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Cruising south on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW), mariners enter Florida at Mile 714. A study in contrasts, the scenery begins its change from nearly deserted, white-capped sounds to the claustrophobic confines of the crowded “ditch” lined by mountainous condominiums. As you cross Cumberland Sound and the St. Marys River, the broad expanses of the marsh-bordered Georgia ICW give way to the narrower, more protected and more populated Florida route.
Florida’s Lower East Coast

Once you pass Vero Beach, you are positioned midway between the upper and lower reaches of the Indian River. As the river widens, the dredged channel begins to straighten out for the 13 miles south to Fort Pierce. The project depth along this stretch is 12 feet, but the controlling depth is 8 feet or less.

The Florida Keys

Extending in a sweeping southwesterly curve from Miami and the mainland, the Florida Keys offer the cruising boater an environment unlike other Waterway areas. In many ways, the Keys resemble the islands of the Bahamas. However, a main highway and a total of 18.94 miles of bridges tie them together.

Florida’s West Coast

Zoologically and geographically, Florida’s lower west coast differs substantially from the east. The cruising, too, is entirely different. The sophistication, glamour and luxury so prevalent on the east coast comes in more measured doses here. The pace is slower, the atmosphere more relaxed and the amenities somewhat more limited and spaced farther apart, but the cruising is superb.
Crossing the Gulf Stream

One of the problems the mariner encounters when crossing the Gulf Stream is how to allow for the set of the current. Fast boats have little trouble correcting the effect of the Gulf Stream, but boats with operating speeds of between 5 and 10 knots must make major corrections. Here are some corrected courses and estimated elapsed times at varying speeds under normal sea conditions.

This table should be used only as a guide, not as a reference. Varying wind and weather conditions will influence your passage.

This table should give a general idea of how long your crossing might take under normal conditions. The chart below depicts those rhumb line crossings noted in the tables and can be used in conjunction with your GPS heading.

- The Gulf Stream was arbitrarily figured at 001 degrees true, 2.5 knots for runs to Lake Worth Inlet and at 002 degrees true, 2.6 knots for all other runs.
- Variation used was 004.5 degrees west.
- Crossings to Lucaya extend beyond the Gulf Stream’s effect; thus, the rhumb line distance shown is that used in calculations for the current, followed by the rhumb line distance to complete the run without current to offset.
- Some routes to Lucaya may not be single, direct runs. They were computed to a point off Southwest Point on Grand Bahama Island, then to the buoy off Bell Channel.
- All runs are not the reverse of others. Miami to West End is calculated, but not West End to Miami because the Gulf Stream would be too much “on the nose.” Lake Worth Inlet to Bimini is not calculated for the same reason.
Florida's Upper East Coast

Cruising south on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW), boaters enter Florida at Mile 714 and Fernandina Beach. A study in contrasts, the scenery slowly begins its change from nearly deserted, white-capped sounds to the confines of the busy ICW lined by condominiums and beautiful homes. As you cross Cumberland Sound and the St. Marys River, the broad expanses of the marsh-bordered Georgia ICW slowly starts to give way to the narrower, more protected, and more populated Florida route. From here to Miami, 375 statute miles (326 nautical miles), navigational aids are plentiful, and marinas and urban centers proliferate as you continue south. Below St. Lucie Inlet, the coastline becomes truly tropical, with a profusion of palm trees and exotic flowers. Here, the bustling Gold Coast comes into its own, with burgeoning development and fewer anchorages than you might wish.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) project depths on the ICW are 12 feet from Norfolk, VA to Fort Pierce, FL, Mile 965; 10 feet to Miami, FL, Mile 1085; and 7 feet from Miami to Cross Bank across Florida Bay. Keep in mind that these are ideal depths, maintained as closely as possible by the USACE and the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND). (FIND receives state funding provided by taxes on waterfront property throughout Florida; thus, Florida has more money available for waterway maintenance than states where dredging is funded only with federal money.) The controlling depth—the least water depth actually available—is what counts. Current depths are reported by the USACE, by the Coast Guard (in the Local Notice to Mariners) and by Waterway Guide (www.waterway-guide.com) according to the latest information. The USACE and FIND schedule dredging of shoaling sections throughout the year, and what was too shallow last year may be 12 feet deep this year, and vice versa. Funds for dredging are still scarce; use caution and stay informed with the most up-to-date information.

You should also be aware that Florida requires a fishing license for both freshwater and saltwater fishing. The easiest way to get a license is online, but the licenses are available through sporting goods stores and are available at the county offices. Just do not wet your lines in Florida without it.

Dozens of bridges cross the ICW between Fernandina Beach and Miami, and many have restricted opening schedules. Some are restricted for different hours in specific months, some are closed during rush hours and some open on the quarter-hour, half-hour or even at 20 minutes and 40 minutes past the hour. To add to the confusion, the restrictions are constantly changing. Just because a bridge opened on a certain schedule last season does not mean it is still on that same schedule. (See the Skipper's Handbook section in the front of the Guide for...
Though the bridge information was correct at the time it was reported—after checking Coast Pilots, the Federal Register and Local Notice to Mariners—some bridge information here may have already changed by the time of publication. Check locally to verify bridge schedules before your transit.

Florida ICW bridges monitor VHF Channel 09, designated by the Federal Communications Commission as the “bridge tender channel.” ICW bridges in other states (except South Carolina and Georgia) still answer on VHF Channel 13, as do the locks in the Okeechobee. In Florida waters, it is a good idea to monitor both the bridge channel and VHF Channel 16—one on your ship’s radio and one on a handheld radio, if your main set doesn’t have a dual-watch capability—to monitor oncoming commercial traffic and communications with the bridge tender.

The proper horn signal for a bridge opening is one prolonged blast (four to six seconds) and one short blast (approximately one second). Bridge operators sound this signal when ready to open the bridge, and then usually the danger signal, five short blasts, when they are closing the bridge. The operator of each vessel is required by law to signal the bridge tender for an opening, even if another vessel has already signaled.

When using VHF, always call bridges by name and identify your vessel by name and type (such as sailing vessel or trawler) and whether you are traveling north or south. If you are unable to raise the bridge using VHF radio, use a horn signal. (For further information, see the Coast Pilot 4, Chapter Two: Title 33, Navigation Regulations, Part 117, Drawbridge Regulations.) If the gates do not come down and the bridge does not open after repeated use of the radio and the horn, call the Coast Guard and ask them to call the bridge tender on the land telephone line, or you may be able to call the bridge directly. Phone numbers for many bridges are given in the Skipper’s Handbook, although some of the numbers are not for the actual bridge tender, but for a central office that manages that bridge. Some bridges are not required to open in high winds. If you encounter a bridge that won’t open, it is prudent to drop the hook in a safe spot until the situation is resolved.

Most bridges carry a tide board to register vertical clearance at the center of the span. In Florida, however, the tide board figure (and the one noted on the chart) is generally for a point that is 5 feet toward the channel from the bridge tender. In the case of arched bridges, center channel clearance is frequently higher than the tide gauge registers. So check your chart and the tide boards and, unless it specifically notes that vertical clearance is given “at center,” you may be able to count on a little extra height at mid-channel, under the arch of the bridge. Some bridges may bear signs noting extra height at center in feet.

With a few exceptions, the ICW between Fernandina and Miami is protected from strong winds and is usually free of rough water. Tidal heights range from more than 7 feet at Fernandina to about 1.5 feet at Key West. Currents up to 4 knots may be encountered between Fernandina and Haulover Canal, especially at inlets. Lesser currents up to about 2 knots occur from Haulover Canal to Miami.

The Florida ICW is well marked and easy to follow. Keep track of your position by checking off markers on the chart as you pass. Take a little extra care where inlet, river and ICW channels meet; a few moments’ study of the chart ahead of time will prevent confusion in those areas where a buoy system changes direction.

Much of Florida’s eastern ICW is narrow and shoal-bordered, with scattered anchorages. As the population continues to increase, favorite anchorages are becoming more crowded. Good anchorages are still available if you plan ahead. Using an anchor light is important and required by law, and some places will give you a ticket for not having one on at night. Marina dockage faces much the same space shortage, so you should
reserve ahead or plan to arrive early at your chosen marina during the winter cruising season. Most dockmasters make every effort to find room for one more, and the friendliness of the boating community usually makes up for the crowded conditions.

In the past few years, the hurricanes that hit the Florida coastline caused damage from Fernandina Beach to Pensacola. Many marinas sustained significant damage. Most facilities have fully recovered while some have permanently closed or sold out to developers. Before cruising in Florida, call the marinas of your intended destinations and make reservations at least one day in advance.

Many retirees who have sold their homes are cruising the East Coast and the islands on a more or less full-time schedule. In Florida, governments at every level regard liveaboards as a problem. Florida law does not distinguish between a resident of the state who lives and works there, has their mail delivered to the marina, has the marina address on their driver’s license, votes there, and lives on a boat instead of a house versus a transient who lives and votes somewhere else but happens to want to winter in Florida on their boat.

The widely held, if unofficial view is that liveaboards rarely move their boats, pump bilge and black water overboard, allow boats to deteriorate, create nuisance problems for local residents and don’t pay property taxes. So the state, counties and local municipalities have acted to curtail liveaboards more and more aggressively. In Florida, merely describing yourself as a “liveaboard” changes your status under the law. Florida municipalities along the Intracoastal Waterway have adopted some restrictive anchoring regulations.

State law defines a liveboard boat as “any vessel used solely as a residence or any vessel represented as place of business, a professional or other commercial enterprise or a legal residence.” For cruisers, the operative phrase is represented as a legal residence. Maritime lawyers and Waterway Guide editors suggest that cruising boaters who might otherwise call themselves “liveaboards” should adopt the term “full-time cruisers” or just “cruisers.” That shifts the burden to the local authorities, forcing them to prove a boat is a residence.

Boating, however, injects about $18 billion into the Florida economy each year, so officials at the state level began to fret at the mounting publicity about anchoring disputes and police harassment. The state of Florida called “time out” and rewrote the law, forbidding the locals from restricting “non-liveaboards in navigation.” Cities like Ft. Lauderdale and Miami had imposed time constraints on anchoring and Vero Beach had flat out prohibited it within their waters. However, the State of Florida, after many lawsuits, passed legislation (327.02) that stated, “that local governmental authorities are prohibited from regulating the anchoring outside of such mooring fields of vessels other than liveaboard vessels...” That is not to say that municipalities may not try to enforce old regulations, but unless you are anchored within a designated mooring field, or you are impeding navigation, you are legal as long as you are a “cruising” and not a “liveaboard” vessel.

As boats compete for space and traffic increases along the ICW, local agencies have set up Idle-Speed/No-Wake Zones. Such speed limits protect shorelines, wildlife, shore facilities and berthed boats from wake damage and help cut down on boating accidents. Idle speed means putting the engine in gear with no increase in throttle, while taking care to maintain control of the vessel. Other areas have Slow-Speed Zones where a minimum wake is required, while others may have a limit on wake height. Read the signs. In crowded areas (such as Fort Lauderdale and Miami), especially on weekends and holidays when less experienced boaters are on the water,
Florida’s Upper East Coast

CHAPTER 1

FERNANDINA BEACH TO ST. JOHNS RIVER

Florida’s summer is tropical, with temperatures in the 90s and high humidity, usually accompanied by a refreshing sea breeze. June and September are the rainiest months, with lots of sunshine between showers. Mosquitoes and sandflies (no-see-ums) may be bothersome, particularly around swampy, wooded or mangrove-fringed areas. Insect screens are a necessity. Winds are generally light to moderate from the east, a phenomenon that makes crossing the Gulf Stream to the Bahamas comparatively easy.

Remember, though, that June 01 through November 01 is hurricane season for insurance reasons, but June 01 to November 30 is what NOAA considers to be the official hurricane season. Listen to the NOAA broadcasts on the weather stations of your VHF radio each day. The colorful graphics of local television news also can be useful, as well as the many available online weather sources.

Morning sea mist is common during the winter months along both coasts of central and northern Florida. Pea-soup “sea fog” can occur from fall through spring in northeast Florida any time warm calm weather settles over cool ocean waters. It appears as a low dark cloud over the ocean that gently rolls in to engulf the coast and sometimes lasts all day. It should be respected.

One of the biggest weather threats in Florida is lightning, which is a daily afternoon occurrence in the warmer months. That is how Florida earned its nickname as “The Lightning Capital of the World.” Refer to the Skipper’s Handbook section in the front of this Guide for a full treatment of this dangerous phenomenon.

QUICK FACT:

THE SOJOURNER PERMIT

A Sojourner Permit is required for any vessel owned by a non-Florida resident, registered in another state or federally documented, which stays in state waters for more than 90 days, or is used in Florida waters more than 183 days a year. The intent is to ensure that boats used in Florida are registered in Florida. Registering your boat in Florida is about tax revenue. The “use” component of Florida’s sales and use tax law provides uniform taxation of items purchased out of state but stored or used in Florida.

Registration of, and taxes on, boats brought to Florida are not required if you meet all of the following conditions:

• You are a legal resident of another state, and
• You have owned the boat 6 months or longer, and
• You have shown no intent to use the boat in Florida at or before the time of purchase, and
• The boat has been in use 6 months or longer within the taxing jurisdiction of another state

A vessel registered in another state may apply for a Sojourner Permit, which will allow the vessel to remain in Florida waters for an additional 60 days. Documented vessels from another state may also apply for a Sojourner Permit and will be granted an additional one year of use in Florida waters. The Sojourner Permit will extend the period of use for your boat in Florida waters, however when it expires you must leave Florida.

The Sojourner Permit is subject to much confusion, discussion and debate, as even the Florida officials poorly understand it and the rules and requirements are often mis-applied. The permit is a document issued by a county tax office. State law is subject to local interpretation depending on the tax district. Many county tax office employees do not know about the permit or the application of the rules. If you are going to keep a boat in Florida longer than the allotted 90 days, you will want to educate yourself in advance. Download and complete the forms, and be prepared to educate the attendant in the tax office when you show up with your application.

The permit required is HSMV 87244, “Application to Register Non Titled Vessels.” Refer to the Florida Department of Revenue’s “Sales and Use Tax on Boats” at http://dormy.florida.com/dor/forms/2011/ft800005.pdf for more information.
As you cross the St. Marys River and enter the state of Florida, you will notice a change in the characteristics of the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW). Georgia's long, open sounds and wide rivers gradually transform into a series of creeks and rivers connected by narrow land cuts, and you will see much more development. The ICW crosses several navigable inlets that no doubt attracted the early explorers. The first settlers built strategic, profitable ports along these protected inside waters. Today's cruisers use improved and connected passages that link many of these original settlements.

**NAVIGATION:** Use Chart 11489. The St. Marys entrance is deep, wide, jettied and well marked, but exercise caution when going through, as the jetties become submerged at mid-tide. It is a relatively easy entry and exit point, conveniently located just off the ICW. The short offshore jump from here to the St. Johns River at Mayport (near Jacksonville) or to the inlet at St. Augustine bypasses the sometimes shallow, shifting channels at Nassau Sound, and a northerly leg to St. Simons Island will cut out the meandering shallows found in Cumberland Sound and Jekyll Creek. Both the St. Johns and the St. Simons inlets do involve long entry channels and strong currents to return to the ICW; be careful, and try to plan exits and entries with a slack current or fair tide. (See Inlet Section at the front of this Guide for more information.)

The active Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base, located in Cumberland Sound north of the junction of the St. Marys River, continues to be the reason for frequent dredging and renumbering of buoys, beginning where the ICW joins the head of Cumberland Sound, and continuing to the ocean inlet. The channel is consequently quite deep and wide. The St. Marys Entrance Channel buoys, offshore of the entrance, were eliminated several years ago. The buoy that formerly was “10” is now flashing red buoy “2,” and every buoy in Cumberland Sound up to the head of Kings Bay was renumbered accordingly. ICW daybeacon numbering remains unchanged. Older charts may not show this change. Remember, the ICW daybeacons all have a yellow square or yellow triangle to designate it as an ICW marker.

When passing from Cumberland Dividings into Cumberland Sound, there is a tricky spot in the ICW channel just south of green daybeacon “75” (Mile 707.8 just east of Kings Bay). Heading south, alter course westward to favor red daybeacon “76,” leaving it close to starboard, and then continue south in the channel, avoiding the charted 4- to 5-foot-deep shoal to port. Also be sure to leave green daybeacon “79” well to port heading south. Here, the green markers will be left to starboard southbound out of Cumberland Sound to the Florida line until you pick up quick-flashing green buoy “1” in the Amelia River near Mile 715.

The ICW fronts the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base near Mile 708, and Navy security patrols carefully monitor traffic from both directions, especially when submarines are passing through Cumberland Sound and St. Marys Entrance. They will ask you to move outside of the channel if a submarine is in the vicinity. Patrol boats respond on VHF Channel 16. The submarines travel at high speeds in open water, creating very large wakes. For more information on security zones around U.S. Naval vessels, see the “Port Security Procedures” section found in the Skipper’s Handbook in the front of this Guide.

On the Amelia River at Mile 718 past the Fernandina Beach waterfront, swing wide between red daybeacons “14” and “16” and favor the north side between red daybeacons “16” and “18” due to 6-foot depths on the magenta line between the two. Red daybeacon “18” appears to be too far to the west but head toward it to give the shoal at the bend marked by flashing green “1” a wide berth, both above and below. After passing flashing green “1,” swing to the east side of the channel as indicated by the magenta line on the chart. The shoal making out here from the west...
side is about 6 feet or less at low water, as noted by our cruising editor in spring 2014.

**Fernandina Beach–Mile 716**

Florida’s northernmost city, Fernandina Beach, is on Amelia Island east of the ICW. Discovered in 1562 by the French explorer Jean Ribault, who named it Isle de Mai, the Spanish settled the island in 1567. They renamed it Santa Maria, established a mission and built Fort San Fernando. In 1702, the British captured the island and gave it the name that finally stuck: Amelia, in honor of King George II’s daughter. Amelia Island has enjoyed a colorful history. In its earlier years, pirates and smugglers used it as their stronghold, and during Prohibition, rum-runners continued the tradition. Eight different flags have flown over Amelia Island, among them the standard of the conquistadors and the French Huguenots, the British Union Jack and the Stars and Bars of the Confederacy. The island is the only place in the United States to have been claimed by so many governments.

**Dockage:** At Mile 715.3 is the entrance to Egans Creek (east of the Waterway), which leads to Tiger Point Marina, the first marina you will encounter as you enter Florida from the north and Amelia Island’s only natural deepwater marina. Tiger Point is also a full-service repair yard with approach depths of 7 to 8 feet. Diesel fuel (no gas) can be found at Port Consolidated and possibly transient dockage. It is usually best to dock alongside Port Consolidated’s fixed dock during higher tides. Many commercial vessels fuel up here, so there may be a wait.

The Fernandina Harbor Marina is located at Mile 716.7. Dredging of the interior part of this marina has transient dockage available on both sides of the floating face dock as well as all slips on the interior of the marina. It is still a good idea to call ahead for reservations, as this is a popular stop. Fernandina Harbor Marina also has pump-out service, a laundry facility, an on-site restaurant and restrooms/showers.

About a block from Fernandina Harbor Marina is a small store that carries limited staples, but serious grocery shopping at Winn-Dixie and Publix is about two miles away and requires a cab. The historic downtown district, next to the waterfront, has several restaurants, taverns and gift shops. The Tourist Information Center can provide a helpful map.

**Moorings:** Fernandina Harbor Marina has installed 20 moorings in the anchorage area across the channel from their marina. Seven are reserved for transient boaters who call ahead, while most are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The mooring fee includes dinghy dockage, use of the marina showers, laundry, trash disposal and free pump-out facilities at the dock.

**Anchorage:** The mooring area is marked with yellow buoys, but anchoring is still permitted outside the marked area. Anchored boats may use the dinghy dock and showers for a modest fee. If you choose to anchor, take care that your swinging circle does not extend into the channel or the mooring area. Also make sure that you have adequate scope on your anchor for the varying depths.
and sometimes fast-moving current. Caution is advised, as sunken boats have been present in this area in the past, and their debris may still be on the bottom. Several sunken boats have been observed outside of the channel between red daybeacons “14” and “16.”

Boats have been seen anchoring up the Amelia River in Bells River and also in Lanceford Creek. These anchorages should be approached with caution, as the chart contours show varied depths with snags and mud banks. The tidal range is greater than 7 feet, and tidal currents run up to 2 knots here. Although it is a relatively short dinghy ride to the marina dinghy dock, the anchorage and mooring areas are open to winds, wakes and considerable tidal current. Always display anchor lights, as commercial and other traffic can be heavy at all hours. Oyster Bay Harbor Marina is located off Lanceford Creek for those who prefer to tie up.

At Mile 719.5, entering the Amelia River and the ICW from the east, Jackson Creek provides 7-foot depths at mean low water, although its entrance is recently reported to have shoaled to 4 feet. Like all anchorages in the area, it has swift tidal currents. It is relatively narrow, and the north side should be favored to avoid the charted shoal. The Amelia River breaks off to the west of the ICW at Mile 719.8 with 6-to 7-foot depths at mean low water. Although it is preferred over Jackson Creek to the north, it is also quite narrow. Enter slowly with the depth sounder on. Be sure to lay out plenty of scope due to the swift currents, but also be aware of the swing room.

GOIN’ ASHORE:
FERNANDINA BEACH, FL

History: The downtown historic district, a 50-block section surrounding Centre Street, is an attractive and popular gingerbread seaport dating from the 1850s, when Florida’s first cross-state railroad ran from Fernandina to Cedar Key. (The railroad tracks still run past the waterfront with occasional traffic.) The area is listed on the National Historic Register and is worth a visit. The old train depot is a satellite office for the Chamber of Commerce and serves as the Tourist Information Center.

Points of Interest: With local attractions such as Fort Clinch State Park, Cumberland Island National Seashore, Amelia Island State Park and the island itself, Fernandina makes a pleasant stopover. Luxury resorts such as the Ritz Carlton and Amelia Island Plantation at the south end of the island draw tourists and conference attendees year-round, and new housing development in the area is attracting a wave of new residents. There is an area of strip malls and large stores of the popular home improvement, drug and department variety usually found in booming residential areas, just off-island, near Yulee. When exploring beyond the downtown Fernandina Beach area, however, you will need to arrange for transportation. Also, for golfers, Fernandina Beach Municipal Golf Course is located at 2800 Bill Melton Rd. (904-277-7370).

Shopping: For shopping, try Fantastic Fudge (218 Centre St., 904-277-4801), and Books Plus (107 Centre St.,
### Amelia River, FL

#### FERNANDINA BEACH AREA, FL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marina Name</th>
<th>Contact Info</th>
<th>Berths</th>
<th>16/11</th>
<th>4/50</th>
<th>7/8</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Dockage</th>
<th>Supplies</th>
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<td>1. Tiger Point Marina</td>
<td>904-277-2720</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td>4/50</td>
<td>7/8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>L50</td>
<td>30/50</td>
<td>S</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Port Consolidated (formerly Florida Petroleum Corp.)</td>
<td>904-753-4258</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3/13</td>
<td>50/30</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>3. Fernandina Harbor Marina</td>
<td>904-310-3300</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>16/68</td>
<td>60/120</td>
<td>18/8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>GD</td>
<td>GIMS</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>4. Oyster Bay Harbour Marina</td>
<td>904-261-4773</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5/76</td>
<td>15/6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Amelia Island Yacht Basin</td>
<td>904-277-4615</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>16/72</td>
<td>30/135</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>GD</td>
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<td>L50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Internet Access**

Wireless Internet Access

Waterway Guide Cruising Club Partner

(Information in the table is provided by the facilities.)

904-261-0303). If you are in need of a Post Office, it is located at the corner of Centre St. and S. 4th Street. Amelia Island Paint and Hardware (516 Ash St., 904-261-6604) not only has hardware but also some boating supplies and is planning to expand the marine section of the store in the future. Fred’s on S. 8th St. is a convenience store with everything from meat and vegetables to clothing and computers (904-261-7676). Winn-Dixie and Publix are about 2 miles away. There are a surprising number of shops and restaurants in this small town; too numerous to mention all of them, so take the time to explore all of the side streets.

**Dining:** Not far from the waterfront you will find the Palace Saloon (117 Centre St., 904-491-3332), Florida’s oldest tavern. For fine Italian cuisine try Ciao Bistro (302 Centre St., 904-20604311). Dine inside or out at España Restaurant and Tapas (22 S. 4th St., 904-261-7700), specializing in dishes from Spain and Portugal. Brett’s Waterway Cafe is located at Fernandina Harbor Marina. You can’t find a better view in town (1 S. Front St., 904-261-2660). 29 South is getting great reviews. Find them 2 blocks from the waterfront (29 S. 3rd St., 904-277-7919). An old favorite in town is Marina Seafood Restaurant, located just across the street from the marina (101 Centre St., 904-261-5310). For bakery sweets and treats, try the “Pecan Roll” on S. 8th St. (904-491-9815).

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### Points of Interest

1. Fort Clinch State Park
2. Good Times Books Plus
3. Fantastic Fudge
4. Amelia Island Paints and Hardware
5. Fred’s Super Dollar
6. Brett’s Waterway Cafe
7. Marina Seafood
8. Palace Saloon
9. 29 South
10. España Restaurant and Tapas
11. Ciao Bistro
12. Pecan Roll Bakery

### Fuel Report


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Reference the marina listing tables to see all the marinas in the area.
Fernandina Beach, FL

Corresponding chart(s) not to be used for navigation

- N 30° 40.200'
- W 081° 27.933'

- N 30° 17.800'
- W 081° 28.700'

- N 30° 20.200'
- W 081° 26.333'

- N 30° 30.200'
- W 081° 27.933'

FERNANDINA BEACH AREA. CHART 11489

Corresponding chart(s) not to be used for navigation
ICW: Mile 720 to Mile 735

NAVIGATION: Use Chart 11489. Just southwest of the Jackson Creek entrance to the Amelia River (near Mile 720), the ICW turns south and leaves the Amelia River for Kingsley Creek. The Kingsley Creek Railroad Swing Bridge (5-foot closed vertical clearance, normally open except for train traffic) and the Kingsley Creek Twin Bridges, fixed high-level highway bridges carrying U.S. 1A (65-foot vertical clearances), span the ICW at Mile 720.7. The high-level bridges here are unofficially considered to be among the “lowest” of the 65-foot bridges on the ICW; expect no more than 64 feet at high tide. If in doubt, check the clearance boards and go through at half tide. With the wide tidal range (7 feet), currents can be unexpectedly strong here.

Although the railroad bridge is usually open, trains hauling logs to the area’s two paper mills can delay your journey. The bridge gives no warning when it is going to close, and it does not have a VHF radio. If you are in this area and you hear train whistles, be aware that the bridge could close as you approach it. After passing beneath the bridges, you could see either a wide expanse of water or mud flats on either side of the channel, depending on the state of the tide.

Dockage: Amelia Island Yacht Basin, in a cove just north of the bridges to the east past green daybeacon “13,” is a full-service marina (including gas and diesel) with haul-out capabilities that welcomes transients. The narrow channel leading to the marina may look questionable, but locals report good depths, particularly after a dredging project a few years ago increased low-tide depths to 5.5 feet. Contact marina personnel on VHF Channel 16 for current channel depths. Amelia Island Yacht Basin is a good choice in strong winds when other marinas may be too exposed, but transient space (30 slips) fills quickly in bad weather, so call ahead. They also have an on-site restaurant The Galley Bar and Grille (904-261-7447).

Amelia City to Fort George River—Mile 725 to Mile 735

NAVIGATION: Use Chart 11489. South from the bridges to flashing red “14,” shoaling reduces depths along the west side of the channel to 5- to 8-foot depths. In the ICW channel at green daybeacon “21” and flashing red “24,” just north of the entrance to Alligator Creek, the narrow channel makes a sharp sweep to the east. Unwary skippers will find 2-foot depths outside of the channel at flashing red “24,” green daybeacon “25” and red daybeacon “26.” From red daybeacon “26” to flashing red “28,” favor the magenta line on the chart and avoid the shoaling and submerged pilings to starboard.

Just past flashing red “28” (about Mile 724), you will pass Amelia City, a small waterside hamlet tucked into a bend on the east side of the river. You will see bulkheads, some private docks and a few houses. Inside the marsh, past the bulkhead area, are more houses.

The shallowest part of the south Amelia River is between red daybeacon “34” and red daybeacon “36.” Although charted at 9 feet in May 2014, there is around 6 feet of water at extreme low tide. Favor the green side between red daybeacon “34” and flashing green “37.” Head toward red daybeacon “36” and follow the magenta line, rounding red daybeacon “38” and green daybeacon “39.” The charted 7- to 8-foot depths are the best you will get through here. Follow the magenta line on your chart carefully around red daybeacon “42,” then favor green daybeacon “43” rather than flashing red “44.” The charted red daybeacon at the entrance to the cut just north of Mile 730 has been renumbered as “46A,” according to the 39th edition of the chart dated spring 2014.

Since this is such a changeable area, remember to be on the alert for shoaling and the possibility that there may be additional aids in place when you make passage here. New charts do not have a magenta line drawn along the route across Nassau Sound. The current may be very strong, so watch your set and drift; slow boats may have to crab across. There is a fixed bridge (15-foot vertical clearance) across Nassau Sound’s ocean inlet, at the southern end of Amelia Island.

Anchorage: As the chart clearly shows, the ICW channel hugs the Amelia Island shore just south of Amelia City. There is an anchorage just north of Mile 726 off the entrance to Alligator Creek. Enter by turning to the northeast between red daybeacon “36” and flashing green “37.” However, be careful; its entrance is shallow, carrying only 6-foot depths at low water, and then increasing to 8-foot depths off Alligator Creek. Tugboats have been observed taking a shortcut through this anchorage area at high tide.

LOWER AMELIA ISLAND

The lower portion of Amelia Island is home to a large and lovely resort community, Amelia Island Plantation. The resort still hosts several major annual tennis tournaments. No dockage is available on the premises, however. The closest place to stay is Amelia Island Yacht Basin near Mile 721, described earlier. The island is also the site of an oceanfront Ritz-Carlton Hotel.