

My Ocean Adventure

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As I watch the waves from the shore look pleasing and almost harmless as they crest and crash over one another; I can taste the salt in the air and watch little rainbows glisten through the prisms of the ocean's spray. The warm ocean water towards the shore is covered with foam and bubbles from the rumbling waves as children and their families play in the gritty, tan sand. "This is perfect," I utter to myself.

I make the final preparations on my Yamaha Waverunner. All of the fluid levels are full and there is a faint smell of gasoline mixed with the aromas of salt and fish in the air. I am now ready to step up and take on the mighty waves of the South Padre Island!

Before the truck backs the trailer into the warm waters at the dock and lowers the Waverunner into the blue-green abyss; I crank the engine for a final systems check. It roars powerfully like a lion, drowning out the sound of the birds circling overhead, as thick black and grey smoke initially pours from the exhaust and then slowly drifts away on the wind's light breezy blow. I turn the grand machine off to finish my final preparations.

As I put on my Jet Pilot lifejacket and tighten the thick blue straps, I remind myself to stay calm and not to make any stupid or impulsive decisions during my journey into the ocean. It is easy to push oneself to the limits and lose track of reality.

I climb aboard the Waverunner and grasp hold of the hand bars, warm from the shining sun. Now the truck begins to back up, gently lowering me on this powerful machine into the calm waters of the docking area. As I drift from the trailer, I take a moment to look around and enjoy the peaceful serenity of the smooth water almost like a crystal clear glass. I listen to the sounds that the waves make. It's a quiet swish, swash, swish, swash. It's almost as if they are communicating to me.

I push the start button and the Waverunner roars to life, the power vibrates my seat at first and then settles into a soft rumble. I navigate my way through the docks until I am in the channel. I can now press the throttle and hang on for an exuberant ride! While the waves through the exit channel are only half the size of the ocean's mighty waves, this gives me time to warm up and get in sync with the compelling 135 horse-powered Waverunner. I am now ready to take on the Gulf of Mexico!

I drive out far enough to stay out of the foamy white surf. Suddenly, the ocean begins to crest around me. As I drive into the waves, I am careful to only lower the throttle to a maximum of half power. Any more would be foolish and could cause a wipeout. I approach a wave with a perfect peak and at the ideal time.

I gently squeeze the throttle and the loud howl of the engine fills my ears as the power pushes me up to the lathered white crest of the wave.

In an instant, I am no longer floating on the water, but I am soaring like the beautiful white birds through the misty air. In one brief moment, I look down and see that I am eight to ten feet in the air for a split second before I begin my descent back to the salty waters. In a flash, the back end of the Waverunner sits down into the ocean with the front following in a rocking motion. All around me is a fine spray of the salty water. I have finally landed!

Salt and sweat mix to run down my face and into my mouth. I swallow some of the brackish mixture as I wipe my face with my hand and then run my hand through my dripping hair to dry it out. "What a way to spend an afternoon," I whisper pleasingly.

Soon, I notice that the sun is slowly fading in the west so I decide to turn back toward the docks. As I enter the channel, I decide to return at a slower pace to enjoy my last few minutes at sea. The sun reflects off the water in brilliant colours of gold, orange and red. The drops of sweat and water glimmer on my skin in the vanishing rays of light.

To my surprise, I look out and see a smooth gray hump with a dorsal fin surface about twenty feet in front of me. It's a dolphin! What a striking sight. As this intelligent creature slides back under the ocean's surface, I spot two more dolphins and then another joins them. The first dolphin emerges again to make a total of four. They are swimming in front of me, jumping and playing in the surf. It is almost as if they are leading me to shore. As they guide me through the channel, they slowly disappear back to their home in the Gulf.

Once the dolphins are gone, I gently squeeze the throttle and head back to the docks. With a final look back, I see the sun rays reflect off the glassy smooth water as the ripples of my wake break the surface behind. I think about what a wonderful experience this day has been. Approaching the boat trailer, I realise how physically tired I am from the constant rush of adrenaline brought by my adventures. I have the memories of the exciting jumps of the waves and the vivid pictures in my mind of the graceful dolphins swimming in the sunset. I am now ready to go home.