

# Preparing for Sea



By Rich Wilson  
aboard *Great American II*

Preparations for this voyage began a year ago. *Great American II (GAI)* was berthed in Sydney, Australia. We had to service her sails, replace worn blocks and shackles, upgrade satellite link and laptop software, repaint the bottom, gather nutritious provisions, and buy nautical charts of new areas. The charts are exciting, for they are our roadmap, and they provoke thinking about history, countries, peoples and cultures.

Our sea trial, during which we sailed from Sydney to Hong Kong, took us through the Tasman, Coral, and Solomon Seas, past Guadalcanal, New Britain, Bougainville, Guam, Luzon, Batan, and on to Hong Kong.

The Pacific theatre of World War II was fought on these waters and islands. We thought long and hard of the epic battles and enormous sacrifices made, and how the world was changed there.

Finally landing in Hong Kong was a wonderful experience. Ashore, the people are exceedingly friendly, efficient, and courteous. On Saturday evenings, massive crowds of young people flow through the streets, arm-in-arm, happily window-shopping, and chatting on cell phones.

The harbor reminds you that Hong Kong is the gateway to China. Ferries, cruise ships, tugs and barges, container ships and sampans effortlessly weave through

the harbor. Every ship, mighty or small, modern or ageless, is going deliberately about its business.

Making our offering to Tin Hau, the ancient Goddess of the Sea, we will sail the modern *GAI* deliberately along the path of *Sea Witch* on the China trade route linking Hong Kong to New York.

Date: Mar 15, 2003  
Position:  
22° 17'N / 114° 11'E  
Docked in Hong Kong

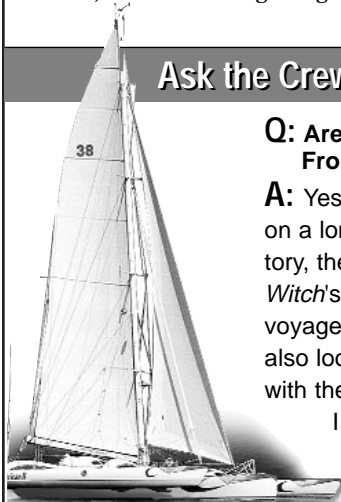
**Win a Call!**  
From *GA II* at sea!  
Details online.



ANSWERS ON  
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1. What nations border the South China Sea?
2. Are there pirates there?
3. How many ships transit the Straits of Malacca daily?

## Ask the Crew of Great American II



**Q: Are you excited about the voyage?**  
From Annie, MA, USA.

**A:** Yes! I have always dreamed of sailing on a long ocean voyage. Since I love history, the idea of racing against *Sea Witch's* 154-year-old record made this voyage even more interesting to me. I am also looking forward to communicating with the many kids following our voyage.

I hope you and your classmates are as excited as we are.

—answered by Rich du Moulin



Locate newspaper articles that pertain to China (or any other foreign country). Classify these clippings into categories such as social, political, economic, recreational, literary, and arts and humanities categories.