



Counting the Days

The crew of *Dream Time* enjoys sailing around the world—one day at a time. **BY NEVILLE HOCKLEY**

IT WAS 1,000 DAYS AGO THAT MY wife, Catherine, and I began our world circumnavigation on *Dream Time*, our 1981 Cabo Rico 41-footer. It sounds rather exciting, but in reality, our departure from land life in 2007 was rather anticlimactic. You see, we didn't launch into the voyage from New York with an adventurous offshore passage, sailing boldly over the horizon, bound for distant and exotic shores. Instead, we fashioned a gentler introduction to our adventure: We sailed to Oyster Bay, off New York's Long Island. The sail lasted only two hours, and while Oyster Bay is really just around the corner from us, it's one of our favorite anchorages on Long Island Sound, and we stayed

Why rush? Throughout their journey, the Hockleys have discovered that the magic of voyaging around the world is something to savor.

there for a week and a half.

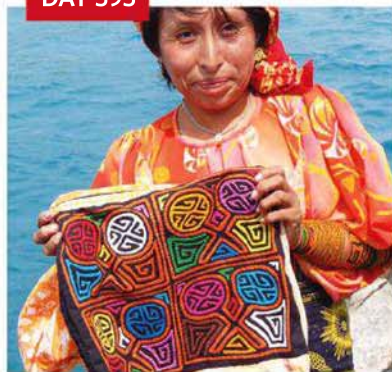
Our first few months seemed to set the pace for our world adventure, as it took us almost four months to sail beyond New York waters and over eight months to leave North America. We joked to anyone who'd listen that at our current cruising pace, it'd take us 72 years to sail around the world—maybe we'd set a Guinness World Record for the slowest circumnavigation ever.

But we soon found our stride, and on Day 265, in February 2008, after traveling down the eastern coastline of North America mostly via the Intracoastal Waterway, we made what was probably one of the most anxiety-filled but rewarding crossings of our voyage to date. It was a mere 90-mile night sail, but it

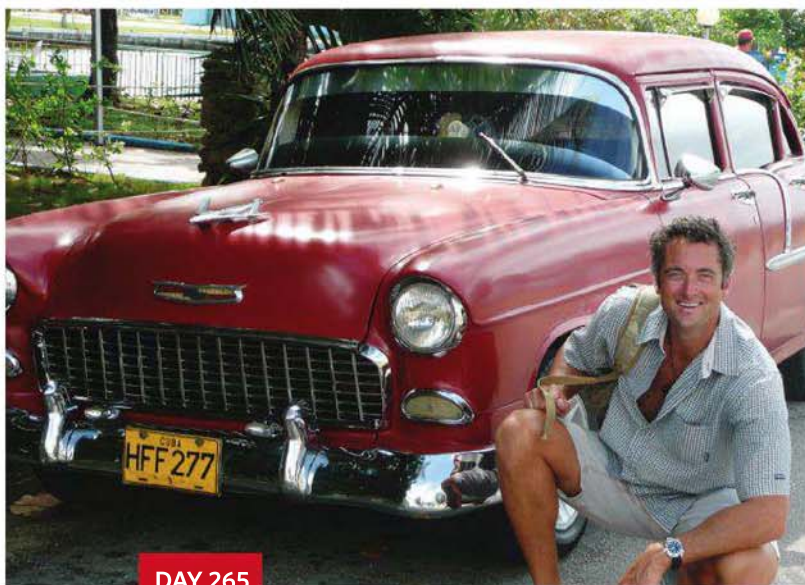
DAY 183



DAY 595



COURTESY OF NEVILLE HOCKLEY (TOP), NEVILLE HOCKLEY



DAY 265

represented our first international passage: America to Cuba.

The passage went without a hitch, and we sailed into Havana's Marina Hemingway flying our quarantine flag for the first time, ecstatic at our accomplishment.

Even clearing into Cuba was an adventure in itself, with 11 government officials, two sniffer dogs, and over two hours of paperwork required before we were officially granted entry. It felt like we were a world away from our old lives. Our voyage had



DAY 810

well and truly begun.

During the next year, we explored the western Caribbean, and there was never a dull moment. On Day 368, Arthur caught us; it was the first Atlantic tropical storm of the 2008 season, and it brought hurricane-strength winds to our anchorage in San Pedro, Belize. That's when we learned—very quickly—how to drop two anchors. We explored the world's second-largest barrier reef there and figured out how to read the depth by water color, which is something that we could never do in New York. We sailed up the Río Dulce, deep into the sweaty jungles of Guatemala,

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trekked north on Day 447 into the highlands to the ancient ruins of Tikal, and, at the end of the hurricane season, sailed to the Archipiélago de San Blas and spent six unforgettable weeks with the indigenous Kuna people off the barren Panamanian coastline.

The experience and confidence we'd gathered during our first nine months helped prepare us for Day 632 and the Panama Canal, when our journey was taken to the next level. The Canal took us from the Caribbean Sea, an area that we'd come to consider home territory, into the Pacific, for us a new ocean, one so vast that it stretched to the other side of the world. Crossing it seemed daunting. The sheer distances between islands with names I could barely pronounce—Hiva Oa, Aitutaki, Tongareva, Pukapuka—were now just over the horizon. So on Day 646, after inching our way farther out, we let go of the Americas and launched ourselves into the Pacific.

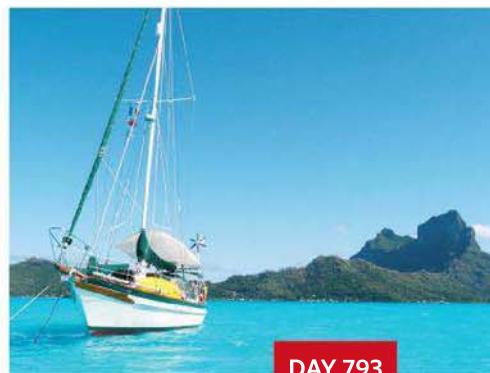
The Pacific is a cruising playground

that's exceeded all of our expectations, from meeting the giant Galápagos tortoises on Day 659 to spending 28 idyllic days sailing on warm trade winds to the Marquesas, diving with sharks in the Tuamotu Archipelago on Day 762, learning to surf in Tahiti, relaxing in Bora-Bora for a month, watching humpback whales roll past our boat in Niue on Day 851, chugging kava with the locals in Tonga, and relaxing in steamy thermal pools in New Zealand. When we look back and reflect on our experiences over the last 1,000 days—what we've seen, the people we've met, and how far we've come—we know how privileged and fortunate we are to be living this cruising life. We

know, too, how much we've changed since we left New York almost three years ago.

People often ask us how long we think it'll take for us to close the loop of our world circumnavigation, and the truth is, we don't really know. But if the last 1,000 days are anything to go by, we may decide never to come back. And

In the first 1,000 days, *Dream Time's* crew enjoyed Cuba (opposite, left), swam in Moorea with rays, and relaxed on the hook in Bora-Bora.



DAY 793

if you're reading this and contemplating a journey of your own, whether an overnight passage, an ocean crossing, or a full circle, our advice would be this: Don't waste another day thinking about it. Shrug off those land lines and start exploring. You won't regret it.

Currently in New Zealand, Neville Hockley and his wife, Catherine, have been exploring the world for four years on *Dream Time*, their Cabo Rico 41. You can follow the Hockleys' sailing adventures at their website (www.zeroXTE.com).



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