

YACHT FRIENDLY MOORINGS – MARICABAN BAY CRUISING CLUB

As at December 2005

The second in our series of yacht friendly moorings is Maricaban Bay Cruising Club, the home of El Rio y Mar Resort and Tequila Mike. Located on the northern side of Busuanga, part of the Calamian group of northern Palawan,

El Rio is a small boutique resort with 14 high-end rooms available in a peaceful bay setting. Within a few hours of being here, guests and staff are normally on first name basis due to the friendly nature of this resort.

This location offers a very peaceful nights' sleep with almost ne'er a wave in the bay, and is the best starting point after Pandan island (last issue) for exploring the more than 100 islands surrounding the main island of Busuanga.

Most of these islands are deserted except for the odd caretaker and normally the eastern side of all of them offers a good anchorage backing onto a sandy beach during the Amihan (dec-may north-easterly) season.

These are 'yer actual' picture postcard islands. Check out also the other two main islands of this group, Coron island and Culion island, in back issues of this magazine and other local and internet information sites, they all have different attractions.

Maricaban/El Rio has seven moorings available for yachts to 50 feet/25 tons max. the moorings are 25 mtrs down and have 1" poly rope underwater and 2.5 tons of concrete on the bottom. Tequila Mike's yacht survived the last Nov 20th typhoon, which went through Maricaban with 100 knot plus winds, tied off long to two moorings, but you should read the article in Issue 4 number 4 of this mag for 'Safe anchorages around Busuanga'.

The two photos in this article show an approach to the bay from the NNW towards the first waypoint and the second shows a view toward the moorings with the resort off the starboard side. Keep 100 mtrs off the resort and you should be fine to the waypoint on the moorings.

The charts you will need for this area are:-

- Northern part of Busuanga
- Western entrance to Coron Bay
- Coron Bay

The other helpful one is the chart for anchorages around Busuanga
On all charts we are referred to as 'Port Caltom'

The mooring charge is Php150 (US\$3) per day and this entitles each crew member to the following benefits:-

- 50% discount on all drinks except wine
- 30% discount on a la carte and buffet meal prices
- free transport to Coron and back (regular shuttles only)
- free transport to Club Paradise for the day, (Php500 consumable island fee)
- free use of facilities such as pools, showers, towels etc
- discounted supplies such as diesel, veggies, beer etc.

Both Club Paradise and El Rio are upmarket resorts, and sailors are the only group so far who have been given such discounts, please respect this concession to us mariners and keep the peace. (by the way, no fishing off the boats is allowed in either resort, we are the only people in this area who try to protect the reefs and marine life!)

In El Rio, there is a beautiful freshwater infinity pool, television / dvd in rooms, internet available, watersports with everything except jet skis and parasailing. We are also the closest place to the Calauit African Safari Island to which we can escort you to see the animals that Tony Parkinson brought over from Kenya in the 70's, (actually the originals are probably all dead by now but the offspring are thriving!).

The diving from Club Paradise, run by Dirk and Rolfie and some very experienced divemasters, is excellent. There is a WW2 500 foot wreck only two miles from El Rio and if you only need tank fills or equipment, check out the advert in the Cruiser News for the Dugong Dive Centre at Club Paradise. The house reef there has many large turtles, a giant clam garden, black tip reef sharks and huge cuttlefish as well as large schools of Jacks normally buzzing around.

Both resorts run on 24 hr generated power and have workshops equipped to help with many repairs.

Beautiful rooms are available in both resorts, if available, at a reasonable price. Have a look if you need a night off the boat in aircon-hot water luxury!

Blow your horn as you pass the resort on your way in and the guys should come out and show you to a mooring suitable for the size of your yacht, first dinghy pick-up is free but please use your dinghy to the floating dock after that.

Motor yachts and very large sailboats should anchor 100 mtrs off the large white roofed building as you pass the resort. Anchor in 25 mtrs and you should be in sand, this is a honeycombed reef and if you anchor shallower you'll be dropping your anchor on coral ridges!!

Contacts

Tequila Mike	+63920 9505944
Gm Sharmaine	+63 920 6350298
El Rio Y Mar	+63 920 9515009
Club Paradise	+63 920 9119704

Waypoints.

Port Caltom Bay Entry	N 12.11.02	E 120.06.53
Bearing To Moorings	306-307 Degrees Magnetic	
Moorings Waypoint	N 12.11.46	E 120.05.92

Looking forward to seeing you soon!