

48 Degrees North

Insights from Editor Richard Hazelton

1. How do you characterize your readership?

Boating enthusiasts, sailing oriented.

2. Who writes for your publication? Where do you get your stories?

We have a few regulars that we count on for specific topics, but mostly it's freelance.

3. If you were to give one or two bits of advice to a freelancer hoping to break into your publication, what would you say?

Know the publication you're sending your article to. It's a waste of your time and the editor's time to send something that really doesn't pertain to the focus of the publication. Send in a story, not an idea. Ideas are a dime a dozen.

4. What is a mistake you typically see new writers (or writers in general) make?

Number one - put your contact information on EVERY page, whether it's electronic or a hard copy! It takes time for an editor to get to all the material received so, after a period of time, you inquire as to the status of your article, make sure and give your full name, the title of the article and when it was submitted. Simply writing "Hi, just wondering about my article - Sue," doesn't cut it.

5. Speaking specifically of travel articles in your magazine, what kinds do you look for? Can you tell me a little bit about your own needs? How would you characterize your publication's travel coverage?

Sailboats are mobile so we cover destinations in our immediate area, and follow locals to exotic destinations. We try to always have some kind of local tie-in, if out of the area.

6. What, in your view, separates an OK travel article from one that's truly inspired?

Definitely, "the sizzle, not the steak," rule applies. A laundry list of facilities, emails and websites isn't worth one personal description of why this place is so special. Of course particulars are necessary, but it's the experience that sells.

7. Do you have any pet peeves when it comes to travel writing?

Write to a general audience, or rather the targeted audience of the publication. Leave out all the cute, inside stuff that's only of interest to four people. It's not your blog, it's an article.

8. Think about the writer you most like to work with... what makes him or her so special?

Professional writers understand that once they submit an article, it's now the editor's. If changes need to be made for space, they don't get all upset. Of course, it's up to how the editor handles these changes, but, to a professional writer, a sale is a sale.

9. Many of our writers have skills in other areas as well as travel writing. What other columns and features for your magazine are you always seeking?

In our case, expertise in various aspects of sailing is valuable. Knowledge of electronics, repair, and navigation is always welcome. Of course, all these types of things refer back to our targeted audience, which are boaters.

Writer's Guidelines

There are no writer's guidelines for 48 degrees North Magazine. However reading the editor's insights and scanning through the online version of the magazine is time well spent. You'll see the sorts of stories that this editor, a real gentleman, by the way, seems to prefer.

A look through the may issue for example, reveals several travel stories: Bellingham for Breakfast, Exploring Tumbo Island, the Southern Straits, U.S. Border Crossing Requirements, Maintaining healthy skin in the summer sun (by yours truly), cooking in the galley (and recipes) and other stories aimed at yachties like reviews of new sailing boats, new equipment, and some yacht races.