Virgin Passage and Sonda de Vieques

NOAA Chart 25650

A reduced-scale NOAA nautical chart for small boaters
When possible, use the full-size NOAA chart for navigation.

- Complete, reduced-scale nautical chart
- Print at home for free
- Convenient size
- Up-to-date with Notices to Mariners
- Compiled by NOAA’s Office of Coast Survey, the nation’s chartmaker
What are Nautical Charts?
Nautical charts are a fundamental tool of marine navigation. They show water depths, obstructions, buoys, other aids to navigation, and much more. The information is shown in a way that promotes safe and efficient navigation. Chart carriage is mandatory on the commercial ships that carry America’s commerce. They are also used on every Navy and Coast Guard ship, fishing and passenger vessels, and are widely carried by recreational boaters.

What is a BookletChart™?
This BookletChart is made to help recreational boaters locate themselves on the water. It has been reduced in scale for convenience, but otherwise contains all the information of the full-scale nautical chart. The bar scales have also been reduced, and are accurate when used to measure distances in this BookletChart. See the Note at the bottom of page 5 for the reduction in scale applied to this chart.

Whenever possible, use the official, full scale NOAA nautical chart for navigation. Nautical chart sales agents are listed on the Internet at http://www.NauticalCharts.NOAA.gov.

This BookletChart does NOT fulfill chart carriage requirements for regulated commercial vessels under Titles 33 and 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Notice to Mariners Correction Status
This BookletChart has been updated for chart corrections published in the U.S. Coast Guard Local Notice to Mariners, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency Weekly Notice to Mariners, and, where applicable, the Canadian Coast Guard Notice to Mariners. Additional chart corrections have been made by NOAA in advance of their publication in a Notice to Mariners. The last Notices to Mariners applied to this chart are listed in the Note at the bottom of page 7. Coast Pilot excerpts are not being corrected.


(Selected Excerpts from Coast Pilot)
The N coast of Puerto Rico from San Juan to Cabo San Juan trends in an E by S direction for 30 miles. The coast is indented by coves with reefs and rocky islets extending 0.5 to a mile offshore; breakers show at many of the reefs. Dangers will be avoided by staying 2 miles or more offshore.

Punta Vacia Talega, 12 miles E of San Juan, is a 60-foot-high ridge with low bluffs at the water’s edge. Rio Grande de Loiza, 14 miles E of San Juan, shows as a wide gap in the trees. It is the largest river in Puerto Rico but cannot be entered because of the sandbar across the entrance.

A rocky patch with a least depth of 2½ fathoms is 1.5 miles N of Punta Picua, 21 miles E of San Juan. The patch is marked by a lighted buoy.

Los Cucarachas, a group of rocks up to 15 feet high, a mile N of Cabo San Juan, lie at the NW end of the chain. A light is shown from a skeleton tower, with a green and white diamond-shaped daymark, on a cylindrical concrete base on one of the rocks. A shoal with depths of 14 to 30 feet extends 0.9 mile NW of the light and a rock awash is 0.2 mile from the light in the same direction.

Pasaje de San Juan, between Cabo San Juan and Las Cucarachas, is 0.7 mile wide and has depths of 32 to 65 feet. The passage is one of the principal channels leading into Sonda de Vieques.

Los Farallones, a group of rugged bare rocks 30 feet high, are 0.8 mile E of Las Cucarachas. Deep water is close to the N and W sides of the rocks, but a shoal with several bare rocks extends to Cayo Icacos. A reef on which the sea breaks is 0.2 mile S of Los Farallones and continues about 0.4 mile W from the NW end of Cayo Icacos. The W end of the reef should be given a berth of 300 yards or more.

Cayo Icacos, 1.3 miles E of Cabo San Juan and the second largest of the chain, is a 40-foot hummocky island. A small wharf and buildings of a former limestone quarry are near the SW point of the island. A prominent tower is in about the center of the island.

Sonda de Vieques extends from the E coast of Puerto Rico to Virgin Passage between the chain of islands and reefs including Isla de Culebra on the N and Isla de Vieques on the S. The sound is about 20 to 22 miles long and from 8 to 15 miles wide. The E part is clear with depths of 7 to 17 fathoms, except for Bajos Grampus SE of Isla de Culebra. The W part has numerous shoals and reefs extending as much as 8 miles off the E coast of Puerto Rico.

A danger area for aerial gunnery and bombing extends about 6.5 miles N and 4 miles SW of Isla de Culebra. (See 334.1460, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.) In 2007, it was reported that this area is no longer used for bombing and gunnery target exercises.

Explosives anchorages are in Sonda de Vieques N of Isla de Vieques. (See 110.1 and 110.245, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.) In 2009, it was reported this area is no longer used for Naval weapons practices.

Bajo Blake, 2 miles E of Isla Palominos, is 0.4 mile in diameter and has a least depth of 20 feet. The S side is marked by a buoy.

Bajo Hodgkins, 7 miles SE of Isla Palominos, is a narrow 0.8-mile-long ridge with a least depth of 27 feet.

The area between Bajo Hodgkins and the E coast of Puerto Rico is full of shoals and should be used only with local knowledge. Many of the shoals have rocks awash or reefs on which the sea breaks while others have rocks that show 1 to 15 feet.

Anchorages.—Deep-draft vessels can find good anchorage in 28 to 60 feet during ordinary weather in Rada Fajardo, in the NW end of Sonda de Vieques between Cabo San Juan and Isla Palominos.

Isla de Vieques, 6 miles off the nearest point of the E coast of Puerto Rico, forms the S side of Sonda de Vieques. It is 18 miles long E and W and 3.5 miles wide near its middle. A range of hills extends the entire length of the island with a prominent hill at each end—Monte Pirata near its W end and Cerro Matias Jaloobre, 3 miles from the E end. The island is wooded in places, especially its E half and around Monte Pirata.

Naval restricted areas extend 1,500 yards offshore around the W part of the island. (See 334.1480, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.) In 2009, it was reported this area is no longer used for Naval weapons practices.

Explosives anchorages are off the N and W coasts of the island.
For more information on aids to navigation, including those on Western Rivers, please consult the latest USCG Light List for your area. These volumes are available online at http://www.navcen.uscg.gov.
Note: Chart grid lines are aligned with true north.
HURRICANES AND TROPICAL STORMS

Hurricanes, tropical storms, and other major storms may cause considerable damage to marine structures, aids to navigation, and moored vessels, resulting in submerged debris in unknown locations.

Charted soundings, crane depths, and shoreline may not reflect actual conditions following these storms. Fixed aids to navigation may have been damaged or destroyed. Buoyage may have been moved from their charted positions, damaged, sunk, or otherwise made inoperable. Mariners should notify the position or operation of an aid to navigation.

Wrecks and submerged objects may have been displaced from their locations. Pipelines may have become uncovered or moved.

Mariners are urged to exercise extreme caution and are requested to report aids to navigation, discrepancies, and hazards to navigation to the nearest United States Coast Guard unit.

CAUTION

Limitations on the use of radio signals as aids to navigation can be found in the U.S. Coast Guard Light Lists and National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency Navigation Chart 117. Radio navigation-aids to commercial broadcasting stations are subject to error and should be used with caution. Station posi

Cuban mile equivalents shown.

CAUTION

This chart has been corrected from the Notice to Mariners (NTM) published weekly by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and the Local Notice to Mariners (LNM) issued periodically by each U.S. Coast Guard district in the dates shown in the lower left-hand corner. Chart updates corrected from Notice to Mariners published within the dates shown in the lower left-hand corner are available at nauticalcharts.noaa.gov.

NOAA encourages users to submit inquiries, discrepancies, or comments about this chart at http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/site/Contact.htm.
VHF Marine Radio channels for use on the waterways:
Channel 6 – Inter-ship safety communications.
Channel 9 – Communications between boats and ship-to-coast.
Channel 13 – Navigation purposes at bridges, locks, and harbors.
Channel 16 – Emergency, distress and safety calls to Coast Guard and others, and to initiate calls to other vessels. Contact the other vessel, agree to another channel, and then switch.
Channel 22A – Calls between the Coast Guard and the public. Severe weather warnings, hazards to navigation and safety warnings are broadcast here.
Channels 68, 69, 71, 72 and 78A – Recreational boat channels.

Getting and Giving Help — Signal other boaters using visual distress signals (flares, orange flag, lights, arm signals); whistles; horns; and on your VHF radio. You are required by law to help boaters in trouble. Respond to distress signals, but do not endanger yourself.

Distress Call Procedures
• Make sure radio is on.
• Select Channel 16.
• Press/Hold the transmit button.
• Clearly say: “MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY.”
• Also give: Vessel Name and/or Description; Position and/or Location; Nature of Emergency; Number of People on Board.
• Release transmit button.
• Wait for 10 seconds — If no response Repeat MAYDAY call.

HAVE ALL PERSONS PUT ON LIFE JACKETS!

All Hazards NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service office. NWR broadcasts official Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/

Quick References
Nautical chart related products and information — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov
Interactive chart catalog — http://www.charts.noaa.gov/InteractiveCatalog/nrnc.shtml
Chart and chart related inquiries and comments — http://ocsdata.ncdc.noaa.gov/idsr/inquiry.aspx?frompage=ContactUs
Chart updates (LNM and NM corrections) — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/mcd/updates/LNM_NM.html
Coast Pilot online — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/nsd/cpdownload.htm
Tides and Currents — http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov
Marine Forecasts — http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/home.htm
National Data Buoy Center — http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/
NowCoast web portal for coastal conditions — http://www.nowcoast.noaa.gov/
National Hurricane Center — http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/
Pacific Tsunami Warning Center — http://ptwc.weather.gov/
Contact Us — http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/staff/contact.htm

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This Booklet chart has been designed for duplex printing (printed on front and back of one sheet). If a duplex option is not available on your printer, you may print each sheet and arrange them back-to-back to allow for the proper layout when viewing.