

# Boating with Missy



## In Her Shoes

Last weekend I was sitting on the end of the dock with my friend, and we were dangling our feet in the water. We looked up to see this very shiny, very odd-looking boat cruise by. It was like a pilothouse and an aft-cabin had a short baby. There was no gunnel to walk around the boat; there was a mere lip of a swim grid and only ladders from the transom over the aft cabin to the helm. We couldn't figure out how you could dock the boat by yourself because you would have floated away from the dock by the time you climbed down the ladders. By Murphy's Law, the wind hardly ever pushes you "on" the dock. We stared in wonder as a woman poked her head out of the driving station, gave us a great big smile and a wave. As we waved back, my friend said to me, "Would you tell her?" I replied, "That depends on whether I was asked before or after she bought the boat." Honesty is tricky.

There are as many different styles of boats as there are people, so you have to take a moment to understand why someone makes the choices that they do. I chose my boat because it had a big back deck, and I enjoy eating outside, even in the rain. Also, she is a beamy girl and when someone steps on the back deck, the drinks don't spill. Priorities.

My friend is a hardcore sailor who prefers wooden boats and often pokes fun at my "plastic" boat —she keeps me real. After the boat passed and the wake refreshed our knees, she turned to me and said, "Why didn't you get a sailboat?" That's easy. I was working full-time, and I had to get to where I was going. I would never admit this to her, but truth be told, every time I have to fill the gas tank, I consider sail. In fact, my introduction to sailing was many moons ago when I was ten or eleven. My dad's friend had a 30-foot sailboat and thought it would be a great idea to take the kids in the "Round Saltspring

Race." Midway through the race, we had all jumped in the water and we were swimming faster than the boat was moving. There was no wind, so it wasn't a great day of sailing, but it was a great day of boating.

Lately, I have been spending a lot of time with my feet in the water, contemplating life. It has been six months of our new normal on the water, and now and then, I take a moment to think about the days gone by. A big hug from an old friend, a dock party with great food, or a good old-fashioned Mediterranean mooring with multiple boats and a paesano-style dinner, all squished together on a long picnic table. I am grateful to be on the water, but happiness comes in waves.

I grew up watching Oprah, and one of my favorite moments was when Joni Jacques bought a pair of Oprah's shoes at a charity auction. Joni's life wasn't going well, and she didn't have the money, but she knew she had to go home with something. The shoes were too big to wear, but when life challenged her, she put them on so she would know what it was like to stand in Oprah's shoes.

That's the thing, I guess. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and we are always surrounded by differing opinions and varying choices. The secret now is to love, be loved, be kind, and appreciate what it is like to be in her shoes.

**Missy grew up boating with her family in the Gulf Islands. She works for a yacht services company based in Vancouver, B.C. and boats most weekends from April to October. A self-proclaimed weekend warrior, she enjoys blogging about everything cool for women who boat at [missygoesboating.com](http://missygoesboating.com).**