

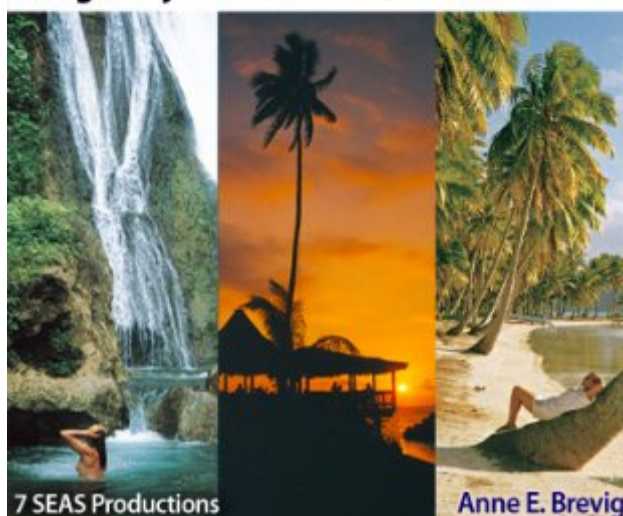
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The South Pacific – The Sea Of Dreams: Sailing Panama-Galapagos-French Polynesia - Tonga - Fiji - Vanuatu - Solomon Islands (Seven Seas Adventures Book 5)



The South Pacific - the Sea of Dreams

Panama - Galapagos - French Polynesia
Tonga - Fiji - Vanuatu - Solomon Islands





Synopsis

The "Seven Seas Adventures Series" is based on the colour paper edition of "9 Years on the 7 Seas with S/Y Nor Siglar". As Kindle Fire and growing number of reading devices now support colour images, each of the 7 illustrated books corresponds to the 7 parts in the colour printed edition. Gliding out of the last lock of the Panama Canal, we find ourselves at a crossroads. Seven years into our adventure, which was supposed to last 3-4, we should really be heading north and home. But the lure of the South Seas proves too strong, and we set sails in the opposite direction, committing ourselves to several more years at sea. Experienced and confident, we are ready to tackle the long ocean passages alone. Another milestone is reached crossing the Equator into the southern hemisphere. In Galapagos, we stand face to face with giant tortoises, learn to deal with corrupt officials, nasty infections and a sore back and prepare for the 3-week crossing to the Marquesas. An ideal passage for us, another cruiser gets lost, his boat later found in Acapulco with no one aboard. After 3000 nautical miles, we make landfall in rugged Hiva Oa, our first introduction to legendary French Polynesia: air laden with the heavy scent of tropical fruit and flowers, beautiful "vahines", erotic hula-hula, tattooed men racing outrigger canoes, gourmet food and joie de vivre. In dangerous Tuamotus, a "Mayday" call is heard from a boat foundering on a reef and in tiny Ahe, we trade locally harvested black pearls and learn to avoid poisonous reef fish. We cruise the magic islands of Tahiti, Moorea and Bora Bora with their stunning turquoise crystal clear lagoons sheltered in anchorages behind treacherous reefs and experience "Heiva", an arts and cultural festival complete with traditional games, song and dance. A 10-day brisk sail further west lies the Kingdom of Tonga where traditions are strong, evident in unique pandanus basketry and crafts, tapa clothing and special "laka laka" song-play and dance. We feast on pigs roasted on the spit, food wrapped in banana leaves cooked in underground ovens and attend our first kava ceremony. One day Tonga's 300 lb. 80-year old king comes swimming out to Nor Siglar and circles her several times as part of his daily exercise routine. Four days further west, friendly Fiji beckons with other customs and traditions. Here we are Mr. and Mrs. Martin and here we lose our passports and credit cards - and the weather window to Australia. So we spend the cyclone season in Fiji instead, as it is paramount for offshore cruisers to be in the right place at the right time. We put Nor Siglar on the hard and fly home to visit family and friends. Five months later, we find her exactly as we left her and proceed to give her a thorough overhaul, even a paint job, as the price is right so long as we can stand the slow, built-in "Fiji Factor". Before setting out to Vanuatu, five days to the west, we help out in a dramatic rescue operation. We spend three great weeks cruising the

islands of Efate, Epi, Ambryn, Pentecost and Espiritu Santu, experiencing war dances in the buff and a close encounter with a shark, building outrigger canoes and helping an injured native. We learn about Black Magic, coming-of-age rituals and pig killings with clubs, their many taboos, arranged marriage and bride prices, and some of their pigeon English language, Bislama, where a helicopter is simply called "mixmaster blongs Jesus". A rough seven-day crossing to the Solomon Islands tests our nerves and abilities and in a veritable "Mother of all Squalls", thoughts of quitting the adventure start to form in our minds. In Morovo lagoon, known for its fabulous scuba diving on the many shipwrecks from WW2, we meet the world-renowned carvers of the South Pacific, but wonder about their integrity when told that one of them had rescued JFK. We love the Solomon Islands, the best-kept secret in the Pacific, it is time to move on with the seasons.

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