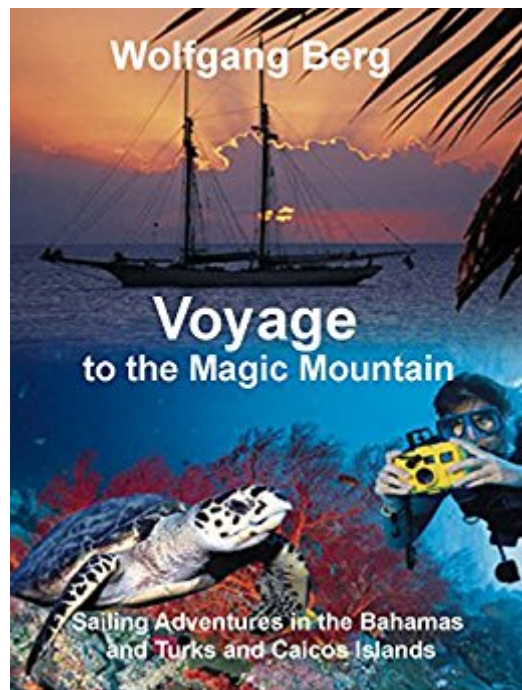




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Voyage To The Magic Mountain: Sailing Adventures In The Bahamas And Turks And Caicos Islands



Synopsis

We wanted to sail where few sailors had ever traveled, exploring the "Out Islands" and beyond, sailing to the "Magic Mountain". While the Bahamas got their independence, a group of flat islands, far beyond the Out Islands of the Bahamas seemed to be forgotten, even by the British government, who owns this crown colony, the Turks and Caicos Islands. Perhaps the Foreign Office in London had other things to worry about than this last little colony; or the colonial department was dissolved, leaving the colony hanging in midair between dependence and independence. These islands, as flat as they may appear on the surface, are actually a huge mountain rising up 8000 feet from one of the deepest bottoms of the ocean. This is our "Magic Mountain". Only the diver can see that the islands are surrounded by steep walls with canyons, caves, and crevices harboring magic sea life in crystal clear water, as clear and pure as the millions of stars at night above them, undisturbed by the lights and the air pollution of America's large land mass. Bizarre shapes of coral and rocks, sponges of huge dimensions and strange shapes make the Rocky Mountains look pale. A snow-white plateau spreads between the peaks of this mountain range, just like the eternal snow on Greenland or the highest land mountains. The fine sand that looks like snow is covered by only a few feet of light blue water. This huge plateau is called the "Caicos Bank", and a similar formation exists in most island groups of the Bahamas. The sand grows and grows continuously, as if it were snowing. And like glaciers, it flows down through canyons and valleys into the deep of the ocean. The voyage that I am about to describe is a mixture of dreams and hard awakenings. Fear and risk are always part of adventure. Things go wrong unexpectedly but great discoveries happen the same way. And after strange encounters with people and sea creatures, after a day of diving, floating weightlessly through tropical coral reefs, eye to eye with wild creatures from another world, when we were alone on the ocean in a dark night, the Milky Way stretched across the sky, we saw our world and ourselves in a new and different light.

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