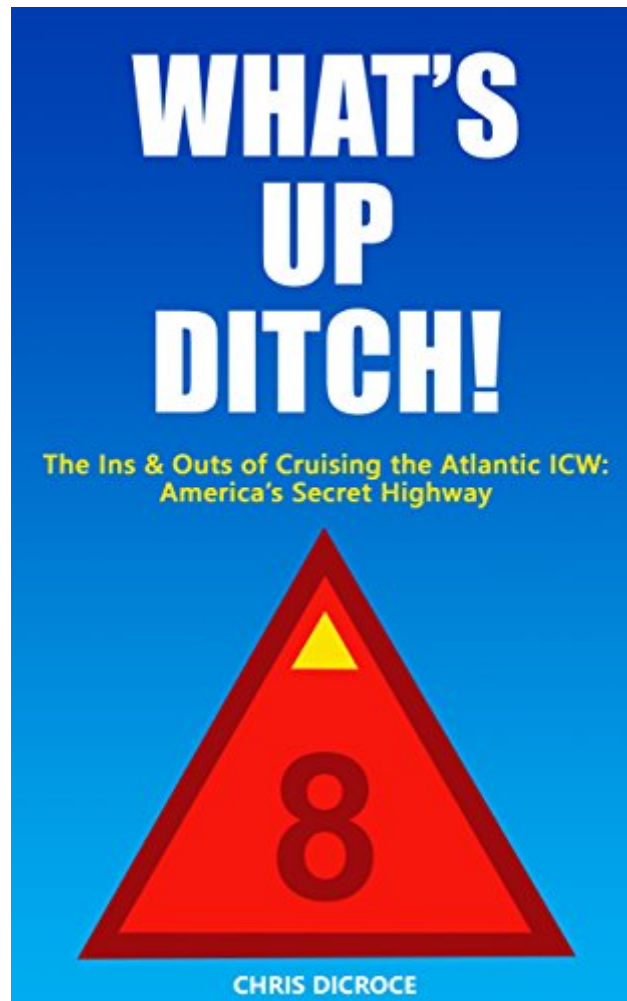


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# What's Up Ditch!: The Ins And Outs Of Cruising The Atlantic ICW: America's Secret Highway



## Synopsis

If you're thinking about doing a boat trip down the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, this is a book to add to your arsenal of information. What's Up Ditch is a personal perspective based on observations and the navigation logs of Chris DiCroce, an avid sailor who has traveled the ICW on his sailboat six times. He walks you through many of the situations you might encounter along the waterway, and includes protocols and ideas on everything from hailing a bridge to maximizing a budget over the course of this 1000 + mile trip. He discusses how much boat you really need, how to figure out fuel usage, VHF radio protocol, tides, currents, and more. What's Up Ditch! is not a "waterway guide." It's not meant to take the place of, but rather complement, the many great resources available to boaters today. The ICW is "back-alley America at six miles an hour" and can take sixteen days or sixteen weeks. It's a trip full of challenges and learning opportunities, and this book addresses a lot of what you'll need to know. From the Dismal Swamp to the Virginia Cut, you'll get a viewpoint you may not have read in the past. The Atlantic ICW will test your navigation skills, boat-handling skills, and your patience, but in the end, it will reward you with gorgeous scenery and an experience you'll not soon forget. If you've ever thought about doing the ICW, or even if you've done some or all of it, there's something here for you. It's a no-nonsense approach with Chris' usual bad jokes and some well-placed sarcasm. Beware you magenta line hugging boaters... there's something in there about you as well! What's Up Ditch! will challenge you and encourage you. It will break down and dissect some of the issues that might be keeping you from doing one of the coolest trips we have right here in America. (Special thanks to John Kretschmer for writing the Foreword.)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I picked What's Up Ditch! shortly after it was published. We own a sailboat in the Caribbean, but we're looking to buy a sailboat for long-term cruising this year. Being from the Annapolis area, the ICW is a route we will definitely take. This is a great book for ICW newbies like us who need to understand whether a particular boat is ICW friendly. It has recommendations on depth/draft, routes to take and overall strategies. The author skips a lot of details that are covered elsewhere, but puts in links to those sources in the proper context; I'm still reading those resources. What I found most impressive was the authors ability to evoke the experience and how to prepare for it. Having a list of all the bridges and the details of their openings is good, but understanding how to intellectually and emotionally prepare yourself for a very new type of boating was the biggest benefit. The editing of this book was great. I'm a grumpy reader when spelling and grammar errors are on every page. I was able to enjoy the prose without any distractions. What would I change? Well, more is good. I'd love to see more about the marinas and attractions the author prefers. ActiveCaptain provides a lot of that, but its not curated. I get the feeling that the author might have an opinion or two. What's Up Ditch!: The Ins and Outs of Cruising the Atlantic ICW: America's Secret Highway

This is a terrific book. Buy it. It doesn't matter if you're a seasoned cruiser planning a trip on the Atlantic ICW or if you've never set foot on a boat. It is well written, highly informative and entertaining, and, perhaps most importantly, it's personal and it illustrates the importance of listening to, and learning from, the experiences of others. There are plenty of guidebooks that'll give you the facts and figures, the bare bones information, but there are few, if any, that'll help you prepare emotionally for what is clearly a big step outside the comfort zones of most people. My only criticism would be that it's too short. But then I suppose that's standard operating procedure among real entertainers. They always leave their audience wanting more.

Some people love details and some love ideas. This is mostly an idea book! It's about traveling the ICW: how to do it, how to plan, how to stop procrastinating but mostly it presents the adventure and

fun of traveling the ICW. It is not a mile by mile description of exactly what the channel is like. Mr. Di Croce does provide a number of suggested websites where you can find up-to-date information of each mile of the ICW. I found the writing to be easy to read and interesting. Like listening to a good friend with their corny jokes. It was well worth the time to read the book! Now I more eager to put an offer in on a boat I've been looking at.

Unlike a lot of books on this subject, this one isn't just about "how" to cruise the ICW, it's also about why. There are lots of helpful and even essential tips, of course, but it's much more than just a listing of ports and anchorages. The author's style is most of all entertaining, and he obviously knows his stuff. I find myself going back and re-reading passages, not because I want to refresh my memory on something, but because it's so damn enjoyable to read. The author also took the trouble to put in lots of helpful links if there's something you want to dig a little deeper into. You could cruise the ICW without reading this book first, but you'll have a much better time if you do. But beware: if you're on the fence about whether to take the trip, this book will probably convince you to go for it. Either way, it's a great read.

This book is about getting away from the dock and enjoying your boat. I have been sailing since I was ten years old and still loved every minute of this read. This is written for beginning cruisers, but I still learned quite a bit. Thank you Chris!

This book must be read by every person who is thinking, planning or doing the ICW. We've done the ICW several times but I couldn't put the book down. When I checked "progress", I was 95% into it and disappointed there was only 5% left instead of 95% left!

50 years running shortish up to 70', 7 years in the Navy and just realized - I,m still learning. There are very few seasoned boaters out there that would not learn from this book. Good job Chris, I envy your lifestyle, wisdom and willingness to accept the challenge(s) Some of us stinkpotters envy your freedom, at the very least - from the fuel docks.

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