paso Hervidero, 4 NM north of the Artigas monument, but much more so at the Paso Corralito, 5 NM southwest of Salto. To avoid the worst of the current it is best to transit the Paso Corralito either well before 0800 or in the late afternoon.

Anchorage

Anchor south of the jetty in about 6m. Go in as close to the shore as you can, but be careful as it shoals rapidly. This should keep you out of the worst of the current. Be prepared for a rise in the water level of 2m or more (from the overnight level to the midday level). Sighting the jetty will give a good indication of the present level.

Land at the stone wall south of the jetty.



Prefectura at Salto



Anchorage and jetty at low water, Salto

Formalities

Call at the Prefectura on arrival and departure.

If arriving in or departing from Uruguay customs and immigration are found in the building on the jetty, but will only be open to coincide with the ferry times.

Facilities

All the facilities of a city. A passenger ferry runs from the jetty to and from Concordia, in Argentina. Buses



Dinghy landing, Salto, looking west



Salto jetty at high water



Salto jetty at low water



Salto street scene



Plaza Artigas Salto



Downstream Salto Grande



Upstream Salto Grande