

S/V ENOΞI Σ Baja Odyssey Background & Lists



Below is some technical information pertinent to the 600 nm round trip sailing voyage I took on my Rhodes 22 from Bahia de Los Angeles to Loreto, both in Baja California on the Sea of Cortez.

The Vehicles: We took my 1983, Rhodes 22 sailboat with IMF and a 6hp Yamaha 2 stroke electric start motor. This combo was transported on a 2003 Triad single axel trailer with electric breaks towed by a 1996 Ford F150 4.9 liter V-6 pickup. The total length of the trip from start to finish was about 2500 miles. There were no significant problems with the tow vehicle (which was adequate) or with the boat itself. There were some modifications done to the standard boat and certainly there were a lot of different supplies and unusual amounts of supplies that you wouldn't find on a regular Rhodes 22 that was day sailed or week ended. The water line certainly reflected the extra stuff in the boat, but the boat handled this without any problems.

Boat Modifications: I increased access to more storage by cutting out access doors/hatches on the port settee aft about as far as the step-down and under the flip up seat just to port of where the head is located. I installed a 16 by 18 inch Taylor Made opening hatch reinforcing it with ½ inch Plexiglas. I also installed 2 padeyes on either side of the companionway to clip on safety harnesses for storms or night sailing. I also modified the poptop to accept locking fastpins to secure the poptop in the event of a rollover or heavy weather sailing and installed a fastpin to replace the bolt linking the poptop to the mast. See attached "to do list" to get a better idea of some things I did; many of the items were normal maintenance and upgrades I would have done regardless of this trip.

We did purchase extra containers so we could have the ability to carry 15 gallons of fuel in two 6-gallon and one 3-gallon fuel containers with snap on fittings. We also carried, in addition to the standard 12-gallon water tank up front under the forward berth, another 14 gallons in two separate containers, one under the port cockpit seat, the other in the lazarett. We also carried about 4 more gallons of

drinking water in ½ liter bottles stowed about the boat. This may seem excessive but the area had no natural sources of water that we could use and in 250 miles there were only 5 places to get water. We saved any melt water from the fridge and cooler and used it in the solar shower.

Equipment & supplies:

Emergency tiller/rudder: I made a replacement tiller from a hardwood wheelbarrow handle. Using two special clamps I made and pre-drilling holes in both the handle & oar, I was able to securely splice a 6-foot, large bladed aluminum oar to the 4-foot e-tiller to create an 8-foot emergency rudder that went into a locking oar lock mounted just to starboard of tiller on the transom. Basically it was just a large sweep. I tested it out and it was adequate to control the boat when used with properly trimmed sails.



Assembled center section



Parts for the emergency tiller



Close up of parts and holes



Emergency tiller to Starboard of regular tiller

Ground tackle: I used an oversized 7 pound fortress (aluminum Danforth) anchor and 100 feet of 3/8 inch 3 strand line with 12 feet of 3/8 inch proof chain, a standard 15 pound Danforth with 100 feet of 3/8 inch three strand with 10 feet of 1/2 inch proof chain, and a 11 pound Horizon claw anchor (Bruce type, good for rock bottoms) with 150 feet of 1/2 three strand and 12 feet of 3/8 proof chain. I also had a small 3 pound Danforth with 75' of 1/4 " three strand for the dingy.

PFD's: We had 3 automatic inflating vests (SOSpenders) with built in harness and 6-8 foot tethers along with provisions to set up a jack line if necessary. We also had a couple of type III vests.

Electrical system: I installed a second heavy-duty battery (should have put it to port and not starboard as I did) and 55W GE solar panel and regulator so I could charge both batteries. I also had a small (50W) inverter that I used to charge camera batteries, rechargeable spotlights, and a cordless drill. It could also charge a laptop had we brought one. We never had electrical problems and used electricity quite liberally.

VHF Radio: We used a fixed mount Solara DSC radio with a 3dB 36-inch Shakespeare SS antenna mounted on the top of the mast. (I would have liked to have a small handheld for ship-to-exploring-party communications).

Depth Sounder: I installed a little Garmin 120 transom mounted fish finder that was ideal for our needs (though if I could have easily mounted it forward it might have been a bit more reliable when underway or at least more predictive).

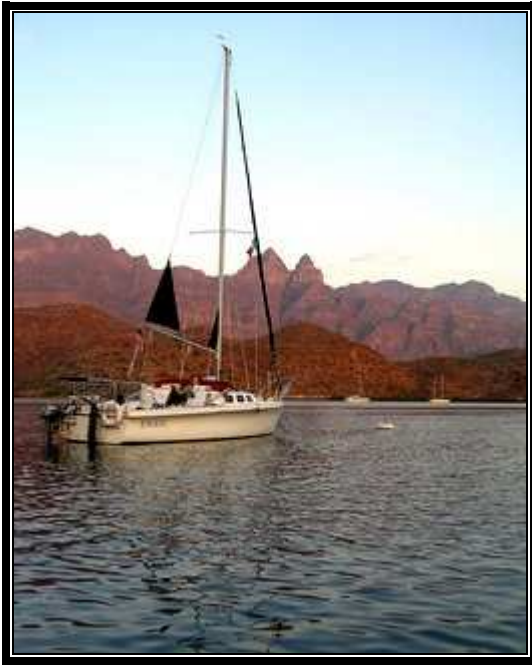
GPS: We used a Magnum NAV-40 by Horizon. It had lots of features, only a few of which we used but was simple and in most locations usually could get a good satellite fix quickly. My wife did most of the navigation with it.

Compass: This was a Saturn bulkhead mounted compass with a 3 3/4" dual reading lighted card. There was a 12-degree variation to account for in the area of Baja. I did not have time to properly swing and adjust the compass but did have notes on how much deviation in each of the cardinal points there was. Since almost all the sailing was line of sight this was not critical. I also had a Davis hand-bearing compass that I really used more than the main compass for triangulation and fixes on coastal points since the charts were sometimes not accurate regarding long & lat.

Binoculars: We used an inexpensive pair of 7X50 binoculars with zoom capabilities to 12 X 50, (that was nice on land).

Facilities: Since space was at such a premium in that remote and arid place we dispensed with the porta-potty and used a bucket that lived under the seat when it wasn't under ours.

Riding Sail: This was a very useful piece of equipment. It was a small triangular sail with a 52 inch foot and appropriate leech and luff that was secured at three points; one on the outhaul of the boom, the head was on a loop on the topping lift and the foot was attached to one of the cleats mid-boom. We did not swing and “hunt” as a Rhodes sometimes does in a windy anchorage. This small sail kept the boat very steady at anchor and when required, could be made to point the boat into the swells using a preventer.



Riding sail in action



Bimini and solar panel in “action”

Bimini: An absolute must in this kind of sailing environment! The sun is so intense it actually *hurts* when it shines directly on your skin. To be able to motor & sail on most points in the shade really made the trip enjoyable. When anchored we often used side panels. I won’t be leaving home without my Bimini!

Fishing Gear: This was used effectively to repel fish from near the boat. We had two trolling rods, lots of strange lures along with a gaff and dip net.

Abandon Ship Bag: Due to the remote location we decided to carry one of these. For details see the attached list. Water in separate containers was also located for quick access and retrieval in several locations.

First Aid Kit: Again, since we were going to be in some pretty remote places, I wanted an expanded kit but cost was a limiting factor. With some advice from some medical friends I put one together for not too much money. (See the attached list for our first aid kit).



**Our Indian Stove, and a galley with
with a magnificent view of a moonrise.**



**The covered propane tank is just
to the right of Alice.**

Stove: Since it was so hot we did all of our cooking in the cockpit on a special board/table made of Starboard®. We used a two-burner stainless steel stove (made in India, that cost around \$60) and a small 11-pound (I think) propane tank mounted on a locking plate by the starboard stern rail just forward of the aft cleat. We would connect the stove when we used it, then disconnect and put every thing away, leaving the tank covered and mounted near the rail. Set up & breakdown time was only a minute or two. The stove and board lived in the lazarett. We used less than ½ a tank for 4 weeks.

Food etc: Since there were not many places where we could eat out (6 days out of 31) and because my fishing record speaks for itself, we felt we had to carry almost a month's worth of food and consumables. These were stored in several places about the boat based on their weight and bulk. As it turned out there were two places where we could easily buy supplies at Mexican supermarkets. In retrospect, probably 2 weeks of selected supplies would have sufficed. We carried a lot of canned goods, packaged meals, pasta & rice, canned & dried meats, and juices. Laughing Cow cheese didn't need refrigeration and with lots of crackers made a number of tasty lunches. We were able to keep water and beverages cold with the use of a large square cooler with all our spare clothes and pillows stuffed around it. The cooler occupied the space where the absent porta-potty would go. When possible, we used 4 blocks of ice; other times 6 bags of cubes were used. This would keep cold for about 3-4 days before the ice melted. We would periodically transfer ice to the upright 'fridge' about once a day or so.

BBQ & Table: Didn't use the BBQ as much as we hoped since we are lousy fishermen and only caught 2 yellow fin tuna the whole time. The BBQ used a separate small disposable tank. In order to avoid carrying extra tanks I bought an adapter that allowed me to refill the disposable tank from the 11-pound tank. However, a little utility table I made from Starboard proved very versatile and was used often. We used it in a number of ways: as a BBQ prep table on the starboard side, underneath the stove, as an "end table" for the cockpit, and as a fish cleaning table on the port side. It clipped onto the leading edge of stern rail and the aft edge of the winch with a removable (1 wing nut) support leg that rested on the genoa track and could be removed for storage or placed in reciprocal location for the port side.



Mmmm Yellow fin Tuna for dinner.



Small divots hold stove legs securely.



Note the table leg in its stowed position location in the lower right of the table



Underside of table, note leg for starboard setup

Sleeping arrangements: We generally always slept in the cockpit because the temperature was perfect. We usually had a nice breeze and didn't need much as far as clothes went. We had those lightweight fleece sleeping bags, which we occasionally used. One of the nicest features of the cockpit was the ability to convert it into a huge bed with filler cushions. There was one potential problem; we were storing a lot of fuel (Two 6-gallon & one 3-gallon containers) under the cockpit benches. When sealed with all the cushions closed, an environment where fumes could build up was created. In addition, there were sources of ignition from the battery under the starboard seat and the 2nd battery in the lazarett, not mention the various wires also in this enclosed area. We finally settled on a couple of compromises. One solution was to put in only 2 of the 3 filler cushions leaving the aft area open and turning off both batteries using the master switch. The second solution was to tie the fuel containers in the dingy for the evening. When we carry only the small container (which is what we do when not on lengthy trips) we just bungee it between the transom and the outboard in the down position with the handle of the motor braced against the transom. In any case, I turn off the batteries from the master switch located in the lazarett.



Filler cushions installed looking forward



Filler cushions installed looking aft,
Note location of fuel container.

Tools & spare parts: Could have gone forever but finally limited it to a good set of mechanics and wood tools, 12v cordless drill & 12V charger, 2 divided boxes for all the nuts, bolts, screws and parts etc. I used and one plastic shoe box for electrical, voltmeters spare wire etc. (maybe 20 pounds total for tools and spare parts).