

Introduction

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The area of sheltered water known as "Cork Harbour" is very much like Milford Haven across the St Georges Channel in SW Wales in that it has a moderately wide entrance with shallow water in the middle of the entrance and which then opens out into an expanse of water which houses oil, gas and container terminals as well as general cargo docks. On top of this there are five marinas and a sixth being developed along with possibilities for anchoring.

The shores vary from being wooded and idyllic to industrial and 'orrid. It is extremely popular as a venue for yachties both local and visiting. For a summer's cruise from UK one has the choice of either going to Kilmore, pottering along to Cork before returning to UK or vice versa; it depends very much on time, weather and crew; it's about a day and a half from Padstow/Scillies at four kts.

Most yachtsmen make for the facilities in Crosshaven as it is the closest to the entrance and has three marinas and a pier/pontoon but this is very busy in the summer; others will prefer to book ahead and wander up to the East Ferry Marina in the East Passage surrounded by woodlands whilst yet others might prefer to work their way up through the West Passage past Cobh (pronounced "Cove") to Cork City itself where there is now a pontoon with limited room in the middle of the city just below the Michael Connolly bridge.

Cobh Sailing Club opposite Haulbowline Island is developing its pontoon landings to accomodate a few visitors but it has yet to develop the infrastructure to go with it.

Cork Harbour Marina is a new marina under development in Monkstown Bay opposite the Cork Dockyard. At the moment it has 90 berths with berths reserved for 8 visitors and has planning and, more importantly, the finance for a further 200 berths. They have not yet built their main facilities block but have access to toilets and showers at a local sailing club. This will be welcome addition to the facilities in Cork Harbour as the present ones are oversubscribed. The main facilities block is still promised but there's problem with planning etc (Typical of town planners - "attract the visitors by allowing the building of pontoons in the water - but don't you dare interfere with the land!)

The main yacht club is the Royal Cork in Crosshaven, but scattered around the shores are various small boat clubs, sailing schools and rowing clubs, (though the rowing clubs are in the upper reaches beyond Blackwater Point) the result of which is that in just about anywhere you could drop your pick someone has sunk a permanent mooring.

The popular anchorages up the Owenboy River beyond Crosshaven are pretty well full of moorings but normally you can find room up the East Passage beyond the East Passage Marina (beware of the current through here). It's a case of matching your requirements with what is available and at what cost; you should reckon on between 20 and 28 Euros a night for a 10 meter boat wherever you tie up apart, that is, if you anchor up the East Passage where it is free. The problem with anchoring will be finding somewhere to come ashore in your dinghy because it dries to mud in a lot of places and, of course, you could be miles away from anywhere in terms of pubs and shops.

Having said all that, with a bit of exploration, whatever your fancy, you should be able to find something to suit you here and of course the advantage is that you can mix and match!

Approach

The approach is straightforward and the white light house on Roche's Point is visible for miles;

..... there is shallowish water (not a problem for the average yacht) in the middle of the entrance which gives rise to two possible passages into the harbour for large vessels. Both passages have their own port and starboard marks and they join together beyond the NCM positioned to cover the shallows from the North.

From there on in the passage is marked in the standard way taking one to the East of the two main islands in the centre of the "lower" harbour. To get into Crosshaven on the Owenboy River you branch off the main channel at Rams Head picking up the port and starboard marks to the NW of the Head. At this stage is it worth noting that there are a plethora of PHM and SHM with time signatures varying from 2.5 sec to 10 sec, all of which will be visible at some stage of a night approach so it looks a bit like a Christmas tree and if you are not familiar with this entrance, or are not in recent practice at night sailing this is not the place to chose for a first try at night; best aim for a daylight entry.

The Crosshaven marinas are clearly marked on AC 1777-0 and our O/H Google shot; it is up to you which one you contact and where you choose to clew up. It would be wise to contact the marinas concerned before setting out. If you don't want to join the boats at the marinas in Crosshaven you could always anchor in White Bay or Grab-all Bay, there are no services ashore but in winds from the right direction they would be somewhere to anchor if you feel like a rest before taking on the harbour.

Further in you can veer off to starboard abeam Spike Island at the Tug Moorings to the NNE of the Whitegate Terminal and make for the East passage; there are moorings for shallow draft boats at Aghada pier on the South side opposite the East Passage and you would be able to anchor here. Otherwise continue on North into the East Passage and tie up at the marina (if room) or continue past there to anchor clear of the moorings (consider a tripping line)

At the moment, if you by pass Crosshaven and the East Passage, you are bound either for the new marina at Monkstown or for Cork City's Marina pontoon up the West Passage.

The West passage is very tidal and it would be a waste of time to attempt to get up to Cork against the ebb and it should be noted that the channel across Lough Mahon is fairly narrow so it would be disastrous to stray too far out of it, best do it on a flood when it'll take just over an hour from the Cobh Dockyard.

Port of cork Guidance notes for Leisure Craft

<http://www.portofcork.ie/index.cfm/page/guidancenotesetc>

Berthing

As has been said, space is at a premium here and it would be wise..... to contact your chosen marina before setting out to ascertain whether space is available.

CROSSHAVEN:

There are three marinas; the Royal Cork Yacht Club, the Salve marina, and the Crosshaven Boatyard. As well as those you can come alongside at the town Pier for a limited time to take on supplies if there is room.

Crosshaven Boatyard Marina is charging 23 Euros per night for a 10m boat in 2019; showers included in that, but shore power on prepaid cards.

<http://www.crosshavenboatyard.com>

Salve Marina claims to have only fully equipped Marine Engineering shop on this coast. It takes visitors and charged 2.95 Euros per metre per night in 2021 but shore power and showers were included in that. They need

advanced bookings as they were "fully booked" when we contacted them

Royal Cork Yacht Club The club welcomes visitors (membership of a yacht club is preferable but not exclusive). In 2019 they are charging 32 Euros for a 30 ft boat and 37 Euros for 31 to 35 ft boat which included shore power and showers. They have diesel on tap and, of course, a club bar and restaurant.

Some of the moorings up river from the Royal Cork belong to members of that club; you may be able to arrange to use one of those.

<http://www.royalcork.com/visitors/>

The anchorage at Drake's Pool is a bit busier than it was when Drake hid here; in fact it will be almost impossible to find some where to put down your anchor.

East Passage:

There is one marina here with limited capacity along with moorings and room to anchor.

Cobh (Whitepoint) Marina:

This marina which first came to light back in 2014 and was the great hope of the Cove Sailing Club. Those dreams have come to fruition and they now have a new marina with a wave break to reduce the swell from passing ships. It has been a long time in coming but the volunteers from the Sailing Club are to be congratulated on the results of their endeavours.

<http://covesailingclub.ie>

They look forward to seeing visitors and their facilities can be found in the Marina section of their website above. In 2022 they are charging 25 Euros per night up to 30ft and over 31 ft 30 Euros

Cork Harbour Marina:

This is still under construction with the initial phases complete with 82 berths available. The shore side amenities are not yet built and are not expected for the summer of 2014. They are charging 25 Euros per night up to 10m and 2.50 Euros per metre on top of that. This includes shore power

Update 2022 They are **still** awaiting the permissions for shore side buildings here but the local Marina Manager has found ways to circumvent this problem. He can get Gas or Camping gas delivered almost immediately, he can get diesel in 5 gallon drums, showers and toilets are available in the Sailing Club and he would run you out to the local supermarket and, finally, there are buses to the City centre. Boatyard Services would have to be sourced elsewhere in Cork. <http://www.corkharbourmarina.com/>

Cork City Marina:

This marina changed ownership in February of 2021 and is now owned by an American Company called Tower Holdings Group. There is a dearth of information on the facilities available and what plans are intended for its development. It is in the heart of the city of Cork alongside the Customs Quay and you may have to raft alongside another boat . The website below was posted in 2010 and all the telephone numbers and much of the information is historical . In 2013 they were charging 10 Euros per night for up to 12m (5 Euros per night for shore power), but that was just for 3 nights, after 3 nights the price trebled as they want to discourage visitors from settling in for the summer!! They do not have showers ashore but have an arrangement with a nearby hotel for crews to use the showers (They will charge)

http://www.portofcork.ie/contentfiles/Cork%20City%20Marina%20Operating%20Rules_2.pdf

Facilities

All marinas have water and power on all pontoons and, with the exception of the new Cork Harbour Marina at Monkstown, have showers and toilets ashore. Crosshaven does not have a filling station but has diesel available. Arrangements can be made for petrol for outboards. There is a hardware store (Powers) in Crosshaven which does

Calor gas and Camping Gaz refills.

At Monkstown they have access to toilets and showers at the local sailing club but the nearest fuel is at Passage West (again they will help out with this).

Provisions are readily available at Crosshaven but elsewhere will involve a bit of a walk. East Ferry is a good 3.5 to 4miles away from Cobh and has no bus service.

There is a coffee shop at Monkstown and a limited bus service to Passage West which is where the nearest shops of any size are.

If you need marine services they will be available somewhere in Cork Harbour but the main concentration of these is at Crosshaven.

What To Do

Depends on where you are; everything at Crosshaven but as you retreat from the major yachting centres the facilities become reduced. Cork City itself has plenty of everything.

History