



RCC PILOTAGE FOUNDATION

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[Home](#)>Passage Planning Guides>Mediterranean>Route 9

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The Pilotage Foundation is grateful to John Lawson who was the author of all our Passage Planning routes flowing out from the South Coast of England to Iceland, The Baltic, the Atlantic Islands and the Mediterranean.

This Route was updated by John Marchment in 2008

Route 9

For text version, see below

For interactive Google Map version,

click on pin. 
To return to text version, press 'back' button on your browser.

Gibraltar to all Mediterranean destinations

This first Route 9 section is common to all the Mediterranean lettered routes and should be printed before selecting the desired route (i.e click the desired lettered “9” route on the map or list of routes)

- 9A** Gibraltar to ADRIATIC, CORINTH and CAPE MALEA via BALEARICS, SOUTH SARDINIA and STRAITS OF MESSINA, also to MALTA via SARDINIA AND TUNISIA.
- 9B** Gibraltar to BALEARICS, SOUTH OF FRANCE, CORSICA, NORTH SARDINIA and NORTH WEST ITALY
- 9C** Gibraltar to CAPE MALEA and CORINTH via NORTH AFRICA and MALTA
- 9D** CAPE MALEA and CORINTH to DARDENELLES (4 Aegean routes)
- 9E** MALTA TO ISRAEL via CAPE MALEA, SOUTHERN CYCLADES, TURKEY and CYPRUS.
- 9F** MALTA to CYPRUS, ISRAEL and PORT SAID via NORTHERN CRETE.

An overall distance table is given below. Each section has a more detailed distance table between ports

Distance Table

	GIBRALTAR	BALEARICS	ANTIBES	GENOA	Sardinia	Messina	MALTA	Corinth	Cape Malea	Dard'iles C.	Dard'iles M.	MARMARIS	Limassol	ISRAEL	Port Said
GIBRALTAR	***	460	865	942	747	982	1010	1362	1380	1612	1650	1760	2010	2030	1940
BALEARICS(Palma)	460	***	260	355	255	490	630	870	888	1120	1138	1300	1550	1710	1610
ANTIBES	865	260	***	100	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
GENOA	942	355	100	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Sardinia(Cagliari)	747	255	***	***	***	235	330	615	633	865	903	1000	1220	1380	1310
Messina	982	490	***	***	320	***	***	380	398	630	668	670	900	1060	980
MALTA	1010	630	***	***	330	***	***	450	420	700	690	680	930	1020	930
Corinth	1362	870	***	***	700	370	450	***	***	250	***	300	540	680	610
Cape Malea	1380	888	***	***	710	390	420	***	***	***	270	250	510	600	510
Dardenelles(Corinth)	1630	1120	***	***	950	620	700	250	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Dardenelles(C.Malea)	1650	1138	***	***	980	660	690	***	270	***	***	***	***	***	***
MARMARIS	1760	1300	***	***	1000	670	680	300	250	***	***	***	280	490	400
Limassol	2010	1550	***	***	1220	900	930	540	510	***	***	280	***	150	200
ISRAEL(Haifa)	2030	1710	***	***	1380	1060	1020	680	600	***	***	490	150	***	***
Port Said	1940	1610	***	***	1310	980	930	610	510	***	***	400	200	***	***

Distances are direct between any two ports in different columns. Interpolation of distances between ports in the same column will not necessarily be correct.

Weather, sea states and currents

Will be found in each individual lettered route

WARNING

Mediterranean summer weather has become unsettled in recent years and storms with winds of force 9 or more, albeit of short duration have become more frequent. These are often localised and not mentioned in the forecast especially if occurring well out to sea. Mariners should always be prepared for such weather especially when settled summer conditions make such occurrence seem unlikely.

Formalities

Further details of formalities may be found in RYA "Foreign Cruising Vol 2. C2/04."

The following documents should be on board and produced on demand in all the countries on the routes:-

- Original Certificate of Registry or Small Ships Registry Document
- An RYA or International Certificate of Competence, at least for the Skipper.
- Evidence of insurance for the vessel and third party liabilities, original and not a copy. Italy and Greece require certificates in Italian or Greek.
- Passports for all on board.
- The ship's radio licence.

The following will often save time:-

A crew list with passport numbers.

A check-off list of information often demanded by authorities in the language of the country; some Pilot Books have examples of these.

France

EU regulations apply

Spain

The documents above should be taken to the *Capitanía* or the Marina office on first entry into the country and produced subsequently on demand.

Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya.

Visas for all crew are needed for Algeria and Libya; a visa may be needed for non-EU citizens and for stays of more than 3 months in Tunisia which may be obtained on arrival; no visas required in Morocco. In all countries the vessel will be visited at every port and the documents requested. Morocco is conducting a vigorous campaign against drug smuggling and all yachts are suspect.

Italy

EU regulations apply. Insurance certificate in Italian.

Malta

Although Malta is in the EU, clearance is still being enforced on yachts of other EU countries; this is expected to cease shortly.

Albania

Check with Foreign Office before visiting. Visas not required for EU nationals but still residual dangers and difficulties; yachts are treated as commercial vessels which is expensive.

Montenegro

Visas not required; one of two ports of entry must be used to arrive or depart; cruising permit and light dues about £100; usual documentation; currency is the euro.

Croatia

Visas not required; one of many ports of entry must be used to arrive or depart; a cruising permit costs £135; usual documentation plus crew list and equipment list with serial numbers. Clearance must be effected before seeking a berth.

Slovenia

Visas not required; one of three ports of entry must be used to arrive or depart; small cruising fee may be charged; usual documentation.

Greece

EU regulations now apply and Transit Logs are not required for EU registered yachts but a lot of paperwork has replaced them; EU yachts currently have to pay 30 euro entry fee and non-EU yachts considerably more for a Transit Log. Foreign yachts have been subjected to periodic taxes or laws and the current state of play should be checked (viz Law 2743 introduced in 2000) with the RYA or the National Tourist Organisation for Greece in London. Greece is now being taken before the European Court for these impositions. Whatever the situation, these laws are often applied unevenly and some ports of entry are better than others. Frequent voyages between Greece and Turkey are best avoided.

Turkey

Yachts must clear in and out of the country at designated ports of entry (shown in the text) and obtain a Transit Log costing US\$30 and paid for in hard currency. UK citizens require visas which cost £10 obtainable at place of entry. Most marinas – from Istanbul to Antalya – will assist with the formalities and provide advice.

Cyprus

The same formalities for Greece generally apply to Greek Cyprus, and the entry requirements for Turkish Cyprus as for Turkey; Turkish (Northern) Cyprus is not recognised internationally and sailing between Greek and Turkish Cyprus is forbidden.

Syria

Visas needed, best obtainable in London. Onerous formalities and an agent may be necessary or the Syrian Yacht Club may help. Entry only through Latakia.

Lebanon

Visas can be obtained on arrival. Entry preferable through Jounieh.

Israel

Visas are not required for UK passport holders. The authorities should be asked NOT to stamp passports; this can cause problems on entry to other countries.

Egypt

The documents above will be required at Port Said to clear in and through the Suez Canal.

It would be prudent to check all these countries requirements, with the possible exceptions of France and Spain, before making any commitment to visit. Most Pilot Books and the RYA booklets numbers C1/04 and C2/04 contain all these details but later legislation may have been enacted. A check through the RYA or the countries' UK Consulates is advisable.

Search and rescue

The routes are covered by 11 MRCCs at Almeria, Cabo de Nao, Tarragona, La Garde(Toulon),Roma, Palermo,Rijeka(Croatia), Piraeus, Cyprus, Alexandria and Haifa. There are many MRSCs and sub stations attached to give full DSC coverage with the following exceptions:-

- (a) There is no VHF DSC coverage from Ceuta to Tunis along the north African coast.
- (b) There are gaps in the VHF DSC coverage between the Balearics and Sardinia, Sardinia and Sicily/Malta and Italy and Greece.
- (c) There is no MF (or VHF) DSC coverage on the north African coast from about 6°E to 9°E and from 11°E to 21°E along the Libyan coast.
- (d) Malta is not on DSC but keeps watch on Ch 16.
- (e) Slovenia and Croatia have full DSC coverage and also watch Ch16; Montenegro and Albania only watch Ch 16.

Some of these gaps are partially filled by the busy shipping lanes running along the north African coast and from the Malta Channel to Cape Malea and Port Said.

Navtex and weather forecasts

All routes are covered by Navtex stations at Tarifa(G), Valencia(X), La Garde(W), Cagliari(T),Rome(R), Augusta(V), Split(Croatia)(Q), Malta(O), Kerkyra(K), Iraklion(H), Limnos(L), Izmir(I), Antalya(F), Cyprus(M), Haifa(P), Alexandria(N), and Ismailia(X).

There are still many coastal radio stations in Italy and Greece with fewer in Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Turkey and Cyprus. These countries transmit frequent weather forecasts from them and details may be found in Admiralty Maritime Communications (UK and Mediterranean) NP 289 and RYA Weather Forecasts G5/04. Forecasts may be obtained from a number of web sites; the one for Greek waters is http://www.poseidon.ncmr.gr/weather_forecast.html. For the Adriatic SSB forecasts on 2579kHz from Bari. Weatherfax – Offenbach, Hamburg.

Fuel and domestic gas

Gibraltar

Duty-free fuel available so it is worth leaving here with full tanks.

Spain

See details in Routes 7 or 8. As any fuelling stops on this leg will be in marinas it is unlikely that duty-free Gasoleo B can be obtained, but it can in Ceuta and Melilla.

France

Fuel is duty-paid.

Italy

Fuel is duty-paid but generally cheaper than in the rest of Europe.

Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia

Available in the few marinas and most fishing ports by pump but only by can in the smaller places; relatively cheap.

Malta

Duty-free fuel in quantity with notice; duty-paid readily obtainable.

Slovenia, Croatia and Montenegro

Duty-paid fuel available in most marinas but cans needed to carry in other places.

Greece

The newer marinas have fuelling berths and pumps as do some harbours, otherwise it will be delivered by tanker. Duty-paid fuel only for EU yachts; for non-EU yachts with a Transit Log duty-free fuel is available in some ports.

Turkey

Fuelling berths in the larger marinas, by can or tanker elsewhere; duty-paid but relatively cheap.

Cyprus

As for Greece, or Turkey in Northern Cyprus.

Domestic gas

Camping Gas is widely available in all countries and it is probably worth changing to this although Calor cylinders can still be charged in Turkey, Croatia, Malta and Greece. The alternative is to change to that country's cylinders and valves if staying there for any time – provided the bottles fit the stowage.

Selection of route

It is around 2000 miles from Gibraltar to Cyprus, Israel and Port Said. The direct route via Malta along the northern shores of Algeria (570M) and Libya (720M) will only find favour with the hardier cruising yachtsman who has no need to stop for provisions or fuel over these distances. At present Algeria is back on limits but makes little or no provision for yachts and it will be a year or two before they are accepted without much wearisome bureaucracy and in safety. There are a number of suitable ports but the need would be pressing to use them.

Sanctions against Libya were lifted in 1999 and in theory any visit there should be trouble free. However visas for all on board must be obtained in advance from the Libyan People's Bureau in London; restrictions by European standards in Libya are onerous and information about the ports are sparse, except from the Admiralty Mediterranean Pilot Vol V, NP 49.

Brief details of this direct route are, however included in the hope that conditions will improve.

The popular route is from Gibraltar via either the Straits of Messina or Malta. Going via the Balearics and/or southern Sardinia adds little to the total either proceeding via Messina or the Malta Channel. The use of the Corinth Canal saves no significant distance over going south about round Cape Malea, even if proceeding NE to the Dardenelles. However the use of the Straits of Messina rather than Malta will be worthwhile if going anywhere N of Corinth in the Ionian, or N up the Adriatic.

It is 450M up the Adriatic to Venice or Trieste from the Straits of Otranto; the Croatian and Slovenian coasts offer a most attractive cruising area but the east Italian coast has few harbours of refuge and these tend to be industrially or commercially oriented.

Cruising E of mainland Greece in the Aegean is rich with choice of islands although there are no ports of any size on the S coast of Crete. Northern (Turkish) Cyprus can only be visited when outward bound from mainland Turkey.

Syria only has one yacht harbour or marina, Lebanon two. The present security situation in Israel does not encourage visits but there are four marinas of which Haifa is probably the best, with Ashkelon the most

convenient if going from or to the Canal. Port Said is included for those using the Suez Canal although there are yacht facilities 130M to the W at Alexandria.

The passage to the south of France, some 750M from Gibraltar can be along the Spanish and French coasts or via the Balearics, the latter giving a 200M open sea crossing from Minorca. North west Italy can be reached via the Balearics, Straits of Bonifacio and Corsica with the longest hop of 250M from Minorca to Corsica.

Routeing recommendations

Southern route along N. African coast

This is a possibility if going E especially in a low powered vessel as the current runs E, accelerating up to 1½ - 2 knots at either end. However there are 570 miles of Algerian coastline to pass and the summer winds tend to blow from the E during the days. There is no virtue in using this route if bound N of Corinth up the Ionian or Adriatic.

Northern route via Balearics and/or Sardinia

The preferred route either way. Keep offshore between Cabo de Gata and Balearics if bound NE, inshore if bound SW to use the current. The disadvantage of this route is the chronic overcrowding now in all Spanish marinas on the S and E coasts in the high season and the difficulty in finding a berth in any port even overnight. The overcrowding extends also to the Balearics but there are more alternative anchorages here.

Use Straits of Messina if bound N of Corinth up the Adriatic. Once N of Albania most will favour further progress up the Croatian and Slovenian shores, although when coming SE and then W round the S end of Italy, the current favours the E Italian coast.

The choice of route between Straits of Messina or via Malta is equally balanced if going to Corinth or the south or in the reverse direction.

Greece to/from Turkey or Dardenelles

See the sections below. There is infinite choice of stopovers.

Greece to/from Cyprus

There is slightly less distance to go via Cape Malea, thence along the N coast of Crete where there are some ports.

Malta to Israel

Over 1000 miles of open sea although S Cyprus could provide some relief 150M from Haifa; also it is only a small diversion to pass along the N coast of Crete.

Malta to Port Said

Only a diversion to the N coast of Crete will provide a break in the 930 miles although there are yacht facilities at Alexandria 130M to the W of the Canal.

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