



# Bermuda

## Island in the Stream

Story & Photos  
by  
King Montgomery



The near and off-shore reefs are home to a variety of jacks, pompano, grunts, barracuda, and a host of other fishes. This shot is taken at the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo at Flatts Village in Hamilton Parish.

“Bermuda: isn’t that an island in the Caribbean?” I hear that a lot when I tell folks my latest trip to this wonderful place. No, Bermuda is *not* in the Caribbean - it is a small archipelago about 650 miles east of North Carolina in the Atlantic Ocean, warmed by the flow of the Gulf Stream. The main islands are connected by bridges and are known collectively as *Bermuda*. It is a lush, hilly, semi-tropical paradise, about 1 ½ hours nonstop via US Airways from Washington’s Reagan National Airport.

Bermuda has it all for the sports-minded person: golf, ecotourism, boating, fishing, horseback riding, hiking, scuba and snorkeling, spectator sports (cricket, polo, rugby, soccer, and sailing), and water-

sports galore. Throw in historical sites, botanical gardens, aquariums, great shopping, fine dining, great beaches and resorts, and you have a rich and diverse vacation paradise.

Bermuda is the oldest self-governing overseas territory in the British Commonwealth. Queen Elizabeth II is the head-of-state and is represented by an appointed governor. An elected premier oversees the democratic government of the land. English is the language of Bermuda, and it sounds more American than British, probably due to the fact that most of the island’s visitors are from North America. The Bermuda dollar is tied exactly to the US dollar, and both currencies are used interchangeably.

### *A Little History*

Juan de Bermudez discovered the islands of Bermuda in 1503, but he couldn’t land because of the treacherous encircling reefs. The reefs continued to keep explorers at bay, and it wasn’t until 1609 that a group of British colonists on their way to Jamestown actually landed on the islands, after foundering on the reef near the present day city of St. George.

The shipwrecked colonists, led by Sir George Somers, were stranded for ten months until they could build a boat suitable to continue their journey to Jamestown. Their reports aroused great interest in the islands, and in 1612 King James extended the Charter of the Virginia Company to include Bermuda. In late

1612, about 60 British colonists arrived and founded the town of St. George, the oldest continuously inhabited English-speaking settlement in the Western Hemisphere.

Slaves were brought to Bermuda from Africa soon after the colony was established, and they performed the menial and manual labor for the colonists. The slave trade to the islands was outlawed in 1807, and all slaves were freed in 1834. Today about 55% of Bermudians are of African descent; whites comprise 34% of the population, with 7% mixed ethnicity, and 4% not stated. Regardless of ethnicity, all Bermudians are referred to as *onions*, after one of their earlier major export crops.

*For more information on Bermuda call Bermuda Tourism at 1-800-BERMUDA and request a visitor's packet, or see their superb website at [www.bermudatourism.com](http://www.bermudatourism.com). Other interesting websites include [www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bd.html](http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bd.html); [www.bermuda-online.org](http://www.bermuda-online.org); and [www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5375.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5375.htm); [www.bermuda.com](http://www.bermuda.com); and [www.experience-bermuda.com](http://www.experience-bermuda.com). US Airways is at 1-800-428-4322 or see the website at [www.usairways.com](http://www.usairways.com).*

### **The Fishing**

Bermuda offers three types of saltwater angling: deep sea or offshore fishing, reef angling, and shoreline fishing. The latter includes the sand flats that are home to the charming, beautiful and elusive bonefish. This is the northernmost limit of the bonefish's range.

Hundreds of licensed and inspected charter boats cater to offshore and reef fishing enthusiasts. They take their parties to locations where several species of marlin and other sailfishes, as well as yellowfin and blackfin tunas, abound. Smaller craft take anglers to the reefs



**Bermuda is a semitropical archipelago paradise of 23 square miles located about 65 miles due east of North Carolina. It is not in the Caribbean area.**



**View from the Gibb's Hill Lighthouse showing the rolling hills and numerous bays and inlets on the main island of Bermuda. Boats are as plentiful as cars, but there's plenty of water to go around.**

where bait, lures, and flies are used to entice a myriad of colorful fishes including various grunts, snappers, jacks, porgies, triggerfish, pompano, and barracuda. There is only one well-qualified fly angling guide on the island: Captain James Pearman of the Jump dem Bones guide service.

The Pearmans are Bermudians who have been involved with sportfishing for generations. My friend Lefty Kreh, the noted American angler, fished with young James' father and grandfather. And my wife, Elizabeth Grant, and I had the pleasure of angling with James for a day during

our most recent visit to Bermuda. (If you visit Bermuda once, I guarantee you'll be back!)

Our base in Bermuda was the wonderful Pompano Beach Club, and we left from there to meet James Pearman at Ely's Harbour Marina, about two miles north of the club in Southampton Parish. James pulled up alongside the dock in his comfortable flats skiff, and after loading and storing gear, we were off. After a short run back to the extensive sand flat out from the Pompano Beach Club, we were poling along looking for bonefish.

As James maneuvered the skiff, his eyes peeled for bones, he related more about the area and its fishing. The first two hours of the incoming tide is best for bonefish and other flats species. With the flooding tide they come out of the nearby deeper water to feed on small crabs, shrimp, and other morsels. The bones are usually in singles, doubles, or small groups. We did encounter several moving schools of bonefish with 25-30 fish - most unusual according to our knowledgeable and affable guide. Mornings and evenings with the incoming tide are usually the most productive because the wind is often lighter than during the heat of the day.

We used 9 foot rods for a 9 weight floating line with leaders of 10 to 14 feet tapering to 8 to 12 pound test tippets. Flies should match the bottom in color, and have enough weight to get to the bottom fairly quickly. Thus, flies are usually in the tan/beige range when fishing over the sand, and green or brown when casting over the turtle grass that dots the marinescape. James explained that the turtle grass is so-named because green sea and loggerhead turtles feed upon it.

Bonefishing is like hunting; you must find, stalk, and shoot your fly to the proper place at the right time. Everything must come together, making this form of fishing the most challenging of all - and the most rewarding when a fish strikes the fly and heads for Virginia! The task often becomes more difficult when the wind kicks up, making it harder to see the fish and cast to them with any accuracy.

The McVey Gotcha proved to be the best fly, and I gave some to James after our time on the water. The next day, a client of his used one of my Gotchas and landed a handsome bone of over seven pounds. Although I wished that either Elizabeth or I had caught it, there was a great deal of satisfaction knowing that a fly I had tied



**Bonefish are beautiful, sleek, and strong creatures. Captain Pearman practices catch-and-release for Bermuda bonefish.**



**Captain Pearman assists Elizabeth Grant with fly casting. A good guide not only finds fish, but also helps clients with their fishing skills.**

**Various sea turtles, some plentiful and others rare, swim the warm Bermuda seas and sand flats.**



helped make a fellow angler's day. I will engage James Pearman every time I visit this touch of paradise near the warm waters of the Gulf Stream.

*Contact James Pearman at Jump dem Bones, 441-292-2190, or see his website at [www.jumpdembones.04.free.bm/](http://www.jumpdembones.04.free.bm/). James also does some offshore and reef fishing in a larger boat. Whichever type fishing you choose, James is your best bet. Bermuda Tourism's website, [www.bermuda-tourism.com](http://www.bermuda-tourism.com), lists charter boats and gives contact info.*

### **Pompano Beach Club**

Travel writer Ron Charles, author of the authoritative *Bermuda Guide*, calls the Pompano Beach Club, "Bermuda's best full-service casual resort." I couldn't agree more - there's something about the

words best, full-service, and casual. When Charles visits Bermuda, he stays here.

Dramatically perched on limestone cliffs overlooking the southwest coast, Pompano, owned and operated by the American Lamb family since 1956, has sixty comfortable rooms and all the amenities found at a larger world-class resort. The private pink beach beckons, the championship golf course next door calls, and any place with two dining areas and two bars gets my attention every time.

The meals at Pompano are uniformly superb, beginning with a breakfast that's as light or heavy as you wish. Lunch is served around the large swimming pool or on the nearby veranda. More often than not, we ordered pina colodas and seafood salads with a side of conch fritters. Dinner

in the elegant yet casual Cedar Room is always a treat, particularly when fresh local seafood is on the menu, which changes every day. A nice wine list offers selections to complement any meal.

Pompano Beach Club is a wonderful base of operations for your visit to Bermuda. It is also self-sustaining enough for you to stay there your entire visit. It is the ideal venue for romantic getaways, for historic sightseeing and super shopping, or for a fishing adventure.

*Contact the Lambs at 1-800-343-4155 (Massachusetts office), in Bermuda at 441-234-0222, email [info@pompano.bm](mailto:info@pompano.bm), and see the excellent website at [www.pompanobeachclub.com](http://www.pompanobeachclub.com). You will find that everyone associated with Pompano is eager to assist you, and they go out of their way to cater to your wants and needs.*



Oh, and did I mention the weather? There is no rainy season; periodic showers are brief, and rainbows over the water are quite the sight, appearing for us almost every morning of our stay. Temperatures seldom top 85 degrees and rarely drop below 70. Folks still wear Bermuda shorts at Christmas and New Years - although water and air temperatures in winter will be cooler than in the Caribbean. And it's all available with a 95 minute flight on US Airways from National Airport in Alexandria, Virginia.

Mark Twain wrote the following after spending time in Bermuda during the late Nineteenth Century: "You go to heaven if you want; I'll stay in Bermuda." I couldn't have said it better.

---

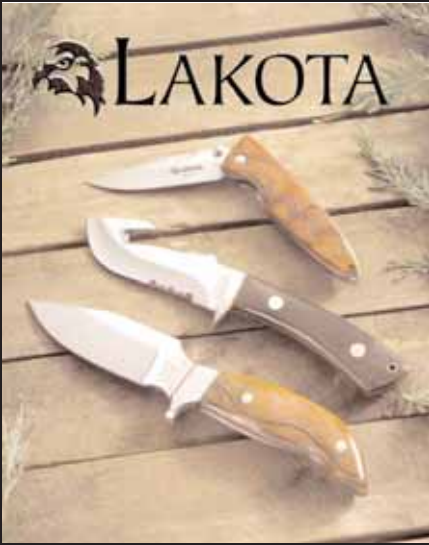
King Montgomery is an award-winning, nationally known outdoor & travel writer/photographer who writes for a number of publications. He is a retired US Army officer, has a degree in fisheries biology, and is a former light-tackle/fly fishing guide on the Potomac River. He lives in Burke with his wife Elizabeth Grant.

**Eco-Fly Guide Service**  
**Capt. Chris Newsome**  
*Specializing in fly or light tackle fishing & eco-tours on the lower Chesapeake Bay*



*Explore tranquil waters by 22' bay boat, 19' flats boat, kayak, or wading*  
[www.bayflyfishing.com](http://www.bayflyfishing.com)  
 (804)815-4895 (804)725-3889

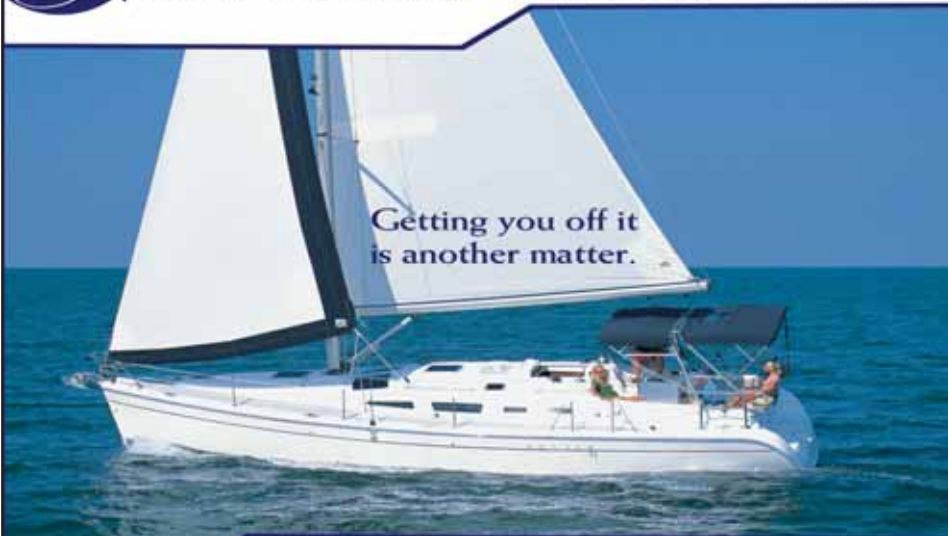
The Hardest Working  
 Knives in the Field



**LAKOTA**




P.O. Box 155  
 Greenville, VA. 24440  
 800-807-1169  
[www.lakotaknife.com](http://www.lakotaknife.com)

**Norton's** can put you on the boat of your dreams.



Getting you off it is another matter.

At Norton's Yacht Sales you can pick the best new or used boat for your money from the largest selection in Deltaville. We're one of the largest Hunter sailboat dealers and the #1 dealer in Customer Service for Hunter sailboats in the world. Stop by anytime and see why our customers love us!

**Norton's Yacht Sales, Inc.**  
 Deltaville, Virginia • 804-776-9211 • fax 804-776-9044 • [www.nortonyachts.com](http://www.nortonyachts.com)