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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 9C

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Gibraltar to Corinth and Cape Malea via north coast of Africa and Malta

SEE INITIAL ROUTE 9 FOR FORMALITIES, SEARCH AND RESCUE, NAVTEX AND WEATHER FORECASTS, FUEL AND DOMESTIC GAS AND ROUTEING RECOMMENDATIONS

Weather and sea states See **Warning** in Route 9

Gibraltar to Oran

The wind blows either E or W in the Straits of Gibraltar and this will be noticed as far E as Melilla. Further to the E there is often too little wind to sail in the summer. The next fuel stop must be kept in mind.

Oran to Cap Bon

In the summer steady easterlies up to 20 knots blow along the coast during the day in a zone up to 25 miles offshore. They often die at sunset so passages westward can either be made well offshore or at night. At night there can be strong southerly sea breezes near the shore.

Cape Bon to Malta

The coastal régime of summer easterlies changes as the Malta Channel is entered and become predominantly NW.

Malta to Greece

The predominant wind direction is from the N or NE becoming NW as the Greek coast is approached.

Seas in the Mediterranean tend to be shorter than in the Atlantic but can be no less unpleasant. They tend to become higher and more irregular off headlands and the steady E set along the north African coast against the prevailing E winds in the summer does not make them easier.

Swell is created by any depression crossing the area or strong winds. A feature of the spring or late autumn in the Mediterranean is a low and confused swell resulting from various disturbances mainly in the N

part of the basin. This is present until a long spell of settled summer weather has set in.

Sea temperature along the coast is from 25°C to 26°C.

Fog is rare in the area but may often be encountered round Cape Bon; the southern *sirocco* brings sand from the Sahara and reduces visibility for the usually short time that it blows.

Currents

The surface flow in to the Mediterranean reaches its peak in the Straits of Gibraltar at up to 2 knots E. This eases off but continues thus along the north African coast accelerating up to 1½ knots SE through the Malta Channel. Currents are variable and insignificant between Malta and Greece.

Tides and tidal streams

Must be reckoned with in the Straits of Gibraltar where the range is 0.9m but can be discounted E of Melilla.

Ports on the route

Port names in capital letters indicate a port with major marina facilities including slipping with all kinds of repair, electricity and water on the pontoons with the resources of a town or city nearby. Other ports will have some of these facilities but with any omissions noted.

Port categories

Ports are categorised for their accessibility in all weathers and the security of shelter.

- A Port of refuge in storms, complete shelter.
- A* Qualified storm port of refuge and haven.
- B Port accessible in gales, good shelter
- B* Qualified gale port of refuge and haven
- C Entry subject to wind and swell conditions with some shelter inside.

Distance Table

| | GIBRALTAR | Al Hoceima | Melilla | Ghazaouet | Mostaganem | Sidi Ferruch | Bejaia | Stora/Skikda | Annaba | Tabarka | Bizerte | Pantelleria | MALTA | Corinth | Cape Malea |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|---------|-----------|------------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|---------|---------|-------------|-------|---------|------------|
| GIBRALTAR | *** | 90 | 150 | 205 | 310 | 460 | 575 | 665 | 720 | 760 | 825 | 930 | 1010 | 1460 | 1435 |
| Al Hoceima(Morocco) | 90 | *** | 60 | 115 | 220 | 370 | 485 | 575 | 630 | 670 | 735 | 840 | 920 | 1370 | 1345 |
| Melilla(Spain) | 150 | 60 | *** | 55 | 160 | 310 | 425 | 515 | 570 | 610 | 675 | 780 | 865 | 1315 | 1290 |
| Ghazaouet(Algeria) | 205 | 115 | 55 | *** | 105 | 255 | 370 | 460 | 515 | 555 | 620 | 725 | 815 | 1265 | 1240 |
| Mostaganem(Algeria) | 310 | 220 | 160 | 105 | *** | 150 | 265 | 355 | 410 | 450 | 515 | 620 | 715 | 1165 | 1140 |
| Sidi Ferruch(Algeria) | 460 | 370 | 310 | 255 | 150 | *** | 115 | 205 | 260 | 300 | 365 | 470 | 570 | 1020 | 995 |
| Bejaia(Algeria) | 575 | 485 | 425 | 370 | 265 | 115 | *** | 90 | 145 | 185 | 230 | 335 | 440 | 890 | 865 |
| Stora/Skikda(Algeria) | 665 | 575 | 515 | 460 | 355 | 205 | 90 | *** | 55 | 95 | 160 | 265 | 370 | 820 | 795 |
| Annaba(Algeria) | 720 | 630 | 570 | 515 | 410 | 260 | 145 | 55 | *** | 40 | 105 | 210 | 325 | 775 | 750 |
| Tabarka(Tunisia) | 760 | 670 | 610 | 555 | 450 | 300 | 185 | 95 | 40 | *** | 65 | 170 | 290 | 740 | 715 |
| Bizerte(Tunisia) | 825 | 735 | 675 | 620 | 515 | 365 | 230 | 160 | 105 | 65 | *** | 105 | 230 | 680 | 655 |
| Pantelleria(Italy) | 930 | 840 | 780 | 725 | 620 | 470 | 335 | 265 | 210 | 170 | 105 | *** | 130 | 580 | 555 |
| MALTA | 1010 | 920 | 865 | 815 | 715 | 570 | 440 | 370 | 325 | 290 | 230 | 130 | *** | 450 | 425 |
| Corinth(Greece) | 1460 | 1370 | 1205 | 1265 | 1155 | 1020 | 890 | 820 | 775 | 740 | 680 | 580 | 450 | *** | *** |
| Cape Malea(Greece) | 1435 | 1345 | 1290 | 1240 | 1140 | 995 | 865 | 795 | 750 | 715 | 655 | 555 | 425 | *** | *** |

The distances are direct between any two points in different columns. Interpolated distances between two ports in the same column are not necessarily correct.

GIBRALTAR A

A large commercial and ex-Naval port on the W side of the Rock. It has three marinas and is increasingly widening its facilities for yachtsmen at this focal point at the entrance to the Mediterranean. Accessible in all weathers but the three marinas are subject to a greater or lesser extent to swell in strong westerlies and all are buffeted by downdraughts in strong *levanters*; a duty-free port with excellent facilities for yachtsmen.

Vessels up to 90m and 3.5m draft can be accepted in the marinas and more in the commercial part of the harbour; 40 ton travel lift at Sheppards and the largest yacht can be catered for at Cammell Lairds in the old dockyard; good medical facilities on the NHS for UK residents; several flights a day to UK destinations but not Spain; a good place to leave a yacht but a warp and fender-minder needed even in the summer.

Yacht-friendly ports in the 1145 miles along the north African coast to Malta are not abundant and the next fuel stop should always be in mind if dependent on it. The ports selected are between 50M and 150M apart and include the ones in Algeria. This coastline extends for 570M and as things stand at the time of writing it would be preferable to avoid Algeria altogether, but the ports are included in case pressing needs arise.

Ceuta, 15M S from Gibraltar, is a duty free port with excellent facilities and a very good alternative to Gibraltar to top up at before setting out.

Alboran Island lies 120M E of the Rock and 30M from the African coast. There are no facilities and only an open anchorage but there is a Spanish garrison and helicopter pad in case of dire emergency.

Al Hoceima (Morocco) B

A medium fishing and naval port with improving yacht facilities although they still have a long way to go; a port of entry; deep water approach and good shelter inside with no limitation on length or draft; water on quays; fuel by drums although quayside pump expected; victualling involves a walk or taxi; an isolated place in the Rif Mountains; suffered in the earthquake of February 2004

Melilla (Spain) B*

A deep water approach but uncomfortable inside in strong easterlies; much improved yacht facilities and a duty free port with the last opportunity to top up with cheap fuel; no length limitation, minimum depth 2m but deeper available; water at pontoons, duty free fuel by pump; convenient shopping; coastal bus route and daily ferries to mainland Spain.

Ghazaouet (Algeria) B*

A safe approach but open to the W and uncomfortable inside in these winds; a medium commercial and fishing port with no yacht facilities; no depth or length limitations; water by can, fuel by arrangement; some provisions.

Mers-el- Kébir (Oran) is a large naval and commercial port from which yachts are prohibited.

Mostaganem (Algeria) B

Good access and berthing in a medium sized commercial and fishing port with no yacht facilities; a port of entry and reported friendly but water only by can, and fuel might be a problem; provisions a short walk

Sidi Ferruch (Algeria) C

Entry not recommended in over force 5 and not at night; the only sort of marina in Algeria; 3m draft limitation; 16 ton travel lift but few repair facilities; water by hose from quay; good quality, cheap fuel.

The very large commercial port of **Algiers** may only be entered by yachts in an emergency; no fuel in yacht quantities.

Bejaïa(ex- Bougie)(Algeria) A

A commercial all-weather port with excellent shelter; a port of entry; no yachting facilities but fuel available and water by cans; adequate shopping; ferry service to Marseilles, train and air service to Algiers.

Stora and Skikda(Algeria) B*

Stora is a small fishing port and preferable for a yacht but neither would be safe in strong northerlies; fuel available in Stora and water by can with adequate provisions. Skikda is a large commercial port 2M away with no yacht facilities but marginally better shelter.

Annaba (Algeria) A

A large commercial port with a safe approach and excellent shelter; a port of entry; a yacht club and some facilities; water at YC and cheaper and better fuel than Tunisia; taxi needed for victualling.

Tabarka (Tunisia) A

A fishing port with good yacht facilities, access and shelter in all weathers; no restriction on length but minimum depth 2m; a port of entry; travel lift and boatyard; water at each berth and fuel by pump on quay; taxi needed for serious provisioning; much tourist development and reasonable communications with Bizerte.

Bizerte (Tunisia) A

A large commercial and naval port with separate yacht facilities; a port of entry; no length restriction but 2.5m at most in yacht section; minor repair facilities; water and electricity on pontoons; fuel by pump; reasonable provisioning; road, rail and air connections.

From Bizerte to Cape Bon is 60M with Pantellaria a further 50M; a 15M diversion could be made S from Cape Bon to the port of **Kelibia** with adequate shelter and yachting facilities if necessity calls.

Pantellaria (Italy) B*

In spite of a new breakwater the harbour is still very uncomfortable in strong northeasterlies and drafts of much over 2.5m may have difficulty especially in a swell; fuel pumps on the town quay and piped water available; shops close by; daily flights and ferry to Trapani and Kelibia.

MALTA A

The best equipped yachting centre in the central Mediterranean. Accessible even in the worst storms and good security in the Grand Harbour(Dockyard Creek), Manoel Island (Lazaretto) and Msida Marinas although the latter is very crowded and has a 15m length restriction; no limit elsewhere; 23 ton travel lift and slips up to 60m and 500 tons at Manoel Island, much bigger in Grand Harbour; every kind of repair can be met; duty-free fuel in quantity with notice, duty-paid for smaller amounts; easy provisioning and duty-free stores; hospitals; daily flights to UK and Europe and ferries to Sicily. A safe and secure place to leave a yacht or to winter but early bookings on www.yachtyard-malta.com/ needed.

It is 420M almost due E to Cape Malea, slightly more to Corinth, all open sea except for the last 130M from Cephallonia to Corinth, and little shipping once 100M clear of Malta.

Route 9C Waypoint Table

THESE WAYPOINTS SHOULD BE USED FOR PLANNING ONLY AND NEVER FOR NAVIGATION

Waypoints are given to the nearest minute of latitude and longitude and are positioned in clear water off the ports or headlands.

Turning Points (TP) to avoid land or navigational hazards are also noted in the table.

The symbol * between two points denotes that the direct route between them passes over or close to land or other navigational dangers.

| Port or point | Lat | Long |
|------------------|----------|----------|
| GIBRALTAR | 39° 06'N | 05° 21'W |
| Al Hoceima | 35 15 | 03 55 |
| TP C.Tres Forcas | 35 27 | 02 58 |
| Melilla | 35 18 | 02 55 |
| Ghazaouet | 35 07 | 01 52 |
| TP Is.Habibas | 35 40 | 01 08 |
| C. de l'Aiguile | 35 55 | 00 25W |
| Mostaganem | 35 57 | 00 04E |
| Sidi Ferruch | 36 50 | 02 50 |
| TP C.Caxine | 36 51 | 02 58 |
| C. Benguf | 37 00 | 03 55 |
| C.Sigli | 36 55 | 04 50 |
| Bejaia | 36 47 | 05 07 |
| TP C.Bougaroni | 37 10 | 06 30 |
| * | | * |
| Stora/Skikda | 36 54 | 06 53 |
| TP C.de Fer | 37 07 | 07 12 |
| C.de Garda | 37 00 | 07 38 |
| Annaba | 36 54 | 07 48 |
| * | | * |

| Port or point | Lat | Long |
|----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Tabarka | 36 58 | 08 46 |
| TP C.Serrat | 37 15 | 09 12 |
| Ras Enghela | 37 25 | 09 45 |
| C.Blanc | 37 25 | 09 55 |
| Bizerte | 37 17 | 09 54 |
| * | | * |
| TP C.Bon | 37 05 | 11 05 |
| * | | * |
| Pantellaria | 36 51 | 11 57 |
| * | | * |
| MALTA | 35 55N | 14 31E |

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