NOLS Alumni Trip
Sailing the British Virgin Islands
March 29–April 5, 2014

Features of this trip
• “Competent Crew” Certification optional
• Self-sufficient 8-day expedition
• Sailing and seamanship skills aboard a 39’ sailboat
• Hands-on learning and immediate application of new skills
• Anchorage assessment, weather assessment and passage planning
• Each night in a new harbor or cove
• Exploring islands, cays, and beaches throughout the BVI
• Snorkeling exploration of reefs and wildlife
• Coastal and underwater Leave No Trace skills and ethics
• 6-12 participants; 2 instructors

Cost: $2,350 (Includes instruction, food and lodging pre & post-trip)  Minimum age: 18

Trip Description:
The trip begins at Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands at 12 p.m. on March 29. That day, we’ll review equipment, get oriented to the boat, examine the route and help with provisioning. After spending the first night aboard, we’ll leave the docks early the next morning for our first sail.

Sailing instruction and review is the first few days’ focus, but very soon you and the rest of the crew will have gained the skills to run the boat while your instructors step into a coaching and assisting role.

Over the course of the week, we will explore the BVI archipelago of over 50 islands, isles and cays, which have been called “Nature’s Little Secrets.” Most of the islands are volcanic, though some are formed atop coral reefs. Much less developed than the US Virgin Islands, the British Virgin Islands feature warm temperatures, mesmerizing aqua blue water, and best of all, strong, steady breezes ideal for beginning and intermediate sailors. The islands are almost all within sight of one another and host a broad array of harbors and coves where we’ll pick up a mooring or drop anchor each night. Some moorings are rimmed with white sand beaches, others with colorful local shops and restaurants, and some with nothing but the tropical forest. A favorite haunt of historic pirates, the BVI offer seclusion and a rugged beauty that is best discovered by sailboat.

In addition to Tortola, our voyage includes Norman Island (rumored to be the basis for Stevenson’s Treasure Island), Virgin Gorda, Jost van Dyke (named after a Dutch pirate), and several other smaller isles and cays. As we sail from island to island, you will learn or hone your previous skills in seamanship, navigation, passage planning, anchorage assessment, and many other important skills of expedition sailing. There will also be plenty of time to discover the world down below. “The Indians” (rock pinnacles) and the boulder gardens of “The Baths” are a few of the particularly captivating snorkeling spots we may explore.
Environment:
Weather is not predictable. Though the winds are generally between 10 and 25 knots, the potential exists for stronger gusts and squalls. The weather can range from hot sunshine to rain, strong winds, low visibility, and high seas. There are times when you might be wet and tired, but you will learn to manage these situations, perhaps even with a smile. Each boat carries a radio and a satellite/cell phone for emergencies. However, communication cannot be guaranteed, and medical evacuations may be delayed.

A constant theme in our instruction is identifying and managing the hazards of ocean travel. Hazards include inclement weather, prolonged exposure to heat and sun, marine organisms, shallow reefs and submerged rocks.

This trip’s environment includes the sailboat itself. Sailboat living is an intensely communal experience—participants and staff share small cabins, meal preparation and common areas around the clock. Excellent “Expedition Behavior” and good cheer are requisites.

Curriculum:
Alumni trips are more relaxed than a typical NOLS course; however, this sailing expedition is not a vacation or a guided trip. Trips are self-reliant where evacuation to modern medical facilities may take hours to days. Throughout the trip, you live on the boat, prepare group meals, and care for yourself. We will cover sailing and seamanship skills, Leave No Trace skills and ethics, and human and natural history for the area. The expedition sailing format emphasizes hands-on learning and application of new skills in a variety of situations.

“Competent Crew” certification is available for those interested. It is not a requirement that all participants pursue the certification. If you are interested in working toward chartering your own boat in the future, achieving “Competent Crew” certification and gaining experience onboard is a great first step! Course curriculum materials that will be mailed to you before the trip. They should be reviewed prior to arrival to best set yourself up for success and to allow you to enjoy the practical sailing and surroundings.

It is most productive and enjoyable to spend our time on the boats acquiring practical sailing skills. To this end, if you want to receive sailing certification please let us know at least one month before the course so we can get appropriate curriculum materials to you.

Expectations of you as a participant:
We expect that participants have read the pre-trip information and that you are prepared mentally and physically for the challenges and adventures that are in store for you. As on all expeditions, we will be flexible and may be thrown extraordinary challenges; your instructors are prepared to deal with such situations but may require your support and flexibility as well. If you have any questions or concerns, please call us in the alumni department 800.332.4280; we look forward to hearing from you.

Participants are responsible for any evacuation expenses incurred by NOLS. We urge you to consider trip insurance.
Planned Itinerary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>Depending on exact travel details or if you are participating in NOLS’ Navigation Seminar, you will leave the U.S. and arrive in Tortola on this day. For those not taking the earlier Navigation Seminar, paired lodging provided by NOLS at the Mariner Inn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 29</td>
<td>Noon – meet by the pool at the Mariner Inn (Wickhams Cay 2, Road Town, Tortola, BVI). We will have a brief orientation meeting and then prep gear, and rations. We will board and load the boats after 6:00 pm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 30 – April 4</td>
<td>Sail, snorkel, and explore the BVI!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 5</td>
<td>Return to the marina by 11:00 am. Trip wrap-up. Paired lodging provided by NOLS. Optional no host dinner out to celebrate a wonderful week of adventure!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Most participants will leave Tortola this day.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trip Logistics:
Upon your arrival on March 28 (if you are not taking the Navigation Seminar), you will have a shared accommodation in a room with 2-3 participants at the Mariner Inn at the Sunsail Marina. **Dinner on March 28 and breakfast on March 29 are on your own.**

*Note: If you are taking the Navigation Seminar prior to the sailing trip, your lodging and food are provided for the evening of March 28 and the morning of March 29.*

Your sailing trip officially begins at **noon on March 29** by the pool at the Mariner Inn, Road Town, on Tortola. We will gather for a lunch provided by NOLS, and begin the trip planning and organization. Then we will set sail for the remainder of the week!

If plane schedules/delays cause you to arrive late, please contact the NOLS Alumni Department ASAP 800.332.4280. Please arrive in Tortola no later than the afternoon of March 28 to accommodate delays. Please limit the luggage you carry to that on the equipment list, as space on the boat is limited. There is a non-secure luggage storage room at the marina if needed.

On the last day we will return to the marina, clean up, and end the trip. If there is interest we can arrange a farewell dinner on the last night on Tortola. **Please do not schedule a departing flight until Sunday, April 6.**

Travel logistics for getting to Tortola:
The British Virgin Islands are in the northeastern Caribbean Sea, 60-miles east of Puerto Rico. Flights arrive at Beef Island Airport on Tortola (EIS), the largest island in the BVI. Many airlines serve and connect to Beef Island. Many connections go through San Juan, Puerto Rico. It is also possible to fly to St. Thomas, in the US Virgin Islands, and take a ferry to Tortola.
Entering the BVI:
US citizens must have a valid Passport to enter the BVI and re-enter the US. US citizens do not need a visa. Residents of other countries may need to obtain an entry visa in advance. For more information, visit the BVI tourist board at www.bvitourism.com. You must clear customs and immigration upon arrival in the BVI. You will be asked whom you are chartering with, we charter with Sunsail.

Lodging:
Lodging is included in the price of this trip. As lodging choices are limited and can be very expensive when booking on your own, NOLS has organized lodging for you.

Upon your arrival on March 28 (if you are not taking the Navigation Seminar), you will have a shared accommodation in rooms of 2-3 people at the Mariner Inn at the Sunsail marina. Dinner on March 28 and breakfast on March 29 are on your own.

*Note: If you are taking the Navigation Seminar prior to the sailing trip, your lodging and food are provided for the evening of March 28 and the morning of March 29.

On April 5, after we return to the marina, all participants will have a shared accommodation in rooms of 2-3 people at the Mariner Inn for one night.

Airport Transportation: Taxis are readily available at the airport to transport you to the Mariner Inn/Sunsail Marina. Fares should be approx. $25 (you can often share a taxi/van with other hotel guests which can save you money).

Communication and Contact:
Expect to be out of telephone contact during your expedition. If someone needs to reach you in an emergency, contact the NOLS Alumni Relations Department 800.332.4280. People should not expect to hear from you while you are sailing.

Currency:
The official currency of the British Virgin Islands is the US Dollar.

Fishing:
Spear fishing and underwater hunting are illegal in the BVI.

Registration and Payment:
To reserve a space on this trip, a $200 non-refundable deposit is required payable to NOLS via phone with a credit card (Mastercard or Visa) or with a check. NOLS Alumni Department, 284 Lincoln St., Lander, WY 82520. Phone: 800.332.4280

The remainder of the tuition and all application forms are due by January 24, 2014.

Your trip tuition includes shared lodging before and after your trip, meals starting with lunch on March 29 through lunch April 5, all group equipment, sailing resources and instruction.

Trip participants are responsible for travel to/from Tortola, and any costs incurred for evacuations.