

# WHAT IS THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE COAST?



The Brotherhood of the Coast is a global fraternal organization whose members have sworn to each other their friendship and loyalty, anchored by their common love of the sea. Started in Chile in 1951 as the **Hermandad de la Costa**, it has steadily grown to over 3,000 members (**Brothers**) in over 200 local chapters (**Tables**) across the world. We do not discuss religion, politics or business and we are not a yacht club, secret society, charitable or service organization.

The guiding principles of the Brotherhood are codified in the **Octolog**. They are based on the camaraderie which existed amongst the Buccaneers who gathered in the second half of the seventeenth century to establish an organized community with rules observing a strict respect for the "customs of the coast". They formed a very close knit society, which they named **Frères de la Côte** ("Brothers of the Coast"), on the islands of Tortuga and Jamaica.

The eight principles of the **Octolog** is sworn to by all Brothers worldwide and must be respected - disregard of them could lead to expulsion. Brothers must treat all Brothers equally with respect. A Brother's economic, religious, ethnic, social status or nationality is of no importance among Brothers. Visiting Brothers may stay with another Brother even though they have never met. The bonds among Brothers are very strong - many develop deep, long lasting friendships that are life-changing, not only within the Brother's Table but among Tables worldwide.

The Founding Brothers of the US Brotherhood were inspired by the closeness of this fraternity, which led them in 1959 to choose the name **Brotherhood of the Coast**.

Similar to sailors who depended on each other for survival during long journeys at sea, it embodies fraternity, commitment, and lifelong friendship among Brothers worldwide.

As the Brotherhood is based on a common love of the sea, boating raft-ups and regattas are a major activity in home waters and abroad. Tables are free to support any causes they wish. When the earthquakes hit Haiti and Chile, Brothers worldwide contributed to help Brothers impacted by these devastating events. There is no typical Brotherhood Table; they are largely autonomous, free to decide amongst themselves how often to meet and the format of their meetings.

Aside from regular meetings, some Tables hold events to which all Brothers are invited. Many Tables will celebrate founding anniversaries or national holidays - New York, for example, invited Brothers worldwide to join in celebrating Op Sail and the Chilean Brotherhood will celebrate their 75th Anniversary in 2026. Many Tables invite Brothers worldwide to participate in their local and national meetings. Traveling Brothers will find a welcome berth in any Brotherhood location.

There is a National Assembly of Captains which offers guidelines to Tables and deals with international matters and subjects of common interest. Every four years there is an international gathering, a **World Zafarrancho**, lasting about a week. They have been held in Chile (where Brothers rounded Cape Horn, courtesy of the Chilean Navy), Argentina, Australia, Belgium, France, Italy, UK,

Uruguay and the USA. These meetings give Brothers the opportunity to meet old friends and develop new ones.

Even though The Brotherhood of the Coast is a loosely organized fraternity, there are features common to all. There is a dress code referred to as **Brotherhood Formal Dress**, which includes a blue blazer with a distinctive pocket patch and a tricorne hat. At other events designated for **Battle Dress**, Brothers will wear traditional seventeenth century regalia, some complete with bandanas, cutlasses and mock flintlock pistols. At events, appreciation is shown with a traditional toast recognized worldwide and known as the **Broadside**.

Any Brother may sponsor a potential Brother (**Engage**) to join a Table. The Table's Brothers will spend a lot of time with Engages to ensure that they understand the commitment required and will respect and adhere to the guiding principles of the **Octolog**. After some time during which the Engage attends meetings and outings with other Brothers, if all the Table's Brothers concur, the Engage will become a Brother for life.

**In short, the Brotherhood of the Coast is a fraternal organization of lovers of the sea but is not for everyone.**

Our aim is not to increase our numbers but to maintain our viability worldwide. We hope that this brochure has given you some insight as to what we are all about.

For more details, go to

[www.bocus.org](http://www.bocus.org)

<https://youtu.be/m8ZBEZsIP6I>

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## OCTALOG

1. Execute with respect the orders of the Captain as if they were those of your Spiritual father or your older Brother.
2. Never bear arms or attack with bad words the Brothers of the same Bay or those of the Littoral.
3. Receive in your boat the Brother who visits you; offer him the food from your table and the best hammock in your cabin.
4. As you treat your Brethren so will you be treated and the Captain will celebrate your fraternity, or will punish you.
5. Do not envy the ship of your Brother, nor his sails, nor his motor.
6. Bring the Brother without harbor to your bay, and should he own no other riches than his heart, take him aboard your yacht and consider him as your Brother.
7. Do not be conceited or violent; if you are, you will cause your Brethren to keep away from you, and you will be quarantined with your plague.
8. Love of the Sea must be the cult of your days; make sacrifices for her and observe her laws.



## BROTHERHOOD OF THE COAST

ANGOLA  
ARGENTINA  
AUSTRALIA  
BAHAMAS  
BELGIUM  
CHANNEL ISLANDS  
CHILE  
CUBA  
FRANCE  
GREAT BRITAIN  
GERMANY  
HAITI  
HUNGARY  
IRELAND  
ITALY  
NETHERLANDS  
NEW ZEALAND  
NORWAY  
POLAND  
PORTUGAL  
SOUTH AFRICA  
SPAIN  
SWITZERLAND  
TAHITI  
UNITED STATES

Chesapeake Bay, Corpus Christi, Gold Coast,  
Houston, New York, Sailing Capital, San Antonio,  
San Juan, Savannah, Solomons, Sun Coast  
URUGUAY  
VENEZUELA