

A Midnight Excursion

"Nowhere, Costa Rica" is something I will always ditch my cocktail dress and big city lifestyle for!

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As always, akin with all true fishermen, the excitement of a fishing excursion arouses the utmost excitement deeply within me. In this case, we were headed out on a journey that I will never forget. Upon our arrival in Los Suenos, Costa Rica, we had dinner waiting for us in the salon of our 68 ft. Bayliss sportfisher. Discussing our plan with the Captain, we decided to begin our journey in the twilight that preceded our day ahead. Slightly tired from our flight, but ready to embark, we stoked the fire of the engines, and settled into our staterooms, dreaming of the fishing that laid in store for us.

We left the marina in the moonlight, and the stars twinkled silently above us. Both the sky and water were pitch black, and we slept soundly in preparation for the enjoyment ahead. Overnight, we went 80 miles offshore at a slow pace of 9 knots, in order to conserve fuel. In these instances, it makes a considerable financial difference

to travel slowly when covering long distances to reach your fishing destination. For example, we used approximately \$400 in fuel by taking the entire night to get there, with the crew sleeping in shifts. If we had gone the usual cruise speed of 34 knots, we would have burned around \$2,000 in fuel for the trip. Conservation is key, and it's favorable to use the best judgment when making these decisions. Tucking into my stateroom, I rested up for the morning ahead of us.

Rising at dawn, we prepared to run about an hour more in order to reach our endpoint for billfishing. Suddenly, as we were underway, there was a huge "thud" as we unexpectedly ran over a submerged log hidden in the water. Sometimes, floating logs can become saturated with water; they sink just beneath the surface. This makes them unavoidable and undetectable to the human eye. Regardless of keen eyes and extra effort, you cannot see submerged

items. The waters of Costa Rica are treacherous in rainy seasons during July through November.

Examining the situation, we assessed that one of the propellers had been bent, but luckily the damage wasn't extremely detrimental, and the worst consequence was that we needed to take the same slow pace on our return to the marina. It's always good to have backup parts for the essential gear on your vessel, especially if you are pre-fishing before a tournament. Experienced with this concept, we had two sets of new wheels on shore, so we knew that the situation was covered, and the dilemma would be easily resolved.

After a successful day of billfishing, the sun was setting in the dusty-blue sky. As the sun set, and the horizon faded to black, my senses were coming alive with anticipation. I assure you, it's like the giddy feeling of going to a sleepover party in grade school,



As a senior in journalism school, Lace is a columnist for several fishing magazines. Combining her media training with her love of fishing, she has achieved the perfect combination in her professional career. Living between New York and Florida is exciting for Lace, and escaping from big city life is what keeps this angler happy!

PHOTO BY:
Jimmy Nelson

