INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
SPECIAL SECTION!
16-PAGE BOAT BUYERS GUIDE

ASK THE EXPERTS: HOW CAN I EVALUATE A USED ENGINE?

SHOULD I ADJUST MY VALVES EVERY 400 HOURS?

TOUCH-SCREEN DIGITAL MONITORING SYSTEM p. 22

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Attain the Dream

Step into the cruising lifestyle

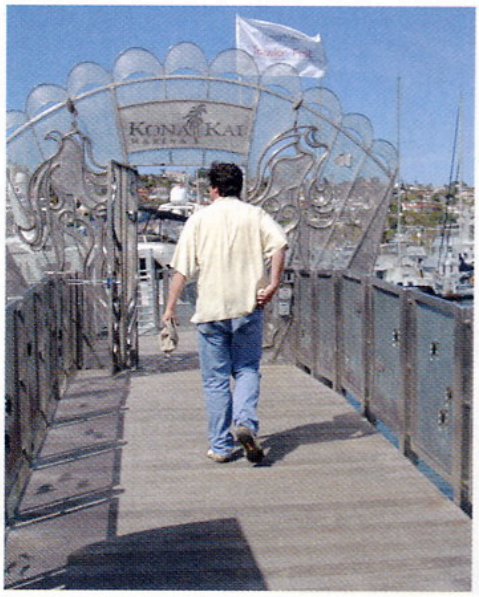
BY LYSA CHRISTOPHER AND MARY NESFIELD

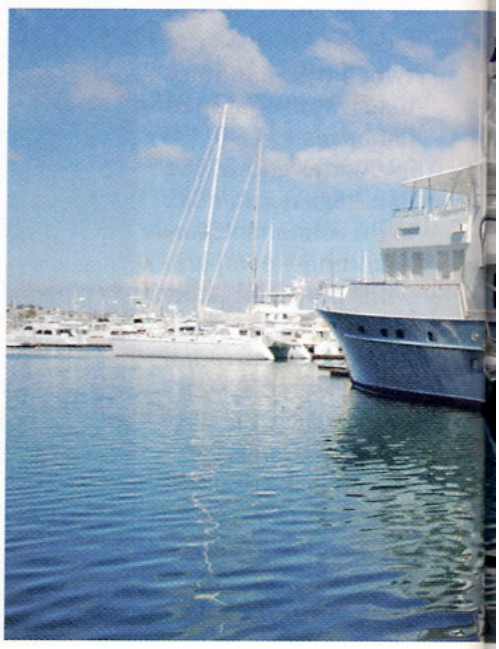
Almost everyone has dreamt of cruising at one time or another, whether it's on the boat you currently own or something new and magnificent. We envision ourselves navigating unknown waters and discovering unique ports, with no timelines, deadlines or restrictions on our freedom.

The Kona Kai Marina and Resort located on Shelter Island in San Diego, CA was home to the debut San Diego Trawler Fest held February 26-28, 2009. It was reported the event had more than 1,000 in attendance over the course of three days.

We attend boat shows, read magazines and conduct countless hours of research online, all in an effort to prepare ourselves for the cruise we intend to embark upon one day.

Over the past few months we've met a variety of people who represent all different segments of this dream. From Tony Fleming, president and owner of Fleming Yachts, Inc., to high school friends, now retired, about to embark on the journey of a lifetime. No matter what stage of the dream they represent, the story is always the same — they count the days until they can untie their dock lines and just go.





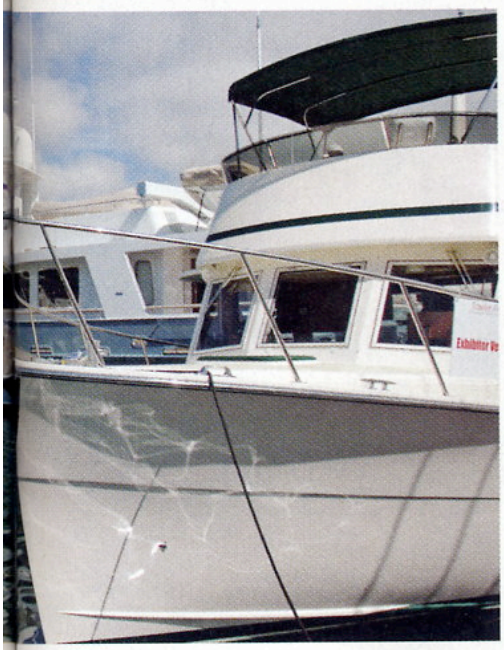


photo by Jack Fessendon

Larry and Mary Mason have traveled from the Croatian coast to Venice, Italy and have been avid cruisers since 2005.

Knee Deep in Paradise

Larry and Mary Mason achieve their ultimate dream

NAME: **Larry and Mary Mason**
HOMEPORT: Rifle, Colorado
TYPE OF BOAT: Nordhavn 57
CRUISING SINCE: April 2005

Q What's your favorite cruise destination?
The Croatian coast, Dubrovnik to Venice, Italy. The conditions are perfect and with 1,000 islands, great anchorages and good weather, there is literally something for everyone. The best part is the Croatian people and government who welcome and support boaters.

Q What's the farthest you've traveled and for how long?
We started at Dana Point, California to the Pacific Northwest through Panama ending in Martinique. The trip took 14 months to complete and it was wonderful.

Q Where did you first learn about cruising?
In 1964, while I [Larry] was in the U.S. Army stationed in Germany. Our base had a small library filled with all sorts of books. I read several books on cruising. After the Army, I owned a 10-foot catamaran for two years but then moved away from the water. However, over the next 30 years I continued reading everything I could find on the subject of cruising and obtained my private pilot's license. In 2000, we began going to boat shows and attending boating seminars. We read Robert Bebe's book "Voyaging Under Power" and knew this was going to be a big part of our future.

Q What advice would you give someone new to cruising?
Get help and go along on the voyage before you solo. If there are two of you be sure that both of you learn everything on the boat, just in case of an emergency. Make sure you both understand everything aboard before you take off on your own.

Q What's the biggest mistake made by a first-time cruiser, and how can they avoid it?
They do not have a big enough dream, or they do not follow their dream. Think about where and how you plan to use your boat. Then take your boat to a great cruising ground; so you can really use it and experience a wide variety of situations. If need be, acquire help to move your boat if you do not have the skill level or it is a long passage. You have to believe that somehow everything will work out fine. When you make big plans, surprisingly everything does work out eventually. You will also meet other people who share your passion and can offer tips and tricks that will help you make your dream a reality.