



ABA Strait of Malacca and Andaman Sea Cruise

7 to 21 December 2014

Pangkor Marina in nocturnal lights

The first of a two-part series covering the two-week 2014 voyage to Phuket, one of Aseanarean Bluewater Alliance's signature cruises.

The much awaited annual cruise to Phuket had arrived! Familiar faces greeted us at the pier when we arrived at the marina. Six boats – *Lady Olivia*, *Leeway III*, *La Gaeta*, *Volare*, *Joey* and *Dolphin* – had gathered in anticipation of the two-week trip. A couple of our friends had departed in the wee hours of Saturday morning for recreational time with their friends and families before meeting us at Puteri Harbour.

While awaiting immigration clearance, we ensured necessary items were safely onboard before setting sail at 11am. *Leeway III* and *La Gaeta* were trailing us closely, with *La Gaeta* passing under the bridge of the second link barely clearing the air draught. The rest of the boats departed from Raffles Marina later. *Veronica*, from Marina at Keppel Bay and *Seareenity*, from One Degree 15 Marina, were also due to meet us at Puteri Harbour.



Dinner hosted by Commodore Tan of RSYC, Selangor

Along the way, we stopped to satisfy our rumbling tummies. Lunch was a buffet spread at an unbelievable RM\$10! Anchoring just after sunset, we had to proceed for immigration clearance and barely halfway through, we were blessed with a heavy downpour. What an excellent weather to catch up on some sleep. Our friends at Puteri Harbour were kind enough to fetch the ladies back on a buggy. Before retiring for the night, a roll call revealed the safe arrival of all eight boats. Our next leg of sailing was to Admiral Marina, Port Dickson, approximately 140 nautical miles away.



Ladies from Dolphin and Volare

Our day started off bright and early and before we knew it, we were cruising to Port Dickson and due tie up the next day at 8am. *Leeway 3*, *Searentity*, *Veronica* and *Joey*, had left in the wee hours of the morning and would be reaching Port Dickson by sunset. While cruising, we heard that one of *Leeway 3*'s engine beltings had come loose, but would still continue with one engine, arriving safely at 8pm. The day's journey for us was made more enjoyable with the company of the crew. We had simple dishes cooked on board by our resident chef, Boon.



All hands on Volare deck

By 7.30am the following day, our convoy of eight boats arrived at Port Dickson. *La Gaeta* had to depart for Pangkor Marina for upslip hull maintenance and would be meeting the convoy on 14 December. Blessed with good weather, some of the crew went shopping in town, and it was a free and easy evening for all.



Jr Captains, Ian and Mark

The highlight for the night was definitely the barbeque party organised by the families from *Dolphin* and *Volare*. We sat by our boats enjoying the cool sea breeze.

Thanks to the generosity of David Lee and Edwin Tans' families, we got to indulge in a variety of tasty dishes. Barbequed chicken wings, sausages, satay, baked macaroni, and Korean pancakes, were served. With a single lamp illuminating our dinner table, you could say that it was a rather romantic dinner by the sea.

Boats and their Skippers

Name of Boat	Skipper
Slow Convoy	
<i>Lady Olivia</i>	Steven Leong
<i>Dolphin</i>	David Lee
<i>Duck</i> (Join from Langkawi)	Amir
<i>La Gaeta</i>	Peter Schwarze
Mid Convoy	
<i>Leeway III</i>	Francis Lee
<i>Searentity</i>	Lew Syn Pau
Fast Convoy	
<i>Joey</i>	Eric Koh
<i>Volare</i>	Edwin Tan
<i>Veronica</i>	Jeffrey Chew



Ladies from Duck

We awoke the next morning to the squawking of birds, our eyes squinted as the glaring sun pierced through *Lady Olivia*'s curtains. She was all ready to go. Joining her was *Dolphin*, *Joey* and *Volare*. The other boats would be leaving much later and would join us at Port Klang in a jiffy, given their cruising speed. At Port Klang, the Commodore of Royal Selangor Yacht Club (RSYC), Commodore Tan It Beng graciously invited us to yet another dinner party and we had the opportunity to mingle and chat with members of the club.



Jeffrey Chew & family from Veronica



Khun Boon and Khun Vrit meeting old friends at Phuket Boat Lagoon's welcome dinner



With Khun Anan of Kang Eng 2, Phuket



Commodore Tan presenting a welcome gift to Mr Lew Syn Pau



Welcome speech by Rear Commodore, Diana Teh

The following day, friends from RSYC brought us on a sightseeing tour. We stopped midway for delicious Bak Kut Teh – a bowl of steaming hot soup, simmered with meaty pork ribs and an assortment of herbs and spices. Delicious! The entire evening was spent planning the itinerary for our next destination – Pangkor Marina. It was time to bid farewell to the wonderful hosts of RSYC.

Time check: 6.45am. Our journey to Pangkor saw rough seas and rocky boats, probably one of our rockiest legs ever encountered. Nonetheless, all was well, as skillful boat captains managed to control and steer their boats to the destination. Before we anchored at Pangkor Marina for dinner, our fishing skills secured a couple

of catches along the way, which made it to our dining table, thanks again to resident chef Boon. Upon docking, we were greeted by the staff of Pangkor Marina on behalf of James Khoo, the Operations Director, who was out of town. We received overwhelming hospitality from them over dinner. Thank you!

Day 7. Rising bright and early at Pangkor Marina the next day, some of the crew decided to travel to Pangkor Island on a ferry while the rest of us stayed put to repair our boats and catch up on some lost sleep. The entire day was spent free and easy, chatting with friends and indulging in some recreational activities.⚓



Convoy's group photo at Phuket Boat Lagoon

Look out for the concluding part of this series in the next issue of Nautique.