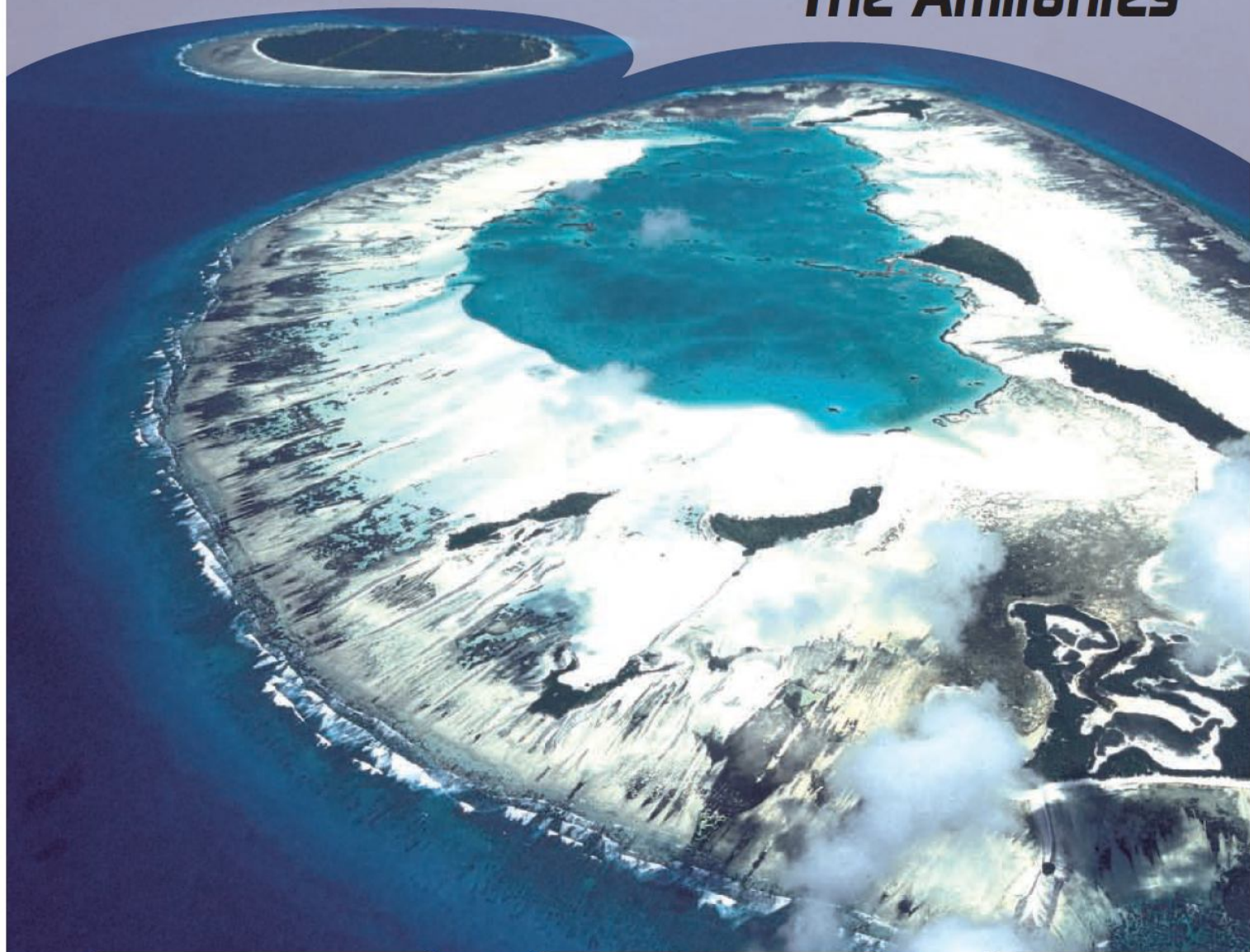


THE BEST OF THE CATAMARAN DESTINATIONS: *To be discovered in the Seychelles: The Amirantes*



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The Seychelles have a special place in the hearts of those who like cruising in warm waters bordered by coconut trees, and basking in dream anchorages worthy of a postcard.

So, what can we say about the Amirantes, the 'other' Seychelles...

With their amazingly beautiful anchorages, a profusion of islands, exceptional underwater life, a welcoming population of a rare kindness, the Seychelles are a cruising paradise. But there is even better...the Amirantes. A Seychelles dependency, these islands offer everything you have ever dreamed about, with the incredible luxury of solitude into the bargain, as to get there, you need a boat with a special licence and an approved skipper. Situated 120 miles from Mahé, these islands are spread over 86 miles (Desroches, Poivre, D'Arros, Rémire, Bancs Africains, Marie-Louise, Atoll de St Joseph, Atolls d'Alphonse and de St François) and only Desroches is inhabited and has a hotel and a diving centre. Unlike the Mahé group, where the islands are mountainous and granitic, the Amirantes group is made up of very flat, virgin coral islands, populated by birds and coconut trees. The crossing to these islands allows your imagination to awake. And then suddenly the island appears ahead of you, a real mirage, low in the water, protected by a barrier of big white rolling breakers on the coral plateau, with, in the background, a long band of white sand capped by a crown of coconut trees and green casuarinas. The Amirantes islands are accessible from October to May, and you must allow two to three weeks to discover them fully, but it is possible, by accepting that you will sail a lot, to go there in 8 days...

1 : The Amirantes are a totally protected little paradise (here, St Joseph).

2 : Boats with authorisation to go to the Amirantes are rare... Hence the incredible protection of these islands.

3 : During the crossing, don't forget to trail your fishing lines...

4 : Superb beaches, deserted, exceptional anchorages, the Seychelles are one of the charter 'musts'.

PRACTICAL SEYCHELLES

Getting there: Situated in the Indian Ocean, the Seychelles are reached after a direct, easy flight from Europe. The big advantage is the small time difference with respect to Europe.

Weather: There are no hurricanes in the Seychelles, you can sail there all the year round, but the Amirantes are only accessible from October to May.

Language: French - English.

Formalities: Valid passport to enter the Seychelles for EEC and North American citizens. To go to the Amirantes, crews must obtain authorisation from I.D.C., pay a disembarkation fee and embark an approved local skipper.