

escape

PROSAIL ASIA
JULY 2021
ISSUE 02

*3 tri's
3 days
2 hangovers
2 stopovers!*

*i Finding
Ghost Island*

TOP-SECRET HIDEAWAYS
DISCOVERING THE SOUTHERN ISLANDS



Finding Ghost Island

schedule

DAILY

- 01** Changi Sailing Club to Lazarus Island. [5 hours]
- 02** Lazarus Island to Pulau Hantu, Southern Island, Singapore [1.5 hours]
- 03** Pulau Hantu to Changi Sailing Club [6 hours]

EXCLUSIVE

It wasn't planned to stop for an overnight at Lazarus Island on the way down but as it turned out, that was the best way to do it.

The 5 hours in getting to Lazarus was mainly due to wind and tide factors. The nice sail back from Hantu to Changi was due to wind and tide factors - but that's why we enjoy sailing.

A Dash 750, a 760R and a C28RS made the trip which we think worked so well we've found our next regatta!

Day One...

Changi SC to Lazarus.

We met at CSC and departed in a very leisurely manner at about 11:30am. Although there was a steady breeze it was from the Southeast and so the first half was a beat all the way to the dreaded Changi Naval Base - it doesn't matter if you are outside of the boundary, the alarms always go off and the navy greeting committee come out to chase you away!

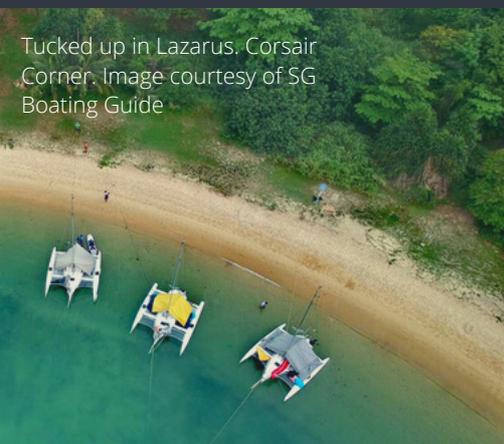
The Changi Navy Base is the most southeast point of Singapore island and lies roughly 10 miles from CSC then its another 10 from there to the first of the southern islands.

Our preference for an overnight is Kusu Island as

Kusu is a charming little island with a famous temple on it. Lazarus is where you are "allowed" to go, and that's why it gets crowded.

The crowd comes from One 15 Marina just 5 miles north but they disappear back to the marina and by 8 pm, you're on your own.

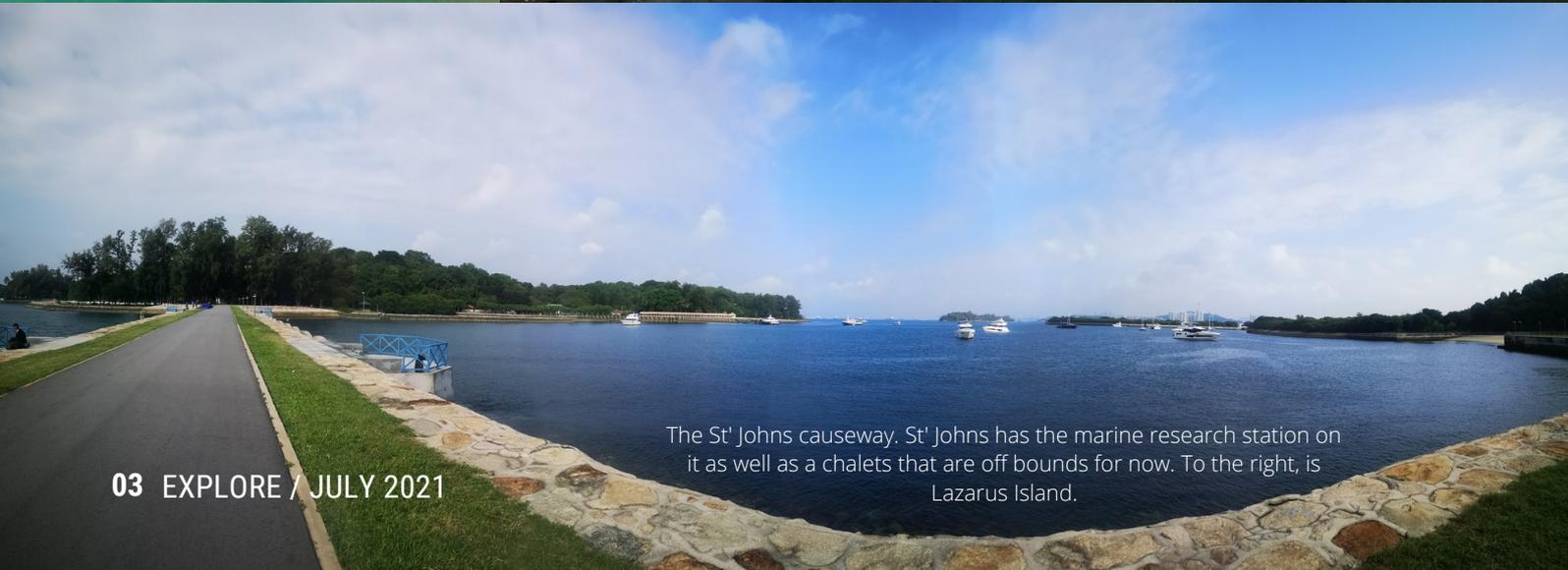
We tend to hang in behind the south wall of the bay. One thing is for sure, you can a really flat night on the water. Lazarus has a toilet and shower block but it's a little hike away. A new toilet block exists on St' Johns Island that can be reached via a walk across the causeway but, we've never made it that far!



Tucked up in Lazarus. Corsair Corner. Image courtesy of SG Boating Guide



The Kusu Temple is worth a visit. There's a nice feeling of serenity on overnights at the island.



The St' Johns causeway. St' Johns has the marine research station on it as well as a chalets that are off bounds for now. To the right, is Lazarus Island.



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Pulau Hantu was the site where ancient Malay warriors duelled to the death and their ghosts are said to wander the island.

Day Two...

Leisurely...

With high tide at 2 pm there was no morning rush and besides that would allow enough time to get over a hangover after TriHarder and frozen margaritas on the beach at Lazarus!

It turned into a very pleasant one and a half hours sail from Lazarus to Hantu. The only hazard is crossing Sisters Fairway and then Jong Fairway. No trip around Singapore is complete without nearly being scuttled by some ultra large vessel!



Hantu is really two islands, 'big' and 'small' with a lagoon in the middle. It lies less than a mile south of one of Singapore's largest refineries and so the north facing shore doesn't have a great view unless you like industrial abstracts.

We were following in the footsteps of Team Cicak and so following their recommendation, headed into the lagoon on the western end of the island. You can find Cicaks many adventures on YouTube, worth a look!

Most of Singapore's fringing islands have been manicured to some form. This includes small lagoons that have walled protection but are only accessible by shallow draft craft. Corsair, pull the dagger board up and head on in! We've managed this in Sisters Island and Kusu but these have since become off-bounds as well now!

The Corsair does have the advantage of being able to sneak into small spaces. Of course once your in, you can head straight to the beach and 'park it'!

All the channels and flukes around the Singapore

suffer strong tidal currents and so it's pretty necessary to be mindful of what the tide is doing. During July is Singapore's hottest period thankfully, the torrential rains of the week before our trip didn't carry over and we had those you know, balmy tropical nights!

During most of the normal times, Hantu is visited mostly by divers as it is home to Singapore's rare reef that has been slowly regenerated.

Right now due to Covid practices mostly no one is visiting Hantu and that must appease the island spirits no end! As such, it's a little unkempt and that made it even more perfect!

When we arrived in the early afternoon, we were the only guests. By the next day, 4 kayakers had made their way onto the island under the cover of darkness, and that was the full compliment of island guests.

Enjoy the space, it's completely rare around here and it really felt like we had escaped! Brief but very worth the effort.





So if you found yourself alone on a deserted island, what would you do first? Get some food and heat up some Sake! The best bits of life are the simple things.

The shower block on the island was really good. Very clean and the cold water showers were very welcomed after the beach heat on Lazarus. The Singapore government has to be commended for having such facilities on the recreation islands.

As there are no street lights, the walk to the shower block after dark might be a little daunting for some given the islands' legend and name. But fear not, it's far less dangerous than walking around the streets after dark in most western cities!

Surprisingly for a small boat like the Corsair 750/760, there's more than enough space for everything you need! We'd been away. We had constantly been eating and there was still more food and Sake pouring out of the boats! Some commented that we could have gone for a month.

Each of the Corsairs has cooking and toilet facilities onboard and so that removes most of the hardship. When we compare it to our adventure of sailing a Nacra Sport Cat to Phuket, the Corsair is a super-yacht! Dry clothes, hot food and drinks and, life is good!

Due to the current situation we've missed out on our annual pilgrimage to The Equator with the Neptune Regatta but on the sail to Hantu, we think we could do a mini-adventure event just around the southern islands. With the current limits of 'groups of two' it can still work. There are enough places to make a great three or four day event out of the Southern Islands. So minds together and figure it out.

An evening on Hantu is very pleasant just make sure to coat yourself with anti-insect spray as the overgrown nature is obviously encouraging their breeding!

In the 90's we first visited Hantu on the Nacras, guided along by Major Tan from the Singapore Navy, and another memory lane event. Hantu has been manicured but not overly. Great to see it again!

Day Three

Ready for reality...

After a dreamy few days away it was time to head on home. High tide was at 6am so the plan was to get out of the dry-out bay at about 8 am.

A gentle southeast breeze was present and made for a really nice morning sail. The wind held up until Sentosa but luckily the dropping tide was running with us so it wasn't a real chore.

From Sentosa island down to the Changi Naval Base was, slow! Just before the navy base, a southwest kicked in so really good time was made on the second half of the trip. But that is kind of normal as the wind generally caves in around the Naval-Base for some strange reason!

OUR TAKEAWAYS

- The unplanned stop at Lazarus made the whole trip much better as there wasn't a rush to get there.
- Two islands in three days is much better than one island for two days.
- Very doable with just two people.
- The Hantu Bay is a dry-out bay so only boats that can sit on their bottoms can get in.
- Frozen margaritas should be a safety requirement.
- Getting of terrafirma for a bit, is really worth it!

We'll put a plan into action for a two-up southern islands challenge.

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