



## **Cruising Guides by Sarah Goddard-Jones**

This is the first in a series of articles intended to assist those cruising north for the winter regatta season in the Whitsundays. This article will cover cruising guides and references; the next will cover Marinas; the third will cover all weather anchorages; the final will cover anchorages off the beaten track for which you need particular conditions. It is written from the experience of *Wine-Dark Sea*, so contemplates a 15 metre sailing vessel which has a draft of 3 metres. Use the guides to help you find better destinations for different sized vessels.

### **Cruising the New South Wales Coast by Alan Lucas**

Most boat owners in Sydney would already own this guide I am sure, but it's worth investing in a current edition if yours is a bit long in the tooth. Lucas provides a comprehensive guide to places to stop on the NSW coast, favouring anchorages over Marinas. The information is generally very reliable and includes useful information about facilities such as provisioning and fuel, as well as detailed approaches to anchorages, and photos of landmarks. This guide covers the area from the Victorian border through to the Gold Coast.

### **Cruising the Coral Coast by Alan Lucas**

Again, similar information to the same standard as the NSW version, covering the approaches to Point Danger to Weipa, but including information on the Gulf of Carpentaria and the Coral Sea between Cape York and Papua New Guinea. We made great use of this guide beyond Cairns, where information becomes much harder to source and charts become less reliable. Lucas is a solid reference.

### **Noel Patrick's Curtis Coast**

We love this particular book which provides a very detailed guide to the area between Bundaberg and Mackay, bounded by the Great Barrier Reef. It has particularly good cover of the Capricorn and Bunker group of reefs, which are some of the most beautiful, accessible and unspoiled reefs between Sydney and the Whitsundays. It also covers Island and mainland anchorages that Lucas does not contemplate, but which are accessible in the right conditions for even deep draft vessels.

### **100 Magic Miles of the Great Barrier Reef by David Colfelt**

The Whitsundays bible, which it is foolhardy to cruise the area without. As well as detailed sketch charts of all the islands, later versions also include many Google Earth style photos of anchorages, which are very useful. Colfelt also includes compass roses for all suggested anchorages, showing the best shelter for prevailing wind conditions. He also includes useful information about diving and snorkelling recommendations. Lucas barely covers the Whitsundays in The Coral Coast, so if you intend to spend any time cruising the area, we highly recommend this book. It covers Mackay to Bowen, and includes some of the reefs outside the Whitsundays.

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### **Rob's Passage Planner**

This is an incredibly useful guide covering Hobart to Lizard Island. Whilst it does not cover anchorages as the Guides above do, it gives detailed information about VHF cover and channels on this stretch of coast, and provides detailed maps of all the marinas and facilities offered. It has useful guidance on Passage planning, safety regulations in each state as well as details about prevailing weather and incident management.

### **Admiralty Sailing Directions Australia Pilot Volume 3**

This is definitely not a cruising guide, but when used in conjunction with your charts, particularly in more isolated areas, it can be a godsend. This version covers Sydney to Cape York, the Reef, Torres Strait and the south coast of PNG. From radio broadcast information, to detailed navigation and pilotage info, whilst aimed at shipping, it can be used to find suitable anchorages, where no other information is available. Probably not compulsory if you only intend to sail between Sydney and the Whitsundays, but if venturing past Cairns, it should be on your list.

*Bon voyage!*