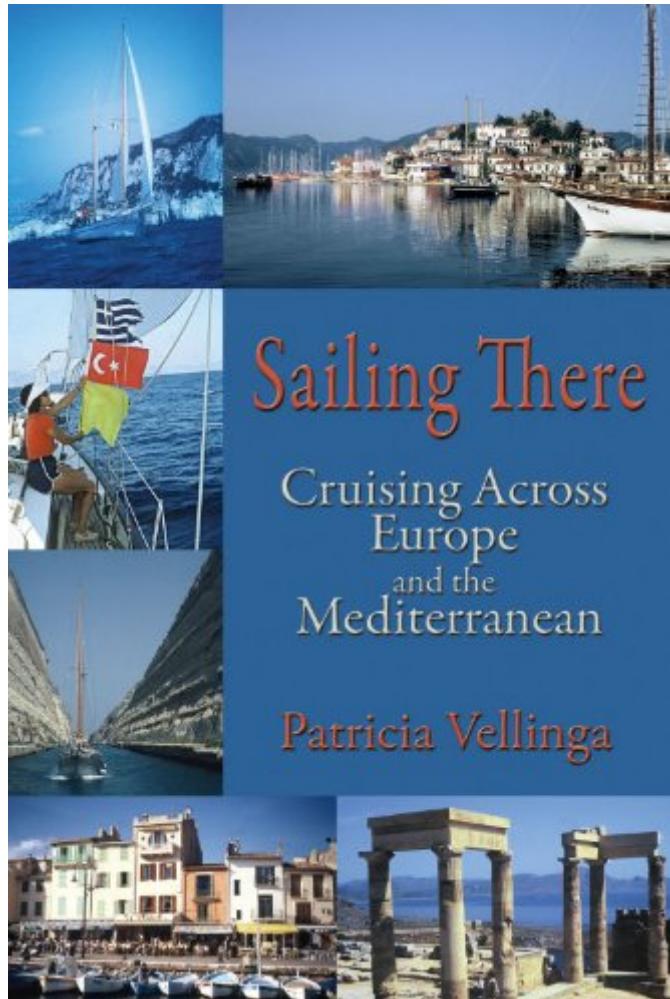


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Sailing There, Cruising Across Europe And The Mediterranean



Synopsis

Looking for a new adventure, Patricia Vellinga and her husband buy a boat-a big boat that turns out to be more a yacht kit than a yacht. Their simple plan is to cruise Europe and the Mediterranean for one year. Their journey, however, is far from routine. As Pat and Ray motor through the canals of Holland, Belgium, and France, then sail to Italy, Greece, Turkey and Spain, they find beauty and danger. Towering locks and feisty barge captains test their boat handling prowess. Forced at gunpoint to cast off into the raging SaÃ±e River, they struggle to safety. The treacherous winds of the meltemi in Greece and the mistral in France challenge their sailing skills. They sail into idyllic anchorages and 2000 year-old ports used by Odysseus. Anchoring? Who thought anchoring could be so funny? It becomes the daily entertainment as yachters jockey for position in ancient ports. Patâ™s detailed descriptions of Rayâ™s brush with the octopus mafia and the charter captain who leaves everyone in a wake of pandemonium will put a smile on your face. Salty characters abound. In the end, Pat and Ray are hooked on the cruising lifestyle. It takes them well beyond their one-year plan.

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Customer Reviews

we just bought a boat so I have been on a binge of reading books about the cruising lifestyle. I have read quite a few about the Caribbean, some about North America, but hadn't seen many about the Mediterranean, so I was really looking forward to checking this out. What isn't said in the description, or in fact anywhere in the book, is when this story took place - from what I can tell after reading it, this was about 20 years ago. I don't know if the author wrote the book 20 years ago and then waited to publish, or took excellent notes at the time and recently turned them into a book. This book chronicles their first year cruising the Med, from her bio it sounds like they continued cruising there for quite a number of years - so why not write about all of that? As it was I felt that the story wasn't fresh, it felt stale and the writing stilted. I don't know why the author wasn't more upfront about it - why not start the description with 'in 1991 we bought a boat and had it delivered to Rotterdam...' As it is, there are lots of other cruising books I thought were much better as cruising literature, though I'm still waiting for a good one about the Med!

This is a tale about a fascinating couple who have inspired my wife and I to live out our lives as adventurers too. It will draw you in and carry you along with the wind of your imagination as you discover the many ports and gorgeous coves along their course...I have read this book via the Kindle reader on my iPad over the past several weeks and have thoroughly enjoyed it! What adventurers Ray & Pat Vellinga are!! Even though this story happened several years ago, there is so much to be learned from all of their triumphs as well as their openly discussed miscues. I never really dreamed of cruising a small yacht in the Mediterranean before, but there is certainly a burning ember in my heart to add it to the bucket list now!

An intimate and entertaining journey, experienced through the eyes and hearts of an adventurous couple who hone their expertise as sailors while taking in the sights, sounds, cultures, and flavors of the Mediterranean.

This book is an absolutely wonderful read for those that have or would like to cruise the Med. It reads like a real adventure and you can often imagine being there. What's more, I found the book inspirational and a great learn for those (like me) who one day would like to do the same!

With Pat's excellent descriptions I felt like I was meeting the same interesting people, eating the different foods, experiencing the storms and the balmy breezes, the mechanical problems and the solutions, the facts about the ports of call and all the beautiful scenery they passed. A great way to

'see' places I'll never be able to visit in person.

For the armchair traveler who enjoys adventures from a safe location "Sailing There" is a delightful book. The word that popped into my head from the beginning of the book was "Intrepid" definitely with a capital "I". It is an excellent vicarious adventure for a confirmed landlubber. How did Ray and Pat ever learn to handle all the complicated situations of canal, river and finally Mediterranean travel? It seemed like every event was different from every one that had gone before. Ray's sailing and mechanical abilities were matched by Pat's navigation and crewing skills. The descriptions of their sailing adventures, the camaraderie among cruisers, the different ports (large and small) they visited, the locals they met gave a real taste of what the cruising life must be like. Pat's clear writing puts the reader there. One of the treats of reading "Sailing There" on my iPad Kindle app was the ability to switch over to Maps, Google Images or Wikipedia to follow along on. Many thanks to Pat for sharing the Vellinga adventures and love of sailing the Mediterranean.

If you're any kind of boater, sail or power, or an aficionado of the Mediterranean cultures and cuisine, or best of all both, this is a must read that you can't put down. Through Pat's very colorful and descriptive style we get the full flavor of their adventures to "assemble" their pre-ordered boat in the Netherlands, negotiate the tricky locks and canals across France and then take on both the beauty and fury of the Mediterranean Sea, while savoring the very wonderful flavors of the Mediterranean towns and cities from Turkey to Spain. Some of the best parts for me as a veteran boater was seeing how deftly Pat and her husband Ray handled the many maritime challenges they encountered and at the same time rekindling my warm memories of travels through many of those same towns and ports that dot the coast. If you love boating or travels in Europe this is a great read. I only hope the Vellinga's take us along on another adventure some time in the future.

We plan to sail the Med in a catamaran for a year with two kids aged 6 & 8. This book forms part of my research. Whilst the book was a great read, it came close to putting me off the idea altogether. Having to deal with the Mistral in the western med and the Meltemi in the east, bolshy harbour masters and flotillas of charter boats there didn't seem to be time for much enjoyment.... And we'll have kids!

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