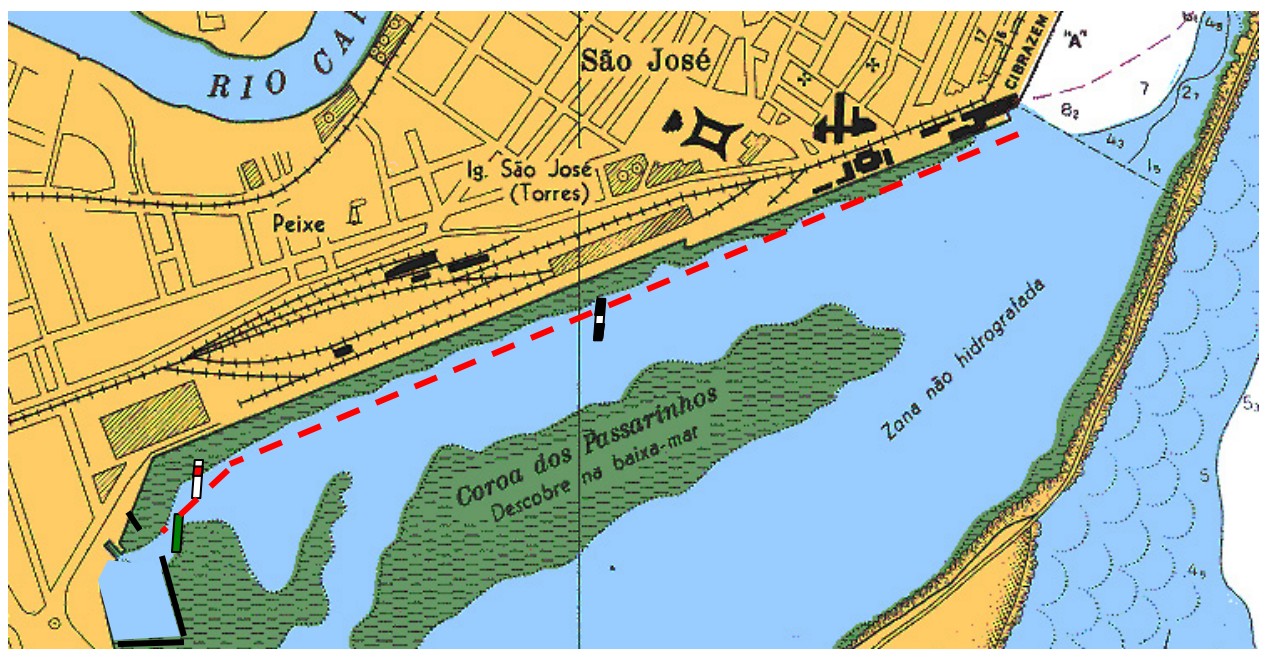


CRUISING NOTES FOR RECIFE

Arriving at Cabanga late Clube

For yacht sailing up from Salvador, most guides recommend to keep at least 20 miles off the coast in order to avoid a close encounter with small fishing vessels. The problem with this strategy is that conditions offshore are significantly rougher than closer to the coast. Everybody we met in August 2006 was complaining about strong winds, an unsettled sea and quickly changing conditions. For this reason, many local yachtsmen sail less than 5 miles off the coast. We were told that fishers were a manageable problem there as they tend to cluster on the 50 meter depth line close to major towns and only few of them use drifting nets. Still, the cat sailing with us up from Itaparica almost run into a small fishing boat (no lights and the fisher apparently asleep) a few hours after leaving Salvador. So, a good strategy may be to stay close to the coast but to avoid the 50 meters depth line and keep a sharp lookout for fishers in the vicinity of Salvador, Maceio and Recife.

The approach to Cabanga late Clube is a bit exciting thanks to the absence of depth soundings for the last mile before the marina. The club tries to mark the channel with green and red posts. When we arrived early August, only three posts of unidentifiable colour remained. Before the annual Recife-Fernando race (end of August), new posts were put out, but some of them disappeared within a few days. Still we found the approach easily, even with a broken depth sounder: From the bridge between São José and main Recife you can already see the marina. Follow the wall and buildings on starboard (your right) with a distance of some 50-70 meters until the middle of the marina entry is at magnetic 240°, then head for the entry. According to locals, the middle of the channel has a depth of 1 meter from datum (meaning a depth of 1.3m at spring low water and 2m at neap low water).





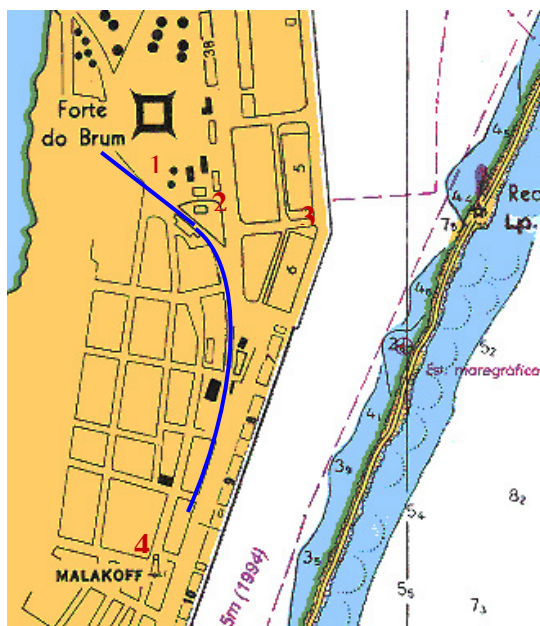
In the marina, you will normally be guided to a mooring (the guys arrive at 8am). There are two types: Moorings in the south-eastern part are owned by the club and allocated to visitors. You will pick up a buoy for your stern lines and stabilize your bow with long lines to the external wall. To get ashore, you will need to use the dinghy. Moorings in the South-Western part are owned privately but you may be able to use one of them. Berths consist of wooden posts for stern lines and floating platforms to get off from the bow. The advantage of the privately owned moorings is that you don't need to use your dinghy to get ashore and that you get shore power. In both cases, don't moor stern-to – your rudder may touch ground at low tide.

Cabanga offers great facilities: swimming pools, saunas, showers, restaurants, bars. There is also a boatyard with a slipway. We paid 6 dollars (sic) per night for the club. If you use one of their moorings, this is all you pay. If you have a privately owned mooring, you may be asked to pay some extra (approximately reals per day). It is certainly better to talk directly to the owner; there is an older guy in the marina who rents out the berths without the owners knowing what you pay.

Formalities

Cabanga late Clube will give you a detailed note on the clearance procedure for Recife. The following is an update to the typed note we received. Apparently, the club is about to issue a new leaflet for foreign visitors that already contains the updated version.

My impression is that the clearance process runs smoother than in Salvador. The following three steps (to be followed in that order) can be completed within 90 minutes. Best start 9 am the first business day after your arrival:



- Step 1: Polícia Federal (Immigration). Take a taxi to the Forte do Brum (Fare will be around 8 reals). Next to the Forte is a pedestrian entry (1) to the enclosed harbour area. The taxi will not be allowed in. Don't ask the driver to wait for you - everything that follows is within walking distance. Next to the pedestrian entry is a restaurant, and right behind it you will find the building of the polícia federal (2). It seems that the police officer is not always in his office. We were lucky both times; other yachts spent half days waiting.
- Step 2: Aduana (Customs): Opposite the Polícia Federal building you will see a street leading past shed #5 to the waterfront. Walk it down 150m and you will find Receita Federal on your left (3).

* Note: The procedure applies for yachts reaching Recife from another Brazilian port. If reaching Recife from abroad, you will also need to visit Vigilância Sanitária before the Capitania. This is located at the entry to the harbour area, behind the federal police.



- Step 3: Capitania dos Portos (Navy): Leave the harbour area and walk back in the direction of town, following Av Alfredo Lisboa (blue, the street you came by taxi). The Capitania is located at the corner of Rua Bom Jesus (which runs parallel to Av. Alfredo Lisboa) and Rua Rodrigues Mendes (4). It's a white-blue building and can be seen on your right 0.5 nautical miles after Forte do Brum (just before you reach shed #10).

Services

The boys in the marina offer hull cleaning for 2 reals per foot (negotiable). They also like to do your washing. We paid 40 reals to Marco for about 20 kilos but were not 100% convinced of the quality of the service.

I didn't find a decent shipchandler in Recife. Nordeste (across the bridge and some 500 meter further in direction to Boa Viagem) has a limited stock at completely exaggerated prices – only go there if you are desperate. Apparently, the shop in Olinda is a bit bigger but not cheaper. The Olinda sailmaker does decent work but again is not cheap (I'd say European prices minus 30 percent). There are some fisher shops in Rua da Praya where you can buy ropes and basic equipment but you won't find any fancy stuff (for instance, I didn't find any non-recycled polyester ropes). For electrics, try the shops on the way to Mercado São José; shopping around is worth it as prices for the same item vary greatly between shops.