

Flying to the Bahamas

I flew to Andros island and took some notes on the trip. The intention of the doc is that I could read it next time I want to go over the pond, and you KNOW there will be a next time, and I should be in a position to head on out.

KPIE - No need to file the flight plan from here since will be stopping on the right coast for fuel and filing.
Ask ground for class bravo services departing to the east. Ground will give you a squawk code.
Tower will switch you to Tampa approach at climbout.
Tampa approach will switch you when directly overhead the airport.
Usually cross at 2600 feet. Might do 2100. Expect one or the other.

KFPR – No need to call approach control.
Tower 10 miles out.
Watch for birds.
Ask grnd for the Tiki restaurant
Check weather on computer and file international VFR flight plan
Open flight plan with Miami Radio on 122.55
Close with Nassau on 124.2 or 128.0 (Within 50NM)

KPBI – Need to talk to approach control
If approaching from over the ADIZ then call 122.4 or 126.7 Miami Radio and ask for an ADIZ code.
Approach will vector you for landing. Possibly switch you to another approach before taking you to tower.
Most likely bring you in to 9R
Ask for Customs or Signature
Customs is a yellow building with green roof 2 o'clock off end of 9R.
Signature has complementary icecreams and a courtesy car
Departing contact clearance delivery 7100Q and Destination and VFR. They are busy brevity good.
Clearance delivery will hand you over to Grnd
Taxiways Fox and Romeo to 9R for take off.
Tower will hand you off to Departure
Hold assigned headings until told otherwise.

MYAK – Close flight plan with Nassau Radio on 124.2 or 128.0.
Docs say to use 126.0 but this is not valid
Also can close it with Miami Radio which is remoted on the islands
Announce position reports into CTAF 122.8
Announce arrival early to get the customs man out there.
Look for blue holes caves at midfield on downwind for 15.
Tie down is available for public use
Customs closes at 5 don't be late
Need C7A in triplicate and each person needs a Bahamas entry form
<http://preview.bahamas.com/assets/content/pdf/PilotC7form.pdf?sectionid=72434&level=2>
Since you have your cruising permit there is no need to check out with customs as long as you are not leaving the country.

MYNN – Contact approach to enter
May send you to 128.0 to get a flight plan, didn't for me.
They will assign a squawk remain VFR
Bringing you into Nassau have to sequence you in with 767 traffic to prepare to hold.
Terminology – Orbit = Right 360
Line Up = Position and Hold
Ask if unsure.
You should fill out one of these departure forms in advance:
http://www.floridapilot.com/Aircraft_C7.pdf

Fuel up at the General Aviation center
 File flight plan from GA center with Nassau.
 Clear customs and immigration at GA Center.
 Girls leave free, guys pay 15 USD each
 Executive air a 3 minute walk to the west has weather on the internet and a phone to phone WX brief.
 The computer doesn't have std weather so use <http://wunderground.com>
 I filed a flight plan with WX Brief but Nassau Clearance said negative on flight plan and sent me back to the ramp to file with Nassau at GA center.
 Phone customs from Executive Air. Take option 2. Will be assigned a customs clearance code. Eg (JC)
 Clearance delivery will assign a squawk code.
 Taxing to runway for takeoff is complex so ask for progressive taxi.
 Open your flight plan with Nassau Radio on 124.2 or 128.0 when airborne.
 Signal seems to deteriorate rapidly so do this earlier rather than later.

MYBS – Over Bimini contact Miami Radio on 122.4 or 126.7 to get an ADIZ code. Do not cross ADIZ without one.
 Contact Miami Flightwatch on 122.0 and give a Pirep. THEN ask for weather between Bimini and PBI. Very helpful folks and useful info. Reception is good. Crossed at 6500.

KPBI - Listen to ATIS
 Cancel Flight Plan
 Contact Approach Control with Info Q and 20 miles out.
 Approach will vector for landing 9R
 Ground to Customs
 Clearing customs each will need a custom form for each family.
 Need a form for the plane which identifies owners etc.
 The decal for the plane is on file on the computer so customs can look that up.

KPIE - On route KPIE had nasty weather all around.
 Contacted Miami flight watch on 122.0
 Tried from 1500 with broken transmission
 Climbed to 2500 and signal was good.
 Alternate weather sources given by flightwatch were 122.2 and 122.65 they are remoted for Miami Radio and can give weather.
 Use Nearest on GPS to identify alternative weather info sources.

Sqawks

1. Oil temp seems to be running on the high side. Not in red yet but too close for comfort.
2. I leaned temp to in the low 1400s on the way there with RPM at 2500.
3. On the way back I kept it a bit richer in the 1300s to try to cool the engine a little and get the oil temp in the comfort zone.
4. Used One quart of oil and at last check oil read at 6.5 on the dipstick.
5. Interesting experience lost all radios directly over TPA when copilot messed with squelch on the intercom. Resolved this by unplugging all other headsets than the pilot. Quite unsettling to be over TPA with NORAD.

Fuel

PIE-FPR	12.1 Gal	1.4	8.6gph
FPR-PBI	11 Gal	1.3	8.5
PBI-MYNN	25.8	2.8	9.2
MYNN-PIE	28.5 Gal	3.1	9.2

Do different

Write onroute frequencies on the navigation log.
 Plan on 110 for a cruise speed.
 Learn to use the autopilot.

For each leg of the journey tune the VOR ahead, just for practice.
Try to do most of the flying in the morning, early in the day leaves room to slide for weather.
Prefill all the forms and have them in a binder.