

# West Bay — Overview

CHS Chart No: 4279 — Bras d'Or Lake

## Description:

Being 'to weather' of the prevailing south westerlies of the Bras d'Or Lakes, West Bay, historically rich and yielding many beautiful anchorages, does not enjoy the exploration of the cruiser which it deserves.

The twelve mile long bay is almost a consistent five miles in width and bounded on both sides by high hills reaching an elevation of 750 feet. Along the North Mountain range the shores drop precipitously while along the southern shore of Sporting Mountain, a number of inclined islands dot the shorelines presenting their eroded clay faces towards the Bay.

Over two dozen wooded and uninhabited islands, some joined to the shore by thin sandbars and others joined to each other in mid-bay forming good anchorages, dot the Bay. Other islands, long since eroded beneath the surface by wind and water, constitute a half dozen shoals several of which are marked with navigational aids and only three of which carry less than 8 feet of water.

The early beginnings of Cape Breton pioneer life are manifested in West Bay, its namesake village at the head of the bay being a thriving and bustling terminus for water borne traffic on the lakes; the gigantic marble quarrying operation in North Mountain luring hundreds of squared-rigged vessels into the bay; the soil along its shores yielding such fruit crops that the area was known as "The Garden".

Sailing directions for West Bay are presented in a clockwise direction beginning with Morrison Head, the first refuge on the south shore after departing St. Peters Inlet.

