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## Hello Sailor - 6 Sailing Trips you shouldn't miss!

by Fiona Harper



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Polish your deck shoes, slip on some sunscreen and brush up on your port and starboard! Here's our Sailing Bucket List that is guaranteed to send your friends green with envy when you tell them that you're going sailing.

### The Clipper Round the World Yacht Race

Billed as the yacht race that anyone can do (with the appropriate amount of cash to throw at it), the Clipper Round the World Race is probably the closest that most of us will come to being Sailing Rock Stars. Identical yachts crewed by paying crew, led by professional Skippers, are pitted against each on a round the world course. Legs are broken up into stages that become races within the overall race. Crew either sign up for a leg or for the entire race. Immense bragging rights come with being able to nonchalantly drop into conversation, 'yeah I did Hobart,' or '...when I sailed around the world....' Visit: [clipperroundtheworld.com](http://clipperroundtheworld.com)

### Whitsunday Islands

The Whitsundays are proof that God was a sailor. Why else would He have plonked 74 beautiful continental islands within cooee of each other and bathed them in sunshine smack bang in the middle of the trade winds belt? With consistent south east breezes of 20 - 25 knots, the Whitsunday Islands are a sailors dream. Hire a bareboat from Hamilton Island or Airlie Beach and skipper yourself or hop on board one of the many sailing yachts that cruise the islands. Visit: [tourismwhitsundays.com.au](http://tourismwhitsundays.com.au)

### Louisiades

The first thing you're probably wondering is just where the heck are the Louisiades? It's a good question. Like much of Papua New Guinea, the Louisiade Archipelago in the south east of the country is little visited by western travellers. The exception being when the (mostly) annual Louisiades Yacht Rally arrives from Cairns. Essentially a fundraiser for villagers who mostly live a subsistence lifestyle, sailors take part in the rally for the rare opportunity to visit extraordinary cruising grounds. Diving is spectacular but so too is the opportunity to engage with locals who rarely see white fellas and their flash boats. Curiosity is in abundance! Visit: [louisiades.com](http://louisiades.com)

### Seychelles

Most non-sailors would have trouble pinpointing Seychelles on a map. Sailors and navigators though are on to this Indian Ocean gem with its beguiling blend of French and African cultures. A water baby's paradise, blindingly white beaches are littered with granite boulders creating intimate lagoons filled with aquamarine sea. If the trade winds becomes too monotonously consistent, don some gear and pop over the side - diving and snorkelling are out of this world. Visit: [seychelles.travel/](http://seychelles.travel/)

### Thailand

Phuket is well known for being a sailing-friendly hot spot thanks to a couple of hugely popular regattas like Kings Cup and Phuket Race Week. Phang Nga Bay is where most of the action happens on the water. Pretty little mushroom-shaped islets, their bases carved out by ocean currents at sea level, pop up out of sea that rarely raises itself beyond a ripple. Shoes-optional beachfront bars with cheap beer and fabulous food entice yachties return year after year. Visit: [sunsail.com.au](http://sunsail.com.au)

### Tonga

The island archipelago of Tonga consists of over 170 islands and lagoons strewn across the South Pacific Ocean like a pearl necklace that's come adrift. Little tourism infrastructure means that a visit to Tonga is a little like stepping into the pages of Paul Theroux's *Happy Isles of Oceania*. Unspoilt and untouched are clichés that marketers toss around like fetta in a Greek Salad. In Tonga's case however it's entirely apt. The water is so ridiculously clear that sailing feels like floating on air. Colourful fish below the yacht appear to be flying. Or maybe we just spent too much time in the sun? Visit: [thekingdomoftonga.com/](http://thekingdomoftonga.com/)

Fiona Harper is a travel writer specialising in cruising, active and soft adventures. Follow her at [Travel Boating Lifestyle](#)

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