

Water, Water, Everywhere

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Daniel Moore Thompson
formerly of The End Result

There is something about being on the water that soothes the soul. Whether you're sailing through light seas, lying on a sandy beach, splashing in the surf, exploring coves lined with tangled mangroves, or just hanging out on a dock with fishing pole in hand, the lure of the water brought you to this place and time.

On my birthday in May thirty-two years ago, my husband, Steve, and I ended our quest to find a new home for our sailing school on the tip of Captiva Island. Looking for the perfect destination resort, we traveled from Port St. Lucie down to the Florida Keys and back up to Marco Island, where a friendly beach boy said, "Go to Captiva."

As we drove over the Sanibel Causeway, we felt we were entering another era, deliciously calm and, yes, captivating. We meandered down Periwinkle Way in the shade of a magical green canopy, rustling with the breeze off Pine Island Sound. The Gulf emerged and took our breath away as we neared Blind Pass, which in those days was flush with water passing back and forth from the Gulf and Roosevelt Channel.

We were very quiet, both of us thinking, "What better place to be than an island surrounded by water?" Awed by this perfect paradise, our destiny changed when we arrived at South Seas Plantation, where our Offshore Sailing School remains today.

The islands of Sanibel and Captiva, and Southwest Florida in general, may be the most perfect place in the world to enjoy everything that goes along with being on or near the water. We lived on Sanibel for more than twelve years, and during that time, we tried to experience everything there is to do with the water.



Kayaking through the waterways of the "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge with an expert guide is thrilling. Sailing on the Gulf or Pine Island Sound is cathartic. Enjoying cocktails on a powerboat in Tarpon Bay in the setting sun: priceless. Fishing, floating, swimming, board- and kitesailing, paragliding, joining friends by boat at a favorite restaurant...well, it just doesn't get any better, anywhere else.

This issue of *Times of the Islands* inspires readers to explore waterways both local and farther flung. Features uncover the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef, the jewels of Florida's Treasure Coast, and the efforts to return scallops and oysters to area waterways. Other stories focus on everything from water safety and waterside restaurants to a local manufacturer of skimboards.

So relax. Refresh. And as the wind plays in your hair, let the sand dust your feet and a distant horizon carry you away.

Doris Colgate
Chief Executive Officer and President,
Offshore Sailing School