



December 2000

Greetings from aboard the sailing vessel ***Nine of Cups***:

For a long time we've dreamed of sailing off into the sunset and this was the year! We "sold up" and "sailed off". Let us share a few of the highlights...

- We bought a sailboat in March. After nearly a year of looking, we found her in Galveston, Texas. The "Nine of Cups" is a 45' cutter made by Liberty.
- David retired in mid-April. We sold off house, cars and furniture and moved on board the boat in late April and spent the next month getting her ready to set off.
- My sister, Lin, volunteered (she'd never admit to this) to handle our mail forwarding and bill paying.
- Renaming a boat is a serious matter. We "denamed" her from her original name and "renamed" her "Nine of Cups" in the best nautical traditions in order to appease the gods of wind and sea. David's Mom even came down from Denver to celebrate with us. "Nine of Cups" is the wish-come-true card in tarot.
- We set sail in May across the Gulf of Mexico...about 700 miles and our first major passage. It took about a week and we were only seasick the first three days!
- Ports of call have included St. Petersburg (we visited my Mom & Dad), Key West, Amelia Island, Beaufort (NC), Annapolis, Mystic Seaport, Nantucket, Provincetown, Salem, Gloucester, Portland, Camden and Mt. Desert Island.
- Most notable of all was coming through Hell Gate in New York City, a sometimes-difficult passage. We made it without a problem and were rewarded at the end with the most magnificent view of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor.
- Midst our travels we've seen dolphins, whales and seals. We saw the parade of Tall Ships entering New London harbor, a pirate ship battle in Beaufort, NC and a Civil War battle re-enactment in Charleston, SC.
- We've acquired lots of new skills and have lots more to learn. Every time we handle a situation which we've anticipated with dread, we refer to it as "slaying the dragons". It's never good to feel too confident, however, because just when we think we've become accomplished at something and begin to brag a bit, we're quickly humbled by the boat or the sea.
- We're currently in Charleston, SC planning to head south right after the holidays. Not sure of where yet, but we know it will be warm and sunny.
- We maintain a website which we update monthly. If you'd like to be notified when we update, just drop us an e-mail and we'll include you on our e-mailing list.

We thank God for our health and good fortune and wish you a Happy New Year.

Marcie & David

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