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Exploring cool blue Bermuda by boat

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HAMILTON, Bermuda

Blue. Light blue. Dark blue. Blue-green. Even bluer still. The hue of blue surrounds the small skiff as it zips and bounces lightly across the cool waters of the Atlantic Ocean.

The high noon sun stares down from yet more shades of blue. Cloudless and never-ending, the sky hangs in a way that appears distant and yet, reachable with a glancing touch. The warmth of yellow rays cast shadows that dance across the boat's bright white deck.

Blonde hair of the rider on the bow blows in every direction, floating on the headwind breeze and bouncing with each surge of the outboard engine. The rider turns to her driver and smiles. The boat's helmsman returns the happy expression with a grin of his own and an unseen wink behind a dark pair of aviator shades.

Map in hand, the vessel's captain charts his course for a string of tiny islands only 30 minutes or so from Hamilton, Bermuda's largest city. Outside the protected waters of the port, bustling with freighters, fishing boats, and cruise ships, a calmness surrounds the craft humming its way along the rugged seashore.

Bright sand curls up from the waves gently lapping an isle not much longer than a football field. Trees curl towards the sky, bent and broken from a recent storm. Deserted of human existence, the boaters have discovered their new home-away-from-home in a curving stretch of light pink beach.

Weighing anchor on the sandy shore, the couple lay claim to the island and disembark to have a picnic. The man



spreads a blanket on the water's edge as the woman pulls food and drink from a rustic metal fishing cooler.

An array of sandwiches, fruit, cookies, chips and a bottle of champagne spread across the borrowed hotel bed blanket - a once in a lifetime celebratory feast as a couple's first wedding anniversary mid-day meal should be special and slightly unique.

The husband surprised his wife with a trip to Bermuda and he wanted this day to be as special as the day they were married. The morning started with room service and breakfast in bed. Dinner that evening would be at a waterside four-star restaurant in Hamilton and perhaps some dancing. But for right now, lunch was a Boston Whaler saltwater excursion that included an exploration of small uninhabited islands with a romantic picnic and snorkeling.

Boat rentals in Bermuda are fairly easy to come by. A simple search offers various skiffs and crafts available to rent by the day or half-day and while most of Bermuda is fairly expensive, procuring a boat for cruising the coast is relatively comparable to renting a vessel back in the United States. It's well worth the money to have this kind of personal tour and to

be able to experience the islands at one's own pace and discretion.

The ocean in May can be quite chilly. While Bermuda is considered tropical, the country's location - in the middle of the Atlantic and parallel to North Carolina - means it can still be quite cool on the surface and even cooler down below until summer rolls around. Without a wetsuit, divers can experience a shiver or twenty when dropping below the sun-kissed surface. Breathtaking in view and bone-piercing coldness, watching exotic fish frolic among wooden ruins of sunken ships can be quite fun for a little while, but the redundancy of aquatic wildlife and barnacle covered hulls grows tiresome when all one can think is "Geesh, it's freakin' freezing."

Back on dry land, warmed by the shining spring sun and a few glasses of champagne, the happy couple soaks it all in. The gentle ocean lapping the wet sand. An occasional seagull caw. The vast azure sky hovering above. The feeling of being the only two people in the world. This was the goal. This was the perfect way to celebrate one year of wedded bliss, with the happiness and love a couple shares, together forever in this one moment in time.