



# Guatemala

## A Cruisers' Guide to

# Rio Dulce

**FULLY REVISED SECOND EDITION**

Rio Dulce nestles at the heart of the northwest Caribbean and is much more than just a safe haven for your boat during the hurricane season. From there, you can set off on a voyage of discovery and explore waters that are as yet unspoilt by the nautical tourism industry, which has taken hold of much of the Caribbean. Armed with a spirit of adventure, you will find sailing these seas highly rewarding, as you can explore stunning locations, experience local cultures, and share your journey and adventures with fellow cruisers. You can also moor your boat on Rio Dulce and set off to discover Guatemala's fascinating history, archaeological sites and breath-taking natural beauty. Rio Dulce is an eclectic world where friendly locals live and work side-by-side with a community of international cruisers: some come for a short stay or a season; others arrive and stay for life.

This guide aims to reawaken cruisers' interest in this relatively unknown, yet enchanting part of the world. It combines nautical information with the personal experience of the authors, who sailed to Rio Dulce almost by chance, but were immediately bowled over by its beauty.

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### Lilia Hartmann & Roberto Trapani

They live and work in Rome and have been sailing for about 30 years. They have travelled throughout the Mediterranean, skippered a boat from Sweden to Spain, and sailed from the River Tiber to the River Hamble in the UK via the rivers and canals of France. As they wanted to combine their love of sea travel with their work, in 2006 they embarked on the first leg of a long journey. Every year, they sail for about three months and then return home, leaving their boat *Ganesh* in a safe port from where they recommence their journey the following year. Their travels have taken them to the Moroccan coast, the Canary Islands, Capo Verde and Senegal, from where they crossed the Atlantic, via the Equator, and docked in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil. They then sailed the east coast of Brazil, via Fernando de Noronha, until they reached the Amazon, sailing 600 miles inland. They sailed on to French Guyana, Trinidad, the Antilles, Cuba and from there to Rio Dulce, Guatemala. They were so enamoured with Rio Dulce that they left *Ganesh* there for two seasons. They explored also the southern part of the West Caribbean: Panama, the San Blas Islands and the beautiful Cartagena. In 2016 they sailed back to Rio Dulce where they left *Ganesh* for another season and in 2017 they eventually left the Caribbean Sea via Mexico and Cuba to reach the US East Coast. The journey goes on northwards...