

inexperienced and draw comfort from being able to access support from other more experienced sailors.

“The overall safety record of the six around the world events that I organised is quite outstanding, although unfortunately it was in that first round the world rally that there was one fatality and one boat lost.”

## Life changing

So who is taking part in these rallies? Bishop has seen a whole plethora of entries from all corners of the globe and walks of life during his long tenure at the World Cruising Club, yet he does acknowledge there is a typical participant, as he explains: “In terms of our client base, it’s hugely diverse with entrants from over 30 different countries.

“Generally speaking, our clients will be a couple in their mid-50s who have taken early retirement, although that is just a general picture. We also have a lot of sailors who are taking a gap year and that really can be anyone from their late 20s to mid-50s.

“Many will return back to their normal life once the rally is over, although we do find that many who take part in the World ARC tend to find it a completely life-changing experience and find it difficult to step back into their old life.

“That’s because these rallies genuinely can be life-changing experiences. To see the friendships that are made along the way is really part of the magic of organising these events; it’s what makes it worthwhile for us and keeps us pushing on with these rallies year on year.”



**ABOVE**  
ARC Participants prepare for departure across the Atlantic

**BELOW**  
Many rallies open the doors to exotic locations along the way

## Which rally is for me?

These days there are so many rallies out there, it’s difficult to work out what to choose from. Here’s a handy list of some of the options available: All prices are based on a 40ft (12.2m) yacht with two crew aged over 16.

### Europe ARC PORTUGAL

**Start date:** May

**Price:** £675

**Contact:** worldcruising.com

Often treated as a shakedown for the ARC, this WCC organised event runs from Plymouth and takes in Bayona, Povoá de Varzim, Gaia, Figueira da Foz, Peniche, Oerias, Sines and Lagos.

### EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN YACHT RALLY

**Start date:** April

**Cost:** tbc

**Contact:** emyr.com

One of the longest running rallies, having been set up on a not for profit basis in 1990. In the past, the rally took in Syria and Lebanon, but the organisers have had to take a flexible approach in recent years due to political unrest and for 2017, the rally is restricted to 60 boats and sticks to the Turkish coastline.

### ARC BALTIC

**Start date:** July

**Cost:** £3,780

**Contact:** worldcruising.com

A six week, 1,800 mile cruise around the Baltic taking in all the important cities and some stunning cruising grounds along the way. Starting in Rostock it takes in Rønne, Visby, Tallinn, St Petersburg, Helsinki, Stockholm and Kalmar.

### Atlantic crossing (east to west)

**ARC/ARC+**

**Start date:** November

**Cost:** £1,280 (£1,370 for ARC+)

**Contact:** worldcruising.com

Needs no introduction. Still the biggest rally out there and running from Las Palmas in the Canaries across to St Lucia in the Caribbean. ARC+ is an extension of the ARC that also takes in the Cape Verde islands on the way. Otherwise, the format is the same as the ARC, starting from Las Palmas and taking in the Cape Verde Islands en route to Saint Lucia.

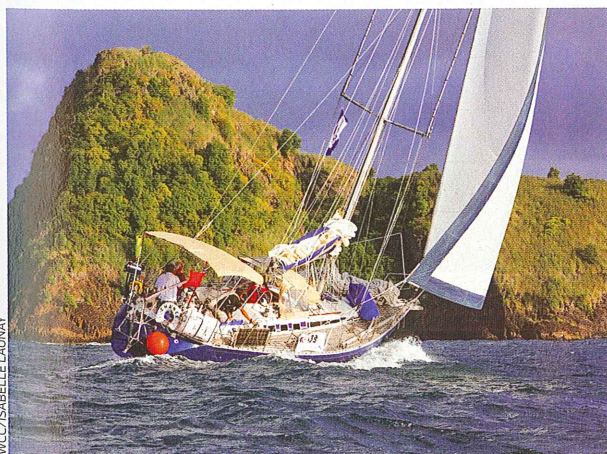
### ATLANTIC ODYSSEY/ CARIBBEAN ODYSSEY

**Start dates:** November and January

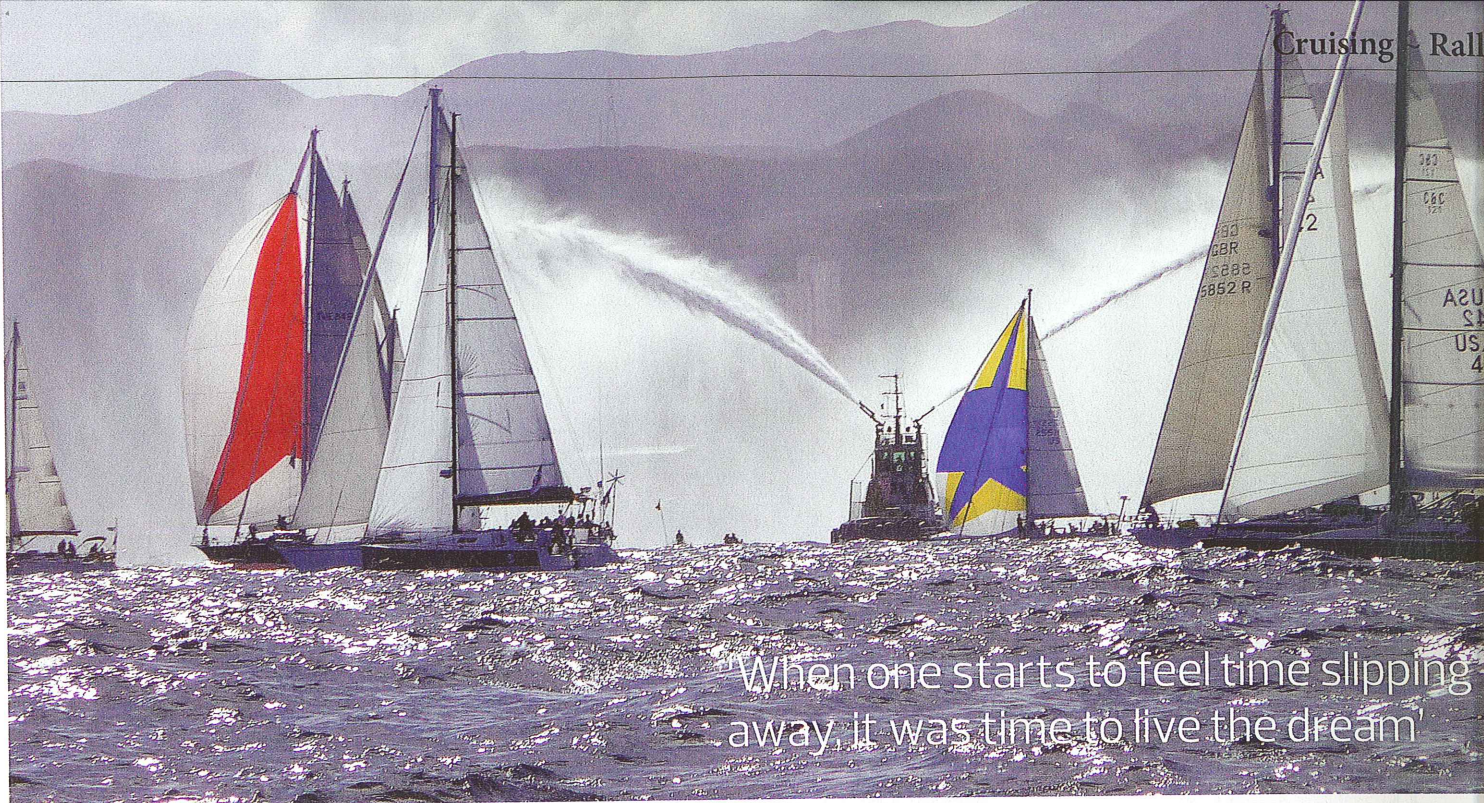
**Price:** £1,100 (children under 18 free)

**Contact:** cornellsailing.com

Two rallies organised by Jimmy Cornell, the originator of the rally concept. Cornell wanted to move away from the competitive aspects of some of the rallies and return to pure cruising roots with the emphasis on →



WCC/ISABELLE LAUNAY



When one starts to feel time slipping away, it was time to live the dream

family cruising. The course runs from Tenerife to Barbados for the Atlantic Odyssey but there is an option to take in the Cape Verde islands.

#### RALLYE LES ÎLES DU SOLEIL

**Start dates:** November

**Price:** tbc

**Contact:** rallye-ilesdusoleil.com

An Atlantic crossing from Tenerife to Marie Galante in Guadeloupe. In the past, this event took in ports in Brazil, with participants even venturing up the Amazon, but it has now reverted to a more straightforward route.

#### ARC EUROPE

**Start:** May and June

**Price:** £1,350

**Contact:** worldcruising.com

This event offers two routes – from Chesapeake Bay in the US or from Tortola, British Virgin Islands – to take a fleet to Bermuda, then on the more testing route across the Atlantic from west to east via the Azores before continuing to Europe.

#### Around the world

##### WORLD ARC

**Price:** £20,600

**Contact:** worldcruising.com

**Start dates:** January from Saint Lucia; September from Australia

The World ARC carries on from where the ARC leaves off in St Lucia, taking participants through the Panama Canal and into the Pacific before heading into the Indian Ocean and down to Australia.

The Suez Canal is eschewed in favour of stopovers in South Africa and Brazil before heading back to the UK.

#### OYSTER WORLD RALLY

**Start date:** January

**Price:** £20–£25,000

(depending on LOA)

**Contact:** oysterworldrally.com

Oyster's take on a world rally enjoyed its inaugural run in 2013–14 and proved a big hit. The 2017–18 event is now under way, with participants currently up in the south seas. The event, which is naturally only open to owners of Oyster yachts, runs from Antigua to Antigua and is a fully-supported, 27,000 mile circumnavigation. The route has been extended from 15 to 27 months and comprises four connecting stages.

#### US and Caribbean

##### ARC BAHAMAS

**Start date:** November

**Price:** tbc

**Contact:** worldcruising.com

A trip through the Caribbean from Portsmouth, Virginia, at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay and threads its way to Harborview Marina in the Abacos.

##### ARC CARIBBEAN 1500

**Start date:** November

**Price:** £1,240

**Contact:** worldcruising.com

The Caribbean 1500 takes yachts from Portsmouth on the east coast of the USA, down to Nanny Cay, Tortola in the British Virgin Islands

#### ABOVE

The departure of hundreds of yachts in company often garners a carnival atmosphere

#### BELOW

The social aspect of the ARC is a big draw for participants

#### ARC USA

**Start dates:** April

**Price:** £1,240

**Contact:** worldcruising.com

A Caribbean islands tour via Nanny Cay, Tortola BVI to St George's Bermuda, then on to Portsmouth, Virginia or other east coast ports, or to Fort Lauderdale via the Old Bahama Channel.

#### Pacific

##### PACIFIC PUDDLE JUMP

**Start date:** February

**Price:** free

**Contact:** pacificpuddlejump.com

This is much less of a rigid event than some of the other rallies. There is no fee to enter and it is more a loose community of boats all headed from the east coast of the US, bound for French Polynesia. There is also no fixed start date and entrants can set off any time between February and June.

