

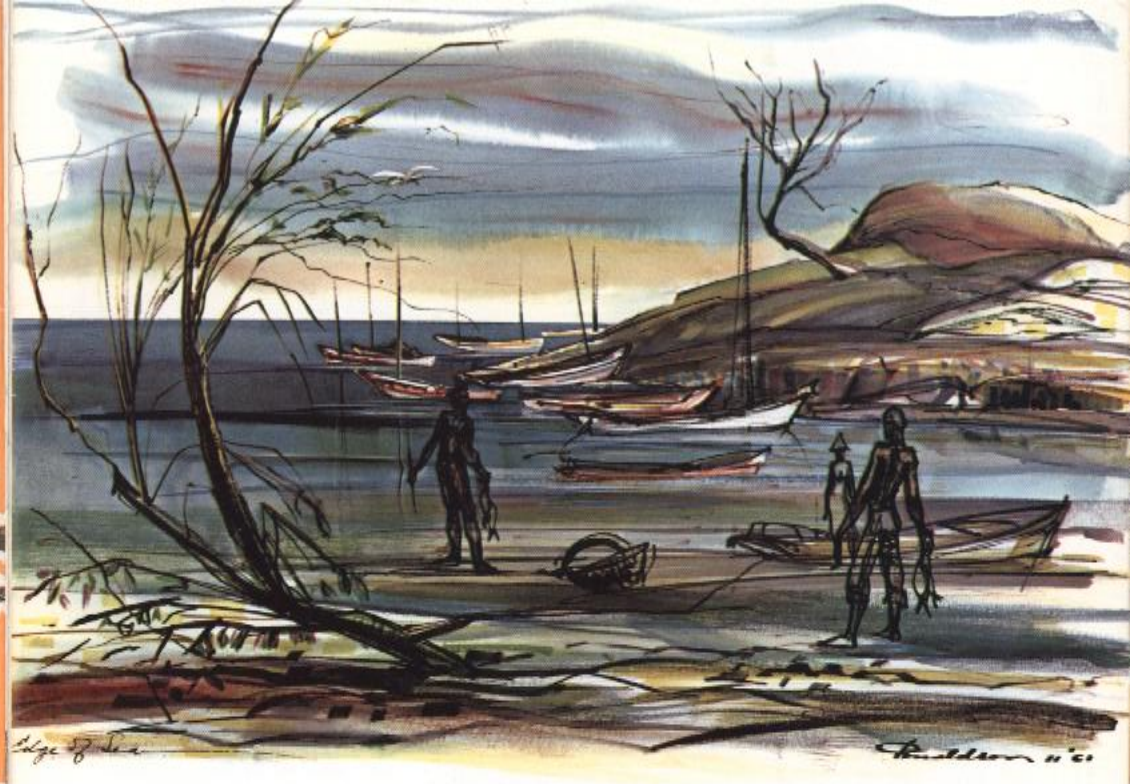
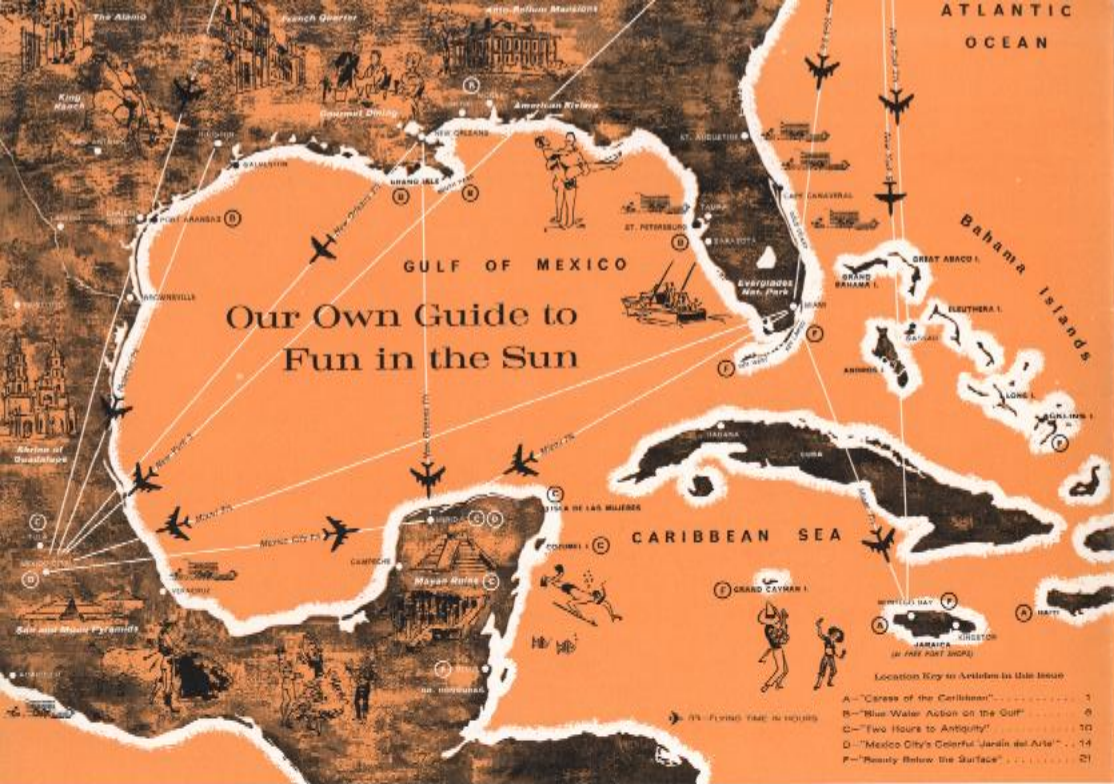
the
Continental
magazine

Volume 2, Number 1



**LURE OF THE
GOLDEN SUN**

Caress of the Caribbean, by Charles A. Rawlings
Mayan Temples and Pyramids, by Oliver La Farge
Yachting... Gulf Fishing... Mexican Art Shopping



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"Wedgwood blue of a magic sea . . ."

Caress of the Caribbean

by Charles A. Rawlings, paintings by Joseph Donaldson and Horace Day

THE CARIBBEAN! What is its unique thrill and vitality? It has it. But after all it is only a thumb of the Atlantic Ocean snugged up against the hot and humid coasts of Central and South America, marked off on the north and east by a curve of islands. On a chart it looks as if a child had tried to make his little private sea in a tidal pool with a barrier of sea shells. Can it be a separate and special place?

Haiti's southern shore was green velvet with a dainty lace fringe of slow surf out of the starboard window of the plane when we picked up a magazine and began reading

Charles A. Rawlings is a nationally known maritime writer and an authority on sailing.

Carleton Mitchell, one of America's most observing and winning small boat sailors. Mitchell thinks it's a separate and special place.

"Another of the charms of cruising," he said, "is that every area takes its character from the life along its shores, both present and past. Each is different because of its combination of geography and history."

Across the plane the Wedgwood blue of the magic sea stretched to infinity, innocent, benign, disarming.

"Sweet one," we said to it, "no wonder you intrigue us. What a past you have. No sea on the globe has swashbuckled and scuttled and sinned more than you."

For 250 years, from 1550 to 1800,

the Caribbean was the cockpit of maritime rivalry for all of Europe. Spain, starting with Columbus,

A familiar Jamaica scene.



A haunting and colorful past

discovered and developed. Holland, France, England plundered, conquered and settled. Catholic and Protestant, trader and pirate, merchant and slaver were all actors in the great and bloody drama, and all at the same time. More treasure of gold and silver moved from west to east across the Caribbean, driving man mad with every slow roll of the heavily laden galleons, than any sea ever floated before or since. Names of men who lived and loved and hated and fought in the Caribbean ring like bells: Drake, Raleigh, Hawkins, Hamilton, Nelson.

Sugar took over when the treasure was gone and conquest stilled—sugar and slaves. The Caribbean for more than a century echoed and shrieked and shuddered with strife and struggle and cruelty and horror. Its blue was stained pink with men's blood. If a colorful past can leave a distillate the Caribbean is haunted with it. One has to be there and be half a poet and feel

it for himself. We were there and we could travel on. Take a small look at the present that Mitchell says blends with the past to make character.

We sat down in Jamaica. Hibiscus was in its prime. Dark green hedges of it were everywhere with the blossoms as red as blood.

But the pleasantest blossom was a yellow-skirted girl's face under a heavy basket and her straight-spined graceful sway as, "Good morning, sar," she said and smiled.

We left the city of Kingston with its hundred smells and teeming streets and hawkers' cries and rode a bus up and down the steep jungle hills of the interior. It was a sweet-smelling jungle, cool with moist, scented air. The royal poinciana flamed amid the wild vines and towering trunks of hardwoods. Banana groves. Cocoa pods hanging jade green on homely little trees.

The north coast has a southeast

breeze, and a small surf was breaking on the white sand at Ocho Rios and Runaway Bay and Discovery Bay where Columbus landed on his second voyage in 1494.

The surf was waiting for us and our new red bathing trunks at Montego Bay. Montego is the Riviera of the Caribbean. The grand hotels are spaced along the curve of the bay, each one looking much like the one before. An entrance archway, curving drive, broad portico with uniformed bell boys waiting. A seaside veranda with the breeze rippling the colored awnings. Then the perfect white beach sloping down to the perfect sea; soft green in the shallows, jade green in the middle depths and then the unforgettable blue that sank the galleons.

Beyond the last of the swanky inns, down the coast a piece, is Round Hill. It sold lot by lot in a brilliant promotion that was restricted to the rich-famous. Not the rich or famous. You have to be both.

We found a lonely stretch of beach and launched the new red trunks. The cares of the Caribbean on the human hide is schooled voluptuousness. You stop feeling so sorry for the men who had to walk the plank in pirate days.

The time to come into Saint Thomas, in the Virgins, is after dark but not so late you miss a drink and dinner. We walked around the corner of the hotel's porch and stopped short. Ahead was fairyland. Stretching up Denmark Hill a half mile away, up, up were ten thousand lights. They twinkled and glowed in the soft night. They reflected on the still glass of the little harbor. The waiter came and without taking our eyes away we said the habitual ritual.

"Daiquiri, please. Mount Gay or Vat 19. Tell him one squirt from the syrup bottle. Make it dry."

Why were these lights so beautiful? Suddenly it came. There was no neon hideousness. No garish reds and oranges and bilious blues. These were all white lights. We forget the beauty of white light against the night. The waiter came.

"Where are the fancy colored lights of other cities?" we asked.

"These are the lights of our city

Horace Day

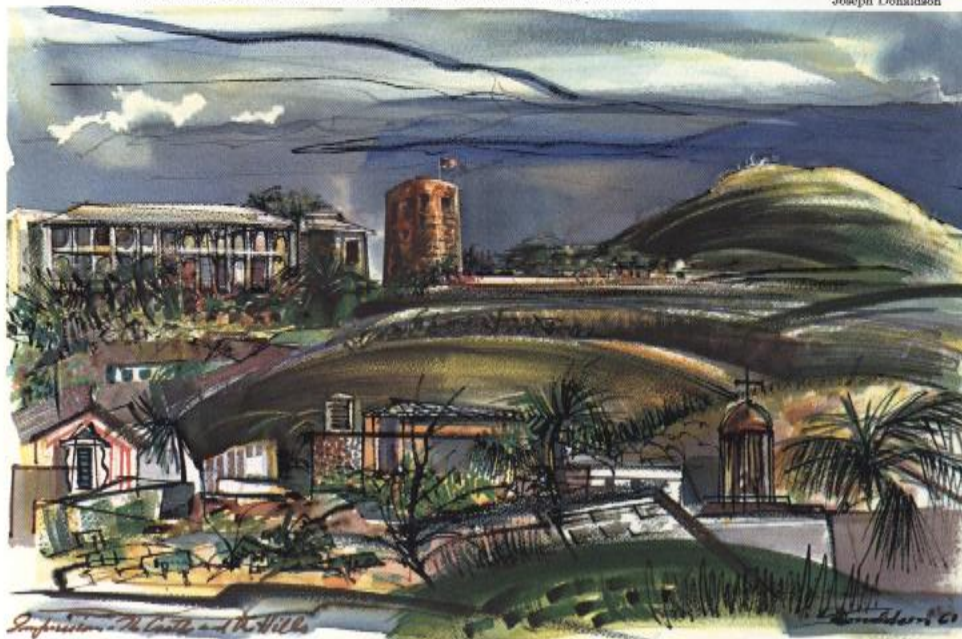


A lush jungle shades this island road.



Joseph Donaldson

Green hills dominate the landscape of St. Thomas, in the Virgin Islands.



Improvements in the Coast and the Hills

