

Quantum Sailing Experience – Testimonial



I am Peter Martin a 54 year old (well fed and watered) business man and I sailed on Quantum Leap with my 14 year old son Jack, (super keen/super fit) and my 11 year old daughter Gabby, (willing but a little unsure).

We took a skippered charter in August 2009 for 7 days and again a skippered charter in October for 4/5 days. Glenn Smallcombe was our skipper on both cruises.

Before these cruises, during 2008 Jack and I had spent a week in Greece doing our “Competent Crew” and 2 weeks in The Solent doing our theory and practical “Day Skipper”. Following those weeks, all three of us did a weeks skippered cruise in the Greek Islands.

After these experiences we were all keen to do some more sailing and took an unskippered charter in The Solent for a week in October 2008. Jack and I felt we had some coastal experience under our belts and we wanted to try some longer passages and out of sight of land. This would also be a way of determining whether we were all committed yachtsmen – especially Gabby who although really adaptable and keen, had not clocked up too many miles.

I was attracted to Quantum Sailing because of the very user friendly web site but mainly because of the skills of the skipper/owner, Glenn Smallcombe. There are many “Yachtmaster” qualified skippers but not that many with their own cruising yacht, so my reasoning was that Glenn would certainly know his way around a yacht and how to get the best out of her! Having questioned hard about charter yachts during my other recent experiences I also felt that an owner/skipper was the right way to go – if it was not perfectly maintained and seaworthy he would not want to be out in it himself!

Quantum Leap was everything I expected. She is completely equipped for any voyage and very comfortable too, both above and below decks. All equipment and fittings are maintained to an excellent standard by Glenn who is personally very fastidious as any of the best experienced sailors tend to be. Glenn gave me a clear sense that there was little about Quantum Leap that he hadn’t taken apart in order to clean, maintain and improve and probably the equipment types in just about every other yacht class too!

It was not just the obviously good condition of Quantum Leap which reassured me right at the start of our experience but also Glenn’s approach to efficient stowage, essential safety briefings and demonstrations and his sheer attention to detail.



Jack’s ambitions for his time on board were clear from the off. Jack wanted the boat to be driven as hard as possible, to stretch as much sail area as possible and to clock some impressive speeds. He also wanted to be in the thick of all and any action, from constantly trimming every sail to

monopolising the navigation. Glenn showed not only great patience and understanding of Jack's needs but proved to be a huge store of experience and knowledge for Jack to draw from. We all learned a great deal about sail craft in a very large range of conditions and even achieved one of Jack's ambitions to fly the spinnaker on a couple of occasions! Jack was able to navigate and gain vital experience of many harbour approaches especially the difficult night ones where Glenn's experience and patient guidance were very much in evidence. It is so much more difficult to teach in potentially dangerous situations than it is to do it yourself, but Glenn was more than able to make sure that the experiences were gained without risk.



Gabby had more modest ambitions during the two cruises but still was determined to learn some new skills and get the notches on her belt towards getting a "Competent Crew" certificate at some stage. Gabby is very slightly built but through Glenn's continual encouragement managed to grow the winching techniques to take the main sheet (almost) fully tight and she grew the confidence and ability to stand by herself at the mast and pull the mainsail just about all the way up! Gabby proved to have a real liking for ropes and managed to figure out what most of the ropes leading in to the cockpit were for, at least enough for Glenn to usefully involve her in working the boat. Despite some long passages, including one of 22 hours, Gabby was involved and entertained all the time and is now very determined and positive around sailing. She will always remember the seeming hours that she and Glenn spent practicing the basic and more complicated knots all sailors are supposed to know as well as the knot puzzles that they set for each other.

For me I was very content to be at sea in a safe and comfortable environment where I could explore many new challenges with a completely reliable and experienced skipper to keep me on the right track. I find that with every voyage I learn new things and found myself, with Glenn, learning beyond elementary things to a lot more - issues such as finessing the sail trim to maximize performance, preventers, safe sail management, better helming and a great deal more. I felt I had enough tasks to keep me gainfully used but felt under pressure at no stage, which I attribute to Glenn's ability to foresee sailing needs and match capabilities to them.

With our two separate cruises over to and around the French coast and Channel Islands we asked for long sailing days to build our experiences and qualifying miles as well as interesting harbours. Those things we were given of course, but we got a great deal more, not least in terms of knowledgeable teaching, great companionship and really good fun!

We clearly were really happy with our cruise last August as we were all so keen to do it again in October and, if I can find some time around Jack's and Gabby's hectic diaries, to do another cruise this year. I thoroughly recommend Glenn and the Quantum Experience and am happy to be contacted (email address provided upon request) to talk some more about how much we appreciated our time with them.

Peter Martin, 10th March 2010